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Doctoral (PhD) Thesis

Festival images:
Brand image and stakeholders' brand relationship types at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

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Author:
Louise A. Todd

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Abstract

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe (The Fringe) is the largest arts festival in the world and it has inspired the creation of similar festivals world-wide. Since its conception in 1947, the Fringe has demonstrated significant growth in visitor numbers; ticket sales; and its economic contribution. Despite this, the sustainable future of Edinburgh's festivals is debated as Edinburgh, 'the Festival City', faces threats from other festival destinations. Festivals position Edinburgh creatively in contrast to the city's traditionally perceived image as a cultural-historic centre. Despite this, little research has been undertaken into the creative and cultural significance of Edinburgh's festivals, including the Fringe. This interdisciplinary research grounded in marketing, tourism, and festival and event management; and underpinned by constructivism, presents an understanding of types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. This is achieved through defining both the Fringe brand image and its primary stakeholders; and applying these definitions to the development of a typology of Fringe-stakeholders' brand relationships. The significance of this study is evident within its topic of inquiry and the research methods applied. In the little-considered arena of arts festivals and their stakeholders, this is the first in-depth study into the Fringe as a festival and festival brand. Within this, the definition of a Fringe brand image contributes to understanding the cultural and creative significance of the Fringe. Furthermore, this research contributes a unique understanding of the types of stakeholders that are engaged with the Fringe. The types of brand relationships that exist between these stakeholders and the Fringe are another significant contribution to knowledge and understanding. While specific to the present context, these findings may prove transferable to further festivals or events, and related areas and industries. The contribution made by this research to the methodological developments in festival and event studies is of additional significance. The application of visual research methods, including semiotic analysis and photo-elicitation within phenomenological interviews,

has previously been applied in marketing, consumer, and tourism research, but not to the understanding of festival brands and stakeholders' brand relationship types. Findings of this research illustrate that existing marketing and consumer brand frameworks and stakeholder theories are applicable to festivals. Further, it is possible to define 'a' Fringe brand image which is subjective and contradictory. The unique open-access and organic, operational model of the Fringe facilitates its many contributors, and consumers. Fringe stakeholders may be categorised according to their level of engagement with the Fringe (as primary or secondary) and their particular stakeholder role(s), which are varied and multiple. Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types are overwhelmingly positive; and are based upon interpersonal relationship dimensions (including friendships, marriages, kinships and partnerships). Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types can be classified therefore as having similar dimensions to those brand relationship types previously described for consumer products and brands.

Key words

Edinburgh Festival Fringe; brand image; festival primary stakeholders; brand relationships

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List of Contents

Part 1: Introduction to the study

Chapter 1: Round and beyond the Fringe. An introduction to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the scope of this research

Part 2: Literature review

Chapter 2: The image concept

Chapter 3: Branding: image and relationships concepts

Chapter 8: Qualitative interviews

Part 4: Analysis and interpretation

Chapter 9: Constructing the Fringe brand image

Chapter 10: Defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe

Chapter 11: A Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology

Part 5: Conclusions and reflections

Chapter 12: Conclusions and reflections on research findings

List of figures and tables

Part 1

Introduction to the study

"Round the Fringe of official festival drama there seems to be more private enterprise than before… I'm afraid some of us are not going to be often at home during the evenings!" (Kemp, Robert, 14th August, 1948, The Edinburgh Evening News, cited in: Moffat, 1978, p.17).

The first part of this thesis introduces the research subject of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe; and the topic of inquiry: defining types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. This first chapter introduces the aim and objectives of the research and the potential contribution to knowledge of this study. The Fringe is contextualised historically and in its position as a key element of Edinburgh's festivals programme. It is also defined as a hallmark arts festival through consideration of academic literature concerned with festivals and events management.

Chapter 1

Round and beyond the Fringe: [1] An introduction to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the scope of this thesis

1.1 Introduction

The term 'fringe' has various meanings. In describing festivals it can suggest an edgy nature, and being on the edge of the mainstream: "unofficial, not part of the main event" [Chambers, 2010].

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe (the Fringe) is one of the largest arts festivals in the world. It was conceived as an 'unofficial' festival, in response to the introduction of the 'official' Edinburgh International Festival (Moffat, 1978). At the core of the Fringe is a non-selective artistic policy. It is therefore unique, both in its ethos and operation and this paradigm has inspired the creation of similar fringe festivals world-wide.

Dating from 1947, the Fringe has grown significantly in terms of visitor numbers, ticket sales and economic contribution. This growth has progressed however in an organic, rather than a planned and managed, way. As one of Edinburgh's twelve major festivals, the Fringe accounts for almost half of all festival attendees' three million annual visits to the city (SQW Ltd & TNS Travel & Tourism, 2005).

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[1] 'Beyond the Fringe' was an early comedy revue performance by Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, Alan Bennett, and Jonathan Miller. It has become widely associated with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. First performed in 1960, it was in fact part of the programme of the Edinburgh International Festival, and named 'Beyond the Fringe' in an attempt to be differentiated from the Fringe (Moffat, 1978).

Since 2006, media has reported that during this sixtieth anniversary Fringe, and in subsequent years, the festival has contributed £75 million to the Scottish economy (Ferguson, 2007). Furthermore, the Fringe has grown to attract ticket sales approaching two million in total (Brown, 2009). The Fringe in 2010 saw the presentation of almost 2,500 productions including: theatre; comedy; visual art; dance and physical theatre; music; musicals and operas; children's shows; and events (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010).

Despite the availability of the above information, little research has been undertaken into the cultural significance of Edinburgh's festivals, including the Fringe. Given the previously detailed evidence, Scotland's festivals are intrinsic to civic repositioning in this era of events as global tourism phenomena. The Fringe is vital therefore to the artistic and creative positioning of the Festival City: Edinburgh, as it continues to define itself as a creative destination (Prentice & Andersen, 2003).

This PhD thesis is concerned with the cultural significance of the Fringe, as the largest and one of the longest established of Edinburgh's arts festivals.

1.2   Thesis title

The title of this thesis is: "Festival images: Brand image and stakeholders' brand relationship types at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe."

1.2.1 Purpose and rationale of this study

This interdisciplinary research, grounded in marketing, festival and event management and tourism is philosophically underpinned by constructivism. This study focuses upon the brand image of the Fringe; its primary stakeholders; and the types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe as a festival brand and these stakeholders. The purpose and rationale of investigating these particular topics were varied.

In the first instance, there has never been a major in-depth study undertaken into the Fringe. As a hallmark festival in the city of Edinburgh, the Fringe has existed for more than sixty years. As noted, while it is considered to be the largest arts festival in the world and raises tens-of-millions of pounds for the Scottish economy on an annual basis: existing research into the Fringe is limited to industry-based studies concerned with quantifiable impacts. As a case study, the Fringe seemed therefore to be an ideal subject for this independent academic study due to its scale, nature, situation and accessibility. A significant aspect of this study is therefore its uniqueness of the research subject, in the Fringe, and the implications this may have to academic festivals and events-based research, and to industry.

The central concepts of this research: festival brand image; primary stakeholders; and festival-stakeholder brand relationships have never been collectively researched before. There is limited research into festival image and brand image and none identified which is concerned with the relationships that exist between festival brands and consuming stakeholders. The majority of research into these constructs is concerned with product brands and consumers and reveals significant insights into how consumers engage with brands (see: Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000 for examples). A significant element of this study was therefore the application of theoretical approaches and empirical research of consumer-brand relationships directly to the festivals domain. This has proven relevant to the Fringe, the festivals industry and is likely to have significance to related areas in tourism and services.

Furthermore, and of relevance, is that there have been no similar in-depth studies undertaken into the cultural significance of the Fringe. This research considers the perceptual and symbolic elements of festival image and brand image. Indeed, there is limited concern with image or brand image research in the festivals and events domain. As such, much of the

existing research uncovered of relevance to this study was in the discipline of destination image formation (see for examples: Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gartner, 1993; Gunn, 1972); and destination brand image (Caldwell & Freire, 2004; Clarke, 2000; Hankinson, 2004a; Henderson, 2006; Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999, 2004; Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott, 2002; Murphy, Beckendorff & Moscardo, 2007; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Pritchard & Morgan, 1996). Brand image research in the majority of studies is centred on product brands, or is conceptual in nature (Aaker, D., 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2008; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000). As illustrated in the Literature Review (chapters 2-4) and following Methodology (chapter 5) there are thus a number of significant gaps in the existing literature and this study seeks to fill some of these.

Of additional significance to the rationale and purpose of this study is the lack of existing research into festival stakeholders in relation to their definition. This study presents a stakeholder model of the Fringe illustrating the roles and engagement of particular groups. The findings of this are of considerable significance as there has been no attempt made to apply existing research to defining the Fringe stakeholders. Both the findings and the approach are of relevance within further festival and event contexts.

It should be noted that the significance of this study lies not only in the contribution to the understanding of the interaction between festival brand image; festival stakeholders; and the types of brand relationships that exist between festivals and stakeholders for the specific case of the Fringe. As noted, these findings are of significance in their contribution to knowledge and are applicable to the greater festival and event context, and related tourism areas.

This study also contributes to knowledge and understanding through the engagement of research methods that had previously not been applied in the festivals and events domain. Semiotic analysis has been widely used intourism and marketing studies (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Berger, A., 1995; Bignell, 2002; Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; MacCannell, 1982; Noth, 1990; Oswald, 2007; Rose, 2007; Uzzell, 1984; Williamson, 2002); while phenomenological interviewing has been applied in social sciences and consumer research (Fournier, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). Until now neither has been applied to the context of festivals and events research. These particular approaches are thus a significant and important contribution in themselves.

1.2.2 Research aim

The aim of the research undertaken in writing this thesis is to provide an understanding of types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. This is considered by defining the Fringe brand image and investigating the perceptions of Fringe primary stakeholders.

1.2.2 Research objectives

The overall aim of this research is addressed through the following objectives:

Objective 1: To critically define the brand image of the Fringe, as projected through its portrayal in branded visual promotional materials.

Objective 2: To define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe.

Objective 3: To develop a typology of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders.

1.3   Contribution to knowledge

As noted in section 1.2 which details the purpose and rationale of this study, this research is an independent academic investigation considering the cultural significance of the Fringe. As elements of Edinburgh's festivals, these factors have received less academic attention than quantitative indicators of success. It is anticipated thus that the significance of this study is manifold. Firstly in its contribution to knowledge is the development of a unique conceptual framework defining types of Fringe brand relationships. This model may be applicable to similar arts festivals, and events, in its findings and in its underpinning by philosophical theory and application of method.

From a practical perspective, another contribution of this research involves consideration of the branding approaches of festival organisations and festivals themselves within the festivals industry. The findings of this research may therefore prove useful in application to the branding practices of festival and event organisations. This research seeks thus to provide a better understanding of how festival brand image may be applied to appeal to those significant consumers of primary stakeholders. The contributions of this study are presented in detail in the final conclusive chapter of this thesis (see chapter 12).

Through discussion and examination of the Fringe in its capacity as an arts festival, this chapter details its historical context and its current position within Edinburgh's extensive festival programme. Further, the Fringe is considered as a festival in relation to conceptual definitions.

1.4   Format of this thesis

The remaining chapters of this thesis outline the rationale, methods, and results for the research as introduced above. Part 2 is the literature review

which considers the central areas of inquiry: the image concept in chapter 2; brand image and relationships in chapter 3; and festival stakeholders in chapter 4.

Part 3 of this thesis presents the methodological approach and methods applied to the research. Chapter 5 introduces the philosophical paradigm and methodological approach adopted. The specific research methods are then discussed in chapter 6, where semiotic analysis is applied in defining the brand image of the Fringe. Chapter 7 continues with a discussion on the application of the literature review in developing a Fringe stakeholder model. Chapter 8 details the use of qualitative interviews as an approach to defining the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types.

The research analysis and findings are introduced in Part 4 of this thesis. Chapter 9 presents the results of the semiotic analysis to define the Fringe brand image. Chapter 10 presents the Fringe stakeholder model, and chapter 11 details the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology.

Part 5 presents the conclusions of this study. The final chapter is concerned with the discussion and conclusion of the research findings; a discussion of the contribution to knowledge made by this study; recommendations for future research areas; limitations of the research and reflections upon these, concluding with a reflexive summary.

1.5   The Edinburgh Festival Fringe

> "It is apparent that major events can have the effect of shaping an image of the host community or country, leading to its favourable perception as a potential travel destination" (Getz, 2007, p.142).

The city of Edinburgh has a significant and long history of festivals and currently hosts twelve major, city-wide festivals annually. In addition to the Fringe, these include: Edinburgh International Science Festival; Imaginate; Edinburgh International Film Festival; Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival;

Edinburgh Military Tattoo; Edinburgh International Book Festival; Edinburgh Art Festival; Edinburgh International Festival; Edinburgh Mela Festival; Scottish International Storytelling Festival; Edinburgh's Christmas and Edinburgh's Hogmanay (Festivals Edinburgh, 2009).

1.5.1 An historical view of the Fringe

The Fringe and the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF) were both conceived in 1947, although their origins differ. Often referred to as the 'official' festival, the EIF was established by a group of world-leading artists and Edinburgh civic leaders as a post-war means to enrich the cultural context of Edinburgh while attracting tourism-related revenue to the city and Scotland as a whole [2](Moffat, 1978). The EIF's website states the founding principle of the festival:

> "This founding principle - that a world class cultural event, which brings together people and artists together from around the world, would also generate significant cultural, social and economic benefits for Edinburgh and Scotland - is as relevant today as it was nearly 60 years ago" (Edinburgh International Festival, 2009).

The Fringe was created in the same year, however unlike the EIF this was not a centrally-managed event. Conversely, eight groups of performers that had not been asked to appear at the EIF (six from Scotland and two from Oxford) decided to take advantage of the Festival atmosphere in Edinburgh and travelled to the city to perform independently. The results were said to engender a sense of spontaneity and transience, different to other festivals (Moffat, 1978).

Organisationally, many features of the Fringe have developed in an organic and unstructured way (Ind, 2009). Even the title of the festival was not a managed or strategic decision. Indeed, in 1948, the name of 'Fringe' festival was conceived by the playwright and journalist, Robert Kemp, of the Edinburgh Evening News, who wrote: "Round the fringe of the official

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[2] EIF was established by a group including: Rudolf Bing, the General Manager of Glyndebourne Opera, Henry Harvey Wood the Head of the British Council in Scotland, and a group of civic leaders from Edinburgh (Edinburgh International Festival, 2010).

Festival drama there seems to be a more private enterprise than before...
I'm afraid some of us are not going to be often at home during the
evenings" (Moffat, 1978, p.17).

As years passed, the Fringe grew both as an organisation and a festival:
administrative support was created through development of performers'
facilities, and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society was established in
1958. A central box office and an information office were opened in 1959
and a constitution was drawn-up detailing the non-selective policy of the
Fringe programme, which remains at the heart of the festival today:
"Artistic vetting is to have no place in the Society's aims, a decision which
remains central to the development of the Fringe" (Edinburgh Festival
Fringe, 2010).

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, The Fringe continued to
develop, with the establishment of the Festival Fringe Society as a limited
company and the securing of public funding to open an office. The role of
Fringe Administrator was created between 1969 and 1971 (Edinburgh
Festival Fringe, 2010). The Festival Fringe Society and its annually elected
Board of Directors became the legal entities responsible for the
management of the Fringe. Nevertheless, the open-access policy has
been maintained and any person can participate in the festival on
registering with the Festival Fringe Society and securing a listing in the
annual Fringe programme (The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010). The
mission of the Festival Fringe Society is defined as: "to provide a variety of
services for performers and audiences alike, while also managing free
events on the Royal Mile and at Fringe Sunday" (Edinburgh Festival
Fringe, 2007, p.4).

The Festival Fringe Society employs a small permanent staff throughout
the year. During the festival itself a large number of temporary seasonal
staff, and a few volunteers, are taken on by the Society and the numerous

venues and other organisations involved in the festival (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009).

From its initial conception and growth until the present day, it is apparent therefore that the Fringe emerged and developed organically, despite being managed by the Festival Fringe Society across many functions (AEA Consulting, 2006).

1.5.2 The Fringe today

As noted previously, the Fringe is considered to be one of the largest arts festivals in the world (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010) and since its establishment it has experienced significant growth in tangible measures.

The available quantitative data evidences the continued growth of the Fringe in measurable terms over recent years. 2007 witnessed sales of 1.7 million tickets (Ferguson, 2007). In 2008, there were however widely publicised problems with the Fringe box office system, resulting in significant ticketing problems and a reported ten percent drop in ticket sales for the first time in years. At the end of the troublesome Fringe 2008 season, the then Director resigned. Amongst widespread reports of a financial rescue package of up to £500,000 from City of Edinburgh Council, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Arts Council (Ferguson, 2008), an investigative report was commissioned into the issues encountered by the Fringe in 2008, Recommendations were made regarding the management of the box office issues, the governance, and the staffing structure of the Festival Fringe Society. A constitutional review has been ongoing in addressing these issues[3] (Scott-Moncrieff, 2009).

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[3] In November 2010 the first results of the Fringe's constitutional review were published and these reported on the new constitution for the Festival Fringe Society. This further underpins the open access policy and includes: the development of a "Participants' Council", allowing performers, venue operators, and producers to be consulted by the board; those groups to be allowed places on the board; and the appointment of additional board members with specific areas of expertise (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010).

Prior to the 2009 Fringe, the Festival Fringe Society undertook a staffing restructure: introducing and appointing a new role of Chief Executive, responsible for the overall management of the Fringe. This post was taken by Kath Maitland and a new management structure was established (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009). A newly appointed box office system was launched and this operated successfully for the 2009 Fringe, as ticket sales grew to 1.89 million (Brown, 2009); and then to 1.95 million in 2010 (Ferguson & Smith, 2010; MacKenzie, 2010).

Consequently, despite the reported financial and reputational damage reportedly suffered by the Fringe in 2008; it is evident that it is vital to the artistic and cultural positioning of the city of Edinburgh as an international festival tourism destination. Such positioning is significant in achieving sustainable competitive advantage for the city (AEA Consulting, 2006).

As detailed, this research is concerned with the brand image of the Fringe and in defining its primary stakeholders. The brand relationships of the Fringe and these stakeholders are then defined through the investigation of these central concepts.

1.5.3 The Fringe as a hallmark event

There is a long history and tradition of festivals and events throughout the cultures and societies of the United Kingdom and this can be traced thousands of years into the past. The academic study of festivals and events is comparatively recent. In defining these there are however various perspectives and concepts to consider.

In discussing the Fringe as part of the fabric of Edinburgh's role as the: "Festival City" (see references in: AEA Consulting, 2006, Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2003; Festivals Edinburgh, 2010; DEMA, 2007; Graham Devlin Associates, 2001; Jamieson, 2004; Prentice & Andersen, 2003; Robertson, Wardrop & McMillan, 2003; VisitScotland, 2007), it is important

to first define the phenomena of festivals and to determine the type of festival the Fringe may be. In doing this, some academic conceptual and operational definitions are now considered.

In introducing, defining, and characterising the nature of the events industry, Yeoman et al., (2004, p.xx), write*: "*The characteristics of festivals and events are unique and as such, no one standard model of management fits all".

Festivals can be defined as phenomena. Further definitions emphasise their unique features and non-routine nature as:

> "phenomenon arising from these non-routine occasions which have leisure, cultural, personal or organisational objectives set apart from the normal activity of daily life, whose purpose is to enlighten, celebrate, entertain or challenge the experience of a group of people" (Shone & Parry, 2004, p.3).

The term festival has been in use for centuries. Public events, for example, may be traced to trade fairs of the 12th Century (Bowdin *et al.,* 2006). The history of events can be traced back to the dawn of time. Australian Aboriginal traditions; Ancient Greek events; European festivals; and Chinese New Year are early examples of ways in which humankind has marked important life events through celebration (Allen *et al.,* 2008).

Getz (1991, 2005, 2007) has written widely upon the development, management, and concepts of festivals and events. These may be considered from both the perspectives of the event organiser and customer as:

> "a one-time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programmes or activities of the sponsoring or organising body. To the customer or a guest, a special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond the everyday experience" (Getz, 2005, p.16).

In discussing the social and cultural meanings of festivals and events and considering sociological and anthropological definitions of the festival concept, Getz (2007, p.18) concludes that the definition of an event as a concept is simply: "an occurrence …at a given place and time; a special set of circumstances; a noteworthy occurrence." Conversely, festivals are more problematic to define; but Getz's (2007, p.31) preferred definition of festivals is simply: "themed public celebrations."

Bowdin *et al.* (2006) also describe festivals and events as symbolic benchmarks of occurrences within the lives of humans, often involving celebration. They cite the definition of festivals provided by The Policy Studies Institute:

> "A festival was traditionally a time of celebration, relaxation and recuperation which often followed a period of hard physical labour, sowing or harvesting crops, for example. The essential feature of these festivals was the celebration or reaffirmation of community or culture. The artistic content of such events was variable and many had a religious or ritualistic aspect, but music, dance and drama were important features of the celebration" (PSI, 1992, p1, cited in: Bowdin *et. al.,* 2006, p.5).

It is possible to further classify festivals and events by their form and content (Allen *et al.,* 2008; Bowdin *et al.,* 2006) and the Fringe by its nature may be described as a cultural event:

> "Edinburgh festivals are an important expression of human activity that contributes much to our social and cultural life. They are also increasingly linked with tourism to generate business activity and income for their host communities. Council and related organizations, supporting both private and public sector initiatives, have developed an enviable reputation and tourism bonanza through staging a wide range of festivals that cater to different market needs" (Bowdin *et al.,* 2006, p18).

Additionally to classifying festivals and events by their content, much of the events and festivals academic literature defines these by their dimensions, ranging from small community events, to larger hallmark, prestige, and major events; and ultimately worldwide mega events, such as the Olympic Games (Allen *et al.,* 2008; Bowdin *et al.,* 2006; Getz, 1991, 2005, 2007).

Hallmark events are described as 'iconic'. Applied in descriptive and metaphorical terms, there are thus distinctive features and symbols of quality synonymous with hallmark events:

> "Hallmark events are those that possess such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity, that the event provides the host venue, community or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time, the event and destination images become inextricably linked. Hallmark Events are, by definition, permanent 'institutions' in their communities or societies" (Getz, 2007, p.24).

Based on the above definition, it is evident that the Fringe is a hallmark event. As an arts festival it is iconic within Edinburgh's festivals programme, and it may be considered synonymous with the city. As noted, measurable dimensions indicate that the Fringe is the largest of Edinburgh's festivals in terms of its scale of venues, performers, and audience numbers. It is also arguably Edinburgh's most accessible festival. This is both in tangible terms, due to the high visibility it assumes upon the streets of the city; and in intangible terms, because of its widely appealing and eclectic programme, encompassing many art forms. As an Edinburgh institution the Fringe is commonly acknowledged as the first festival of its kind in the world. Further, to this day and despite spawning numerous imitators, it remains the largest fringe festival in the world.

1.6   Edinburgh and the Fringe

As illustrated, information about the tangible impacts of Edinburgh's festivals is readily available: published directly by the festivals themselves; commissioned reports; and reported within the Scottish and national media.

Unfortunately, little academic research has been conducted into the cultural, creative and artistic significance of Edinburgh's festivals, including the Fringe. These elements are integral to the contemporary positioning of Edinburgh as a festival city (AEA Consulting, 2006).

Edinburgh has the reputation of being a leading destination for festivals and events (Carlsen, Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2007). Traditionally Edinburgh has however defined its brand as a city based upon cultural-historic tourism (Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2003). The Edinburgh festivals continue to generate publicity for the city that can facilitate positive imagery. This positions the city favourably in terms of arts, creativity and culture and contributes to perceptions of Edinburgh's brand (Derrett, 2004).

Within academic literature and reportage about Edinburgh, it is frequently referred to as a Festival City. It may be argued that contemporary Edinburgh seeks to define elements of its brand as such (AEA Consulting, 2006, Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2003; Graham Devlin Associates, 2001; Jamieson, 2004; Prentice & Andersen, 2003; Robertson & Wardrop, 2003).

Prentice and Andersen (2003, p.7) suggest that: "performing arts and other festivals are now a worldwide tourism phenomenon". Further, in Scotland, festivals are intrinsic to civic repositioning: in contrast to traditional representations of Scotland as having an idealised rural past, characterised by such associations as: "Highlandism, Tartantry, Brigadoonism and Braveheartism".

McCrone, Morris and Kiely (1995) also suggest that these discourses, in this instance termed as Brigadoonery and anti-Brigadoonery, have been associated and embedded in Scotland's tourism for many years. There is a resulting plethora of Scottish iconography widely used to position the country and its cities. It may be argued therefore that as a contemporary Scottish city and a festival destination, the image and thus brand image of Edinburgh is consumed as both a tourism-historic city; and in relation to Scottish and international performing arts (Prentice & Andersen, 2003).

In the contemporary competitive tourism marketplace, Scotland's cities: specifically Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee, have sought to create a more contemporary and urban repositioning than this idealised, rural Scotland positioning. Edinburgh in particular seeks to position itself as a festival city: "offering a unique selling point of creativity as well as heritage" (Prentice & Andersen, 2003, p.8).

Despite the almost year-round presence of festivals in the city, the establishment and growth of Edinburgh's festival programme was not strategically planned or managed. Conversely, each festival developed as a discrete event and today all remain distinct in their management. Nevertheless, in recent years the roles of Edinburgh's festivals and their significance to the city have been investigated by their civic and public stakeholders.

The *"Events strategy"* (City of Edinburgh Council, 2002) and *"Festivals and the city: the Edinburgh Festivals strategy report"* (Graham Devlin Associates, 2001) assert the importance of Edinburgh's festival programme to the city in relation to its overall image as a destination. Commissioned and funded by the City of Edinburgh Council and supported financially by the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian, both reports recognise the importance of Edinburgh's festivals to the city, on a cultural and economic basis (Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2003):

> "The city is the Festival; the Festival is the city. Edinburgh is the city of Enlightenment with magnificent architecture providing a backdrop for a plethora of the exciting and popular festivals unmatched in the UK or Europe. Indeed, during August the city becomes effectively the cultural capital of the world. As a result, there are many throughout the world who know Edinburgh primarily (if not solely), through its image as a Festival City. That image brings with it associations of sophistication, modernity, civilisation and attractiveness" (Graham Devlin Associates, 2001, p.4).

The *"Festivals and the city: the Edinburgh Festivals strategy report"* (Graham Devlin Associates, 2001) presents a series of recommendations for the city of Edinburgh, including the development of a shared vision for Edinburgh's festivals and the agencies involved in their production and development. Further, it advocates the development of objectives to facilitate the development of a common vision for the Edinburgh festivals in order to develop each event's impacts through working collectively. This strategy discusses Edinburgh's Festival City status as evidence of commitment to the development of this title as an aspect of Edinburgh's brand.

It is apparent that Edinburgh's festivals are important contributors in determining the image of the city and the Edinburgh brand (AEA Consulting, 2006, Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2003; DEMA, 2007; Festivals Edinburgh, 2010; Graham Devlin Associates, 2001; Jamieson, 2004; Prentice & Andersen, 2003; Robertson, Wardrop & McMillan, 2003; VisitScotland, 2007).

Edinburgh has continued to investigate the role and significance of its festivals. In 2004 the City of Edinburgh Council commissioned research into the economic impact of Edinburgh's festivals: *"Edinburgh's year round Festivals 2004-2005 - Economic impact study"*. The results confirm the success of Edinburgh's festivals in generating income for the city and Scotland. Nevertheless, the study recommended that wider benefits of the festivals should be investigated for broader attributes including: education, social inclusion, cultural diversity, civic pride, creativity and innovation, city promotion and quality of life for residents. It was also suggested that the work of the festivals should be recognised and supported (SQW Ltd & TNS Travel & Tourism, 2005).

In 2005, a further research project considered Edinburgh's festivals within the broader competitive environment. *"Thundering hooves: Maintaining the*

global competitive edge of Edinburgh's festivals" was commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council; The Scottish Arts Council [4]; EventScotland; Scottish Enterprise; and the Association of Edinburgh's Festivals. This study involved significant contributions from all of the major festivals. It suggested that while Edinburgh was maintaining its position as the Festival City, there were a number of emerging competitors within the festivals' market-place. As a result a series of recommendations were made including: maintaining the quality of programming of the festivals; directed strategic planning; and working collaboratively to market the festivals and the city of Edinburgh as the Festival City. The report suggested that in maintaining Edinburgh's competitive advantage, an important consideration was the image and identity of the festivals (AEA Consulting, 2006).

Following the publication of *"Thundering hooves",* one of the actions to address the outstanding recommendations was the establishment of Festivals Edinburgh in 2006. This high-level organisation was founded and is managed by the directors of the twelve Edinburgh festivals and a small staff. Festivals Edinburgh is tasked with representing the festivals collectively, and delivering collaborative strategic projects (Festivals Edinburgh, 2010).
Edinburgh as the Festival City is intrinsically identified with festivals throughout the year as they evoke symbols of creativity and cosmopolitan intercultural scenes which create images associated with a cultural capital city (Jamieson, 2004).

Festivals are important to the experiential economy through engaging memories and stimulating entertainment. Further, Edinburgh's festivals are important components of city life and have a vital role in the creation and

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[4] The Scottish Arts Council was until July 2010 the public body responsible for funding, development and advocacy of the arts in Scotland. In 2010 it was merged with Scottish Screen (the national development agency for the screen industries in Scotland) and renamed as Creative Scotland.

maintenance of the city's brand image. This has an impact upon the cultural economy of Edinburgh and its position as a festival destination (Ali-Knight & Robertson, 2003; Robertson, Chambers & Frew, 2007).

Edinburgh itself is a 'suprabrand', composed of sub-brands. The sub-brands are defined as: the festival city; the world heritage city; and the city of contemporary culture. Within this structure it is vital that the sub-brands do not diminish or undermine the brand awareness of Edinburgh. Further sub-brands, including festivals, may however be introduced and developed to sustain the city brand (Robertson & Wardrop, 2003). It is apparent that in considering Edinburgh's brand the festivals do have an important and strategic role in the brand and therefore the brand image of the city.

It should be noted that to date, the researcher has not discovered academic research that is concerned with the image or brand image of the Fringe. In investigating the brand relationships between the Fringe and its key stakeholders a conceptual framework will be developed. This will be concerned with defining a series of these relationships.

1.6.1 Edinburgh's brand

Since 2007, Edinburgh has been subject to the development of a city region brand strategy managed by Destination Edinburgh Marketing Association (DEMA). The *"Edinburgh Inspiring Capital"* brand project initiative is supported by public and private stakeholders, including: The City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian and VisitScotland Edinburgh. Further stakeholders include representatives from Edinburgh's key industries of: "economy, including local business, finance, higher education, local government, festivals, tourism, voluntary, bio-technology, information technology, retail, creative industries, local enterprise and other professional sectors" (DEMA, 2009).

The city's commitment to its festival programme is evident throughout this promotional strategy. DEMA was established to take charge of the promotion of Edinburgh as a destination through the themes of visiting, investing, living and studying in the city (DEMA, 2010). DEMA acts as a unified source of Edinburgh promotional strategy and message. It created and now manages the *"Edinburgh Inspiring Capital"* brand, which represents the particular qualities of the Edinburgh city brand and: "reflects Edinburgh's inspirational influence. We are a strong international capital city and a world leader in business, science, education and the arts" (DEMA, 2010). The Festivals are a component of the brand essence and personality of Edinburgh's brand, which has the arts and creativity at is centre.

The *"Edinburgh Inspiring Capital"* brand communicates a tone of voice and brand values to be considered when using the Edinburgh brand. The tone of voice is defined here as the 'brand personality' of Edinburgh and is described as:

> "Imaginative; Vibrant; Determined; Authentic; Confident… The words we use send signals about us - they show our audience what we represent as a brand and helps people to understand what we stand for. The way we talk as a brand is as important as the way we look" (DEMA, 2009).

In addition to defining Edinburgh's brand personality through an appropriate tone of voice, the brand values of Edinburgh are communicated to reflect this tone as: "inventive visionary, rich diversity; …striving for excellence, understated; …and sincere warmth" (DEMA, 2009).

Edinburgh's festivals are contributors to the Edinburgh city brand. The festivals are indeed one of the key stakeholders of the city of Edinburgh.

1.7   Summary

The first part and introductory chapter of this thesis presents the aim and objectives of this research and speculates its potential contributions to

both theory development and the festivals industry. The Fringe is introduced in its historical and present-day incarnations. Today, it is evident that the Fringe assumes a central role within Edinburgh's festival programme. Despite this there is a lack of academic research concerned with the cultural and artistic significance of the Fringe or similar festivals.

As noted, the overall aim of this research is to define a series of brand relationship types that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders. In doing this there are a number of central inquiries to be considered. The following part of this thesis is the literature review, where many of these questions are identified and discussed.

Part 2

Literature Review

Part 2 of this thesis is a literature review consisting of three chapters, each corresponding to an objective of this research. In chapter 2 the image concept is investigated in its definition, role, components, formation and measurement. Chapter 3 shifts attention to the brand concept, including its constructs of brand image, related symbolic elements, and brand relationships. The final chapter of the literature review considers stakeholder theories and poses thus the question of defining the Fringe stakeholders.

These concepts are investigated through this review of literature across academic disciplines, including: marketing; branding; consumer research; festival and events management; tourism; social sciences; philosophy and the arts.

Chapter 2

The image concept

> "Images were first made to conjure up the appearance of something that was absent" (Berger, J., 2008, p.3).

2.1 Introduction

As presented in Chapter 1, this research aims to define a series of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. In doing this there are a number of central concepts to be considered by the literature review. These are: the image concept; the brand concept, including brand image; and self-concept, including self-image congruence.

These particular constructs are elements that combine in informing a greater discourse of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships. The second contributory element to brand relationships is therefore Fringe stakeholders.

In this chapter the image concept is introduced and investigated. A definition of image is sought, and its role within the formation of perceptions is considered. The destination image concept as an important element of the marketing of destinations in discussed. The chapter continues by considering the relationship between image and motivation; and concludes by reviewing the components of image and the process of image formation.

Throughout this chapter the literature reviewed is drawn from early studies into the image construct and seminal research concerned with destination image, dating from the past fifty years. Within tourism research, there have been numerous notable studies undertaken that are concerned with understanding this concept and many of these have been considered here as they are relevant to this study. This is similarly the case throughout

chapter 3 in its consideration of the brand concept, brand image and relationships.

2.2 Defining image as a concept

In defining image, it tends to be characterised as an abstract entity, representative of something concrete. Writing on image, Boorstin (1961, p.201) presents it as related to the Latin: "imitari", meaning "to imitate". His definition of image suggests it as superseding reality in modern times: referring to American dictionary definitions: "an image is an artificial imitation or representation of the external form of any object". Boorstin (1961, p.189) believes that the concept of image has come to replace and replicate realities: "The image is a pseudo-ideal… it is synthetic, believable, passive, vivid, simplified and ambiguous."

It is suggested that image is a representation of a tangible item. Jung (1990) writing on *"The archetypes and the collective unconscious",* believes that images are 'archetypes', or unconscious representations of original ideals: themselves visible throughout history and societies (Mark & Pearson, 2001). Images are thus perceptions representing numerous physical and measurable entities including: objects; people; places; services; and organisations.

When considering image as a projection of an object, it is naturally defined by the individual that receives it (Ind, 1992). Indeed, it is constructed by the individual as he or she perceives it: composed from the interaction of their beliefs, ideas and impressions of this projection. Image may be described therefore as an abstract concept involving various perceptual influences (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Crompton, 1979a; Hunt, 1975; Lawson & Baud-Bovy, 1977).

Due to its abstract nature, image is a complex discourse. It is a widely understood concept, yet has no commonly held definition:

"'image' is one of those terms which will not go away. A term with vague and shifting meanings, it has been variously linked to advertising and consumerism, attitudes, memories, cognitive maps and expectations" (Pearce, 2005, p.92).

Image is unique to the individual in terms of the interaction of their perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and memories. As a perceptual construct of an object, it is therefore important for an image to be perceived positively. This is particularly the case for complex items such as services, destinations and consumer objects where a positive image may motivate individuals to make decisions to experience, visit, or purchase.

An investigation of literature to date has not uncovered a study making a specific examination of consumers' or stakeholders' perceptions of the Fringe in relation to its image or brand image. Indeed existing research considering the image or brand image of arts festivals is sparse. Stakeholders' perceptions of the Fringe image and brand image as consumers of it are important considerations because the Fringe is a hallmark event, synonymous with the city of Edinburgh as a tourism destination (Allen *et al.,* 2008; Bowdin *et al.,* 2006; Getz, 1991).

2.3   Destination image

Destination image has been researched widely for the past forty years in tourism research. Many researchers and destination marketing organisations (DMOs) recognise that in the increasingly fragmented market, issues of substitutability are inherent to the destination selection process. Creating and communicating a unique destination image is thus an important consideration in ensuring a destination is successful in attracting visitors (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999, 2004; Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott, 2002; Murphy, Beckendorff & Moscardo, 2007; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Pritchard & Morgan, 1996). Indeed, tourism imagery is vital to the cultural infrastructures that underpin consumer society (Pritchard and Morgan, 1999).

There are numerous definitions of destination image as a concept. Additionally, there are many theoretical and empirical investigations into its role in the decision-making process; its components; and its formation. These related concepts are considered in their relevance to this research. Conceptually, destination image has been defined in many different ways by researchers. Definitions are broad in nature and there is no universal agreement (Andreu, Bigne & Cooper, 2000; Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Jenkins, 1999; Pike, 2002; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil 2007; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008).

Echtner and Ritchie's (1991, p.6) conceptual paper investigating the meaning and measurement of destination image is a bench-mark in this field. The lack of a common definition of destination image is highlighted, but the authors maintain there is a perceptual aspect to image as a concept: "Destination image is frequently described as simply 'impressions of a place' or 'perceptions of a place'."

Echtner and Ritchie (1991) present a critique of the various definitions assigned to destination image in the field of tourism research at the time of writing. They conclude that there are numerous conceptual definitions of it, but less understanding of its operationalisation. This approach appears frequently within destination image research (see: Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Pike, 2002; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil, 2007).

In an early investigation of how destination image relates to tourism development, Hunt (1975) defines it as being perceptions held by potential visitors of the environment, climate, and people of a destination. In another consideration of destination image, it is referred to by Crompton (1979a, p.18) as being perceptions of the individual, defined as: "the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination".

Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977, p.10) also define destination image as perceptual: "the expression of all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudices, imaginations, and emotional thoughts an individual or group might have of a particular place."

Chon (1990, p.4) notes the importance of image to destination selection: "An image is the set of meanings by which an object is known and through which people describe, remember and relate to it. That is, an image is the net result of the interaction of a person's beliefs, ideas, feelings, expectations and impressions about an object."

In investigating the formation of destination image, Baloglu and McLeary (1999) note that definitions tend to emphasise the perceptual aspect of image. Furthermore, in revisiting Crompton's (1979a) definition of image, they too define image as being perceptual: "A commonly adopted definition of image is that it is a set of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of a place or destination" (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999, p.871). Pike (2002) reviews 142 academic papers on destination image written between 1972 and 2000. He concludes that there is a great deal of destination image literature available to researchers and this is rich resource; however he also states that there is a lack of a common definition.

In presenting an overview of destination image research it is evident there is no commonly cited definition. Nevertheless, tourism researchers concur that destination image is a perceptual entity formed in the minds of individuals, similarly to the image concept.

2.4   The role of image in decision making

Image is a determinant within the decision making process, and this is thought to be particularly relevant to the destination selection process.

Individuals' images of a particular place are important determinants in the motivation to favour and select one destination over another.

Studies in tourism motivation present the concept of 'push' and 'pull' factors as important contributors to developing motives to travel for pleasure. Push factors may be described as the internal, socio-psychological reasons motivating individuals to travel. Conversely, pull factors are the motives that arise from the attractions of the destination itself, rather than the internal needs of the traveller (Crompton, 1979a, 1979b; Dann, 1977, 1981, 1996; Gartner, 1993). Crompton (1979b) conceptualises further that motives are acted upon as a means to restoring equilibrium, when an individual's needs and wants cause a state of disequilibrium.

Similarly, Goodall and Ashworth (1988) suggest that motivation is determined by both the intrinsic needs and extrinsic desires of an individual:

> "Together, needs and desires determine motivations, i.e. definite and positive inclinations to do something. Motivations for pleasure travel contain push factors related to the home environment, such as a break from work, escape from routine, or respite from everyday worries, and pull factors related to the stimulus of new places and the attractions of destinations" (Goodall & Ashworth, 1988, p.3).

In converting a motivation into an action to visit a particular destination it is necessary to therefore identify tourists' preferences and knowledge of the destination as mental images can become the basis of the selection process.

Image has long been regarded as important to the decision making process, but only in recent times has this theory been applied to tourism choices (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). Chon (1990) acknowledges that image and perceptions are important determinants in travel purchase behaviour and that this is significant to the marketing of destinations when travellers' behaviours are considered. Dann (1981, 1996) too links destination image

to choice and asserts that this is demonstrated by the existing research in this discipline (see also: Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil, 2007).

In discussing the motivations behind recreational travel Iso-Ahola (1983) argues that this is a conflicting and dialectical process: involving individual needs to leave familiarity behind and to seek novelty. This is termed the 'escape seeking dichotomy' framework of tourism motivation, and it consists of two motivational forces: seeking and escaping. This conceptualisation is developed from Maslow's (1968) well-known framework illustrating the hierarchy of five human needs, from fundamental physiological needs to self-actualisation needs; one need appearing only after the satisfaction of a more fundamental need. Maslow's (1968) needs hierarchy is widely-cited as important to understanding consumer behaviour.

It is evident therefore that image has an important role in the decision making process when it comes to pleasure-related travel. Despite this, there is limited research related to motivation concepts in festivals and events; and attendance at events such as festivals.

Building upon Maslow's (1968) needs hierarchy, Getz (1991) classifies three main categories of festival attendees' needs that are addressed by festivals and these are: physical; interpersonal or social; and ultimately personal or psychological. Indeed major hallmark events, such as the Fringe may influence the image of Edinburgh leading to a favourable image as festivals and events become mechanisms for successfully satisfying the higher needs levels through aesthetic appreciation.

Crompton and MacKay (1997, p.425) draw upon the frameworks of: push and pull; Maslow's (1968) needs hierarchy; and the escape seeking dichotomy (Iso-Ahola, 1983) to investigate the motives that drive people to

visit festivals. They contest that tourists have multiple motivations in making a pleasure trip and making a decision to visit a festival is a: "directed action which is triggered by a desire to meet a need". Further, in addition to this desire, further variables to explain behaviour in relation to festival visitation are: learning; cultural conditioning; social influences and perceptions.

Motivation is an important determinant in making a decision to visit a destination. Nevertheless, it may not determine the choice of one particular destination; or whether to visit a festival at that particular destination. These decisions are seemingly dependent upon numerous factors and influences. Research concludes that a major influence in motivating individuals to travel for pleasure purposes is the destination image. This is the case whether the travel is for the pleasure of a holiday or to visit a festival.

2.5   Image constructs

This review now turns to examining the components of image; and those factors which are included in individuals' formation of images. The literature reviewed here presents perspectives upon the formation of destination image. There are numerous approaches to this topic, and it is commonly agreed that there are a number of components that influence the formation of image.

2.5.1 The components of image

As illustrated by the preceding definitions of image, it is a multi-dimensional construct. Many tourism researchers agree that the overall image of a destination is formed through the cognitive (perceptual) and affective (emotional) evaluations of individuals in conjunction with other variables such as socio-demographic factors; psychological factors; previous experience and information sources (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999;

Beerli & Martin, 2004a, 2004b; Echtner & Ritchie 1991; Ryan & Cave, 2007; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008).

It is evident that destination image has an important role both in understanding travel behaviour and in developing tourism marketing strategies. Destination image is proposed as a three-dimensional construct of two main components that are attribute-based and holistic impressions. Within these components, measures of both: functional (or tangible) and psychological (or abstract) characteristics should be included. Additionally, in measuring destination image, traits that are: common (functional and psychological); and unique (distinctive features, events, feelings or auras) to destinations should be considered (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991).

In presenting this model Echtner and Ritchie (1991, p.2) detail the significant changes to the tourism industry during the past fifty years that have influenced the process of the formation of destination image. These are growth in destination choice and increased leisure-time coupled with more disposable income. There are a number of marketing challenges arising from this situation and one of the most significant is: "the need for an effective destination positioning strategy".

Jenkins (1999) investigates the components of destination image and argues that much attention has been given to the recognition of the measurable functional characteristics, but little to the psychological features which are more difficult to assess. She suggests that Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) presented common and unique dimensions are overlooked by much research into destination image. An additional feature of destination image is that it is a holistic experience. Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) model overcomes this problem through its three-dimensional nature.

Baloglu and McLeary (1999) develop and test a conceptual model of the key determining factors in the formation of destination image by addressing previous research. In discussing the components of destination image this model includes an evaluation of the relationships between the two major informants of destination image: cognitive and affective evaluations. A third category of influencing factors is introduced as global. Within this categorisation, there are two further components of image, namely external stimulus and internal personal factors. Destination image is constructed from these cognitive, affective and global factors; and these are influenced by socio-demographic, stimulus and personal factors unique to the individual.

Primary and secondary sources of information about destinations made available to tourists are important in influencing destination image. This is in addition to socio-demographic characteristics and any accumulated tourist experience. The role of the individuals' personal characteristics is further investigated by assessing the role of tourists' socio-demographic characteristics in comparison to the perceived image they have of a destination. Results suggest that these socio-demographic characteristics influence the cognitive and affective assessments made by individuals (Beerli & Martin; 2004a, 2004b).

It is suggested the pattern of image formation is hierarchical and that cognition influences both the complexity of the image and the affective components. Personal factors, including experience of the destination, are also important. Destination image is formed from cognitive and affective evaluations and these are influenced by psychological factors particular to individuals (Ryan & Cave, 2007; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008). It seems that image is therefore a complex construct of various components described as a kaleidoscopic view: multiple in its elements and processes; subjective and also dynamic (Gallaraza, Gil & Calderon, 2002).

Pearce (2005, p.93) agrees that destination image is a "complex schema". Within this are the multi-sensory dimension and the attitude towards the destination. This aspect of image is composed from the cognitive, affective and conative (behavioural) components.

Gartner (1993) suggests that the components of destination image are cognitive, affective and also conative and these are hierarchically related. Images are developed during the cognitive stage; evaluated during the affective stage and acted upon during the conative stage of the image formation process. Further, the affective component of image is closely related to motives.

In investigating the relationships between destination image and its components, Tasci and Gartner (2007) discuss the complexity of the components of image formation and go on to determine three sources of image formation agents, detailed as: supply side, from the destination itself; the autonomous sources; and the demand-side or image receivers. It is suggested that the development of individual perceptions of image results from a spectrum of sources, including personal knowledge and beliefs, decisions, memories, meanings and evaluations. In discussing the components of destination image, Tasci, Gartner and Cavusgil (2007) assert that three main components exist within the formation of image: cognitive, affective and conative. Further, they argue for other components to be included: holistic, attributive common and unique. Furthermore, few definitions of destination image account for all of the components involved in its formation. In illustrating components of destination image, an interactive system of image components is presented.

Dann (1996) in investigating the measurement of image emphasises the complexity of image in terms of its components. He argues that image is a complex and abstract concept formed by subjective and psychological

variables and influences and composed from cognitive, affective and conative evaluations.

San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque (2008) in addition to the recognised cognitive and affective components of destination image, discuss the role of cultural values to destination image and the relationship that the cultural distance between an individual and a destination produces in terms of the perceived destination image. They conclude that this too is an important factor influencing destination image, as tourists with a similar culture to a destination will tend to develop a more positive image of that destination.

It is thus apparent that in discussing the components of destination image, it can be argued it is indeed a multi-dimensional construct. As these perspectives illustrate, the three main components of destination image can be classified as cognitive, affective and conative evaluations. Further, these are influenced by the psychological and socio-demographic personal features of the image perceivers. Also, the functional and symbolic aspects of the image are contributory elements along with evaluations of the common and unique features of destinations.

Image is therefore presented as a complex system whereby all of the components interact. The components of destination image are interactive and dynamic in nature and this contributes to the understanding of how image is formed (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004b; Dann, 1996; Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Gallaraza, Gil & Calderon, 2002; Gartner, 1993; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil, 2007).

2.5.2 The formation of image

It is widely theorised that destination image is formed in stages. Gunn (1972) first developed a typology of the image formation process which relates to destinations and their features, as understood by the market population. This understanding of image can be described by three types

of images that endure ongoing modification: organic; induced; and complex. The basis of Gunn's (1972) typology is that overall image of a destination is formed upon a continuum, within which there are seven stages. Further the process of destination image formation is circular: thus dynamic and continuous in nature.

Gunn's (1972) typology suggests there are numerous sources of information that contribute to the formation of destination image. The first image agents described are organic. These are naïve, non-tourist information about the destination; are accumulated over a long period of time; and are thus embedded through cultural and historical discourses rather than touristic or marketing-related sources (Hankinson, 2004a; Jenkins, 1999). Organic images are defined by Gunn (1972, p.120) as: "accumulation of mental images of a place through life …the totality of what a person already knows or perceives about that destination."

Gunn's (1972) image typology asserts organic image formation is the most significant of the stages within the image continuum. Organic images are accumulated from sources including the media, newspapers, television and radio news, documentaries, drama, fictional and non-fictional publications, magazines, geographical and historical studies, and word-of-mouth accounts of destinations visited by peers.

The second image agents described are induced images, defined as: "overt processes designed to attract travelers to certain areas" (Gunn, 1997, p.38). There are four overt methods of developing an induced image, namely: paid advertising, public relations, publicity and incentives. Induced images are the result of a conscious attempt by destination marketers (Chon, 1990). These processes form the basis of promotional activities within marketing approaches of services and products and are connected with branding (Hankinson, 2004a).

Gunn (1972) asserts that on reception of induced images, these are modified by the receiver through the processes of: researching the destination; making the decision to travel to the destination; the process of travelling to the destination; then accumulating experience of the destination. This participatory and experiential aspect of the destination leads to the development of the third image type: complex image agents (or modified-induced). As this typology proposes a circular process, the final two image formation stages are those of return travel to the destination and accumulation of further images. Gunn's (1972) typology of the image formation process is commonly supported in destination image research. It contests that destination image is a complex construct of components and its formation occurs upon a continuum of stages of the travel experience (see: Andreu, Bigne & Cooper, 2000; Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Gallaraza, Saura & Garcia, 2002; Gartner, 1993, 1996; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Hankinson, 2004a; Jenkins, 1999; Tasci & Gartner 2007; Tasci, Gartner & Cavusgil, 2007).

Returning to organic images, Hankinson (2004a) suggests that attributes associated with these historical, cultural, and heritage-related images are highly salient in the formation of perceptions of overall image. Urry (2002, p.3) contends that tourists choose to 'gaze' upon particular destinations because their anticipation of the destination's characteristics is constructed and developed through non-tourist sources, "such as film, TV, literature, magazines, records and videos, which construct and reinforce that gaze". Echtner and Ritchie (1991) also support Gunn's (1972) stage continuum typology, and agree that the functional, psychological, common and unique components of destination image may be arranged in this way.

This recurrent theme of image being formed upon a continuum suggests a time-bound element to destination image formation and again suggests the importance of the type of images classed as organic: those which are formed over a long time period and are common to greater discourses in

life. Image formation as a process may occur therefore as a series of discrete events, occurring consecutively, or in an historical context.

The classification of organic images occurs in further destination image formation research as does the concept of images being formed upon a continuum. Based upon Gunn's (1972) stage theory typology of organic, induced and complex images, Gartner (1993) proposes a model of the image formation process based upon a continuum of eight image formation agents. This widely-cited study into the formation of destination image, presents it as being unique to individuals. The image formation process is a series of separate agents that act on a continuum, either independently or in combinations, to form a particular destination image. The first two agents on Gartner's (1993) continuum are categories of overt induced images (1 and 2). Overt induced 1 images refer to advertising, from TV, radio, and tourism brochures. Overt induced 2 images correspond to information requested and received from tour operators, including brochures. These are not directly associated with specific destinations but do contribute to the destination image. There is some management control over the content of these images as they are communicated and they include elements of the destination's brand. Nevertheless, there is an issue with the credibility of this stage of image formation as communications are from numerous agents involved in the destination.

The third and fourth components of image formation are covert induced (1 and 2). Here, in the first instance destinations are supported or recommended by celebrities. The covert induced 2 category refers to image formation agents formed from impartial sources such as unsolicited travel writing. It is likely that the destination promoter will be involved in this stage of the continuum, but the perceiver may not be aware of this. The fifth stage is autonomous image formation agents, including, popular culture, films, articles, documentaries and news reportage. These

autonomous agents have an immediacy and high credibility (Gartner, 1993).

The final three agents are: unsolicited organic, which refers to information offered in conversation by individuals with experience of a destination; and solicited organic, or 'word-of-mouth' obtained from friends and family. The final stage of the continuum is: organic image formation. This stage is presented by Gartner (1993) as having the greatest credibility, as it is based upon actual travel to particular destinations.

Further research supports the concept that destination image is formed upon a continuum: of both primary and secondary agents. Although there is no commonly agreed overall theory of the image formation process, it is agreed that destination image is indeed influenced by a selection of factors based upon experiential variables of realities, histories, cultures and perceptions.

Beerli and Martin (2004b) suggest that image is composed from a collection of information agents, which are independent but contribute to the formation of the overall image as perceived by the individual. In investigating the factors which form the post-visit or complex modified induced (Gunn, 1972) images of a destination, the key image components are primary and secondary sources of information; stimuli which influence perceptions and evaluations related to both pre-visit and post-visit; motivations; experiences as tourists and socio-demographic characteristics. Beerli and Martin's (2004a) assertion of the classification of primary and secondary sources adopt a similar stance to other continuum-based typologies.

Destination image is formed thus from a selection of factors. Developing Gartner's (1993) continuum of the eight formation agents noted previously, Pearce (2005) discusses the components of image. Asserting its

complexity he argues that the image formation process involves numerous applications of attitudinal, behavioural and multi-sensory components:

2.5.3 Marketing and image

As discussed, image is formed from a variety of sources and is based upon experiences, perceptions, and beliefs of tangible and intangible variables. Some research investigates the role of marketing communication within the formation of image. There is debate surrounding the degree of credibility of marketing communications within individuals' image formation processes and it is suggested that organic images are stronger (Ashworth & Goodall, 1988; Gartner, 1993; Gunn, 1972). However, unlike many of the contributing components of image formation, marketing communications are controlled by the DMO. It is important to therefore understand the contribution they make to image formation.

Pritchard and Morgan (2001) examine the components and formation of destination image through investigating influences upon tourism representations. Concerned with destination branding, they suggest all destination marketing communications and tourism perceptions of destination image and brand are dependent upon; influenced by; and constrained by wider discourses of cultural, political and historical factors. Furthermore, the portrayed image of any destination is informed by the greater discourses within the macro-environment of the given destination.

This resonates with Gunn's (1972) typology in relation to the role of organic images, which are said to be those related to these wider discourses. This assertion of the importance of greater discourses upon influencing image and branding is also presented by Yeoman *et al.* (2005); and Durie, Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie (2005) in their studies: both of which assert the importance of historical discourses in influencing the destination image and branding of Scotland.

Marketing communications do influence the development of destination image to a degree (Gartner, 1993). As the substitutability of destinations increases it is essential for DMOs to ensure that marketing efforts aim to differentiate their destinations and create a unique and memorable brand image (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999, 2004; Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott, 2002; Murphy, Beckendorff & Moscardo, 2007; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Pritchard & Morgan, 1996). Effective marketing and promotional strategies are essential to the formation of destination image; and in contributing to tourist satisfaction (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott, 2002).

Ashworth and Goodall (1988) adopt a marketing perspective to suggest that destination image formation process occurs in three stages. In the first instance an image is projected by a tourism agency. The projected image is then transmitted via marketing and promotional activity; and the message is received by potential tourists, thus forming a destination image.

Nevertheless, at the projection stage, of concern is the perceived saliency of the tourism agency's official projected image. Research suggests that non-marketing images are the most significant in forming perceptions. This is illustrated by Gunn's (1972) typology where organic non-marketing images are the most salient to the perceiver in forming an image of a destination. Gartner (1993) too asserts that marketing-related images have less credibility to image perceivers than autonomous or organic images. Additionally, there can be disparity between the content of the images projected and the destination's overall marketing strategy. This can lead to perceiver dissonance at the transmission and reception stages. A third issue with the theory of projected and received images is that in tourism marketing it is usual for different agencies at local, regional and national levels to have responsibility for the projection of marketing communications for destinations This can lead to a lack of clarity to the

overall destination image as various projected images are received (Ashworth & Goodall, 1988; Smith, 2005).

Andreu, Bigne and Cooper (2000) also investigate the theory that image is constructed from projected and perceived image. In examining the relationship between these two elements, they conclude there is a gap between these image types and thus the destination image.

The gap between projected and received image is further discussed by Tasci and Gartner (2007) as they emphasise the important role of positive destination image to tourism development within an increasingly complex market-place. The authors investigate the relationship between image and its determinants and similarly to Ashworth and Goodall's (1988) assertion, it is suggested there are two aspects to the formation of destination image: the supply-side aspects of marketing; and the demand-side aspects, which relate to behaviour and decision making. A third aspect of significance to destination image formation is the independent or autonomous aspects, which are influenced by numerous internal and external factors. Thus, the image which is projected will not necessarily be the same as the image received due to other factors such as interference from other sources and personal experience of a destination

Tasci and Gartner (2007) present the types and components of image in relation to both Gunn's (1972) and Gartner's (1993) typologies. They argue that DMOs increasingly recognise that organic images are of vital importance to the destination image formation process: but there is a lack of control over these images. Organisations are however becoming skilled in developing promotional images, blurring the distinctions between organic and induced image reception. Nevertheless, DMOs can be at risk of establishing unrealistic expectations which can damage the ultimate image of the destination. Destination image formation is therefore based upon supply and demand inputs: classified as controllable (dynamic), semi-controllable, (semi-dynamic) and uncontrollable (static). These inputs

provide image capital to destinations. Similarly to Gartner's (1993) typology, individuals form unique destination images; however there is sufficient overlap amongst destination images to create useful market segments based upon particular variables.

In considering the formation of destination image as a process, some tourism and marketing research focuses attention upon the transformational or dynamic process of the formation of image, rather than examining this as a series of stages on a continuum. It is concluded that image is formed in stages, over time. The components of destination image are dynamic: changing on a constant and circular basis. Marketing-related communications are influential in the formation of image: although less credible than organic images. Marketing organisations should therefore attempt to create promotional images that resonate with the motivations of individuals and are based upon ingrained, organic images (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Gartner, 1993; Tasci & Gartner, 2007).

2.6   The measurement of image

Returning to Echtner and Ritchie's (1991) study into the meaning and measurement of destination image they conclude that in using only structured techniques, researchers have not been successful in accurately measuring destination image. Functional and tangible image attributes are most commonly measured through structured methods, but psychological and abstract attributes are assessed through less structured methods. Thus, to ensure a balanced measure of destination image, a structured approach will afford measurement of perceptions of functional factors, and unstructured methods should be used to measure the perceptual features, holistic impressions and unique features of destination image.

This is consistent with the findings of Pike (2002) in concluding that much research into destination image papers involves only structured methods with few applying qualitative methods, or consumer perceptions in their

approach. Jenkins (1999) also notes the dominance of structured methods and suggests that qualitative research should be an important element in measuring perceptions.

Some studies tend towards emphasising the application of structured methods (see for example: Beerli & Martin, 2004b; Boo & Busser, 2006; Gallaraza, Gil Saura & Garcia, 2002). The use of quantitative methods in destination image measurement studies is considered important in defining the relationships between the components of destination image. Notwithstanding, in measuring perceptions and attitudes towards image there are critics of purely quantitative methods. It is argued that through the use of researcher-administered questionnaires and similar measurement scales, there is little flexibility for respondents to describe their own perceptions. It is thus commonly supported that purely quantitative studies may not be adequate in measuring perceptions or psychological aspects of image (see: Baloglu & McLeary,1999; Coshall, 2000; Dann, 1996; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Hankinson, 2004a; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997; Pearce, 2005; Pike, 2002).

Some research advocates particular approaches in assessing perceptions of image. For example, Coshall (2000) contends that the repertory grid technique is appropriate because of its proven use in psychological studies. Further, unlike structured semantic differential or Likert scales, it avoids bias because respondents are able to provide their own responses. The qualitative repertory grid approach is also used by Hankinson (2004a) in a study into the saliency of organic images in the formation of destination brand images.

A multi-methodological approach to assessing image is devised by Pearce (2005). In this, he discusses the role that factors such as photography, film and historical constructs have on the formation and construction of image

and how these relate to or integrate with the visitors' personal experiences and stereotypical views of destinations.

Through the use of pictorial images to measure perceptions of image Dann (1996, p.42) investigates the formation of destination image perceptions by tourists. He argues that tourism research has traditionally adopted a neo-positivist approach to the measurement of destination image and suggests that this approach: "may not be capturing the full dynamics or richness inherent in the process of destination choice."

Image is a complex and abstract concept, formed by subjective and psychological variables and influences. The use of purely quantitative approaches to measuring perceptions of image may be therefore inappropriate. This is because destination attributes cannot be assumed to be the only motivating factors in selection. Consumers' perceptions, activated by images, are more pertinent. There is a lack of flexibility inherent in traditional structured research into destination image: for example, surveys tend to be devised by the researcher. This may overlook the subjects' perspectives which can increase objectivity but affect validity. Dann (1996) argues therefore methods such as photo-elicitation and semiotics are important in assessing destination image formation: hence the history and prevalence of brochures and other promotional materials within the tourism industry.

MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997) investigate how the content of promotional images may contribute to the construction and interpretation of destination image. Perceptions of image are measured through the use of promotional materials in focus group settings. Jenkins (1999) also advocates the use of qualitative methods and suggests that photo-elicitation may be appropriate (see: Banks, 2007; Collier, 1957; Harper, 2002; Rose, 2007).

Semiotic analysis (often applied to marketing disciplines) is concerned with uncovering residual meanings within signs and texts. It encourages recognition that the symbols experienced in life are interpreted differently by individuals (Banks, 2007; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Echtner, 1999). Semiotic analysis of promotional materials has been used in image research, particularly in relation to advertising and tourism marketing (Dann, 1996). It is concerned with the symbolic, metaphorical and figurative layers of meaning within a sign system, which may be tourism brochures; postcards; festival programmes; or other promotional materials (Echtner, 1999; Uzzell, 1984). A semiotic approach is useful in determining the brand image represented by a destination and how it is perceived (Echtner, 1999). Further, as a methodological approach semiotics is useful in interpreting advertising and marketing communications (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Berger, A., 1995; Bignell, 2002; Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; MacCannell, 1982; Noth, 1990; Oswald, 2007; Rose, 2007; Uzzell, 1984; Williamson, 2002).

Tourists themselves may be considered semioticians as their perceptions are constructed and collected through the signs that define destinations (Urry, 2002). In investigating tourism imagery and promotional images in particular, Morgan and Pritchard (1999, p.31) suggest that tourism as a discipline is grounded within contexts that are historical, political, economic, social and cultural. The cultural discourse is: "about meanings which are communicated via representational systems and within these systems we make use of signs or symbols to interpret those meanings". Further, the tourist gaze is really defined by marketers who create systems of signs that reflect culture.

Despite demonstrating strength in developing conceptual models of the components of image; it seems there is little evidence that the exclusive use of structured methods in measuring consumers' perceptions of image proves fruitful. It may be concluded that the use of unstructured methods

are effective in their ability to remain flexible and to assess the psychological and perceptual aspects of image (Dann, 1996; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 2007; Jenkins, 1999; Pearce, 2005). The use of visual methods: such as photo-elicitation, or pictorial stimulus, are useful in assessing the perceptual element of destination image and the multi-dimensional constructs of this concept (Dann, 1996; Jenkins, 1999; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 2007).

Semiotic analysis may be applied to researching perceptions within tourism research and marketing-based research in particular (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Banks, 2001, 2007; Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Dann, 1996; Echtner, 1999; Jenkins, 2003; Rose, 2007). Semiotic analysis and photo-elicitation as research methods are discussed in detail in chapters 6 and 8 of this thesis.

2.7   Summary

This chapter considers the image concept and concludes it is an element held in the minds of individuals (Chon, 1990; Crompton, 1979a; Dann, 1981, 1996; Hunt, 1975; Lawson & Bawd-Bovy, 1977). Similarly, destination image is related to perceptions of a place (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Pike, 2002) and related to marketing-related activity as well as perceptions (Pearce, 2005). Despite this, research emphasises the lack of a common definition of destination image.

Image is a complex, multi-dimensional construct, composed from cognitive, affective and conative evaluations of individuals. These are influenced by: information sources; socio-demographic; socio-psychological factors; and previous experience of destinations. Furthermore, there are abstract and functional aspects to image (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004; Dann, 1977, 1981, 1996; Echtner & Ritchie 1991; Gallaraza, Gil & Calderon, 2002; Jenkins, 1999; Pearce, 2006; Ryan & Cave, 2007; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008).

Image is an important factor in the motivation of individuals within the destination selection process and is related to the pull factors of destinations, assisting in motivating individuals to visit a destination (Crompton, 1979a; Dann, 1977, 1981; Gartner, 1993, 1996). Tourists' motivation to travel is a conflicting process: an escape seeking dichotomy (Iso-Ahola, 1983). In deciding to attend festivals, there are multiple motivations: desire to attend; motivation to learn; cultural conditioning; social influences and perceptions of the festival (Crompton & MacKay, 1997).

Image formation occurs over time, on a continuum, where various organic and marketing-related sources influence the image formation process at different stages. The image formation process is thus dynamic and circular (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Gartner, 1993; Gunn, 1972).

In developing models of the components of destination image, structured methods have proven useful (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004b): however, in measuring perceptions of image, unstructured methods are appropriate. Some support the use of mixed methods (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Hankinson, 2004a; Pike, 2002). Others advocate the use of unstructured methods to allow flexibility (Dann, 1996; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

As tourist perceptions of image; the tourist gaze; and the greater discourses in which tourism sits are influenced by the communication of marketing and promotional materials then the use of semiotic analysis in measuring destination image may be considered appropriate (Dann, 1996; Echtner, 1999; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999). Semiotic analysis is frequently used in relation to marketing and branding research (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Rose, 2007) and therefore, it may be concluded, can be applied to the investigation of brand image (Echtner, 1999).

Chapter 3

Branding: image and relationship concepts

"brands only properly exist in the minds of consumers and represent the totality of experience. Thus the brand is as much about internal understanding as external communications" (Ind, 2007, p.79).

3.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the brand concept through a review of academic literature across the disciplines of marketing; branding; consumer behaviour and the social sciences. Aspects of the brand concept considered are: brand equity and loyalty; brand image; the self-concept and self-image congruence. This chapter also addresses the brand relationship proposition.

The purpose of this investigation is to determine how these concepts may be defined and in what ways they may be applied to this research in its investigation of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships. It is thus important to first consider branding and how this is related to image.

3.2 The brand concept

Brands are considered as collections of tangible and intangible attributes including a name, logo, or design. These represent and differentiate one service or product from another: as managed by the brand owner, and in the perceptions of the consumer (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003). Brands are therefore composed from functional and symbolic elements (Elliot & Percy, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2008; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999; Patterson, 1999; Riezebos, 2003) and this is particularly evident in tourism destination brands due to their complexity and high-involvement status (Caldwell & Freire, 2004; Clarke, 2000; Henderson, 2006).

David Aaker (1991) has written extensively on managing brands and he provides a definition of the brand concept:

"A brand is a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors. A brand thus signals to the customer the source of the product and protects both the customer and the producer from competitors who would attempt to provide products that appear to be identical" (Aaker, D., 1991, p.7).

Morgan and Pritchard (1999) suggest that brands may be understood on functional and unconscious levels. Indeed brands reflect individuals' perceptions of greater discourses within the world around them as they experience it. Brands are:

"an unique combination of product characteristics and added values both functional and non-functional, which have taken on a relevant meaning which is inextricably linked to that brand, awareness of which might be conscious or intuitive" (Morgan & Pritchard, 1999, p.140).

Given the collection of attributes associated with a brand, brands are considered unique aspects of products or services. These are communicated by the brand owners of the relevant product or service; and perceived by consumers of that brand. David Aaker (1991) suggests branding has been practised since the medieval era in Europe, when tradesmen and craftsmen used their names on products to avoid substitution: however it was not until the 20th century that differentiated branding became an aspect of modern marketing.

Brands are composed of tangible and intangible variables (Elliot & Percy, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2008; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999; Patterson, 1999). Tangible visual elements include logos and designs to signify and identify the nature of the service or product (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003). It is vital for marketers to manage a brand effectively. This can engender positive consumer perceptions; focus upon a strategic approach; and develop skills and assets, to build upon competitive advantage (Aaker, D., 1991).

Hankinson (2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2005) has written extensively on destination branding. He suggests place brands are particularly complex, and presents both tangible; and intangible elements, one of which is the brand image as perceived by consumers. Plummer (2000) also discusses the duality of brands and suggests that they are composed from two elements: the 'input', related to what the brand owner wants consumers to feel about their brand; and the 'out-take', which are consumers' perceptions of the brand.

This research into the Fringe brand image, and the relationships that exist between this and its stakeholders, asserts that brand image has a perceptual aspect to it, particularly in relation to consumers (Elliot & Percy, 2007; Hankinson, 2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2005; Keller, 1993, 2008; Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003; Patterson, 1999). As discussed in the previous chapter, image, as the greater discourse of brand image, is considered to be a perceptual construct (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Crompton, 1979a; Chon, 1990; Dann, 1977, 1981, 1996; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Hunt, 1975; Lawson & Bawd-Bovy, 1977; Pearce, 2006).

3.3   Brand equity and loyalty

Brand equity is a central concern of brand image as a symbolic or intangible brand element. Positive brand equity can contribute to successful brands and is based upon a collection of dimensions managed by brand owners (Aaker, D., 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Graeff, 1997; Keller, 1993, 2008; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). As this research is making an investigation of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships, it is important to define the concept of brand equity. David Aaker's writing on the topic in his 1991 book, *"Managing brand equity"*, defines it as:

> "a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers" (Aaker, D., 1991, p.16).

As a concept, brand equity encompasses considerations of both the brand owner and consumers (Aaker, 1991, 1996, 1998; Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Keller, 1993, 2008). Indeed, in understanding brand equity, consumers' perceptions are the most important factor. These lead to preferences for specific brands in terms of perceived added value; and can potentially impact upon the success of the brand (Elliot and Percy, 2007).

Keller (1993, p.2) presents a conceptual model of customer-based brand equity, defined as: "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand". Within this definition three concepts are important. The first is the comparison between consumers' responses to the marketing of a particular brand compared with the response to the same marketing of a similar unnamed product or service. Secondly, brand knowledge which is defined in terms of brand awareness and brand image and is: "conceptualized according to the characteristics and relationships of brand associations" (Keller, 1993, p.8). The third concept is the consumers' response to marketing, described as the consumer perceptions, preferences and behaviours that result from the marketing mix.

Brand knowledge, as an element of brand equity, is composed of brand awareness and brand image. Keller (1993) suggests both are aspects of memory and while brand awareness relates to consumers' recall and recognition; brand image is memories held of the associations they link to the brand. Additionally, Keller (2003, p.70) draws attention to the important role of strong, favourable and unique, associations in the creation of a positive brand image: "A positive brand image is created by marketing programs that link strong, favorable and unique associations to the brand in memory."

David Aaker (1991) considers consumers' and brand owners' perspectives and presents the assets and liabilities associated with a particular brand

as components of the overall brand image. These may alter the perceived value of a brand for brand owners and consumers. In defining brand equity, assets and liabilities are grouped into five categories which should be linked to the name and/or symbol of the brand. These are: brand loyalty; name awareness; perceived quality; brand associations; and any visual signifiers, including logos. Further, in providing value to both the customer and brand owner, brand equity can through the assets of brand loyalty and associations, enhance consumer confidence in purchase decisions. Past experience and perceived quality of the brand may enhance satisfaction. The brand owner gains benefits such as increased trade activity and customer loyalty. As it is less expensive to retain existing customers than gain new customers, brand loyalty is a valuable aspect of brand equity.

Supporting both David Aaker's (1991) and Keller's (1993, 2003, 2008) assertions regarding the concept of brand equity, Elliot and Percy (2007) suggest that positive brand equity is related to a strongly positioned brand. Consumer brand loyalty is a consequence of brand equity and that when a positive brand attitude and image exists, consumers will have a preference for a particular brand and will thus eventually develop a loyalty towards it.

As noted, brand loyalty is reliant upon consumer trust within a brand (Lau & Lee, 1999) and is a result of maintaining positive brand equity (Aaker, D., 1991). Consumer brand loyalty is defined in relation to: "the strength of the relationship between an individual's relative attitude and repeat patronage" (Dick & Basu, 1994, p.99).

The importance of consumer brand loyalty to the success and continued growth of brands has been recognised for many years (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Organisations should ensure that the maintenance of brand loyalty is central to their marketing strategies in order to ensure greater leverage of trade; reduced costs; and customer retention,

satisfaction and attraction (Aaker, D., 1991; Bloemer & Kasper, 1994; Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2001; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Keller, 1993, 2008). It is argued that as a key contributor to brand equity, adopting a strategic approach to fostering brand loyalty can contribute to gaining advantages in responding to competitive threats and developing a customer base less inclined towards switching to competitors' brands in the same categories (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2001; Dick & Basu, 1999; Gounaris & Stathakopoulos, 2003; Teuyland, 1979; Wenerfelt, 1991).

As this thesis seeks to define a series of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships; the notion of brand preference for the Fringe is important. Furthermore, brand image is an important determinant in consumers developing preferences for particular brands (Patterson, 1999). Having reviewed the important role of brand loyalty within the maintenance of positive brand equity the concept of brand image is now introduced.

3.4   Brand image

Similarly to the image concept, brand image is considered to be the perceptual aspect of the brand concept. Further, it is determined by a particular brand's strength; favourability and uniqueness (Keller, 1993, 2008). David Aaker (1991, p.109) defines brand image as: "a set of associations, usually organised in some meaningful way".

Plummer (2000, p.28) describes brand image as a construct of how brands are presented by brand owners, through the marketing mix; and then perceived by consumers within an ambiguous environment. Interpretation of brands occurs through a complex system of filters: "through experience, through perceptions, misconceptions, the value systems of the individuals out there in the world, and, of course, all the noise in the system."

Brand image is a central construct within the concepts of brand loyalty and thus brand equity (Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal, 2006; Keller, 2008; Plummer, 2000). Further, brand associations are important to consumers in brand preference (Aaker, D., 1991; Aaker, D., & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2008). Brand associations are factors such as particular images, symbols or emotions that are linked to the memory of a brand (Aaker, D., 1991). Indeed, as noted previously, dimensions of brand associations, and thus brand image, are determined by a particular brand's strength; favourability and uniqueness (Keller, 1993, 2008).

It seems that positive brand equity can contribute to the success of a brand. Within this are important considerations of brand loyalty and brand associations. In developing brand loyalty, trust is important: particularly in relation to symbolic brands that may imbue perceived 'high-risk' perceptions in adopters of the brand. The symbolic meaning of a brand often differs from its quantifiable attributes. Emotions are important in building trust and confidence in brands. Furthermore when a memory of a brand is recalled by an individual, affective components within these memories will facilitate perceptions forming (Elliot & Percy, 2007).

Research into destination image demonstrates distinctive links between the concepts of image and brand image. Much of the research reviewed in the previous chapter suggests that image is composed from cognitive and affective components. These are influenced by various stimuli, information sources and the socio-demographic features of consumers (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004a, 2004b; Echtner & Ritchie 1991; Ryan & Cave, 2007; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008). Further research suggests a conative, or implicit behavioural, aspect to the composition of image (Dann, 1996; Pearce, 2005). Thus it may be suggested that brand image components is similarly composed of cognitive, affective and conative elements.

In investigating the symbolic meaning of brands further, the role of the brand consumer must be considered within the dimensions of the brand concept. Particular aspects related to the role of the consumer are: brand image; brand personality; and self-concept. These aspects of the brand bear an interdependent relationship (Blythe, 2006; Hosany & Ekinci, 2003; Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Plummer, 2000; Patterson, 1999).

The above concepts are key aspects to the Fringe brand: perceptions of the congruence between the Fringe brand image; and Fringe stakeholders' perceptions of their self-concepts. This forms the foundations of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology.

It is suggested that brand image should be understood and defined from the perspective of the consumer. This is because consumers are equipped to bring brand names into common usage and the power to therefore make brand names synonymous with product categories (Boorstin, 1961). Additionally, image may be regarded as consumer perceptions to which personal value is attached, of an output of the overall brand concept (Aaker, D., 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Hankinson, 2004a, 2005; Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Janonis, Dovaliene & Virvilaite, 2007; Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000; Tasci & Kozak, 2006). As noted, the brand itself is communicated by its owner and is comprised of various elements, including visual markers. Thus, brand image will be formed based upon consumer perceptions of the brand and these communicated elements.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Gunn's (1972) classifications of induced and complex images are related to marketing outputs and brand image falls into this category. Similarly, within Gartner's (1993) typology of the image formation process, it is notable that brand images are likely to be formed during the overt induced stages of the image formation process. As marketing outputs, the brand and its visual markers are most visible

through the traditional forms of advertising, media and communications presented as related to the formation of overt induced 1 images. In this instance the receiver of the message is in no doubt of the identity of the sender of it. Furthermore, overt induced 2 images, where third-party tourism organisations provide promotional materials, are also associated with the destination brand.

Patterson (1999, p.412) argues that the brand image concept is formed entirely from consumers' perceptions of the marketing mix: "The brand image is compiled by the consumer through direct experience of the brand, through exposure to advertising and promotion … and even through observation of what kind of people use the brand". This situation is applicable to the Fringe brand. The Festival Fringe Society, as an organisation and brand owner, is responsible for its own overt marketing and promotional activity. It is however also a member of Edinburgh's festivals' and tourism organisations' network, which collectively communicates the Fringe's tangible brand. Of further considerable importance is the representation of the Fringe brand by its many participating stakeholders including: performing companies; independent venues, and other organisations. All of these entities also communicate the brand of the Fringe. It is notable that a festival such as the Fringe, with its numerous stakeholder groups and components, contributes therefore to the covert stages of Gartner's (1993) image formation typology: involving destination promoters and recognisable spokespersons. Furthermore, the Fringe as an arts festival involves autonomous formations of image that occur through the dissemination and digestion of independent reports, news and other sources. Finally, the organic stage of image formation occurring through "word-of-mouth" is a powerful image formation source and is of extreme relevance to a festival such as the Fringe through its many stakeholder groups and their communications.

It is thus evident that brand owners should strive to develop brands that appeal to their target stakeholders and consumers to engender a positive brand image; create positive brand equity; and encourage brand advocacy (Aaker, D., 1991, 1996; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Graeff, 1997; Keller, 1993, 2008; Lawer & Knox, 2006).

3.4.1 Brand personality in brand image

As noted, an important source of equity for a brand is its brand image (Aaker, D., 1991; Keller, 1993, 2008; Solomon, 1983). Indeed, it is suggested that brand image and brand personality are components of brand loyalty (Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Keller, 1993, 2008; Leenders, 2010).

Brand image and personality are related concepts and are thus components within the overall brand construct. Within existing research into the definitions and roles of brand image and brand personality, it is argued that there are linguistic, conceptual, and theoretical ambiguities over the roles and definitions of brand image and personality (Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000).

Both terms may be applied interchangeably: considered as consumers' perceptions of a brand (Elliot & Percy, 2007). Or it is possible to view each as separate, and brand personality as a component of brand image. Indeed it is suggested that brand personality is the emotional or affective element of brand image (Hosany & Ekinci, 2003, 2006; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Keller, 1993; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000).

Patterson (1999, p.412) suggests that brand personality underpins brand image. Due to the personification of brands particular emotions are generated which represent different meanings to the consumer. In defining brand image, its components are therefore brand personality and user

image. Consumers' subjective perceptions of a brand result in the formation of brand image: "pictures which are wholly resident in the consumer's mind". Brand personality is considered therefore to be the emotional aspect of brand image (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Hosany & Ekinci, 2003, 2006; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal 2006; Keller, 1993; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000).

There has been a considerable volume of literature written upon the concept of brand image. Brand personality has also received attention within the discipline of consumer research (see: Aaker, J., 1997, 1999; Aaker, J., & Fournier, 1995; Austin, Siguaw & Mattila, 2003; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2004; Blythe, 2007; Caprara, Barbaranelli & Guido, 2001; Graeff, 1996; Keller, 1993, 2008; Patterson, 1999; Plummer 2000; Sirgy, 1982).

Some of this research has been in service and hospitality studies (Ekinci & Riley, 2003); considering the brand personalities of retail and stores (D'Astous & Levesque, 2003; Wesley, Fowler & Vazquez, 2006); and restaurants and food provision (Murase & Bojanic, 2004; Musante, Bojanic & Zhang, 2008; Opuku, *et al.,* 2007; Siguaw, Mattila & Austin, 1999).

Brand personality has also been researched in relation to tourism, travel behaviour and destinations: often in relation to self-image congruence (see: D'Astous & Boujbel, 2006; Douglas & Mills, 2006; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal, 2006; Murphy, Beckendorff & Moscardo, 2007; Litvin & Kar, 2000, 2003, Sirgy & Su, 2000).

An important empirical study in brand personality was undertaken by Jennifer Aaker (1997, p.347) in the development of a theoretical framework of the brand personality construct: the Brand Personality Scale (BPS). Her definition of brand personality is frequently cited and views the

brand personality concept as a multi-dimensional construct, defined as: "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand."

This approach suggests that brands are often imbued with human personality traits. This is based upon the theory of 'anthropomorphism', where people have a tendency to imbue inanimate objects and non-human entities with human characteristics. As a paradigm which is universally prevalent, anthropomorphism is the influencing factor that causes humans to see patterns in non-human occurrences and to imbue possessions, such as cars and pets, with human personalities. This is a spontaneous feature of human behaviour which is seen throughout cultures (Guthrie, 1997). It is argued that brands are therefore attributed with personalities as a natural response of consumers (Aaker, J., 1997; Blythe, 2006; Cooke & Harris, 2007; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Ekinci & Riley, 2003; Fournier, 1998; Guthrie, 1997; Hirschman, 1994; Keller, 2008; Seno & Lukas, 2007).

The Fringe does have a brand which is a combined name, symbol, design and sign (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003). These tangible aspects of the brand are contributors to the brand image. Indeed, until recently the Fringe had a brand personality ascribed to it by its marketing department with many features presented as one would describe the personality of a person: "established, hedonistic, cutting-edge, challenging, anarchic, innovative, professional, entertaining, global" (L. Page, email dated 4th March, 2008 and meeting in Edinburgh on 4th March 2008).

The first objective of this research, in addressing the aim, is to define the Fringe brand image, of which brand personality is a component part. This chapter now considers some methods of defining brand image, continuing with an overview of destination brand image in relation to festivals and the Fringe.

3.4.2 Destination brand image

The Fringe itself is not a destination, but it is a hallmark event and therefore is synonymous with the city of Edinburgh as a destination. The Fringe is not defined as a product, service or destination. Nevertheless, as an event it is a major component of Edinburgh's tourism system (Allen *et al.,* 2008; Bowdin *et al.,* 2006; Getz, 1991, 2005, 2007). Throughout the course of undertaking this study it has been noted that there is little written on the subject of festival brands, and even less research into festival brand image. Much of the literature included in this review is concerned with destination image research as a close parallel.

The development of a destination brand is an important consideration for any destination marketer wishing to ensure their destination is easily identifiable and differentiated from its competitors. This is true also of festival brands. It is notable that festival brands and destination brands are connected, and this is particularly evident in terms of hallmark festivals where there is this synonymy between the event and its host destination.

Despite this, while there has been considerable research undertaken into product and service branding and an emphasis on developing brand theory, there is less research into the concept of destination branding. Much of the literature is concerned with management considerations rather than conceptual or empirical research into perceptions of destination brand image (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005; Caldwell & Freire, 2004).

Destinations are arguably more complex brands than consumer goods or services due to the number of contributors and users involved (Caldwell & Freire, 2004; Clarke, 2000; Hankinson, 2004a; Henderson, 2006). In the current competitive tourism market-place it is essential for a destination to have a strong and recognisable brand in order to differentiate itself from its competitors (Durie, Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2005; Morgan, Pritchard

and Piggott 2002, 2003; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Pritchard & Morgan, 1996; Yeoman *et al.,* 2005).

The development and definition of a destination brand is a complex process. Accordingly, while it is possible to apply consumer marketing approaches to destination branding, this process is closer to corporate branding. Furthermore, misconceptions around destination branding foster a belief that marketers can easily action the branding or rebranding of a place. Conversely, destination branding tends to be a challenging process of gradually changing perceptions (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004).

Branding is an important marketing consideration and thus a vital means of differentiation for destinations. Furthermore, brand image perceptions are influenced by factors outside marking activity.

> "Even when a country does not consciously manage its name as a brand, people still have images of countries that can be activated simply by voicing the name. Country images are likely to influence people's decisions related to purchasing, investing, changing residence and travelling" (Kotler & Gertner, 2005, p.42).

The links between destination brand and image are noted by Tasci and Kozak (2006). In their study into the brand and image concepts, and how they are related they contend there are two perspectives to consider. Firstly, image and branding are separate concepts; and secondly, destination image is created through the branding process. Although this argument separates the concepts of image and brand, it agrees that image is related to consumers' perceptions, as is commonly thought. Branding is related to perceptions of the message portrayed by those responsible for marketing (Patterson, 1999). Brand image is therefore the perceptual aspect of the brand, as noted earlier.

Blain, Levy and Ritchie (2005) undertake an empirical study into the branding practices of DMOs and suggest that despite the concept of

branding being a widely-researched area; there is little research in relation to destination branding. Perceptions of DMOs and their stakeholders infer that the use of logos and taglines are the factors most widely associated with the concept of branding. While this is a narrow view of destination branding; it is nevertheless a common perspective.

In researching the visual aspects of branding, Blain, Levy & Ritchie (2005) devise a definition of destination branding. This is presented as involving key marketing practices; grounded in branding theory; and a holistic definition of destination branding rather than the widespread emphasis upon the visual design aspect, or logo, associated with a destination brand:

> "Destination branding is the set of marketing activities that (1) support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that readily identifies and differentiates a destination; that (2) consistently convey the expectation of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; that (3) serve to consolidate and reinforce the emotional connection between the visitor and the destination; and that (4) reduce consumer search costs and perceived risk. Collectively, these activities serve to create a destination image that positively influences consumer destination choice" (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005, p.337).

In defining destination branding, the key aspects of: marketing activities; the creation of a visual identity to differentiate a destination; and factors associated with consumer perceptions are emphasised. The development of a strong destination brand creates a positive destination image.

Another reason why destination brands differ in nature to most consumer brands is because a destination's brand and brand image will have evolved over a long time (Anholt, 2002). The formation of destination brand image involves the influence of a series of historical, cultural and political discourses (Hankinson, 2004a; Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). In branding a destination, a set of aesthetic images of that destination is created, however, which helps: "package the place into a set of images" (Ooi, 2005, p.253).

Scotland, has for example, evolved a particular destination brand image of a rich cultural history; elements of escapism; and having various sporting and outdoors activities on offer; as well as the aestheticism of the country's picturesque scenery (Anholt, 2002; Durie, 2003; Pritchard & Morgan, 2001). Furthermore, Scotland can demonstrate a strong and recognisable brand image which reflects the needs of tourists who seek escapism, culture, and authenticity of this Scottish experience. These factors create the basis of emotional connections that may be exploited through branding. This emotional connection influences the cognitive and affective appeal of Scotland as a destination: its brand equity, to which the brand image is a major contributor (Yeoman *et al.,* 2005). Scotland's history and culture are therefore the foundations of its brand, creating its brand equity. The brand image is composed of historical and cultural icons, based upon the aspirations of tourists, thus creating Scotland's: "sense of place", its brand image (Durie, Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2005, p.45). Edinburgh, as Scotland's capital city, and home to the festivals differs in having a brand image based upon creativity (Prentice & Anderson, 2003).

A destination's brand image is thus vital to its success in attracting visitors, and such images of a destination's brand are linked with its heritage, history and culture. As noted, these as organic images: formed through exposure to a broader discourse of influences than those of marketing and promotional activity such as education and the arts (Gunn, 1972). Indeed, consumer behaviour and the realities of destinations should be considered in addition to communications and brand image (Hankinson, 2004b).

Pritchard and Morgan (1999, p.146) also emphasise the broader discourses within the realm of tourism branding and suggest that in differentiating destinations to achieve individuality some countries are using images and icons which are: "the culmination of historical, social, economic and political processes."

It is suggested that the creation of an equitable destination brand depends upon the identification of the destination brand's values. These may be translated into a cognitively appealing brand personality. Additionally, there needs to be consideration made of the relationship that exists between culture and destination brands. This is based upon the premise that culture, including arts festivals, is a distinctive feature of destinations (Bowdin *et al.,* 2006; Getz, 2005, 2007; Jamieson, 2004; Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott, 2003; Prentice & Anderson, 2001).

In conclusion, it may be suggested that as a concept brand image is similarly composed to image: from cognitive, affective and conative factors; socio-demographic and personal factors. Further, destinations are more complex entities than consumer goods due to the number of stakeholders, agents and other entities that are involved in the development of the image and brand image of a destination. Destinations are composed of a bundle of different components (Pritchard & Morgan, 1999). It may be argued that to remain equitable, destination brands should focus upon those factors that are unique or distinctive to them.

3.4.3 Festival brand image

> "The goal of an event organizer is to have a branded event that is so popular that the mere mention of the name brings instant recognition, awareness and attention" (Hoyle, 2002, p.165).

Although there is significant conceptual and empirical research into destination image and brand image, the researcher has not uncovered research concerned with festival brand image and brand relationships. Much festival brand research is concerned with management of marketing and branding activity within the discipline of events management.

As noted, there are links between destination and festival brands. The two are not necessarily synonymous within consumers' perceptions and may be viewed separately. Nevertheless, the use of city or host names is a

form of branding for festivals in the geographical and perceptual positioning of them; but may, or indeed may not, be incidental to consumers' perceptions of the festival brand (Mossberg & Getz, 2006). It is important to note therefore, that depending upon the context, individual destination and festival brands can have both positive and negative impacts upon one another.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Edinburgh's festivals have been investigated in relation to the quantitative measures of their economic impacts. Furthermore, the sustainable future of Edinburgh's festival programme continues to be debated.

The role of major events within destination brand image is investigated by Brown *et al.* (2005) in considering ways in which images associated with a particular event may become synonymous with the destination; and thus act as useful contributors to destination branding. The strategic use of events can be applied therefore to enhancing or changing a destination's image. It is concluded that events can have a significant influence upon perceptions of a destination's brand and brand image. Furthermore events can become key strategic tools in developing the brand image of a destination.

Festival brand image is considered as an element of brand equity, contributing to the loyalty of festival attendees (Leenders, 2010). It has been proposed that event marketing can be leveraged to influence brand image (Drenger, Gaus & Jahn, 2008). Further, there has been research undertaken into the role of stakeholders within the management of festival brands, as discussed in chapter 4 (see: Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005; Mossberg & Getz, 2006).

The role of sponsorship within the development and transfer of event image is considered; and factors influencing relationships between

between event image and brand image are investigated by Gwinner (1997). The associations linked to the event, such as enjoyment levels, may become linked to consumers' memories of the brand. Citing Keller's (1999, p.2) assertion that: "Brand image refers to the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in memory", it is suggested that consumers associate events with particular attributes that have been derived from the event itself (such as its type and characteristics) as well as the individual features of the consumer. Gwinner (1997, p.147) defines event image as: "represent(ing) the cumulative interpretation of meanings or associations attributed to events by consumers."

The determinants of event image are dependent thus upon the subjective perceptions of particular market segments of event consumers. Further, a framework of three factors has an impact upon consumers' perceptions of an event: the type of event it is; particular characteristics of the event; and the individual perceptions of the event consumers, including the number of images associated with the event; the strength of particular images and the past history a consumer has with an event (Gwinner, 1997).

Festival and event consumers inhabit various stakeholder roles (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007). Based upon this, there are numerous categories of image determinants that are applicable to the Fringe. Returning to the concept of cultural capital, it is argued that the arts and culture in Scotland form an entertainment economy, with Edinburgh as a festival destination (Yeoman *et al.,* 2005). Prentice and Andersen (2003, p.7) suggest that Edinburgh's festivals collectively position the city of Edinburgh through creativity; however, this is in terms of the positioning of international arts rather than in relation to the touristic positioning of Scotland, which is seen as a: "landscape and tradition destination".

As the Fringe is a festival synonymous with Edinburgh, it may be termed a hallmark event (Bowdin *et al.,* 2006) As such it is neither a product nor

service: but rather a component of the tourism system of Edinburgh (Getz, 1991).

The previous chapter discussed the measurement of image and discovered that there are various approaches to this, involving structured and unstructured methods. In reviewing and defining brand image, it is concluded that although a brand is communicated by the brand owner; brand image is a perceptual evaluation made by the brand consumer. In measuring brand image, similar approaches may therefore be adopted as are used in measuring image.

In assessing brand image, applied methods have tended towards being unstructured and qualitative: whether across consumer; marketing; or tourism research. In measuring the brand image of consumer products, Hussey and Duncombe (1999) for example use projective techniques where consumers are asked to assign images and cue-cards to particular brands. Empirical research into destination brand image, has involved assessing the perceptions of DMOs in relation to the meaning of brand image. Hankinson (2005) examines the branding practices of twelve UK cities, including investigating brand image, by undertaking qualitative interviews with key marketing staff with the purpose of collecting rich data. In investigating the concepts of destination brands and destination images and how these are related, Tasci and Kozak (2006) also apply a qualitative approach through a panel assessment of experts.

The previous chapter introduced semiotic analysis of visual promotional materials as a research method adopted frequently in marketing-related research into subjects such as advertising and branding (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Berger, A., 1995; Bignell, 2002; Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; MacCannell, 1982; Noth, 1990; Oswald, 2007; Rose, 2007; Uzzell, 1984; Williamson, 2002). Furthermore, the perceptions of tourists, including their evaluations of image is dependent upon the collection of

signs. In discussing the tourist gaze, Urry (2002, p.3) notes that this is dependent upon what tourists encounter and society, social groups and history. "The gaze is constructed through signs and tourism involves the collection of signs."

Semiotic analysis involves the study of signs, and is described by Banks (2007, p.129) as: "the study of signs or symbols, particularly systems of linked signs and how meaning is communicated in predictable and structured ways by them". This approach in analysing materials is discussed in detail in chapter 6 of this thesis.

The first objective of this research is to critically review the brand image of the Fringe as projected through its portrayal in promotional materials. Promotional materials are laden with selective values through their use of images and these are used by marketers to reflect the cultural values of their target markets. The promotion of destinations involves them being projected as cultural symbols of significance (Echtner, 1999; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999). The Fringe produces a range of marketing and promotional materials that are developed to appeal to a target market of Fringe stakeholders: primarily the Fringe programme.

Event image is defined as consumers' perceptions of the meanings and associations that they hold about particular events (Gwinner, 1997). As this research is tasked with defining the brand image of the Fringe, the meanings and associations of the Fringe as perceived by the researcher are of concern. This may be undertaken through a semiotic analysis of Fringe promotional materials to assess the Fringe brand image.

3.5   Self-concept and self-image congruence

The self-concept has been widely researched in the fields of psychology and sociology since the early eighteenth century (Sirgy, 1982). Self-concept is concerned with the manner in which an individual views

themselves. It is defined as: "the totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings with reference to himself or herself as an object" (Rosenberg and Kaplan, 1982, p.8) or: "the evaluated beliefs a person holds about himself" (Burns, 1979, p.3).

Within self-concept there is a sub-theory of interpersonal attraction or congruency, whereby individuals are likely to favour others whom they perceive as being congruent with their own self-concept (Backman, Secord & Pierce, 1963; Burns, 1979). This is termed self-image congruence. When applied to consumer behaviour and branding, there is thus theoretical basis to suggest that individuals are likely to prefer brands that they believe would be favoured and consumed by persons they perceive as being similar to themselves (Belk, 1988; Chon, 1992; Gardner & Levy, 1955; Kressman *et al.,* 2006; Levy, 1959; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Ross, 1971; Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy 1985; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Solomon, 1983). Self-concept may be further defined in relation to consumer behaviour with two contexts: "'actual self-concept,' the way a person actually ('really') sees himself to be and 'ideal self-concept,' the way a person would ideally ('like to') be" (Ross, 1971, p.38).

Within consumer behaviour there is thus a duality of actual and ideal self-concepts (Sirgy, 1985). Self-concept has been recognised by psychologists as having an effect on behavioural patterns and thus when applied to consumer behaviour, research suggests that consumers have similar images of products and services as they do of themselves. This theory may be applied therefore to consumer behaviour: consumers generally have preferences for brands that they consider to be congruent or consistent with their actual or ideal self-concepts (Kressman *et al.,* 2006; Sirgy, 1982, 1985; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

Self-image congruence theory is widely applied to consumer research in relation to product and services brands. In application to tourism and

destination brands consumers are more likely to visit a particular destination that they view as being congruent with their self-concepts (Chon, 1992; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Litvin & Kar, 2002, 2004; Murphy, Beckendorff & Moscardo, 2007; Murphy, Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2007).

3.6   Brand relationships

Brand relationship theory is based upon interpersonal relationship theory (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Fournier, 1998). Interpersonal relationships are two-sided and are underpinned by concepts of interaction, mutuality and continuity, all of which may be arbitrary (Hinde, 1979). Relationships are purposive, adding meaning and structure to peoples' lives and can influence the development of personality (Hinde, 1979; Fournier, 1998). Principles of interpersonal relationship theory have been considered in practices such as relationship marketing (see: Berry, 1995; Christopher, Payne & Ballantyne, 1991; Gronroos, 1990; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Brand relationship theory is founded upon the assertion that consumers have a portfolio of brands with which they have relationships. These relationships are influenced by individuals' life-worlds and identities and are characterised by fluctuating levels of loyalty and trustworthiness towards the brands (Fournier, 1998). It is argued when brands and consumers form relationships, in imbuing brands with personal meanings brand relationships involve considering: "the brand as a friend" (Elliot and Percy, 2007, p.64). Brands are conceptualised as viable relationship partners, contributing to purposive, multiplex and dynamic relationships that take different forms (Fournier, 1998).

Brand relationship theory contends that viable relationships exist amongst the contents of the brand portfolio; and the identity of individual consumers. These relationships are essential to the maintenance of a sense of the consumer's actual and ideal self-concepts. For some

consumers, the selected brands within their portfolio reflect the extent to which they link particular brands to their self-concepts. These brands may behave as efficient meaning-based communication systems. The cultivation of the brand portfolio and self-concept are therefore interdependent.

Within the brand relationships domain, individuals apply their attachment to products or favoured brands in influencing identities and life worlds: thus contributing to their self-concepts (Ball & Tasaki, 1992; Belk, 1988, 1989; Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry, 1989; Kleine, Kleine & Allen, 1995; Levy, 1985; McGrath, Sherry & Levy, 1993; Richins, 1994; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988).

Consumption of some products and services is motivated therefore by self-concept dynamics as consumers seek to define their identities, or to transform their lives as a form of: "symbolic self-completion" (Schouten, 1991, p.412). A person's preferred brands can reveal particular characteristics about them and serve to communicate these characteristics to others (Richins, 1994). It is thus suggested that meaningful relationships can reinforce perceptions of self-concept in individuals (Aron, Paris & Aron, 1995).

Individuals' consumption of brands allows them to attach their own meanings to the objects within their life worlds and related these to their own identities (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Hirschman, 1992; Simmel, 1978). Further, within consumer society, the cultural meanings of consumer brands may transfer from product to consumer (McCracken, 1986; Thompson, Pollio & Locander, 1994) and can result in forming a revised and extended self (Belk, 1988; 1989; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988).

There are therefore subjective and emotive aspects of consumption and these objects that are consumed can serve emotional and functional roles.

Services, products and festivals, can address additional experiential roles within everyday life and may perform a function of identity: serving as an expression of self-concept (Belk, 1988; Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry, 1989; Fournier, 1991, 1998; O'Cass & Hay, 2002; Solomon, 1983; Xue, 2008).

It is evident that brand relationship theory exists within the realm of brands serving roles and addressing motivations. Fournier (1996) states the importance of brand relationships within contemporary society:

> "Relationships with mass brands can soothe the 'empty selves' left behind by society's abandonment of tradition and community and provide stable anchors in an otherwise changing world. The formation and maintenance of brand-product relationships serve many culturally-supported roles within post-modern society" (Fournier, 1996, cited in Keller, 2008, p.8).

Relationship phenomena are seen within the consumer-brand context. Brands, as they are experienced, are viable relationship partners for consumers through the dyadic interactivity, continuity and mutuality which occurs (Hinde, 1979). Finally, different qualities and types of relationships can exist between consumers and their brands. There has been some academic research into brand relationships, based upon the interpersonal relationship proposition. As a result, conceptual typologies of relationship forms have been developed across a selection of consumer brand categories. Existing research has been concerned with consumer brands and includes investigations of relationships between consumers and coffee brands (Fournier & Yao, 1997); women and the products they use (Fournier, 1998); gay men, their community and the product brands they use (Kates, 2000); and children's brands within the family environment (Ji, 2002). To date, there has been no research identified into the brand relationships that exist between arts festivals and their consuming stakeholders.

Fournier (1998, p.347) undertakes empirical research through conducting case studies. These involve phenomenological life-history qualitative

interviewing of three purposively selected women, in varying life situations, about the brands they use in life. The purpose of these interviews is to develop an understanding of the brand relationships as experienced by the women. The information sought is two-fold as: "a first person description of the informant's brand usage history and… contextual details concerning the informant's life world."

In describing brand relationships, Fournier (1998) develops a typology of relationship forms which relate the different qualities of brand relationships. These are based upon parameters of human relationships and are defined as: arranged marriages; casual friends / buddies; marriages of convenience; committed partnerships; best friendships; compartmentalized friendships; kinships; rebounds / avoidance-driven relationships; childhood friendships; courtships; dependencies; flings; enmities; secret affairs; and enslavements.

Similarly to much research into brand relationships, Fournier's (1998) typology is based upon consumer brands. She suggests that there is little empirical research in this area and uses case studies to develop a consideration of relational phenomena in the consumer products domain.

Fournier and Yao (1997) investigate coffee consumer brand relationships, based upon the strength and loyalty criteria. Brand relationship forms are proposed, and these are also based around interpersonal relationships of love, marriage and friendship.

Ji (2002) supports Fournier's (1998) assertion that in developing relationships with brands, consumers develop functional aids to their life and seek meaning within particular areas of their lives. Considering children and the brands they use in the family home, in this instance the relationships formed are also based upon the interpersonal aspects of love, friendship, marriage, and enmity. It is suggested that these

categories are arbitrary. Further, they evolve over time and are not therefore mutually exclusive (Hinde, 1979).

Kates (2000) considers the dynamics related to the construction of community through consumer brand relationships and develops a typology of brand relationships within the gay community. These are based upon definitions of interpersonal relationships: brands as comrades (or community members); political alliances and enemies. It is concluded that brand relationships can create and construct communities. Although this study is specific to a gay community, Kates (2000) suggests that this may be applicable to other consumption contexts.

There are further studies which consider aspects of brand relationships, but do not consider defining relationship types; and those that investigate related topics. In a related field, Wallendorf and Arnould (1988) consider 'object relationships', and explore the meanings of favourite objects through the use of focus groups, surveys and photo-elicitation. Esch *et al.* (2006) investigate how brand knowledge and brand relationships can affect buying behaviour. Citing brand equity theory, they contend that brand relationships and brand knowledge can contribute to developing positive brand equity. Xue (2008) investigates the role of product involvement upon self-concept, and the consumption situation upon situational decision making and concludes that when consumers are highly involved with a product, self-concept and consumption situation are factors within brand choice.

According to Fournier, (1998, p.350) brand relationships are essentially defined through the identities or life themes of consumers. "These (life) themes suggest product categories in which relationships are likely to develop, influence the depth and breadth of chosen brand attachments, and define the criteria by which relationships are maintained".

It seems evident that brand relationships do exist within contexts of consumer involvement with brands that resonate with deeper motivations and reflection of lived experiences and self-concept (Keller, 2008). This is the case for many brand categories, and brand relationship theory is investigated further in chapter 7 in relation to the Fringe. It should be noted, however, that not all brands may be viable relationship partners, indeed, within transactional contexts, for example, a neutral relationship may be more appropriate than a relationship based on interpersonal terms (Cooke & Harris, 2007).

3.7   Summary

This chapter considers the brand concept and particularly brand image as perceptual construct of this in the minds of consumers (Aaker, D., 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2008; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999; Patterson, 1999).

Brands are marketing-related aspects of the image of a destination, product or service. Within the branding theory there are numerous definitions of the brand concept (Elliot & Percy, 2007). Furthermore, brands can be separated into functional and symbolic domains (Patterson, 1999): thus the management of brands is achieved through the management of perceptions. The brand concept has been widely considered in consumer research. There is less research into festival brands: this thesis has uncovered no existing academic literature examining the stakeholders' perceptions of the brand image of festivals, such as the Fringe; or festival brand relationships.

The socio-psychological and symbolic meaning of brands is considered through undertaking a review of academic literature in relation to brand equity; brand image; and the self-concept. Attention is focused upon the brand relationship proposition based upon interpersonal relationship theory (Hinde, 1979). It is concluded that this is relevant to the self-image

congruence that may exist between these variables and perceptions that consumers form of their personal identity and the brands they use (Ekinci & Riley, 2003; Kressman *et al.,* 2006; Litvin & Kar, 2000, 2003; Sirgy, 1982, 1985; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

This chapter concludes by presenting existing research within the context of brand relationships and discusses approaches applied to this in consumer behaviour and the development of brand relationship typologies based upon interpersonal relationships (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000). This is revisited in chapters 7 and 10 where the approach in defining the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships is revealed and the relationships themselves defined.

The brand relationship proposition draws upon the application of interpersonal relationship theory to the brand image of the Fringe (Fournier, 1998); consumers' perceptions of their self-concepts; and thus potential self-image congruence that exists in relation to the Fringe and its consuming stakeholders.

Chapter 4

Festival stakeholders

"Stakeholders are those people and groups with a stake in the event and its outcomes, including all groups participating in the event production, sponsors and grant-givers, community representatives, and everyone impacted by the event" (Getz, 1991, p.15).

4.1   Introduction

As discussed previously, the aim of this research is to define types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. The brand relationship proposition is based upon defining the Fringe brand image; and investigating its primary stakeholders' perceptions of their lived experiences with the Fringe as a festival brand.

This research investigates and defines the brand image projected by the Fringe through its communicated brand. Additionally, Fringe stakeholders' perceptions of the Fringe brand and their own life-themes are examined. Here, the relationship that exists between the Fringe brand image and stakeholders' identities and lived experiences is of significance.

This research investigates and defines brand relationships between the Fringe brand and its primary stakeholders. As discussed in chapter 3, the brand relationship concept is based upon the assertion that consumers have a collection of brands with which they have relationships. These are influenced by the life themes and identities of individuals and are characterised by fluctuating levels of loyalty and trustworthiness towards brands (Fournier, 1998). Thus, it is suggested that in their roles as Fringe stakeholders, these particular consumers have life and identity themes that are congruent to the Fringe brand image.

This particular chapter is concerned with the Fringe and its stakeholders. In addressing the aim of this research, the second objective to be considered is:

2)   To define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe.

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature to determine the potential roles and types of festival stakeholders. Further, this literature review serves to build knowledge about theories and methodological approaches relevant to defining stakeholders of the Fringe (Bryman & Bell, 2003).

The Fringe and its stakeholders must be considered within the parameters of the aims and objectives of this research. The literature reviewed here is concerned in the first instance with organisational stakeholder management to gain an understanding of the role of stakeholders and their relationships within organisations. Following this the chapter focuses upon festivals and events and the application of stakeholder approaches within this field. This festival and event stakeholder literature is revisited in chapter 7 of this thesis where stakeholder models are considered in their potential application as approaches in defining the Fringe stakeholders. The Fringe stakeholder model is then presented in chapter 10 where the research findings are analysed and discussed.

4.2   Organisations and stakeholders

In defining the stakeholders of the Fringe, it is necessary to first investigate the concept of stakeholders and define their role within organisations. Stakeholder approaches within organisational theories may be applied to festival and event management. A review of literature concerned with organisations and stakeholders serves therefore in identifying a means to define the stakeholders of the Fringe (Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

Organisational forms may be defined in relation to the dynamic populations within the organisation itself. These are considered in terms of their function; and their observed or assumed characteristics, which vary amongst particular groups (Hannan & Freeman, 1986).

Within organisational structures there has been a historical emphasis upon the importance of stockholders: those groups that are involved in the financial equity of the firm. It is argued however that organisations also have responsibilities towards a wider population of stakeholders and that financial performance measures are not the only means of strategic decision making (see discussions in: Agle *et al.,* 2008; Atkinson, Waterhouse & Wells, 1997; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1994; Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, Wicks & Palmer, 2004).

Stakeholders of an organisation may be categorised as any groups that have a "stake" in the organisation; and therefore affect it and the achievement of its goals (Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, 1984; Freeman 1994). The stakeholder concept is therefore concerned with stakeholder management frameworks, which involve understanding the internal and external forces upon an organisation's operational context.

Writing on the philosophy of stakeholder management in his key text on stakeholder theory: *"Strategic management: A stakeholder approach"*, Freeman (1984) argues that stakeholder management is important in the successful achievement of current and future organisational objectives. For organisations to survive and operate successfully it is therefore important that their managerial approach adheres to stakeholder theory. This approach is concerned with: determining the purpose of the organisation; and the responsibility that the managers of the organisation have to its stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1994; Freeman *et al.,* 2010; Hillman & Keim, 2001; Jones & Wicks, 1999; Savage *et al.,* 1991).

Stakeholder theory assumes therefore that in the business environment shared values are necessary and these should be explicit and articulated by the organisation. Further, it encourages managers of organisations to define their business approach and importantly to create meaningful

relationships with their stakeholders (Freeman, 1994; Freeman, Wicks & Parmar, 2004; Freeman *et al.,* 2010).

It is commonly suggested that it is essential for organisations to understand the relationships they have with their stakeholders; and to consider stakeholder management approaches in maintaining these relationships (see: Atkinson, Waterhouse & Wells, 1997; Campbell, 1997; Carroll, 1992; Clarkson, 1995; Coff, 1999; Freeman *et al.,* 2010; Frooman, 1999; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997; Savage *et al.,* 1991).

It is evident that stakeholders are important to organisations. Indeed, they are components of the governance chain of roles and relationships assumed by different groups within the overall control of any organisation (Harrison & Freeman; 1999; McVea & Freeman, 2005). This concept of corporate governance is: "concerned with the structures and systems of control by which managers are held accountable to those who have a legitimate stake in an organisation" (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2008, p.133).

Donaldson and Preston (1995) argue that stakeholder theory is a managerial concept whereby attitudes, structures, and practices form a stakeholder management philosophy. Nevertheless this stakeholder approach is not defined in relation to an organisation's management serving its stakeholders: rather it may be best defined by reference to property rights theory. This is described as the organisation resembling a property in the sense it is a 'bundle' of rights. The managers of organisations are not only responsible for the rights of direct shareholders of the organisation: but should consider too the interests of greater society. It is important that managers should attempt to generate support and resources that fit with the organisation and its environment.

Related to this assertion, of an organisation being a bundle of rights, is the concept of resource dependency. This theorises that organisations are potentially dependent on the external sources of the resources of other organisations and stakeholder groups. "Dependencies are often reciprocal and often indirect" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003, p.xii). This network concept proposes that multiple relationships amongst stakeholder groups are as important as linear relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders. Indeed, a useful approach for understanding organisational and stakeholder environments is the use of social network analysis concepts. These recognise structural patterns, rather than dyadic relationships in the operational environments of organisations and their stakeholders (Rowley, 1997). Furthermore, in terms of resources stakeholders' possess bargaining powers that can affect an organisation's competitive advantage (Coff, 1999).

Within stakeholder theory it is suggested that core stakeholder attributes may be defined as related to the concept of stakeholder saliency, which is concerned with the actual or perceived possession of: power; legitimacy; and urgency that a particular stakeholder group has within an organisation. It is suggested that by understanding the saliency of stakeholder groups, organisations may define the roles of these groups and their relationships with them (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984; 1994; 2004, Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997).

Stakeholders are therefore vital to organisations and the network of relationships amongst different groups is dynamic. Furthermore, organisations' and stakeholders' relationships are defined based upon a series of dimensions related to saliency measures, dependency and roles within the governance chain.

In its aim to define types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders, this research seeks to define the stakeholders of the Fringe. This definition is concerned with the nature of their engagement with it as they consume it as a festival. Before considering stakeholders of festivals and events, it is important to consider generic definitions.

4.3   Defining stakeholders

Stakeholders are defined as: "groups and individuals who can affect, or are affected by, the achievement of an organization's mission" Freeman (1984, p.52).

As noted, the expectations of stakeholders, along with an organisation's governance structure and social responsibilities, are considered to be influential upon its strategic purpose. Reflecting this, stakeholders may be defined as: "those individuals or groups who depend on an organisation to fulfil their own goals and on whom, in turn, the organisation depends" (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2008, p.132).

In identifying stakeholders, it is suggested that stakeholder literature is concerned with categorising primary and secondary stakeholders: their roles defined as such depending upon the relationships and level of engagement they have with the organisation (Clarkson, 1995).

It is argued that some generic definitions in stakeholder literature are too broad: suggesting that virtually any group can be identified as stakeholders. Conversely, other definitions are narrow and do not consider delineating stakeholders and strategies for managing relationships with them (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997; Savage *et al.,* 1991).

As discussed, stakeholders may be identified in a number of ways. It is useful to consider their saliency. This is stakeholders' attributed or actual

possession of: power to influence the organisation; the legitimacy of their relationship with the organisation and the urgency of their claim upon the firm. It is suggested that managers of organisations can effectively identify and manage stakeholders based upon this framework (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997).

Much of the stakeholder literature advocates the application of stakeholder theories and concepts in the organisational context, as noted above. Further research suggests that stakeholders should be managed on a more individualistic and customised basis to benefit organisations in their continued survival (McVea & Freeman, 2005). Indeed, when considering the identity of the organisation itself, it is beneficial to approach this from a manager-stakeholder relationship perspective.

It is widely asserted that stakeholders have varying influences and levels of power upon organisations: and their influence upon governance and their own rights within organisations are important considerations for managers. As noted previously, stakeholder categories may be defined in various ways, for example in relation to: the product/service; labour and capital markets as: customer; employee; and ownership stakeholders (Strong, Ringer & Taylor, 2001).

Jawahar and McLaughlin (2001) suggest that stakeholders may be classified according to the specific organisational needs they can satisfy and functions they can address. Furthermore, different stakeholder groups become more or less important to the organisation at different periods in the organisational life-cycle.

A framework to categorise stakeholder groups in relation to the markets within which an organisation operates is applied by Strong, Ringer and Taylor (2001) as: customer; employee; and owner stakeholders as three of the main categories.

Freeman (1984) proposes a stakeholder view of the firm which is a simplified map of the general stakeholders of an organisation, classified as: owners; consumer advocates; customers; competitors; media; employees; special interest groups; environmentalists; suppliers; governments; and local community organisations. This model is simplified, but each of these entities may be classified as stakeholders because:

> "Each of these groups plays a vital role in the success of the business enterprise in today's environment. Each of the groups has a stake in the modern corporation, hence, the term 'stakeholder'…The Stakeholder View portrayed… is enormously simplified, for each category of stakeholder groups can be broken down into several useful smaller categories" (Freeman, 1984, p.25).

This categorisation of stakeholders is generic: but is concerned with classifying particular groups as stakeholders based upon the affect they may have upon the organisation's goals. Stakeholders are therefore acknowledged as being involved in the organisational decision-making process although with varying levels of saliency (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997; Reid & Arcodia, 2002). Apart from these broad classifications, stakeholders may be further segmented into smaller specific stakeholder category groups based upon their roles.

In developing Freeman's (1984) definition of stakeholders as groups that have ownership rights or interests within organisations, Clarkson (1995) suggests that these rights may be in the past, present or future; and they can be legal or moral; individual or collective. The organisation itself may itself be defined as a system of stakeholders: indeed, it is possible to further classify the key stakeholder groups, according to their main interests and level of interaction, as either 'primary' or 'secondary' in nature:

> "A primary stakeholder group is one without whose continuing participation the corporation cannot survive as a going concern. Primary stakeholder groups typically are comprised of shareholders and investors,

employees, customers, and suppliers, together with what is defined as the public stakeholder group: the government and communities that provide infrastructures and markets, whose laws and regulations must be obeyed, and to whom taxes and other obligations may be due" (Clarkson, 1995, p.106).

It seems that the satisfaction and participation of these engaged primary stakeholder groups are essential to the continued survival and success of an organisation. The secondary groups are those that have an ongoing interest within the organisation: but are not essential to its survival. This group includes special interest groups and the media.

An objective of this research is to define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe, as those most engaged with it in a relationship. Within the parameters of this research, the primary Fringe stakeholder groups of relevance to this research are identified within the context of a stakeholder view of the Fringe. This chapter continues by investigating the application of a generic; and primary and secondary stakeholder approaches to festivals and events, by reviewing relevant academic literature. The primary and secondary stakeholder concept is revisited in Chapter 7 in discussing the method of defining then Fringe stakeholders.

4.4 Festival and event stakeholders

Organisational stakeholders are described as: "those persons or groups who can influence the organisation or are influenced by it". Getz (2007, p.91) applies this definition to the management of festivals and events

It is suggested that stakeholders are a major consideration for festival and event organisers and should be understood within the greater environment of the particular festival or event (Bowdin *et al.*, 2006). Further, each stakeholder group has a collection of needs and expectations of the event and these may be similar to, or indeed may conflict with, the needs of the other stakeholder groups. In illustrating the relationships that exist between events and stakeholders a model is presented by Bowdin *et al.*

(2006). The event is central to the model and the stakeholders groups are classified as: participants and spectators (supporting the event and being rewarded with entertainment); co-workers (who provide labour and support in return for payment and other rewards); the host organisation (reciprocal participation and support); the host community (impacts and context); sponsors (financial or in-kind support in return for acknowledgement and exposure to audiences); and finally media organisations (promoting the event in return for advertising revenue or editorial).

The classification and management of stakeholders has been considered both generically, and for individual functions within the management of festivals and events. Further, the power and influence of stakeholders in relation to their roles and the success of festivals and events has been investigated (see for examples: Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Larson, 2002; Larson & Wikstrom, 2001; Reid & Arcodia, 2002; Spiropoulos, Gargalianos & Sotiriadou, 2006).

There has been some research concerned with the relationship between festival stakeholders and branding in relation to ownership and influence (see: Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005; Mossberg & Getz, 2006). There has however been no research identified concerned with festivals' and stakeholders' brand relationships, which is a concern of the present study.

Generic stakeholder approaches can be applied to the management of festivals and events. Reid and Arcodia (2002, p.480) suggest that: "the organisation is a system of stakeholder groups and a failure to retain their participation will result in the failure of the enterprise." This echoes with stakeholder theories and concepts as presented earlier in this chapter (see discussions in: Agle *et al.,* 2008; Atkinson, Waterhouse & Wells, 1997; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1994; 2004; Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, Wicks & Palmer, 2004; Scott & Lane, 2000)

It is important to be aware that event management is a strategic process which differs from other organisational contexts in terms of the temporary and limited time-spans of events. In managing successful festivals and events, it is essential to therefore engage stakeholders throughout the planning process to gain community satisfaction and support for the event: resulting in competitive advantage.

The primary and secondary stakeholders' concept (Clarkson, 1995) is applicable to the festivals and events industry. Primary stakeholders are deemed essential to the event and their interaction and engagement with the festival organisation and other stakeholders results in the festival or event itself: "without the direct support of these stakeholders the event would not exist" (Reid & Arcodia, 2002, p.480). Primary stakeholders of festivals and events are defined on a generic basis as: employees; volunteers; sponsors; suppliers; spectators; attendees and participants. Secondary stakeholders are also important to the success and survival of the festival or event but do not have the same direct impact upon it as primary stakeholders. Secondary event stakeholders are therefore classified as: government; the host community; emergency services; general business; media and tourism organisations.

There have been a number of studies made in relation to identifying and classifying stakeholders of specific festivals or events. A festival stakeholder model is developed by Spiropoulos, Gargalianos and Sotiriadou (2006) where the stakeholders of the 20th Greek Festival of Sydney are identified and categorised in relation to their influence upon the strategic management and delivery of the festival. This model is developed and stakeholders are categorised according to functional roles. It is composed of firstly marketing stakeholders, including the festival content (product); the venues (place); the promotion (those involved in promoting the festival; and the audience members. The second group is the festival's production stakeholders (the festival's events) and the final

group is the administration stakeholders, composed of the management functions of human, financial and infrastructure resources.

Larson (2002) defines the stakeholder groups of a music festival that are related to the production and marketing functions of the festival. These are classified as the festival organiser; the music industry (performers, bands and contractors); the local trade and industry; sponsors; public authorities; associations and clubs (participating venues to earn income for their organisations) and the media.

In investigating the role of stakeholders and the power structure of festivals, Larson (2002, p.119) introduces a metaphor of: "the political market square" (PSQ), to define the dynamic project network of stakeholders influencing decisions made by individuals to attend festivals. The power structure of festivals and events is a political process and is composed of gatekeeping; negotiation; coalition building; building trust and identity building. All of these are posited to be political processes and key to relationship marketing of festivals.

Also considering the political processes and structures of power in events, Larson and Wikstrom (2001) discuss the relationships that are formed amongst stakeholders involved in events which are aimed at achieving a cooperative status. Within these relationships, political processes may be understood from two perspectives: consensus and conflict. Within event project networks relationships amongst stakeholders tend to be built upon these processes:

> "From the consensus perspective, mutual commitment, trust and conversation are important to build fruitful relationships. From the conflict perspective, tensions conflicts and power games are considered unavoidable aspects of social interaction, which create change and renewal" (Larson & Wikstrom, 2001, p.51).

In addressing the influence of festival stakeholders and the relationships that exist amongst them, Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) argue that it is difficult to map all of the stakeholders of festivals. This is because of the nature of festivals where the organiser, despite being considered the most powerful stakeholder, is often dependent upon other actors with stakes in the festival. In terms of the relative importance of the key groups are: regulator; facilitator; co-producer; supplier; collaborator, audience and the impacted.

Returning to Freeman's (1984) application of stakeholder theory and placing the festival at the centre of the stakeholder analysis, Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) propose a series of stakeholder roles. These may be applied to festivals of different types that operate in various contexts. They are the major stakeholder roles within festival networks. Within the networks of different actors the authors suggest there is a dynamic power structure where over time hierarchies will change. The major stakeholder roles are therefore: the festival organisation (owners, investors, directors, employees, volunteers, members, advisors); co-producers (independent organisations that participate on a voluntary basis); the audience and impacted (those who are audience members and others who are impacted by a festival); allies and collaborators (providing intangible services such as marketing); regulators (approval and co-operation); facilitators (provide resources and support the festival) and partner suppliers and venues.

Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) therefore apply the stakeholder management concept of resource dependency to festivals' and stakeholders' relationships. They cite Donaldson and Preston's (1995) assertion that organisations must compete for resources and therefore festival organisers must manage relationships with stakeholders within this competitive environment. In considering festival brands, the role of resource dependency within the festivals industry is important to consider.

This can be seen particularly for festivals such as the Fringe, because as festivals mature they become institutional (hallmark) in nature as their brands become established:

> "As festivals mature they begin to behave more and more like institutions, which, in this context, is a process of remaining united for a specific purpose, which in turn often leads to becoming a permanent, legitimate and valued part of the society. Institutional status should ensure sustained support and resources. It might also be expressed in branding terms, as the organization will possess a highly visible, positive brand that inspires confidence. To become an institution, or to find and sustain a permanent niche in the community, the event organisation must be expert in developing a supportive network and in managing its many, diverse stakeholder relationships" (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007, pp.104-105).

It is evident that managing these interdependent networks of stakeholder relationships is important and often vital to the success of festivals and events. As noted, the process may be described as political in nature (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Larson, 2002; Larson & Wikstrom, 2001).

Some festival and event stakeholders' research is concerned with brands. Investigating the development of event brands through a marketing approach, Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005) develop a stakeholder-based theoretical model in relation to event marketing. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder approach is adapted to consider the important role of primary stakeholders of festivals and events and to create a proactive tool to enhance stakeholder relationships. The resulting analysis and management of stakeholders can be applied to the development of more effective event brands. In developing the model of primary event stakeholder, a qualitative approach is adopted within a case study of the Brisbane Goodwill Games. The marketing manager of the event was asked to draw a stakeholder map to identify key stakeholders of the marketing department. The resulting drawing presents a complex and realistic stakeholder model.

Considering the relationship between stakeholders and event brands from the perspective of influence, Mossberg and Getz (2006) examine fourteen festivals in Sweden and Canada in terms of how stakeholder brand ownership may influence the branding of festivals. The authors argue that the involvement of key stakeholders, such as sponsors, in a festival's branding process is important. Additionally, in considering the role of host city names it is concluded that this does not appear to influence branding. Rather the city name serves to distinguish festivals and to position them geographically for festival attendees. While the use of city names is a form of branding, it is therefore incidental to the overall branding process. Furthermore, in discussing event branding, Mossberg and Getz (2006) identify the lack of available academic research considering brand ownership and festivals. In existing stakeholder research, in contrast to the mainstream theories related to private corporations, festivals frequently differ in their context as non-profit organisations. Within Europe and North America it is suggested that non-profit societies dominate the festival sector and this raises questions of defining the ownership and branding of such festivals, as well as the involvement of stakeholders in the branding process. It is concluded that brand ownership may be considered in two ways depending on the nature of the festival:

> "ownership of the brand (is) either 'single' or 'diffuse'. This is a judgement based on several criteria including ownership of the festival (city-owned, non-profit society, or private), sponsorship arrangements (title sponsor, major sponsor involvement, minor involvement) and other stakeholder influences (e.g. use of public lands and venues)" (Mossberg & Getz, 2006, p.323).

Based upon Mossberg and Getz's (2006) brand ownership categories, the Fringe can be classified as a non-profit-society-owned festival and therefore may be considered a 'single' ownership brand. There is considerable sponsorship involvement with the Fringe: but not to the extent of sponsors assuming title or naming rights, so that the festival is associated with a particular sponsor (Masterman & Wood, 2006). There are however various further stakeholder influences and of particular note

are: the independent venues; performing companies; promoters; audience members; funders; staff members and the Festival Fringe Society itself. It may be concluded therefore these stakeholders are considered important in relation to the Fringe brand.

Within academic literature concerned with the stakeholders of festivals and events, as discussed, there is no identified research that is concerned with the relationships that exist between festival and event stakeholders and the festival or event brand. Much existing festival and event stakeholder research emphasises the role and influence of stakeholders upon the brand, and therefore the success of the festival (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007) and the development of event brands through marketing and the consideration of stakeholders (Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005).

The festival stakeholder literature reviewed in this chapter is revisited in chapter 7 of this thesis. This third part of the thesis is concerned with the research methods for this study; and the literature is re-considered here in its approaches to identifying and classifying festival and event stakeholders. As discussed an objective of this research is to define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe: those most engaged in its consumption. In devising a method to do this in chapter 7, the topic of stakeholders is once again presented in chapter 10 where a Fringe stakeholder model is presented and the primary and secondary stakeholders of the Fringe are defined.

4.5   Summary

Stakeholders are any groups that have a "stake" in an organisation or an impact upon it (Freeman, 1984; 1994). It is argued that organisations and their stakeholders exist in a dynamic network of relationships that involve particular responsibilities from all concerned (Clarkson, 1995). Stakeholder approaches are important to consider within the management and governance framework of organisations (Johnson, Scholes & Whittington,

2008), and stakeholders can be identified and managed in terms of their saliency: power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). This chapter reviews stakeholder literature that is both generic and related to festivals and events. As this research has an objective of defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe.

Primary stakeholders are those groups deemed essential to an organisation (Clarkson, 1995). In the case of festivals, their engagement and interaction with the festival organisation results in the festival taking place and surviving: "without the direct support of these stakeholders the event would not exist" (Reid & Arcodia, 2002, p.499).

The above primary stakeholders concept is revisited in chapter 7 and later applied, along with the key findings of this literature review, to defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe. Primary stakeholders are of particular relevance to this study as it seeks to identify those individuals and groups most engaged with the Fringe as its consumers; and to consider the brand relationship proposition for the Fringe and these stakeholders.

As noted, the specific research method applied to this objective is discussed in chapter 7 of this thesis. The analysis and findings: defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe within the framework of a Fringe stakeholder model is then detailed in chapter 10.

Part 3

Methodology and methods

Part 3 of this thesis presents the constructivist paradigm of this study and in chapter 5 details the ontological and epistemological perspectives and the methodological approach applied to the research process.

The aim of this part of the thesis is to explain and justify the research methods by discussing how the individual objectives will be addressed. The particular methods of inquiry are discussed in relation to the three objectives. Chapter 6 outlines the semiotic analysis approach in the context of defining the Fringe brand image through its portrayal in promotional materials. The approach to defining the Fringe primary stakeholders, and developing a stakeholder model, is presented in chapter 7; and Chapter 8 details the primary method of qualitative interviews, with a phenomenological perspective (Fournier, 1998; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). These involve laddering and photo-elicitation with Fringe primary stakeholders to define the brand relationships (Fournier & Yao 1997; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988).

Chapter 5
The constructivist paradigm

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the philosophical perspective and methodological approach adopted for this research. The following chapters (6, 7 and 8) continue by detailing the research methods applied to meet the overall research aim and the three objectives. The particular methods have been selected upon the basis of their compatibility with the philosophical perspective and methodology, in addition to the cross-disciplinary nature of this research.

5.2 Findings arising from the literature review

Before presenting the philosophical and methodological orientation of this study, it is useful to present a summary of relevant findings from the introduction and literature review, which reveal identified gaps within the literature. These are applied to the formation of the research questions posed to meet the aim and objectives of this research.

The key findings from the literature review may be summarised as follows:

- Edinburgh is widely referred to as the Festival City and the Fringe is a major component of Edinburgh's festival programme. The continued success of Edinburgh's festivals is therefore argued to be integral to the contemporary positioning of Edinburgh. There is abundant information available about the quantifiable success measures of Edinburgh's festivals, including the Fringe. Conversely, little research exists into the cultural and artistic significance of Edinburgh's Festivals generally, and the Fringe specifically, in relation to stakeholders' perceptions of its brand and image.

- The image concept has been researched widely within academic literature, including tourism research. Nevertheless, there has been very little research identified considering the image of festivals, including Edinburgh's festivals and the Fringe.

- Image is a contributing factor in the motivation of individuals within the consumer selection process (of destinations, products and services).

- Image is an abstract concept of cognitive, conative and affective components, including: individuals' perceptions, beliefs, impressions, feelings and other interpersonal and informational influencing factors.

- Within the brand concept, exists the abstract element of brand image. Further, within the brand image construct, there is an affective brand personality element. Positive brand image is considered important to the development of favourable brand equity, and potential consumer preference.

- There has been no academic research identified considering the brand image of festivals and the role that consumers', or active stakeholders', perceptions of festival brands may have in festival preference.

- Consumers form brand relationships with the particular brands they identify most closely with, and as a result develop a personal portfolio of brands. This is related to self-concept; and self-image congruence: the extent to which consumers perceive brands to have a similar image to their own.

- Brand relationship theories have been applied to consumer brand research. There has been no research identified considering festivals and consuming stakeholders' brand relationships.

- Self-concept and self-image congruence have been studied in relation to consumers, marketing and brands. Further there has been research conducted into these constructs within the disciplines of hospitality and tourism. There has been no identified academic research into self-concept theories applied to festivals such as the Fringe.

- Primary stakeholders of an organisation are vital to its survival. Festival and event primary stakeholder groups are thus deemed essential to festivals and events. Their interaction with the festival or event organisation results in it occurring. There has so-far been no attempt made to identify the primary and secondary stakeholders of the Fringe.

- There has been no research identified that considers the self-concepts of primary festival stakeholders; or the brand relationships and potential congruence amongst festivals and their key stakeholders. In investigating the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships that currently exist, it may be possible to examine how festival brand image definitions may be applied in order to appeal to the perceived self-concepts of festival stakeholder groups.

As detailed above, a number of shortcomings within the existing literature have been identified in relation to the aim of this research. These are significant in the development of the research questions and in informing the objectives.

5.3   Research objectives revisited

Returning to the objectives developed to assist in meeting the research aim, these are:

1) To critically define the brand image of the Fringe, as projected through its portrayal in branded visual promotional materials.

2) To define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe.

3) To develop a typology of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships.

5.4   Research questions

In addressing the above objectives and the literature review findings, research questions to be considered are:

- How can the researcher define the Fringe brand image through its portrayal in branded visual promotional materials?

- Who are the Fringe primary stakeholders: can they be defined as individual and distinct groups, or do they have multiple roles?

- How do identified Fringe primary stakeholders define themselves in relation to the Fringe as a festival and festival brand?

- How do Fringe primary stakeholders feel about the Fringe as a festival and a festival brand?

- Which brand relationships exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders, as determined through interaction with stakeholder informants, and in comparison to existing brand relationship research?

- How congruent do primary Fringe stakeholders perceive themselves to be with the Fringe brand (festival self-image congruence)?

- How could the revealed Fringe brand relationship types be engendered to appeal to the perceived self-concepts of existing and new primary stakeholders?

In considering the pertinent aim, objectives and research questions, this chapter now details the philosophical perspective and methodological approach of this research. This begins with a discussion about the nature of qualitative research and continues with a general discussion about prevalent research paradigms, before defining the paradigm of this research.

5.5 The nature of qualitative research

This research is concerned with interpreting phenomena related to the Fringe within a natural setting. A definition of the Fringe brand image is constructed based upon the researcher's perceptions of this as it is portrayed within promotional materials. The researcher also defines and categorises primary Fringe stakeholders and in doing so develops a Fringe stakeholder model. Of concern is developing an understanding of a series of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types and this involves interaction with these stakeholders. This research is concerned thus with an interpreted reality that is socially constructed (Berger, P., & Luckman, 1979; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b, 2005).

Conceptually, qualitative research may assume different positions and meanings in its undertaking. A generic definition emphasises its interpretive features:

"Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individual's lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, p.3).

Qualitative inquiry differs from quantitative research by its focus, which is concerned with phenomena and meanings. Quantitative research is concerned with quantification in the collection and analysis of data: measuring amounts, frequencies, causal relationships and intensities. Quantitative research involves a natural science model of the research process and is influenced very much by positivism: employing deductivist and objectivist research strategies (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b). This contrasts with the qualitative approach, as applied here, which is: "inductivist, constructivist and interpretivist" (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p.573).

Qualitative research is not concerned with the rigorous examination or measurement of factors: rather it emphasises the processes and meanings inherent within the environment of the research (Mason, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994):

"Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints that shape enquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b, p.8).

The social construction of reality is central to the qualitative research approach. Methods of investigating the constructed social world are varied, with many competing methodological traditions informing contemporary inquiries (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a). Within inter-disciplinary research, the issues shaping this continuing debate are: the legacy of the

positivist paradigm based upon the European Enlightenment; the link between social sciences and physical sciences; definitions of facts and values and the roles of rationalism and empiricism (Baranov, 2004).

5.5.1 Inter-disciplinary research

As a qualitative study, this research is interdisciplinary to the extent that it is grounded within marketing; festivals and events management; tourism; social sciences disciplines and the arts. This is evident throughout the previously presented literature review. Research within these disciplines can allow the adoption of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. This is dependent upon the nature of the individual inquiry. In adopting either approach it is nevertheless vital to define an appropriate research paradigm as this is instrumental in determining the philosophical perspective and methodological approach.

Further, and of importance, the defined research paradigm is indicative of the researcher's own view of the world. It also reflects the position occupied within this world by the inquiry.

5.6   A discussion on research paradigms

Within academic research, there are considerations to be made in understanding the link between theory and research. Bryman and Bell (2003, p.7) define theory as: "an explanation of observed realities, to explain…why." On the abstraction of particular theories it is therefore possible to develop various theoretical perspectives. These can be termed as metaphysics or paradigms.

Two important considerations to undertaking research are: the methodology and methods selected; and the justification of their choice and use. This is reliant upon the focus of the research (Crotty, 2003, p.2). Indeed, it is agreed that: "The search for truth shapes all fields of inquiry" (Baronov, 2004, p.2).

Research paradigms are thus the belief systems applied to the development of an appropriate research process. This is evident within the particular truths sought within these paradigms, and within the specific realities they inhabit (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

In illustrating the research process and its components, Pernecky (2007) presents the POEM framework of paradigm, ontology, epistemology and methodology:

> "Similar to a narrative poem, research also involves a series of chronologically related events that all contribute to a whole. Paradigms, Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology (POEM) are essential components of any research process and can be compared to the many elements such as diction, rhythm and line structure or imagery to make a poem work. And as the sound of a poem can be musical so can research be harmonious" (Pernecky, 2007, p.212).

This framework is now applied to the present study in a brief discussion about research paradigms. The philosophical: ontological and epistemological perspectives; and the methodological approach are thus defined and justified.

Paradigmatic perspectives reflect our perceptions upon the existence of ultimate truth and realities. Research paradigms are thus based upon human constructions, and are related to individuals' assumptions and beliefs:

> "A paradigm may be viewed as a set of *basic beliefs* (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimates or first principles. It represents a *worldview* that defines, for its holder, the nature of the "world", the individual's place in it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts, as, for example, cosmologies and theologies do" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p.200).

The three dominant and competing paradigms of guiding theory in relation to qualitative research are: positivism, post-positivism and constructivism. Of further significance is a fourth paradigm termed critical theory (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Pernecky, 2007).

In viewing paradigms as human constructions there are three fundamental questions of the researcher's own perspective that serve as major foci. These questions concern the ontological, epistemological and methodological elements of the researcher's perspective. These are interconnected, thus reflective of the paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

In discussing the concepts underpinning social research methods, Baranov (2004) suggests that competing paradigms inform the research process. Indeed one of the greatest considerations in social research methods is the legacy of positivism. In presenting research paradigms, it is important to therefore define the perspectives that are considered dominant.

The positivist perspective has a long history, dating from the writings of the British empiricist, Francis Bacon (1561-1626). Positivism is grounded in the belief that there is one objective social reality and this may be arrived at through adopting scientific inquiry (Baronov, 2004; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Gellner, 1985). The ontological perspective of positivism may be termed as 'realism' (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). The dominant doctrine of positivism is thus its assumption that one objective reality exists. Further, it advocates that the application of the natural sciences methods represents the only means of acquiring validity in knowledge. Additionally, positivism prescribes the foundation of truth as empiricism: consisting of direct observation and experience. Finally, it separates the subject of the research from the object (Baronov, 2004). Positivism therefore adopts an experimental and manipulative methodology (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Within positivism, research methods are generally quantitative in nature and are concerned with testing theories; determining causal relationships; and rigorous numerical measurement (Bryman & Bell, 2003). The Positivist paradigm's epistemological perspective is thus dualist and objectivist (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). The research and the object of research are assumed independent entities. Values and biases are

prevented from influencing research outcomes; and the researcher and object being studied do not influence one another. Threats to validity are therefore avoided in positivism.

The postpositivist perspective developed as a critique of positivism and adopts a critical realism-based ontological perspective (Baronov, 2004). This argues that objective reality may only be approximated, and is not apprehendable, due to the imperfect nature of human intellect and of phenomena. Therefore, reality is not completely understood (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Postpositivism also adopts an objectivist epistemological stance. It is concerned with determining if findings fit with pre-existing knowledge, and recognises that replicated findings are likely to be true, but are subject to falsification. The methodology of postpositivism is based upon triangulation of data and advocates the use of multiple research methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). In the application of qualitative methods, it is concerned thus with formalising and creating theory through rigour to capture the details of reality (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004).

As noted above, the positivist and postpositivist approaches are focussed upon verification and validity of theory and rigour (Delanty, 1997; Gellner, 1985). Both qualitative and quantitative perspectives can be influenced by the positivist and postpositivist traditions. In terms of the use of qualitative methods this may involve maintaining a positivistic rigour (Denzin & Lincoln, 1989b; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004).

The positivist and postpositivist perspectives are not universally accepted. The critical theory approach advocates that culture presents constructed meanings (Crotty, 2003). Reality is therefore considered as historical (or virtual) whereby the ontological position states that once a plastic entity, reality has over the course of time been shaped by numerous social, cultural, political, ethnic and gender-based factors. The epistemology of critical realism is termed as subjectivist and transactional: here the

researcher and object being researched are linked within the creation of findings. The methodology in its transactional nature creates a dialogue between the researcher and object being studied and it is dialectical (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

5.7 Presenting the constructivist paradigm

This research, in its concern with defining the brand image of the Fringe; examining the perceptions of Fringe stakeholders; and in understanding Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types, prescribes to the constructivist paradigm [5]. The constructivist paradigm as prescribed to by this research is grounded in the perspective that: "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (Crotty, 2003, p.42). Constructivism adopts a relativist ontological perspective and a transactional and subjectivist epistemology. It is suggested that constructivism perceives knowledge and realities as phenomena that are socially constructed. As such, knowledge is not objective, but is constructed through the experiences of individuals, cultural context and is dependent on social conventions (Berger, P., & Luckman, 1979; Breuer & Roth, 2003; Crotty, 2003; Delanty, 1997; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b). The methodological approach of constructivism has an overall aim to reach a construction that is more informed than previous constructions. The methodology is therefore dialectical. Furthermore it is hermeneutical and phenomenological in perspective, arguing that individual constructions may only be developed through interaction between the researcher and the object of investigation. It is considered within the constructivist paradigm that the rigorous and scientific evaluation criteria of positivism and postpositivism are irrelevant to the multi-constructed realities adopted by this perspective. Further, constructivism does indeed embrace realism through its perspective that

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[5] Constructivism, as a paradigm which views reality as socially constructed phenomena, is sometimes referred to as social constructivism (a particular sub-discipline). The term constructionism is also used, particularly in the USA (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008).

there are various real worlds, so it suggests the traditional perspective of one reality is idealism rather than realism.

Within the constructivist paradigm, there are two considerations that relate to judging the quality of an inquiry. These are described as trustworthiness and authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). These considerations differ from the positivist and post-positivist concerns of validity and reliability, which as suggested are difficult to ascertain in studies into perceptions. The trustworthiness criteria relates to credibility and transferability and confirmability. This corresponds to the positivist and post-positivist concerns of internal and external validity, dependability, reliability and objectivity. Authenticity criteria in constructivism is concerned with: fairness; the development of personal constructions (ontological authenticity); a greater understanding of the constructions of others, (educative authenticity); and stimulation and empowerment to action (catalytic and tactical authenticity) (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

As noted previously, through applying Pernecky's (2007, p.212) POEM conceptual framework, the specific ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives and approach of social constructivism will now be discussed in detail. This serves the purpose of presenting a summary of the perspective and approach taken by this research. Figure 5.1 illustrates how the constructivist paradigm, and its elements, are structured and inform one another (Crotty, 2003).

Figure 5.1

The POEM framework: An illustration of the constructivist paradigm of this study

Paradigm:
Constructivist

Realities and truths are co-constructed

Ontology:
Relativist

Realities are social, multiple, apprehendable and product of human intellects that may change as constructors (the researcher and the objects / subjects being investigated) become more informed

Epistemology:
Transactional / Subjectivist

The creation of knowledge occurs through interactions amongst the constructors, creating emic theory

Methodology:
Hermeneutical / Dialectical / Phenomenological

Involves the construction and reconstruction of previous realities; understanding lived-experiences / texts and creating understanding of meaning

(Adapted from Pernecky, 2007, p.212)

5.7.1 Ontological and epistemological considerations

At the core of any research paradigm are the considerations of its corresponding ontological and epistemological positions. In defining ontology this may be described as being concerned with the nature of reality. Epistemology questions the theory of knowledge, asking how the theoretical perspective is informed. It also defines the relationship between the researcher and the inquiry (Crotty, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b, 2003).

5.7.2 Relativism

The relativist ontological position differentiates the constructivist paradigm from those previously discussed (Gellner, 1985; Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Relativism subscribes to the belief that reality is dependent upon societal and cultural factors and: "assumes multiple, apprehendable, and sometimes conflicting social realities that are products of human intellects, but that may change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p.208).

In defining relativism it prescribes that knowledge is thus socially constructed and distributed (Berger, P., & Luckman, 1979). Relativists believe that truth is not absolute, and neither is ethical nor moral thought. There are thus no objective standards, so the philosophical and ethical underpinning of relativism recognises that neither truth nor behaviour may be generalised across all cultures and for all of human-kind (Berger, A., 1998).

Crotty (2003, p.64) argues that relativism reflects the various worlds inhabited by individuals, who have different constructions of reality in relation to the sense they make of the world: "We need to recognise that different people may well inhabit quite different worlds. Their different worlds constitute for them diverse ways of knowing, distinguishable sets of meanings, separate realities."

This research adopts a relativist ontological perspective. In considering the objectives a series of constructions are thus sought and made. These are firstly around the researcher's understanding of the Fringe brand image and then in defining its primary stakeholders. The social interactions taking place amongst the researcher and Fringe primary stakeholders serve to construct apprehendable and multiple realities. These describe a series of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and the stakeholders. As noted, the adopted relativist ontological perspective views the perceptions, understandings and interpretations of informants as a primary data source (Mason, 2006).

5.7.3 Subjectivism

In adopting a subjectivist and transactional epistemological approach, knowledge is thus created through the researcher and the co-constructors. In this case, these are the relevant Fringe promotional materials; and the informants', who are identified as Fringe primary stakeholders. The aim is to gain an understanding of the multiple realities with empirical and social basis. Underpinned by relativism these realities are achieved through creating knowledge about those multiple realities or constructions within the culture of the Fringe as a festival; and the lived experiences of those stakeholders under investigation. This occurs through interactions between the researcher and informants who are identified as Fringe primary stakeholders (Carson *et al.,* 2005).

Constructivism views knowledge as intermediate, "it implies that social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant state of revision" (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p.20), so findings are created (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

Within the constructivist paradigm, knowledge is co-created amongst the researcher and objects of the inquiry. It is considered therefore, transactional and subjective in nature, with the subject assuming an

important role in the creation of knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, 2005). Subjectivism adopts an emic (insider) view of studied individuals, groups, societies or culture. This approach is applicable in the context of this research into the Fringe: its brand image; stakeholders' lived experiences; and the brand relationships that exist.

5.7.4 Methodological approach

The methodological approach is characterised as the: "theory of the method, including its epistemological and ontological assumptions" (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001, p.70). This must be complimentary to the consequent methods selected.

Within the constructivist paradigm, the prescribed methodological approach is hermeneutical and dialectical (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Hermeneutics is concerned with the theory and method of human action (Bryman and Bell, 2003) and its central concern is that within analysis it is important to understand the meaning of texts as imbued by the author. Hermeneutics is concerned with the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century debates around the concept of 'verstehen', which may be translated as understanding (Baranov, 2004, Bryman & Bell, 2003; Schwandt, 1998). Constructivism is considered to have developed from this hermeneutic interpretational approach and was opposed to the then dominant positivistic perspective (Delanty, 1997).

A phenomenological perspective is also applied to the methodological approach for this study. This is compatible to the constructivist paradigm as it is concerned with the phenomenon of experience: assuming that individuals and the life worlds they inhabit are inseparable (Fournier, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). Within the methodology, the orientation towards the generation of theory for this research is qualitative and inductive. Thus, the researcher develops theoretical propositions from the data, moving from general to

specific theory (Mason, 2006). This enables construction of theories about what has been observed and is based upon reflections of particular experiences.

Adopting this particular methodological approach for this research allows the researcher to hermeneutically examine the brand image projected by the promotional materials of the Fringe. The dialectical process of co-creating constructions of perceptions of Fringe stakeholders; and defining the brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders is possible through interaction amongst the researcher and informants. This gains an understanding of stakeholders' perceptions and the phenomena of their lived-experiences with the Fringe.

5.7.5 Reflexivity

> "But the scientific view of this world is often taken as having a superior epistemological status, as being *more objective.* This view implies a self-deception in that it fails to understand the researcher as an equally subjective system, a member of the social world whose constructions are mediated by individual and social characteristics. There is therefore an uncoupling of epistemology (knowledge of the other as constructed) and methodology (scientific knowledge as untouched by the beliefs and actions of researchers and their culture). One may therefore have the impression that researchers are but skin-covered interchangeable instruments. The researcher implied in textbook methodologies has no age, sex, smell, color, or socially conditioned habitus" (Breuer & Roth, 2003, paragraph 11).

Reflexivity refers to the self-awareness of the researcher, requiring an acknowledgement and a developed understanding of their own role within the research process (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). The adoption of any methodology is thus related to the reflexive aspects of the researcher as a system of subjectivity within the research process (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000).

The researcher (as referred to throughout this thesis) may be considered to assume positions within a series of roles such as: "scientist, naturalist, field-worker, journalist, social critic, artist, performer, jazz musician,

filmmaker, quilt maker, essayist"; as she undertakes the process of "assembling images into montages". This is in fitting with the Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.4) described researcher as "bricoleur" role. This involves the methodological practices and the use of aesthetic and material tools as required, to construct representations and specifics of the complex situation of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships.

Although referred to as the researcher within the context of this thesis, it is essential that the self-reflexivity of this individual is addressed in her role as the researcher, constructor, writer and creator of this project. The narrative voices of researchers are diverse, including the authoritative, supportive and interactive. This researcher, as bricoleur, assumes an authoritative interpretative voice which aims to highlight the different interests from the narrations of informants, in relation to her understanding of intended meanings (Chase, 2005).

In positioning herself within the research process, the circumstances and personal context of the researcher should be mentioned. The researcher is herself a primary Fringe stakeholder: currently an audience member and a Friend of the Fringe[6]; she has also previously worked with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, although on a temporary basis. With a former higher educational and professional background in the arts, the researcher was previously a practitioner and conceptualist of visual art and a keen advocate of the creative arts and (arts) festivals. A later professional turn into working with, and undertaking studies within, marketing (mainly in arts, media, festivals, events and education) led to a growing interest in subjective creativity; relationships between individuals' perceptions of image and the understanding and communication of creative brands. Although, prior to undertaking this study (from late 2007) the researcher

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[6] 'Friends of the Fringe' is a private funding scheme based upon customer loyalty. Fringe stakeholders and audience members in particular, are invited to pay a fee on an annual basis to support the core activity of the Fringe. In return Friends receive benefits such as ticket offers, invitations to annual events, and a prioritised box office service during the Fringe (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010).

was working in a practitioner's marketing management position, she had for some time been keen to return to academic realms. Fortunate enough to be awarded the opportunity of accepting a PhD scholarship in the topic of the Fringe, and image, this afforded her the opportunity to further this diverse collection of interests and concerns.

In addressing the reflexive aspects of this research process it is significant to acknowledge that the researcher does not assume the classical view of the research product being independent of her own characteristics or the methodology (Breuer & Roth, 2003, paragraph 13). Indeed the: "social, historical, socialised, and biographical characteristics", of the researcher can be seen as exerting influence upon the entire research process: from conception of an initial research aim; throughout the research design; and establishment of the primary research methods of semiotic analysis and phenomenological-based interviewing. As discussed, the researcher has an ingrained visual arts and creative, interpretative, higher educational and practitioner history. These characteristics are likely to be subjective factors in the interpretation of the Fringe promotional materials; and in the use of photo-elicitation to gain understanding of social constructions related to the Fringe and its stakeholders.

5.8 Challenges to constructivism

As discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, this study assumes the constructivist paradigm which views reality and truth as socially constructed and apprehendable. The constructivist paradigm is apparent across research within social sciences and humanities (see Denzin & Lincoln, 1989a, 1989b). The relativist ontological perspective and subjectivist epistemology position perceptions of the researcher and objects of the inquiry, or respondents, as being vital to the rendering of socially constructed realities.

There are challenges to the constructivist perspective and these are most evident from subscribers to positivist and postpositivist paradigms. As discussed, these prescribe to an objective reality. The positivist perspective is that this reality may be apprehended through the use of scientific method. Postpositivism considers that reality may not be apprehendable, or fully understood, because of imperfections in human nature (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Although adopting a similarly subjective epistemology to constructivism, the critical theory prescribing paradigms also reject the concept of constructed realities. Here it is believed that there is one historical reality which has been shaped by greater forces over time (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

Many advocates of the constructivist paradigm do recognise the challenges to this approach. Holstein and Gubrium (2008, p.3) in the introduction to their edited *"Handbook of constructionist research"*, summarise the: "heated debates" resulting from the constructionist approach, which has been evident since the 1960s: suggesting that constructivism has faced critics and in turn: "has been called radical and conservative; liberating, managerial and oppressive; relativist, revisionist, and neo-objectivist; cancerous, pernicious and pandemic; protean, faddish, trendy, and dull". Further discussions of the parameters and limitations of constructivism, and its relationship to positivism, are evident throughout academic writings (see for examples: Delanty, 1997; Gellner, 1985; Hacking 1999; Searle, 1995).

One of the central features of constructivism is that knowledge is constructed though social interactions and this is understood through our own cognitive processes (Delanty, 1997). Indeed the knowledge accumulated is done so through experiences that may be considered vicarious, as the values of the researcher and other constructors contribute to the creation of constructions which are more sophisticated and informed. As discussed this process as applied to this research is

subjective and reflexive in style, tending towards the use of qualitative methods to build inductive theory. The subjectivity of this study is fitting with the constructivist paradigm which believes knowledge is created through subjective processes (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

5.9   Summary

This chapter presents and defines the philosophical perspective of constructivism as applied to this research. It continues by introducing the relativist ontology, subjectivist epistemology, and the hermeneutical and phenomenological methodological approaches.

Serving as an introduction to the following chapters in this part of the thesis: each of which presents specific research methods, this chapter thus positions the present study philosophically. The reflexive position of the researcher is also highlighted as a central concern within the following discussion on methods.

Chapter 6

Semiotic analysis

6.1   Introduction

In providing an understanding of the brand relationship types that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders, the brand image of the Fringe is a central inquiry of this research.

The previous chapter presents the constructivist paradigm of this research, highlighting: the relativist ontological approach; the subjectivist epistemology; and the hermeneutical and phenomenological methodology (Baranov, 2004; Crotty, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1998, 2005; Pernecky, 2007). In determining a strategy of inquiry and developing the research methods for the research being undertaken, it is important that the methods selected are grounded within the dialectical and hermeneutical methodology (Baranov, 2004; Crotty, 2003). The methods are determined therefore by the methodology and overall constructivist paradigm.

This chapter introduces the application of semiotic analysis in addressing the definition of the Fringe brand image: which is the first objective of this research. Semiotic analysis is complementary to the overall constructivist paradigm, whereby realities are constructed and co-constructed, and the transactional, hermeneutical methodology, where findings are created. The objective to be considered is therefore:

1)   To critically define the brand image of the Fringe, as projected through its portrayal in branded visual promotional materials.

In addressing this objective, the researcher critically defines the brand image of the Fringe through undertaking a hermeneutical study of relevant Fringe publicity materials: a semiotic analysis. The Fringe brand image is thus defined based upon the subjective perceptions that the researcher

formed of the brand, as represented. This subjectivist and transactional theory of the creation of knowledge is compatible with the prevailing relativist ontology and it is reflective of the hermeneutical methodology (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, 2005).

6.2   Semiotic analysis

Semiotic analysis (or semiology)[7] may be defined as: "The study of signs or symbols, particularly systems of linked signs and how meaning is communicated in predictable and structured ways by them" (Banks, 2007, p. 129). Semiotic analysis is concerned with the study of any system of signs used within human language (Ivanov & Bradbury, 1978). Manning (1987, p. 34) describes the purpose of semiotics as: "to identify the elements of a system, and the system of which they are parts, in order to produce explanations of those constructs in formal or differential terms". Semiotic analysis is a hermeneutical research method as it encourages recognition that the symbols experienced in life are interpreted differently by individuals (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Banks, 2001, 2007; Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Jenkins, 2003; Rose, 2007). Semiotic analysis questions thus the process by which images make meanings and create understanding for those interpreting them (Rose, 2007). It is proposed that a semiotic analysis of recent Fringe promotional materials (specifically the annual programme) will prove a valuable method in assessing the Fringe brand image.

Within the concept of semiotics, the most fundamental element within the creation of meaning is the 'sign', described as: "the unit of meaning – and semiologists argue that anything that has meaning – an advert, a painting, a conversation, a poem – can be understood in terms of its signs and the work they do" (Rose, 2007, p.79). Semiotic analyses of sign systems are

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[7] 'Semiotic analysis' and 'semiology' are occasionally separated by references to the tradition they ascribe to. Semiology can refer to the study of signs within the Saussurean tradition, and semiotics the Peircean tradition (see 6.4). Additionally semiology as a term, can refer to an approach concerned with textual analysis while semiotics is grounded in a philosophical concern (Chandler, 2007)

undertaken based upon the belief that any sign is a component of a system of signs. Further, these systems of signs are loaded with meanings (Ivanov & Brandbury, 1978). The semiotic approach is thus contributory to the analysis of cultural forms (MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982).

From an ontological perspective, semiotics views reality as social constructions (Chandler, 2007; Echtner, 1999; Noth, 1990). Epistemologically, in its theory of knowledge, semiotics attempts to therefore: "identify the codes and recurring patterns in a particular sign system" (Echtner, 1999, p.50).

Semiotics is concerned with uncovering layers of meaning, structures and patterns, through the analysis of sign systems within texts and fits with the hermeneutical methodology of constructivism as introduced in chapter 5 (Berger, A., 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1998, 2005). As noted, hermeneutics is concerned with the theory and method of human action and uncovering the meaning of texts (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Its central concern is that within analysis of a sign, it is important to understand the meaning imbued by the author and to understand that: "prior understandings and prejudices shape the interpretive process" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.27).

6.3   Structuralism and poststructuralism in semiotics

There are two recognised analytical approaches to semiotics. Structuralism is commonly applied in marketing-related studies, and as an approach it has taken a variety of forms. Structuralism has formal features: it considers the sign and the signified as being discrete. Often dealing with de-contextualised texts, structuralism is concerned with the underlying deep and relational structures within society, as evident in the work of Saussure (see: Banks, 2001; Berger, A., 1998; Chandler, 2007; Culler, 1998; Noth, 1990). Structuralism thus applies the systems inherent in language to other social phenomena (see: Chandler, 2007). It assumes

the stance that sign systems are composed from: "oppositional categories embedded in language" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.27).

Poststructuralism differs from structuralism through the contextualisation of texts: accepting fluidity between the sign and signifier. It asserts that although entities exist interdependently of signs, these are only understood through socially generated sign-systems. There are evident ambiguities and contradictions, so a semiotic analysis does not produce definitive or complete findings. Chandler (2007) presents both structuralist and poststructuralist approaches as relevant to the constructivist paradigm:

> "Whereas both common sense and positivist realism involve an insistence that reality is independent of the signs that refer to it, socially oriented semioticians tend to adopt constructionist stances, emphasizing the role of sign-systems in the construction of reality. They usually refer only to 'social reality' (rather than physical reality) as constructed. Some argue that there is nothing natural about our values: they are social constructions which are peculiar to our location in space and time. …the social constructionist stance is not an idealist denial of external physical reality but rather an insistence that although things may exist independently of signs we know them only through the mediation of signs and see only what our socially generated sign-systems allow us to see" (Chandler, 2007, pp.218-219).

In applying semiotic analysis to defining the Fringe brand image, it is useful to summarise the central theories that underpin semiotics. In addressing this, the following section of this chapter considers the history of modern semiotics; before discussing particular approaches within tourism, marketing and branding-related research.

6.4 Modern semiotics: Saussure and Peirce

The role of signs within understanding meaning, have a long history, dating from medieval philosophical inquiry (Berger, A., 1995; Noth, 1990). The modern study of semiotics is nevertheless commonly thought to have been developed from the work of two scholars: the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913); and the American philosopher,

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) (see discussions in: Barthes, 1993; Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Bignell, 2002; Chandler, 2007; Eco, 1976; Echtner, 1999; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Mick, 1986; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007).

Saussure (1966), published: *"A course in general linguistics"* posthumously in 1915. In developing his theory of 'semiology', Saussure investigated synchronic linguistics, and was concerned with the nature of signs within the system of language. The linguistic sign was identified as two distinct (dyadic) aspects (Berger, A., 1995; Echtner, 1999; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Mick, 1986; Noth, 1990). "The linguistic sign unites not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image… I call the combination of a concept and a sound-image a sign, but in current usage the term generally designates only a sound-image" (Saussure, 1966, pp.66-67).

The components of Saussure's dyadic sign are termed the 'signifier'*,* which is the material aspect of the sign; and the 'signified'*,* the mental concept of the physical sign. Saussure presents both aspects of the sign as being independently arbitrary in nature. When combined they form a relationship: so concepts may only have meaning because of their relationships (Berger, A., 1995). It is suggested linguistic signs are arbitrary because sign systems, such as language, are learned and are specific to particular contexts or cultures (Echtner, 1999). As such, there is no connection made, in the mind of the perceiver, between the linguistic signifier and the conceptual signified elements.

Saussure (1966) argues that the syntagmatic relationships between sequences of words and the associative relationships of the order and choice of words are of significance in understanding language. Syntagmatic analysis involves the text being examined as a sequence of events that form a narrative (Berger, A., 1995). In considering syntagmatic

analysis of language, it is therefore: "a complex, humanly created sign system" (Echtner, 1999, p. 48).

As a philosopher, Peirce was concerned with the structure of meaning within the human experience and his approach to semiotics included non-verbal signs (Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Chandler, 2007; Echtner, 1999; Noth, 1990). In his *"Collected papers"*, Peirce (1893 - 1913) develops a triadic, or 'pansemiotic' approach to semiotics: contending that semiotics is universal (Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Echtner, 1999; Noth, 1990): "the universe, which we are all accustomed to refer to as 'the truth'- that all this universe is perfused with signs, if it is not composed exclusively of signs", (Peirce, 1906, Vol.2, MS 283, cited in: the Peirce edition project, 1998, p. 394). Peirce refers to the linguistic sign, characterised by its arbitrary nature, as the 'symbolic' sign (Bignell, 2002). In addition to the linguistic sign in addressing non-verbal sign structures, Peirce adds the concept of interpretant, defined in his 1907 manuscript on *"Pragmatism"* as:

> "So much for the object, or that by which the sign is essentially determined in its significant characters in the mind of its utterer. Correspondingly to it there is something which the sign in its significant function essentially determines in its interpreter. I term it the 'interpretant' of the sign" (Peirce, 1907, Vol 2: MS 318, cited in: the Peirce edition project, 1998, p.409).

Peirce's triadic semiotic approach has a philosophical basis of three related ontological categories of: 'firstness', 'secondness', and 'thirdness'. Peirce (1903, Vol.2, *MS 308,* cited in: the Peirce edition project, 1998) thus presents the sign as operating within the trichotomies of the representamen (or perceptible aspect); bearing a relationship to the second (its object), which corresponds to the meaning or referent. This in turn determines the third, interpretant category which is the meaning or signification of the sign (Noth, 1990). The relationship between the representamen and the object is the most fundamental aspects of signs (Peirce, 1903: MS 308, cited in: the Peirce edition project, 1998). This relationship consists of icons (firstness), a representation that resembles

the object signified; indices (secondness), as having a causal relationship to the representamen; and symbols (thirdness), which are the representative word or object itself (Berger, A., 1995; Eco, 1976; Echtner, 1999; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007). All three categories are arbitrary and are not mutually exclusive. They therefore are interpreted differently by individuals and this is dependent on cultural and social norms (Berger, A., 1995; Echtner, 1999).

Peirce's semiotic theory therefore has a relationship which is classified as triadic in character. In comparison with Saussure's dyadic sign, this sign involves the representamen (the object or concept signified); the sign (the signifier of the object or concept) and the interpretant (the interpretation of the sign in the mind if the perceiver). Rather than existing independently, these three aspects have an interdependent relationship, whereby the sign represents different meanings to those interpreting it. Echtner (1999, p.53) characterises this concept as a "semiotic triangle", where each aspect of the triangle reacts with the others to form the sign.

The two above summarised approaches to semiotic theory: those of Saussure and Peirce, are considered to form the modern basis of the study of signs and the interpretation of their meaning.

6.4.1 Barthes: myths, denotation and connotation

A further approach to semiotics was developed by Roland Barthes in 1957, based upon the layers of meaning inherent within language and culture. French writer and critic, Barthes (1915-1980), was concerned with the layers of meaning within signs. Barthes' semiotic theory is based upon Saussure's concept of the linguistic sign and includes the broader structuralist concept of the visual sign to introduce the idea of: myth. Barthes (1993) suggests a layered, denotative and connotative sign system. This is based upon the theory that as well as a literal meaning; language is used in a symbolic way. Barthes asserts thus that the simple,

dyadic sign, as defined by Saussure, is the denotative level, or first order structure and is related to the linguistic structure of meaning. The second order structure of meaning is at the connotative, or symbolic, level and this is the basis of Barthes' development of the concept of myth.

In Barthes' (1993), *"Mythologies"*, (originally published in 1957, and based upon a series of essays written for a French publication) the concept of myth does not refer to its traditional meaning (Barthes, 1993). It is concerned rather with social phenomena: where particular signs and their connotations are developed within the system of signs forming society, to construct social meaning (see Bignell, 2002; Cobley & Jansz, 2004; Echtner, 1999; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Rose, 2007; Uzzell, 1984). Barthes (1993) defines myth as being based upon the triadic pattern of signifier, signified and sign:

> "But myth is a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a *second-order semiological system.* That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second. We must here recall that the materials of mythical speech (the language itself, photography, painting, posters, rituals, objects, etc.), however difficult at the start, are caught by myth. Myth sees in them only the same raw material; their unity is that they all come down to the status of a mere language" (Barthes, 1993, p.114).

Barthes (1993) was concerned with demystifying society through progressing beyond the first order of denotative (literal) sign systems, to the second order: figurative systems, which are connotative and lead to the realm of mythical status (Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Chandler, 2007; Echtner, 1999; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982).

Barthes' (1993) layered approach towards semiotics is of relevance to the analysis of tourism and marketing-related signification systems. This is apparent through the emphasis of both disciplines upon the concepts of denotation and connotation within understanding meaning through the visual materials of promotion and advertising such as posters, postcards,

programmes and brochures (see discussions in: Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Bignell, 2002; Echtner, 1999; Noth, 1990; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Williamson, 2002).

Before discussing the proposed application of semiotic analysis to defining the brand image of the Fringe, the semiotic process is considered briefly within its application to the study of the image concept across tourism and marketing.

6.5   Semiotics in tourism

Semiotic analysis is applied to tourism studies because it is suggested that perceptions of tourists, including their evaluations of image, are dependent upon the collection of signs (Echtner, 1999; Morgan & Pritchard, 1999; Urry, 2002; Uzzell, 1984). Signs include: advertisements; photographs; images; films; texts; or sounds and are the unit of meaning within semiotics (Rose, 2007).

Urry (2002, p.3) notes that the gaze of tourists is dependent upon what is encountered in society, social groups and history: "The gaze is constructed through signs and tourism involves the collection of signs." MacCannell and MacCannell (1982, p.75) suggest that the ways in which tourists interpret images can influence the environments within which they are tourists: "They are time travellers and space travellers *par excellence,* and they like to think of themselves as having a privileged point of view for the interpretation of historical and social phenomena".

Semiotics in tourism research has emphasised the visual image as signs. Morgan and Pritchard (1999) suggest that tourism promotional materials are laden with selective values through their use of images and these are used by tourism marketers to reflect the cultural values of their target markets. The promotion of destinations involves them being projected as cultural symbols of significance, or icons.

Jenkins (2003, p.307) proposes the dominant role of the visual image in tourism marketing through the use of photography of scenery and icons, brochures, advertising to attract tourists to a destination. She refers to the: "hermeneutical circle"[8] (or cultural circle), of representation in describing the process of tourists reproducing photographs of iconic images in a perpetuation of the reproduction of iconic tourist destination.

A particular application of semiotic analysis of image in tourism and related areas is in ethnographic research: involving study and analysis of images as signs in the form of brochures, photographs and postcards and the perceptions and behaviour of tourists (see: Albers & James; 1988; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Banks 2007; Dann, 1996; Jenkins, 2003; Markwick, 2001; Uzzell, 1984).

The application of semiotics to tourism in relation to marketing philosophy and practice is investigated by both Uzzell (1984) and Echtner (1999). Tourism promotional materials, such as brochures, are forms of advertising for destinations. They inform consumers of the existence of a destination, and provide details of the superficial structures of climate, culture and location. Further these materials are responsible for changing the perceptions, opinions and attitudes of individuals. In investigating the brochures of package holiday firms, Uzzell (1984, p.80) contends that these focus upon reinforcing the promotion of factors related to: "self-actualization, social interaction, sexual arousal, and excitement", thus reflecting the connotative, or symbolic, layers of meaning imbued. Uzzell (1984, p.97) investigates the fantasies and myths within tourism brochure photographs at a symbolic level, concluding that tourism advertising is: "replete with messages and myth."

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[8] The 'Hermeneutical Circle' was described by Heidegger (1962) as the relationship between our self-concepts and perceptions of the world. This is also referred to as understanding the whole of a text or sign-system through understanding the parts of it.

Echtner (1999) discusses the application of semiotic analysis to tourism research, and specifically in relation to marketing and promotion. She develops a framework for the application of semiotics to tourism marketing and identifies potential areas for further study. In applying semiotics to tourism marketing, and investigating connotative layers of meaning, it should be recognised these are not distinct or absolute because of the interpretive nature of process. In undertaking a semiotic analysis, research should be thus guided by an ideological framework which is: "explicitly recognised and explained" (Echtner, 1999, p.51):

> "However, since semiotics encourages deeper interpretation, the researcher must always be cognisant of the influence of particular ideological and cultural frameworks. The accomplished semiotician recognizes and addresses the implications of these frameworks for the interpretation of deep structure" (Echtner, 1999, p.52).

Historically, semiotics has involved the study of signs throughout disciplines including: psychology; sociology; anthropology; cultural studies; biology; zoology; and marketing, particularly in terms of advertising and understanding consumption. In discussing Barthes' (1993) denotative and connotative layered concept, Echtner (1999) suggests this is relevant:

> "Part of the semiological enterprise becomes moving beyond the denoted sign system to the mythical level. Such a layered view of semiotics has particular relevance to the analysis of tourism's signification systems, with their emphasis on denotation, myth and fantasy" (Echtner, 1999, p.49).

Echtner (1999) contends that therefore the verbal and visual languages of tourism marketing may be regarded as a sign system where particular mythical tourism experiences are created, codified and communicated. In suggesting the application of semiotic analysis to tourism marketing scenarios it is possible to reflect upon its potential application to the image concept:

> "The promotional material in all its forms, for one destination could be examined to determine the types and frequencies of signs used. A primary objective of the research could be to determine whether there are

any inconsistencies and conflicts in the image created by the sign systems presented in the various promotional materials. A related area of research could focus on whether the meanings of the materials are the same for their producers and consumers" (Echtner, 1999, p.54).

This application of semiotic analysis is relevant to this research which focuses upon the brand image of the Fringe, as perceived by the researcher. The Festival Fringe Society produces a range of branded marketing and promotional materials, including the annual programme of Fringe events. In addressing the first objective of this research, the researcher therefore critically defines the brand image of the Fringe projected through its portrayal in promotional materials by undertaking a semiotic analysis of these. As noted by Echtner (1999), the meanings of the promotional materials may not be the same for the producer and consumer, which is of particular significance to this study.

6.6   Semiotics in media, branding and advertising

Semiotic analysis as a research approach is often applied to marketing-related disciplines, including advertising and branding. This is due to its concern with uncovering residual meanings within signs in the form of images, photographs, advertising, and other media (see discussions in: Bal & Bryson, 2004; Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Bignell, 2002; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; Mick, 1986; Oswald, 2007; Rose, 2007; Williamson, 2002).

It may be argued that semiotic analysis applied within the marketing discipline adopts a structuralist-based approach. Here, relational systems or structures are viewed as languages and deep structures are sought beneath the denotative features of systems. Chandler (2007) suggests that structuralism seeks genres within systems by identifying and comparing codes and signs within texts and the cultural systems they inhabit. Oswald (2007) argues that semiotics indeed underpins brand management because brands are, by their nature, systems of signs. In discussing semiotic analysis of advertising as signs and sign systems,

Dyer (1982) suggests that structuralism and semiotics can become synonymous because of the referent systems and greater discourses that advertisers use to inform meaning.

Arthur Asa Berger (1995, p.16) applies a semiotic analysis to the interpretation of television programmes and films as sign systems (or texts). He recommends the application of syntagmatic and paradigmatic analyses. As noted previously, syntagmatic analysis may be applied where a historical, chain structure is considered: "a text is examined as a sequence of events that forms some kind of narrative." It is argued that therefore any sign system (which in this instance may be a film or television programme) is a series of elements forming a story that may be analysed. Each sign is thus attributed meaning in relation to the signs that surround it (Rose, 2007). Furthermore paradigmatic analysis, defined as revealing the hidden pattern of opposites that generate meaning, is concerned with the investigation of hidden meaning in texts through the understanding that signs are oppositional and thus acquire their individual meaning from the contrasts that are evident amongst them (Berger, A., 1995, 1998).

The use of analogy in sign systems, or texts, is another connotative sign method of communicating meaning within media, particularly through metaphor and metonymy, to convey connections and identities as perceived by individuals (Berger, A., 1995). Metaphor is concerned with suggesting meaning through a relationship between two items through the use of analogy. Metanymic signs are associational in nature, with notions that are representations of the item. A further aspect of analogy is the use of synecdochal signs, whereby the sign represents a part of an item representing a whole, or indeed vice-versa (Berger, A., 1995; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007). It is argued that these connotative approaches are commonly applied within the semiotic analyses of sign systems or texts that are

media related and this reveals how meaning may be generated within these contexts.

Bignell (2002) applies Barthes' (1993) original 1957 concept of the mythical meanings of signs as communications of political, cultural and social ideologies to the decoding of media as sign systems including: television programmes; films; lifestyle magazines; and advertising. He suggests that in the production of advertising and promotional materials, the creators of these may employ visual and linguistic signs to build mythical meanings about products or services.

Noth (1990) asserts that in advertising, semiotics is interdisciplinary and is concerned therefore with the exchange of goods and signs. Inherent to advertising are overt and hidden layers of meaning. In terms of the symbolic meanings, connotative theory is considered appropriate in decoding advertising. This perspective supports the Barthes's (1993) early assertion in his original 1957 publication: *"Mythologies",* that within sign systems, connotations are dependent upon cultural knowledge and societal perceptions.

Judith Williamson (2002) first published her text, *"Decoding advertising: Ideology and meaning in advertising",* in 1978. In this widely cited examination of semiotics and advertising, she contends that within contemporary society, one of the prevailing ideological applications is advertising and the brands advertised (Rose, 2007). Advertising is ubiquitous within society and pervasive of all media. Further in addition to the primary function of selling consumers products and services, advertising demonstrates a symbolic transference of meaning. Williamson (2002) asserts that the referent systems of advertising are those that reflect aspects of the world that exist outside advertising and these provide meaning within advertisements.

Reference within semiotics is particularly applicable to advertising and other media. A sign's referent can be the existing object that is related to the sign (Dyer, 1982; Rose, 2007). Further, it is argued there is an inter-textual nature to many sign systems, and this is particularly true of advertising. Here, inter-textual references are made and these may be conscious, for example quotations or humorous parodies in film production and advertising. In addition to this, advertising, and other forms of media, involves the use of unconscious inter-textuality of themes, designs, plot-lines; and similar elements: "that become common currency, that pervade cultures, and find their way into new texts without the creators' being aware of it" (Berger, A., 1995, p.24).

In discussing the role of advertising of particular brands, Williamson (2002) suggests that its primary function is to provide products and services with associated images differentiating them from other brands within the same category because for many brands there is little else to do so:

> "There is very little real difference between brands of products within any category … this image only succeeds in differentiating between products in so far as *it* is part of a system of differences. The identity of anything depends more on what it is *not* than what it is, since boundaries are primarily distinctions: and there are no 'natural' distinctions between most products … the limits of identity are chosen arbitrarily … it immediately becomes apparent that there are no logical boundaries between most products" (Williamson, 2002, p.24-25).

Therefore, it is suggested that advertising relies on differentiating products and services through making connections with created images beyond the realm of the advert itself. For many products, the meaning of advertising is however arbitrary. This is because many low involvement products and services have little differential significance of meaning to their competitors in advertisements in terms of their use or qualities. Williamson (2002) is concerned thus with the manner in which constructions of social difference are created through the images used in advertising (Dyer, 1982; Rose, 2007).

In his seminal text on image, Boorstin (1961, p.209) presents advertising as a: "pseudo-event". He claims it displaces ideas: creating images in the minds of consumers which through association can cause particular brands to become synonymous with product categories.

As detailed above, semiotic analysis as an interpretation technique is applied across various sign systems within media. In undertaking a semiotic analysis of the Fringe brand image, it is important to examine the process in relation to the selection of signs within its promotional materials as sign systems, or texts. The annually published Fringe programmes are branded promotional materials for the Fringe. As this analysis will be addressing visual and social signs in the Fringe promotional materials that extend beyond linguistic signs, a structuralist-based approach is fitting to the constructivist paradigm adopted by this research (Chandler, 2007; Dyer, 1982).

6.7   The semiotic process: selecting signs

Having reviewed the historical and modern contexts of semiotic analyses as a research method and its application across relevant disciplines, it is of importance at this stage to consider the semiotic process: specifically the selection of signs to be applied to this research.

As discussed, Barthes (1993) presents a structuralist-based series of mythologies of phenomena within society. In addition to various media-related sign-systems, advertising and promotional materials for branded products, services, and tourist destinations have been subject to empirical and theoretical semiotic analyses (see: Albers & James, 1988; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Banks 2007; Berger, A., 1998; Bignell 2002; Dyer, 1982; Echtner, 1999; Goldman, 1992; Jenkins, 2003; Markwick, 2001; Rose, 2007; Uzzell, 1984: Williamson, 2002). At this time there is, however, no evidence of semiotic analyses research of festivals brand image.

Branded advertising, including promotional materials, is considered a multi-layered system of signs (Noth, 1990). By its nature, branded advertising differentiates products and services through the creation of perceived social differences. This is because the particular qualities of many products and brands are not differential (Williamson, 2002). It is suggested therefore that in adopting Barthes' (1993) multi-layered approach of denotative and connotative theory, creating 'myth': branded advertising and promotional materials may be analysed with both tools. These are denotative in understanding the overt advertising message; and connotative to assess the inherent meanings of the symbolic signs and myth structures (Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; Noth, 1990; Williamson, 2002). This structuralist-based approach is adopted for this research.

In approaching a semiotic analysis of Fringe visual promotional materials to define the brand image of the Fringe, as detailed previously, it is notable that there has been no identified research in this area in relation to festivals and events. The researcher therefore adopts particular approaches to decoding printed branded advertising, as a system of signs, in the form of the annual published Fringe programme (Berger, A., 1998; Williamson, 2002).

Synchronic and paradigmatic approaches are applied as not only the denotative or surface layers of meaning within the Fringe branded materials are investigated, but also the connotative, mythical structures (Barthes, 1993; Berger, A., 1998; Bignell, 2000; Chandler, 2007; Echtner, 1999; Eco, 1979; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Manning, 1987; Noth, 1990; Williamson, 2002).

In selecting images or texts to be analysed, it is suggested that images are selected based upon their conceptual and contextual status: not upon a rigorous sampling of images which are statistically representative (see Goldman, 1992; Rose, 2007, Williamson, 1978). Furthermore, the semiotic

process is concerned with detail and analytic integrity, so should be conciliated with the depth of inquiry, rather than being a wide-reaching study:

> "images are interpreted in close relation to semiological theory, and the discussion of particular images is often directed at exemplifying analytical points. Thus semiology very often takes the form of detailed case studies of relatively few images, and the case study stands or falls on its analytic integrity and interest rather than on its application to a wide range of material" (Rose, 2007, p.79).

Illustrating this concern, in presenting an adaptable six-stage semiotic process for tourism marketing studies Echtner (1999) emphasises the importance of selecting a defined data-set of texts to examine.

6.7.1 Designing the semiotic process

Similarly to the selection of images, it is argued that semiotic analysis, within the constructivist paradigm does not follow a definite or linear process (Berger, A., 1998; Echtner, 1999; Noth, 1990). In developing a framework for undertaking semiotic analyses of tourism promotional materials, Echtner (1999) adapts the approach of Barthes (1993) and Noth (1990) to present a semiotic process, summarised in six stages (see 6.7.2). These stages are not definitive and may be adapted:

> "In general, the semiotic/structuralist approach allows considerable analytical freedom and creativity in terms of research procedures. The stages are presented only as an illustration of the more traditional semiotic approach and to provide a baseline for developing a semiotic research process that can then be tailored to address specific research goals" (Echtner, 1999, p.50).

In discussing advertising, Dyer (1982) asserts that within adverts, the photographs of humans used are symbolic of particular qualities that are shifted from the depicted person, to the object being sold (Rose, 2007). This notion of the shift of qualities may be related to ideas of self-concept and self-image congruence, which are particularly relevant to advertising. Dyer continues by presenting a checklist for determining what the signs of

the humans depicted in adverts may represent. This includes representations of bodies; manner; activity; and the props and settings used.

A further approach to the semiotic analysis of advertising is proposed by Goldman (1992, p.77) where the transfer of meaning within images and the operation of these between text and images in advertising are considered. Goldman suggests a: "semiotic mapping" approach, which involves the semiotician mapping out the text; labelling the signs; and then drawing arrows between them to illustrate the transferred signified. The result is a semiotic flowchart of linear and mechanistic sequences.

Rose (2007) also presents this method as being a useful means of considering the relationship between signifier and signified due to the complex nature of many texts. Dyer (1982) presents a framework for the non-textual and textual analysis of advertising: thus viewing them as sign systems imbued with meaning both ascribed by the author, and understood by the perceiver. This framework was applied to the analysis of the Fringe programmes, as presented in chapter 9.

6.7.2 Stages of the semiotic process

As noted, Echtner (1999) suggests a six-stage process to the semiotic analysis of tourism marketing materials. In defining the brand image of the Fringe through making a semiotic analysis of Fringe programmes, this process and its stages are modified.

Chapter 9 presents the findings of the semiotic analysis. Here a six-stage process is introduced, based on Echtner's (1999, pp.50-51) framework. The modified semiotic process applied to the Fringe research is therefore:

1)   Select a closed representative set of data to apply a synchronic perspective and analyse this independently of any historical data;

2)   Identify and specify relevant elements of analysis, including themes and phrases;

3)   Record the frequency of these features occurring;

4)   Examine the relationship amongst elements through syntagmatic (linear progression of narratives) and paradigmatic (patterns of opposition) structures;

5)   Identify the key combinations of possible elements and understand the system by which they are combined within the overall image;

6)   Penetrate the denotative (surface) meanings to extract the connotative (underlying) meanings.

6.8 Challenges to semiotic analysis

It is important to consider at this point, that semiotic analysis is a wholly subjective methodology. A potential challenge therefore to this semiotic analysis is that in defining the Fringe brand image, the findings will be subjective and based entirely upon the perceptions of the researcher (Carson & Taylor, 2009; Echtner, 1999; Goldman, 1992; Manning, 1987).

This characteristic fits with the constructivist paradigm of this research. However, it may be perceived as a limitation of the semiotic analysis method by those drawn towards a paradigm of positivism or postpostivism, where realism is the epistemological position and: "for whom a single objective reality exists indisputably and independently outside us" (Chandler, 2007, p.64). As discussed earlier, semiotic analysis is demonstrated to be a hermeneutical and subjectivist methodology.

Those who are advocates of semiotic analysis do provide critiques of it as a research method. Rose (2007, p.103) while suggesting that semiotics is:

"centrally concerned with the construction of social difference through signs", argues that as an analytical approach it must consider the social effects of meaning. Furthermore, there are methodological issues that should be considered and these relate to the representativeness and replicability of the results.

Another criticism levelled is the elaborate use and application of terminology, which is theoretical and may lead to a lack of reflexivity (see: Ball & Smith, 1992; Leiss *et al.*, 2005; Rose, 2007; Wells, 1992). Nevertheless, Rose (2007), Bal and Bryson (2001) and Goldman (1992) do offer a counter argument to this as their own works in semiotics do acknowledge its interpretive strengths.

Arthur Asa Berger (1998) additionally argues that semiotic analysis may be criticised for its lack of aesthetic judgement. He suggests that in its concern for signs and the meaning of these, semiotic analysis tends to be somewhat less concerned with the quality of the texts it selects. Morgan and Pritchard (1998) also criticise semiotic approaches for the manner in which representations and meanings are considered in isolation from the significant arenas of power and knowledge.

A challenge for the researcher in adopting this research method may be locating the required Fringe promotional materials to undertake the semiotic analysis. As noted, in chapter 5 the analysis involves a closed data set, and to analyse the Fringe brand image, this includes the previous four years of Fringe programmes (Echtner, 1999).

6.9   Summary

This chapter presents an overview of the application of semiotic analysis as an approach to critically define the brand image of the Fringe: thus addressing the first objective of this research. Additionally, attention to the

compatibility of this method to the constructivist paradigm has been justified.

It is proposed that the semiotic analysis undertaken of Fringe visual promotional materials is based upon the semiotic analysis framework presented by Echtner (1999). The findings of this are used by the researcher to critically define the Fringe brand image. This serves the purpose of informing the definition of the brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders in terms of the image-related elements of this inquiry.

The analysis of the data collected from this stage of the research is detailed in part 4 of this thesis (see chapter 9). Chapter 7 continues with this discussion and justification of the research methods by addressing the remaining objectives in defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe and their brand relationships with the Fringe. Chapter 8, the final in this third part of the thesis, is concerned with qualitative interviews.

Chapter 7

Literature review and consultation

7.1   Introduction

This chapter revisits the literature review of stakeholders, presented in chapter 4, where stakeholder concepts and theories were introduced in organisational contexts and then in relation to festivals and events. This chapter considers the specific application of the literature review as a secondary research method in defining the primary Fringe stakeholders. The third objective of this research is therefore addressed through the undertaking of the literature review; and a consultation approach. A stakeholder model of the Fringe, including its defined primary stakeholders, is presented in chapter 10. The third objective of this research is:

3)   To define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe.

The literature review involves three areas of inquiry addressed in three chapters: the image concept; the brand concept, including brand image and relationships; and (festival) stakeholders.

As discussed previously, the Fringe is contextualised as a hallmark event in Edinburgh's festivals programme (see: Allen *et al.,* 2008; Bowdin *et al.,* 2006; Getz, 1991, 2005, 2007). Chapter 4 of the literature review is concerned with organisational stakeholder approaches to clarify the roles of festival and event stakeholders and this now may be applied to the Fringe.

The role of stakeholders within festival organisations is recognised as being important in terms of stakeholder salience: power; legitimacy; and urgency (Getz, 2007; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). Stakeholders may be defined as either primary or secondary by the nature of their engagement

with an organisation and this can be based on saliency levels. Clarkson (1995) suggests that the satisfaction and participation of primary stakeholder groups is essential to the continued survival and success of an organisation. Secondary stakeholder groups are defined as those groups that have an ongoing interest within an organisation, but are not essential to its survival.

It is contended that festivals can only occur and survive as a result of the engagement and interaction of primary stakeholders with the relevant festival organisation. The management and continued success of festivals is dependent therefore on those stakeholders who are most involved with the festival organisation (Clarkson, 1995; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

As detailed, the literature reviewed encompasses the interdisciplinary nature of this research, grounded within: marketing; festivals and events management; tourism; social science; consumer research and the arts. An in-depth investigation is made of relevant literature to the aim and objectives of this thesis and this is intended to represent an effective analysis of appropriate consistency, breadth and depth (Hart, 1998).

The literature review highlights the main areas of inquiry and identifies the gaps in the literature and this consequently forms the research questions to be considered. These are presented in detail in chapter 5 where the paradigm and methodology of this research are introduced.

7.2   Stakeholder definitions and constructivism

This research is concerned with defining the categories of primary and secondary stakeholders of the Fringe. These categories are based upon the nature of engagement with the Festival Fringe Society; and their role within the Fringe itself occurring (Clarkson, 1995; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

The literature review considers those studies concerned with developing festival and event stakeholder models, before initial stakeholder categories were defined. The literature review findings are helpful in raising research questions and in considering approaches and methods for defining festival stakeholders (Bryman & Bell, 2003).

The initially identified primary and secondary stakeholder categories, based upon the literature review findings were presented to two senior staff members at the Festival Fringe Society. The following consultation process resulted in the development of the Fringe stakeholder model. The consultation process was useful in gaining the perspectives of those directly involved with the Fringe (see chapter 10).

This method supports the findings of literature review by providing a specific perspective of the Fringe as a festival. Further, it is relevant to the constructivist research paradigm of this research. Constructivism prescribes that realities are multiple and socially constructed. Further, knowledge is subjective and transactional: created through interactions amongst constructors, thus creating emic theory (Crotty, 2003; Pernecky, 2007). This approach is compatible with the relativist ontology which subscribes to the belief that reality is dependent upon societal and cultural factors. Constructed realities are products of human intellects that can change as the constructors become more informed (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). The constructors approached by the researcher to contribute to defining the stakeholder groups of interest were essential in the provision of an inside perspective of the Fringe. This informed the construction of the Fringe stakeholder world, and assisted in developing the Fringe stakeholder model; thus defining the primary stakeholders. The second research objective was addressed and the population of interest for the forthcoming stakeholder interviews identified. The approach and findings are discussed further in chapter 10.

7.3   Stakeholders: research questions

As noted, the key findings and identified research gaps from the literature review are presented in chapter 5. These are the areas of inquiry that the objectives address in meeting the overall aim of this research. Primary stakeholders are collectively those groups that are essential to the Fringe and whose interactions result in it occurring. This research attempts to define the Fringe primary stakeholders and determines if they can be defined within individual and distinct categories, or if indeed they can assume multiple stakeholder roles.

This chapter addresses therefore the methods applied to answering this research question through the findings of the literature review; and a consultation process to defining the Fringe stakeholders and proposing the development of a Fringe stakeholder model. These are presented in chapter 10.

7.4   Stakeholder theories revisited

In defining the stakeholders of the Fringe, it is necessary to return to the concept of stakeholders and to define their role within organisations. This stakeholder approach may be applied to festival and event management (Reid & Arcodia, 2002). An investigation of this will serve in both defining the stakeholders of the Fringe and in developing a stakeholder model, which is presented in chapter 10.
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Stakeholders of an organisation are categorised as any groups that have a 'stake' and therefore affect the organisation and the achievement of its goals. Stakeholder theory is concerned with the stakeholder management framework and understanding the internal and external forces upon the organisation's context (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, 2007; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001).

It is argued that stakeholder management is important in the successful achievement of current and future organisational objectives. It is therefore possible to define them as: "groups and individuals who can affect, or are affected by, the achievement of an organization's mission" (Freeman, 1984, p.52).

Stakeholders are essential to any organisation and are indeed key components within the governance chain of roles and relationships assumed by various groups within overall organisational control. Further, the expectations of stakeholders are considered to be influential upon an organisation's strategic purpose: along with its governance structure; and social responsibilities (Harrison & Freeman; 1999; Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2008; McVea & Freeman, 2005).

To define stakeholder groups in relation to the markets within which an organisation operates, Strong, Ringer and Taylor (2001) apply a framework which identifies: customer; employee; and ownership stakeholders as three of the main categories. Jawahar and McLaughlin (2001) suggest that stakeholders may be classified according to the specific organisational needs they can satisfy and the functions they can address. Further, different stakeholder groups become more or less important to the organisation during the various stages of its life-cycle.

Freeman (1984, p.25) proposes a: "stakeholder view of the firm", a simplified map of organisational stakeholders, and notes: "Each of these groups plays a vital role in the success of the business enterprise in today's environment. Each of the groups has a stake in the modern corporation, hence, the term 'stakeholder'". These groups are classified as: owners; consumer advocates; customers; competitors; media; employees; special interest groups; environmentalists; suppliers; governments; and local community organisations.

Stakeholders are acknowledged as being involved therefore in the organisational decision-making process and, as a collective group, are essential to an organisation (Agle *et al.,* 2008; Atkinson, Waterhouse & Wells, 1997; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1994; Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, Wicks & Palmer, 2004). Additionally, as noted, they may be further segmented into specific stakeholder categories (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman & Reed, 1983; Freeman, 1984; Freeman 1994; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

Clarkson (1995) develops Freeman's (1984) definition of stakeholders as groups that have ownership rights or interests within organisations. These rights may be related to the past, present, or future; and can be legal or moral; individual or collective. Clarkson (1995) suggests that the organisation may itself be defined as a system of stakeholders, and states that it is possible to further classify the key stakeholder groups, according to their main interests, as either primary or secondary in nature.

Clarkson (1995, p.106) notes therefore that the satisfaction and participation of primary stakeholder groups is essential to the continued success of an organisation: "A primary stakeholder group is one without whose continuing participation the corporation cannot survive as a going concern." Conversely, secondary stakeholder groups are classified as those groups that have an ongoing interest within the organisation, but are not essential to its survival.

7.5 Festival stakeholders revisited

Getz (1991, p.15) applies the earlier general definition of stakeholders to festivals and events as: "those people and groups with a stake in the event and its outcomes, including all groups participating in the event production, sponsors and grant-givers, community representatives, and everyone impacted by the event."

As noted previously, within stakeholder theory it is suggested that core attributes may be defined as related to the concept of stakeholder saliency, which is concerned with the possession of: power; legitimacy; and urgency (see: Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, 2007; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997).

Festival and event stakeholder groups may be considered therefore in relation to the attributed or actual power and influence that they are perceived to have within a festival or event organisation. This can be defined in relation to their roles and the success of festivals and events (Getz, Andersen & Larson, 2007; Larson, 2002; Larson & Wikstrom, 2001; Reid & Arcodia, 2002; Spiropoulos, Gargalianos & Sotiriadou, 2006).

Stakeholders may be considered additionally in relation to their impact upon the achievement of a festival's aims (Campbell, 1997; Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Johnson, Scholes & Whittington, 2008; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). It is argued therefore that the identification and classification of festival stakeholders is essential to the strategic positioning of festivals (Bowdin *et al.*, 2006; Getz, 2005; 2007; Spiropoulos, Gargalianos & Sotiriadou, 2006).

There has been limited research into the relationships between festival stakeholders and festival brands. The role of stakeholders in relation to festival ownership and their resulting influence upon festival brands is addressed in some studies (Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005; Mossberg & Getz, 2006). It is evident however that relationships between festival stakeholders and festival brands has, so far, commanded little academic attention. There is no identified research that investigates festival brand image and the relationship of this to the festival's stakeholders, but it is notable that: "stakeholder analysis and management can be used to build more effective event brands", (Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005, p.1060).

In considering stakeholder influences upon mature festival brands, Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) refer to the concept of resource dependency (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). When applied to festival brands, this suggests that over the course of time mature hallmark festivals, such as the Fringe, become institutional in status; developing a supportive network of diverse stakeholders. In aiming to achieve and maintain hallmark event status it is vital therefore for a strong and positive festival brand image to be reinforced by, and synonymous to, the host city or destination (Anholt, 2004; Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules, 2004; Getz, 2005; 2007; Mossberg & Getz; 2006; Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules & Ali, 2003).

Similarly to those of other organisations, festival stakeholders may be defined as either primary or secondary, by the nature of their engagement to the festival organisation and the impact they have upon the event occurring (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

The classification of primary and secondary stakeholder categories may be applied to festivals and events. Primary stakeholder groups are deemed essential to festivals and their interaction with the festival organisation results in the festival. It is suggested thus that primary stakeholders are important because: "without the direct support of these stakeholders the event would not exist" (Reid & Arcodia, 2002, p.494).

Within the primary and secondary categories, it is evident and notable that all festival stakeholders may assume multiple roles affecting the organisation in different ways (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007).

7.6   Festival stakeholder models: a review

On reviewing the literature considering Festival and event stakeholder models, it was apparent that approaches vary. Bowdin *et al.,* (2006)

present a model illustrating the relationships between an event and its stakeholders. The event itself is central to this model with the stakeholder groups classified as: participants and spectators (supporting the event and being rewarded with entertainment); co-workers (who provide labour and support in return for payment and other rewards); the host organisation (reciprocal participation and support); the host community (impacts and context); sponsors (financial or in-kind support in return for acknowledgement and exposure to audiences); and finally media organisations (promoting the event in return for advertising revenue or editorial).

Adopting Clarkson's (1995) approach, Reid and Arcodia (2002, p.480) apply stakeholder theory to the management of events, suggesting: "the organisation is a system of stakeholder groups and a failure to retain their participation will result in the failure of the enterprise". They note that event management is a strategic process, differing from other organisational contexts in terms of the often limited time-spans of events. In managing successful events, it is essential to engage event stakeholders throughout the event planning process to gain community satisfaction and support for the event: resulting in competitive advantage.

As noted, Reid and Arcodia (2002) apply Clarkson's (1995) primary and secondary stakeholder model to the events industry. The essential primary event stakeholders are defined thus as: employees; volunteers; sponsors; suppliers; spectators; attendees; and participants. Secondary stakeholders are also important to the success and survival of the event but do not have the same direct impact upon the event as primary stakeholders. These stakeholders are classified therefore as: government; the host community; emergency services; general business; media and tourism organisations.

As noted, there have been a few studies made in relation to stakeholders of specific types of festivals and events. A festival stakeholder model is

developed by Spiropoulos, Gargalianos and Sotiriadou (2006) where the stakeholders of the 20th Greek Festival of Sydney are identified and categorised in relation to their influence upon the strategic management and delivery of the festival. Here, stakeholders are categorised according to their functional role so the model consists of: marketing stakeholders, including the festival content (product); venues (place); promotion; and the audience members (people attending). The second group is the festival's production stakeholders (the events occurring during the festival); and the final group is the administration stakeholders, composed of the management functions of human, financial and infrastructure resources.

Larson (2002) defines the stakeholder groups of a music festival that are related to the production and marketing functions of the festival. These are classified as the festival organiser; the music industry (of performers, bands and contractors); the local trade and industry; sponsors; public authorities; associations and clubs (participating venues) and the media.

Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) suggest that due to the nature of many festivals with many involved parties, it is difficult to map all stakeholders. The festival organiser, although considered the most powerful stakeholder, is often dependent upon other actors with stakes in the festival. In investigating the relative importance of the remaining stakeholders the authors categorise the key groups as: regulator; facilitator; co-producer; supplier; collaborator; audience; and the impacted.

Some festival and event stakeholder research emphasises the role and influence of stakeholders upon the festival or event brand, and its resulting success; and the development of event brands through marketing and stakeholder approaches (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005). Existing research is not concerned however with the types of relationships that exist between festival and event stakeholders and the festival or event brand.

In addressing the development of event brands through a marketing approach, Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005) develop a stakeholder-based theoretical model in relation to event marketing. They note that Freeman's (1984) stakeholder approach should be adapted, both to consider the important role of primary stakeholders and to create a proactive tool to enhance stakeholder relationships. The resulting analysis and management of stakeholders may be applied to the development of more effective event brands. A qualitative approach is adopted within a case study of the Brisbane Goodwill Games, where the marketing manager of the event is asked to draw a stakeholder map identifying key stakeholders of the marketing department. The department itself is at the centre and the stakeholders deemed as most important to marketing the event are drawn closer to the centre. The resulting model provides an in-depth sense of the event marketing stakeholders, including: the games' public relations department (as co-members of the cooperative team); sponsors; ticketing agency; government tourism agencies; licensees; venues; athletes; public.

Considering the relationship between stakeholders and event brands from the perspective of influence, Mossberg and Getz (2006) examine fourteen festivals in Sweden and Canada in relation to how stakeholder brand ownership may influence the branding of festivals. The authors argue that the involvement of key stakeholders, such as sponsors, in a festival's branding process is important.

Additionally, and of relevance to the Fringe, Mossberg and Getz (2006) consider the role of host city names and conclude that this does not appear to influence branding. It serves instead to distinguish festivals and position them geographically for attendees. This suggests that while the use of city names is a form of branding, it is incidental to the overall branding process. Furthermore in discussing event branding, Mossberg and Getz (2006) identify the lack of available academic research

considering brand ownership and festivals. They note that in contrast to mainstream theories related to private organisations, in their context as non-profit organisations festivals differ. Further, within Europe and North America they suggest that non-profit-societies dominate the festival sector and this raises questions related to defining the ownership and branding of such festivals, as well as stakeholder involvement in the branding process.

In discussing ownership of festival brands, Mossberg and Getz (2006, p. 323) conclude that brand ownership may be considered as being either "single", or "diffuse", depending on the nature of the festival. Based upon these categories, it can be concluded that the Fringe is a non-profit-society-owned festival and therefore may be considered a single ownership brand.

Further, there is considerable sponsorship involvement with the Fringe brand: but not to the extent of sponsors of the Fringe assuming title or naming rights. This means the Fringe is not associated with any particular sponsor (Masterman & Wood, 2006). There are various other stakeholder influences however within the Fringe, and of particular note are: the independent venues; performing companies; promoters; audience members; funders; staff members and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society board members. It may be concluded therefore these stakeholders are important in relation to the Fringe brand.

In defining the primary and secondary stakeholder categories of the Fringe the findings of the stakeholder literature review, and in particular Reid and Arcodia's (2002) stakeholder model were applied directly to the Fringe as a festival.

7.7   Initial Fringe stakeholder categories

Based upon the literature review and consideration of festival stakeholder models, primary stakeholders of the Fringe were initially categorised by the researcher as:

- Fringe Society staff and board members;
- performing companies;
- venues;
- promoters;
- bookers;
- audience members;
- Scottish government agencies;
- Edinburgh City Council;
- Scottish Arts Council;
- Festivals Edinburgh;
- sponsors.

Secondary stakeholder groups were initially considered to be:

- government (not directly involved with supporting the Fringe);
- media;
- emergency services;
- tourism organisations and agencies;
- tourists and visitors to Edinburgh;
- the host community;
- Edinburgh's festivals;
- general business in the city.

The above categories of primary and secondary stakeholders are informed by the definitions developed by Reid and Arcodia (2002), and the findings of Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005).

Following the development of the above initial stakeholder categories, these were presented to two senior staff at the Fringe. The following consultation process resulted in an informed production of the final Fringe stakeholder model.

The overall findings and the Fringe stakeholder model are discussed and presented in detail in chapter 10, within the analysis and findings, part 4, of this thesis.

7.8   Summary

This chapter is concerned with presenting the research method applied to defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe. A literature review of relevant research and festival stakeholder models is applied to the development of a Fringe stakeholder model. The stakeholder literature review is presented in detail in chapter 4.

It is concluded that the concept of stakeholder salience: power; legitimacy and urgency (Getz, 2007; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997) is of relevance to festivals. Also of significance to stakeholders as festival consumers is the construct of primary and secondary stakeholders. Both are important to festival organisations, but primary stakeholders are actively engaged with the festival organisation and their interaction results in the festival taking place. Of further significance to defining the Fringe stakeholders is its nature, as an open access festival. This has brought a wide network of stakeholders with the growth of the Fringe and it is possible that many individuals have assumed various stakeholder roles at different times; or can be defined within a number of stakeholder categories simultaneously (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007). Furthermore stakeholders interact and engage with the Fringe and impact upon it in different ways.

Part 4 of this thesis, chapters 9-11, present the research findings, starting with the semiotic analysis to define the Fringe brand image in chapter 9. The Fringe stakeholder model is presented in chapter 10 along with a discussion and analysis of the roles of the primary stakeholders and the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships presented in chapter 11. Prior to this, chapter 8 discusses the application of qualitative interviews as a research method to define brand relationships.

Chapter 8

Qualitative interviews

8.1 Introduction

The third objective which informs the overall aim of this research is:

3)   To develop a typology of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders.

The above is based upon the assertion that festival consumers have a portfolio of brands with which they have relationships that are interactive, mutual and continuous (Fournier, 1998; Hinde, 1979).

This chapter details the areas of inquiry addressed by this research through the application of qualitative interviewing to meet the overall aim of this research, in defining a series of brand relationships that exist between Fringe and its primary stakeholders. As detailed in the previous two chapters, this is approached firstly by defining the Fringe brand image through undertaking a semiotic analysis of Fringe publicity materials. Fringe stakeholders are also categorised through literature review and consultation and they are interviewed about their own perceptions and lived history with the Fringe.

The brand image and stakeholders are thus important contributors to developing the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology. Of principal concern in defining brand relationship types is a relationship theory perspective. This involves considering the self-concepts; the lived experiences; and identity themes of stakeholders in their roles as consumers of the Fringe (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997).

As noted previously, in undertaking this research the festival self-image congruence of the Fringe brand and its stakeholders is of interest. Self-

image congruence is a sub-theory of self-concept and contests that individuals are likely to prefer festival brands they perceive to be similar in image both to themselves and to others they regard as similar to themselves (see: Belk, 1988, 1989; Chon, 1992; Gardner & Levy, 1955; Kressman *et al.,* 2006; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Ross, 1971; Sirgy, 1982, 1985; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Solomon, 1983).

According to stakeholder theory, as festival consumers, primary stakeholders of the Fringe are essential. Their engagement and interaction with the Festival Fringe Society results in the festival taking place (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

Interpersonal relationships are dyadic in nature and are underpinned by concepts of interaction, mutuality and continuity: all of which can be arbitrary (Hinde, 1979). As noted by Fournier (1998), despite the realisation of relationship theory approaches within transactional marketing concepts and practice: this approach has been limited in its application to the development of relationship marketing theory. It is suggested that brands can become interactive partners within consumer-brand relationships. Imbuing brands with personal meanings includes considering brand personality and the development of brand relationships*.* It is argued thus that consumers have a portfolio of brands with which they have brand relationships. Brand loyalty and trustworthiness are dynamic, and it may be suggested, influence potential congruence towards the brands in their portfolio. Typologies of forms of consumer brand relationships based upon interpersonal relationships with consumer brands have been proposed (see: Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000).

This study seeks to apply the consumer-brand relationship approach to the Fringe brand and its primary stakeholders. This contributes to academic research into marketing and festivals through the provision of a unique conceptual model of brand relationships. This research and the resulting Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology in particular, will be potentially useful to the critical examination of how brand image may be managed in order to appeal to primary stakeholder groups of festivals. This could facilitate effective branding strategies and thus marketing communications within the festivals industry.

In addressing the third objective of this research, the method of inquiry is therefore qualitative interviewing. The interviews adopt a phenomenological perspective as they seek to construct an understanding of the informants'; lived experiences as Fringe stakeholders (Fournier, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). In conducting the interviews, a laddering technique is adopted in order to determine the links between perceptual elements (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). The interviews involve the use of image stimuli to assist with the narrative (Fournier & Yao, 1997). In developing a Fringe-brand relationship typology: the self-concepts, lived experiences and Fringe-related perceptions of primary stakeholders are investigated. This leads to defining the brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000).

8.2   Research approaches in brand relationships

Before investigating the specific application of qualitative interviewing involving: photo-elicitation and a phenomenological narrative perspective; this chapter considers existing methods of defining brand relationships. As noted previously, brand relationships are classified by the application of norms of interpersonal human relationships such as: interactivity; continuity; and mutuality by individuals to the brands they consume

(Aggarwal, 2004; Fournier, 1998; Hess & Story, 2005; Hinde, 1979). Relationships are purposive, adding structure and meaning to people's lives and they are affected by and can affect self-concept (Aron, Paris & Aron, 1995; Fournier, 1998). Fournier (1998) argues the validity of consumer-brand relationships through lived experiences and develops a typology of relationship forms based on this.

Brand relationship theory is founded upon the assertion that similarly to the interpersonal relationships within their lives, consumers have a collection of brands with which they have relationships. Brand relationships are influenced by individuals' lived experiences and their identities, and are characterised by fluctuating levels of loyalty and trustworthiness towards brands (Aaker, J., Fournier & Brasel, 2004; Aggarwal, 2004; Esch *et al.,* 2006; Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Hess & Story, 2005; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000).

Brand relationship typologies have been developed in relation to consumer goods research (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002) and community and brands (Kates, 2000). The typologies are based upon elements of human relationships such as friendships, political alliances, enmities, love affairs and marriages.

Fournier (1998) adopts a phenomenological perspective in conducting empirical brand relationship case studies (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). These involve modified life-history qualitative interviews with women about the brands they use in every-day life. The purpose of the interviews is to develop an understanding of the brand relationships as experienced by the women. The information sought has two functions: "a first person description of the informant's brand usage history and… contextual details concerning the informant's life world." In describing the brand relationships Fournier (1998, p. 347) develops a typology of relationship forms which describe the different dimensions of brand

relationships. These are based upon types of interpersonal relationships including friendships, marriages, enslavements and affairs.

Qualitative interviews of this nature allow an understanding to develop of the subjective meanings of the experiences consumers have with brands; and can establish the validity of the brand relationship proposition (Fournier, 1998). The application of a phenomenological perspective is useful in understanding consumers' lived experiences with brands (Law *et al.,* 1998; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989)

Personal narratives of lived experiences are also used by Fournier and Yao (1997) in their study of coffee consumer brand relationships. This study is concerned with criteria of loyalty and depth of brand relationships and applies a series of qualitative in-depth interviews involving the use of informant generated images. The interviews involve the use of laddering based upon the images presented. This approach therefore demonstrates the application of photo-elicitation to defining brand relationships, based upon the strength and loyalty criteria. In investigating these aspects of the brand relationships, a series of relationship types are proposed and these are also based upon love, marriage and friendship.

Ji (2002) supports Fournier's (1998) assertion that in developing relationships with brands, consumers develop functional aids to their life and seek meanings within lived experiences related to their self-concepts (Ball & Tasaki, 1992; Belk, 1988, 1989; Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry, 1989; Kleine, Kleine & Allen, 1995; Levy, 1985; McGrath, Sherry & Levy, 1993; Richins, 1994; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). This study examines the relationships between children and brands within the family environment. A series of qualitative group and individual interviews with children are conducted using story-telling techniques. Following idiographic analysis, a typology of ten relationship categories is developed. These are again described by interpersonal metaphors, in this instance, also based upon

the aspects of love, friendship, marriage, and enmity. It is suggested that these categories are arbitrary. Further, they evolve over time and are not therefore mutually exclusive (Hinde, 1979).

Kates (2000) considers the dynamics related to the construction of community through consumer brand relationships and applies an ethnographic approach to investigating brand relationships between gay men and aspects of their community. This method involved an immersive period within the community and participant observation, followed by a second approach of semi-structured interviews. Kates (2000) develops thus a typology of brand relationships within the gay community. These are again based upon definitions of human relationships: brands as comrades (or community members); political alliances; and enemies. It is concluded that brand relationships can contribute to creating and constructing communities. Although this study is specific to a gay community, Kates (2000) suggests that this may be applicable to other consumption contexts.

In defining types of brand-consumer relationships there is evidence that qualitative interview techniques are appropriate (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000). These may adopt a phenomenological perspective in understanding lived experiences with brands (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989); involve the use of additional techniques, such as narrative and laddering (Fournier, 1998; Gutman, 1982; Ji, 2002; Kleine, Kleine & Allen, 1995); or projective techniques, such as photo-elicitation (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Levy, 1985). An ethnographic approach may be useful for a longitudinal community-based study (Kates, 2000).

A qualitative interview method is applied in addressing this aspect of the aim of this research: to define a series of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders. Before discussing the specific

approaches applied within this method, this chapter now introduces and considers the application of qualitative interviewing and its compatibility with the constructivist paradigm.

8.3   Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews with Fringe primary stakeholders are applied to this research. Within the overall aim, this method contributes to the development of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology.

This chapter presents therefore the specific qualitative interview approaches adopted by this research involving: a phenomenological perspective; personal narrative; laddering; and photo-elicitation. Firstly, the use of interviews as a qualitative research method is introduced. The role of qualitative interviews within the overall constructivist paradigm is then considered.

Interviews assist researchers in knowing how people understand the worlds they live in and the experiences they have (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Today, they are considered to be a major qualitative methodology for the collection of information (Carson, *et al.* 2001).

Interviews have particular features, described as: "of relatively long duration. They commonly involve one-on-one, face-to-face interaction between an interviewer and an informant, and seek to build the kind of intimacy that is common for mutual self-disclosure" (Johnson, 2002, p.103).

Interviews are a process of coordination: information is obtained by the interviewer through eliciting questions; and provided by the informant through the provision of answers (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). Qualitative interviewing has various advantages: self-generated responses may be more effective in complex issues and lead to more thoughtful responses

(Shuy, 2002). Disclosures are thus co-constructed by researcher and informant (Mishler, 1991).

A structured form of interview is commonly used in quantitative research to generate answers that can be measured, coded and processed. This interview context requires the researcher to assume a neutral, directive role and the interview itself to be predetermined in relation to the questions posed and the order they occur in. Structured interviewing therefore often serves the purpose of pretesting and exploration (Fontana & Frey, 2002).

Conversely, qualitative interviewing is flexible and dynamic in its approach. It seeks to develop detailed answers and explanations of phenomena through the interviewer adopting either a semi-structured or unstructured interview approach (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Within qualitative interviews the researcher assumes a role which is less directive than that of the structured interviewer (Fontana & Frey, 2002; Mason, 2002). Kvale (1996) writing on interview design emphasises the flexible and creative role of the interviewer:

> "The very openness and flexibility of the interview with its many on-the-spot decisions – for example whether to follow-up new leads in an interview situation, or to stick to the interview guide – put strong demands on advance preparation and interviewer competence. The absence of prescribed rules creates an open-ended field of opportunity for the interviewer's skills, knowledge and intuition. Interviewing is a craft that is closer to art than to standardized social science methods" (Kvale, 1996, p.84).

Qualitative interviewing can therefore be defined as: "an interactional exchange of dialogue" (Mason, 2002, p.62). It tends to be less formal than the structured interview and involves open-ended questions. Mason (2002) argues that all interviews are at the very least structured to some extent as they must follow some form of structure in their approach; however the term unstructured is widely applied to qualitative interviews

which give a greater breadth and gain in-depth insights and understanding (Carson *et al.,* 2001; Fontana & Frey, 2002).

Bryman and Bell (2003) differentiate amongst structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews through their form and the type of interview guide used for each. A structured interview will include a formal interview guide, where all respondents are asked the same questions in the same order. A semi-structured interview may include a series of questions that vary in sequence, and are flexible, but do follow an interview guide. Unstructured interviews tend to involve a series of topics or issues as the interview guide. The interview will be less formal in style and the phrasing and sequence of questions will vary between interviews.

This research involves the application of semi-structured life world interviews to address the central inquiries (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). An interview guide, including a series of questions, is developed: but not all questions are posed in the same sequence, or to all informants. The interviews involve specific approaches compatible to the semi-structured interview approach:

> "A semi-structured life world interview attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects own perspectives. This kind of interview seeks to obtain descriptions of the interviewees' lived world with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena. It comes close to an everyday conversation, but as a professional interview it has a purpose and involves a specific approach and technique; it is semi-structured – it is neither an open everyday conversation or a closed questionnaire. It is conducted according to an interview guide that focuses on certain themes and that may include suggested questions. The interview is usually transcribed, and the written text and sound recording together constitute the materials for the subsequent analysis of meaning" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.27).

A phenomenological perspective is adopted through the semi-structured life world interview, in this case involving a personal narrative approach. The use of photo-elicitation, a projective technique, is also used. These approaches help to define the brand relationships that exist between the

Fringe brand image and stakeholders. The brand relationship definitions are based upon the framework proposed by Fournier (1998). Relevant definitions are investigated by the researcher to meet the final objective of this research and thus address the overall aim. These defined brand relationships, are useful in considering how festival brand image definitions may be used to appeal to the perceived self-concepts of primary stakeholders.

8.3.1 Qualitative interviews and constructivism

Qualitative interviewing is concerned with the perspectives of the participants to develop interpretations through narrative and as a method thus tends to assume a constructivist paradigm (Warren, 2002).

Mason (2002, p.63) similarly asserts that in selecting qualitative interviewing as a research method: "your ontological position suggests that people's knowledge, views, understandings, interpretations, experiences and interactions are meaningful properties of the social reality which your research questions are designed to explore". Further, the epistemological position adopted by the interviewer must allow interaction between themselves and the respondents: primarily through asking questions and listening to responses. The experiences and understandings of informants may only be constructed and reconstructed through the interview process and the interview relies consequently upon the capacity of both interviewers and informants to communicate through their abilities to: "verbalize, interact, conceptualize and remember" (Mason, 2002, p.64).

Miller, de Chazer and De Jong, (2002) suggest that all interviews are social constructions of realities. Qualitative interviews as research methods therefore are reflective of the hermeneutical and dialectical methodology of the constructivist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The specific approaches of personal narrative and photo-elicitation also adhere

to this perspective (Atkinson, 2002; Chase, 2005; Fontana, 2002; Mishler, 1991; Riessman, 2002; Thompson, Pollio & Locander, 1994).

The use of such projective and narrative approaches with qualitative interviews is discussed in detail later in this chapter, followed by a description of their specific application to this research. First, the phenomenological perspective is presented.

8.3.2 A phenomenological perspective

Phenomenology is concerned with understanding lived experiences. As a social science research approach, phenomenology requires the researcher to enter the life world of the informant to interpret experiences (Law *et al.,* 1998).

As a paradigm, phenomenology is a complex system of ideas, concerned with asking how individuals interpret the world they live in; and how philosophers should understand that world without preconception (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Philosophical phenomenology is underpinned by existentialism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989) and is associated with the works of Hussrel into consciousness and experience. It was further developed to include the human life world by Heidegger and Sartre (see discussions in: Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

Phenomenology as an approach is compatible to the constructivist paradigm of this research. It is concerned with the immediate phenomenon of experience. The hermeneutical approach further adopted in this study, in the semiotic analysis, is also relevant as this is concerned with interpreting contexts and meanings inherent in collected data to reach a contextual understanding (Carson *et al.,* 2005).

A phenomenological perspective in a non-philosophical sense has been adopted in qualitative research (Kvale, 1996; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989) across interpretive consumer studies (see: Fournier, 1998; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Mick, 1986). The phenomenological perspective is based upon phenomenology as a means of understanding social phenomena experienced by informants, as described from their own perspectives. Further, it views reality as it is perceived by individuals (Kvale, 1996).

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) propose a framework for understanding qualitative interviews from a perspective inspired by phenomenology. This has twelve aspects and it is adapted to developing and interpreting the Fringe stakeholder interviews:[9]

1) Life world: the interview topic is the everyday life world of each informant and his/her relationship to it.

2) Meaning: The meaning of central themes of the informants' life world are sought and interpreted by the interviewer.

3) Qualitative: the knowledge sought by the interview is qualitative and expressed in normal language.

4) Descriptive: Open and detailed descriptions of aspects of the informants' life world as Fringe stakeholders are obtained.

5) Specificity: Descriptions of specific situations are elicited in preference to general opinions.

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[9] This Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) framework of phenomenological interviewing is presented in chapter 11, where it is applied specifically to the Fringe stakeholders' interviews context.

6) Deliberate naivety: The interviewer remains open to unexpected phenomena, rather than having prepared categories of interpretation.

7) Focused: The interview is concerned with particular themes. Questions are neither strictly standardised, nor completely non-directed.

8) Ambiguity: Informants' statements reflect their life-worlds and may reflect contradictions.

9) Change: The interview process can produce new insights and awareness causing the informant to change descriptions and meanings of a theme throughout the interview.

10) Sensitivity: The sensitivity to and knowledge about the research topic may influence the interviewer's interpretation of themes.

11) Interpersonal situation: The knowledge obtained is elicited through interpersonal interaction.

12) Positive experience: A well carried out research interview can be an enriching experience for the interviewee, who may obtain new insights into his or her life-world.

8.3.3 Qualitative interviews and narrative inquiry

Narrative inquiry may be defined simply as a story telling approach which is applied within qualitative interviews. Respondents tell stories related to their lives and thus bring meaning to their life-worlds. For researchers, narrative inquiry involves developing an understanding of how individuals construct their lives and realities (Atkinson, 2002; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Mishler, 1991; Riessman, 2002)

Chase (2005) presents narrative inquiry as a subtype of qualitative research which may be oral, or written, and can be elicited during fieldwork; during an interview; or within a natural conversation. Gubrium and Holstein (2002) recognise that the narrative approach is applied across social and behavioural science research, professional practice, and the humanities. Further, the narrative approach can assume a constructivist application, as the roles of informants and the researcher facilitate the co-constructions that occur (Atkinson, 2002; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). Denzin and Lincoln (1998b) suggest that within qualitative interviews, a narrative approach can provide rich descriptions of individuals' social worlds and lives.

Narrative inquiry recognises that individuals understand their lives through a sense of continuity and process. Bryman and Bell (2003) describe the role of narrative inquiry within qualitative interviewing as being not only reflective of respondents' lives, but also of the interconnected episodes and events of their social lives, which can be neglected by other methods:

> "Narrative analysis an approach to the elicitation and analysis of data that is sensitive to the sense of temporal sequence that people, as tellers of stories about their lives or events around them, detect in their lives and surrounding episodes and inject into their accounts" (Bryman & Bell, 2003, p.440).

The narrative approach therefore investigates the story that is told of individuals' experiences and lives. It therefore depends upon subjectivity and positionality (Riessman, 2002).

A personal narrative approach within the Fringe stakeholder qualitative interviews is applied to this research (McLean, Pasupathi & Pals, 2007; Pasupathi, Mansour & Brubaker, 2007). This serves the purpose of informing the development of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology as presented in chapter 11 (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000).

8.3.4 Qualitative interviews and laddering

Within the qualitative interviews to define the brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders, a laddering approach is also applied. Laddering is based upon the consumer behaviour concept of means-end theory (Gutman, 1982), suggesting that consumers organise their values and perceptions hierarchically, and this is applied to their behaviour (Gutman, 1982; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Wansink & Chan, 2002). This marketing approach provides a basis by which the attributes of products can be associated with advertising which demonstrates the consumption of the product being advertised as achieving the desired values of the consumer (Gutman, 1982).

Means-end theory is demonstrated thus as a hierarchical chain model based around consumer decision making processes. As an approach it investigates the structures of the individuals' motivations. Gutman (1982) developed the means end chain model based upon four assumptions about consumer behaviour, summarised as: the values of consumers can influence their product choices; consumers place products into categories that reflect these values to simplify choice; all consumer actions have consequences; and consumers grow to associate particular actions with eventual consequences (Gutman, 1982). This may be illustrated by considering that consumers will purchase a product based upon its attributes and the consequences of consuming that product will impact upon their own values.

It is suggested therefore that the means-end theory hierarchy ranges from attributes, to consumption consequences, to personal values (Gutman, 1982; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Wansink & Chan, 2002).

Laddering is a tailored, qualitative interview technique that uses a series of directed probes through the application of means-end theory (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Gutman, 1982; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Wansink & Chan,

2002; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995). When applied to consumer behaviour, laddering allows the interviewer through applying means-end theory to understand: "how consumers translate the attributes of products into meaningful associations with respect to self" (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988, p.2).

Laddering during interviews, as a technique, is used by Fournier and Yao (1997) within their three-stage interviews to define the brand relationships that exist between consumers and coffee brands. Prior to the interviews, informants were asked to collect images that represented their relationships with the product category and how they felt about the particular brand, which was in this case coffee. This informant generated photo-elicitation technique was then used within the first stage of the interviews, in order to elicit the context of the informants' category meanings (see also: Zaltman & Coulter, 1995). The laddering upon the meanings of the images supplied first amplified the images, by asking why they were selected; then identified which images were of central concern to the inquiry. Finally, there was laddering upon elicited picture meanings: informants were probed by a series of questions to reveal their relationships with particular brands in the later stages of the interviews.

This approach is applied to this study within the qualitative interviews and includes the use of informant generated images and a narrative approach with the aim of developing a typology of Fringe brand relationships.

8.3.5 Qualitative interviews and sampling

As noted in chapter 4, the nature of the Fringe, as an open access festival, has brought a wide network of stakeholders with its growth. In addition to participating and attending stakeholders, there is an established framework of supporting stakeholders, and further primary groups including: independent venue producers and the programmers of these

venues. A further group of interest is the Fringe Society stakeholders themselves, and key suppliers of the Fringe.

It is necessary that the informants selected for this research are actively engaged with the Fringe as members of identified primary stakeholder groups. As discussed previously, primary stakeholders are deemed essential to festivals and their interaction with the festival organisation results in the festival (Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

As detailed in chapter 7, in identifying the primary stakeholder groups of the Fringe, literature considering stakeholder models of festivals and events is reviewed (see: Bowdin *et al.,* 2006; Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Larson, 2002; Merrilees, Getz & O'Brien, 2005; Mossberg & Getz, 2007; Reid & Arcodia, 2002; Spiropoulos, Gargalianos & Sotiriadou, 2006). Following this review, a list of primary stakeholder categories is developed and a short consultation undertaken with two senior Fringe Society staff members. As noted previously, the final Fringe primary and secondary stakeholder categories are proposed in chapter 10.

On identification of the primary stakeholder groups of interest, the interview sampling method adopted is one of "snowballing", whereby potential candidates fulfilling the theoretical criteria of being members of a primary stakeholder category, are recommended by each informant (Carson *et al.,* 2001; Warren, 2002).

For the purpose of this research, a defined member of each of the five primary stakeholder groups was contacted in the first instance. The snowballing process continued from there until a number of informants within each category were interviewed. Interviews were undertaken with these informants until saturation of emerging themes was evident, at which point the interview process was terminated.

8.4 Perceptions of self and research approaches

Consideration of the self-concepts of Fringe primary stakeholders and their life-worlds is of relevance to this research. Brand relationships are influenced by the lives and identity themes of individuals and are characterised by consumers' fluctuating levels of loyalty and trustworthiness towards brands (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997). It is suggested that within their roles as Fringe stakeholders, these particular consumers of the Fringe brand have life and identity themes that are congruent to the Fringe brand image. Brand relationships can be defined therefore in relation to the Fringe-stakeholder self-image congruence.

Returning to self-concept, it is concerned with the beliefs a person has about him/herself (Burns, 1979). The sub-theory of interpersonal attraction or congruency, suggests individuals will be likely to favour others whom they perceive as being congruent with their own self-concept (Backman, Secord & Pierce, 1963; Burns, 1979).

Individuals are likely to therefore prefer brands that they perceive would be favoured and consumed by a person similar to themselves (see: Belk, 1988, 1989; Chon, 1992; Gardner & Levy, 1955; Kressman *et al.,* 2006; Levy, 1959; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Ross, 1971; Sirgy, 1982, 1985; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Solomon, 1983).

Within consumer research into self-concept; and brand image some emphasis is towards the use of quantitative research methods to assess or measure self-concepts of consumers (see: Capara, Barbaranelli & Guido, 2001; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy, 1982, 1985). This is also the case in some tourism self-image congruence research (see: Chon, 1992; D'Astous & Boujbel, 2006; Litvin & Kar, 2004; Murphy, Beckendorff & Moscardo, 2007; Murphy, Moscadro & Beckendorff, 2007; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

It seems evident therefore that scales and other quantitative techniques are applied to measuring self-concept. By its nature, however, it is suggested that self-concept is an interpretive and subjective construct which is difficult to quantify (Burns, 1979).

Moving away from the application of quantitative approaches in measuring self-concept, and in considering the definition of self-concept as a subjective construct, some research suggests qualitative approaches. Solomon (1983, p.323) advocates a symbolic interactionism perspective, to the definition of self-concept, whereby there is an experiential view to consumer behaviour and this is a social construct. In defining self-concept therefore: "The individual's self-concept is largely a result of others' appraisals, both imagined and actual. It is essentially a projection of how one appears to others – seeing one as others do."

Pasupathi, Mansour and Brubaker (2007) argue that in narrating an experience within a qualitative interview context, the self-concepts of individuals may be realised and influenced by the individuals as they project and appraise themselves. Furthermore, the narrative approach has an effect upon autobiographical memory, and can thus facilitate the process of individuals' self-development, including perceptions of their self-concepts (McLean, Pasupathi & Pals, 2007). Similarly, Chase (2005) contends that analysis of narratives can highlight the identity of individuals within particular contexts through the constructions of self-concepts they engage in.

Burns (1979) presents three approaches as appropriate in assessing self-concept. The first is self-reporting methods, including rating-scales. The second is observation of individuals. The third method suggested is unstructured, in-depth, qualitative narrative interviewing, including the use of projective techniques such as: unstructured essays; free response; and sentence completion. He presents each of the three methods as being

appropriate to application within different scenarios and subjects. Nevertheless, there are limitations to these methods. Observation is commonly confined to a single set of an individual's observations and may therefore present limited findings. Furthermore, because of its inexact and subjective nature, it is not possible to present a definitive self-concept of an individual. Thus, there are methodological issues with measuring self-concept using self-reporting rating scales in relation to the positivist concerns of: validity; reliability; self-presentation; and disclosure. Vitally, the pre-determined response sets used in these methods can lead to problems of a tendency to acquiescence and social desirability in respondents. He concludes:

> "It is pointless, however, to argue over what is a person's 'real' self-concept since we have to depend on operational definitions. The validity of any approach is governed by its utility as a predictor of behaviour. Personal meaning and interpretation are far more fundamental to self-concept than truthfulness" (Burns, 1979, p.93).

This perspective of the importance of personal meaning and interpretation to self-concept is applicable to the constructivist paradigm of this research and the phenomenological perspective of the interview design and interpretation. As discussed in Chapter 5, constructivism supports the perspective that realities and truths are co-constructed by the researcher and subjects being investigated.

The approach of using projective techniques and personal narratives within qualitative interviews is relevant therefore to the corresponding relativist ontological and transactional epistemological perspectives of the creation of knowledge through interactions amongst co-constructors (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

Burns (1979) discusses the use of projective techniques to define self-concept and in doing so presents the benefits and difficulties of the use of unstructured methods:

"The value of free response or unstructured techniques lies in the removal of the restriction imposed by the rating scale technique where the subject is forced to choose among limited alternatives to circumscribed questions causing the subject to provide a response that doesn't actually reflect his feelings. But the freedom to respond brings with it the corollary that classification of responses becomes very difficult. The projective quality of the obtained responses means that the scoring procedure rests for the most part on the subjective judgement of the scorer himself despite the application of pre-selected categories. The scorer must still decide if a response fits into one category or another. Validity is difficult to ascertain and face validity is often the only form advanced" (Burns, 1979, p.89).

In understanding Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships, the specific approach applied is qualitative interviews involving unstructured free-responses. This approach includes the application of a projective technique (Burns, 1979; Fournier & Yao, 1997) and a narrative approach (Chase, 2005; McLean, Pasupathi & Pals, 2007; Pasupathi, Mansour and Brubaker, 2007). The interviews assume a phenomenological perspective in design and interpretation (Fournier, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). As detailed previously, in its generation of knowledge and construction of realities, this particular approach is suited to the constructivist paradigm of this research.

8.5   Projective techniques

In considering the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships; this research suggests that due to their roles as Fringe brand-consuming primary stakeholders, a level of self-image congruence does exist between primary stakeholders of the Fringe and the Fringe brand image.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the researcher did not uncover any existing research concerning brand relationships and festivals. This includes the foci of this research: festival brand image and festival-stakeholder brand relationships. Existing consumer brand relationship research is generally concerned with consumers and the product brands with which they form relationships. This research applies the basis of this to primary stakeholders, as consumers, and the Fringe as a festival brand upon the

assumption it is consumed in the same way as a product, service or tourist destination. Getz (2005, p.16) recognises the significance that events and festivals have to consumers' experiences: "To the customer or a guest, a special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond the everyday experience."

Projective techniques were developed originally for psychoanalytic purposes and they are considered useful because they are thought to allow respondents to articulate their subjective and unconscious thoughts through the use of ambiguous stimuli and free-response (Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Donoghue, 2000; Rorer, 1990; Westwood, 2007). This is based upon the Freudian theory that individuals' reactions and beliefs are reliant upon their personalities and that subjective thoughts can be expressed through projection upon a third party. Freud proposed a theory of projection related to paranoia, whereby individuals will unconsciously project their own negative personality traits on to others (see discussions in: Allport, 1965; Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985; Boddy, 2004; Donoghue, 2000; Rorer, 1990).

It is agreed that the brain is composed of two hemispheres and these respond to stimulation with different levels of consciousness. It is argued thus that projective techniques are useful in their ability to access the subjective and complex information within the consciousness of the right hemisphere of the brain. This is in comparison to the left hemisphere of the brain which processes information in a linear and logical manner and thus responds to straightforward questions (Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985; Westwood, 2007).

Projective techniques today are widely used within the disciplines of marketing, consumer research, and tourism however they are sourced from psychoanalysis and clinical psychology (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Boddy, 2004; Hussey & Duncombe, 1999; Heisley & Levy, 1991; Westwood,

2007). The use of a projective technique and narrative approach when interviewing Fringe primary stakeholders has the benefit of allowing the respondents flexibility in their responses. Projective techniques are considered to have the ability of being capable of unlocking the mind (Westwood, 2007).

There are numerous projective techniques, including: use of images; word stimuli techniques; personalisation; participant involvement and associations (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Westwood, 2007).

This research proposes the use of images, through applying photo-elicitation (Banks, 2001, 2007; Harper, 1996, 2002; Heisley & Levy, 1991; Mizen, 2005a, 2005b; Rose, 2007), specifically a technique of autodriving (Heisley & Levy, 1991; Westwood, 1997). This approach and its role within the qualitative interview process are detailed below.

8.5.1 Applications of projective techniques

In selecting a suitable research method to apply to the qualitative interviews with Fringe stakeholders', the application of projective techniques to tourism and marketing, including brand and image related research, is now considered.

In recent years, projective techniques have been applied to tourism marketing and consumer behaviour to capture the important nuances of human behaviour that cannot be achieved through the use of more structured methods (Boddy, 2004, 2005; Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985; Donoghue, 2000; Hussey & Duncombe, 1999; Westwood, 2007).

Donoghue (2000, p.48) presents projective techniques as being useful within consumer research as they can: "uncover the innermost thoughts and feelings of a person, those aspects that are particular to this person, in other words the essence of his or her individuality". Branthwaite and

Lunn (1985) suggest that projective techniques can reveal the deep motives and attitudes of individuals by circumventing three barriers of: the unconscious; self-awareness; and rationality and social influence.

It is proposed that this aspect of revealing the deeper essence of an individual may be applied therefore to understanding the lived experiences and self-concepts of Fringe primary stakeholders. This is through the application of projective techniques and personal narratives, within qualitative interviews, to assist in defining Fringe brand relationships, based upon the categories developed by Fournier (1997). As noted, this process is iterative and involves laddering (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988)

Donoghue (2000, p.49) proposes five categories of projective technique approaches that may be applied depending upon the types of response sought. These are firstly 'association': "The subjects are presented with a stimulus and they respond by indicating the first word, image or thought elicited by the stimulus". The second is 'construction', an approach often used in product research involving the use of images, where informants are asked to build a story through making a collage (Hofstede *et al.,* 2007); or to give opinions of the attitudes of others, through for example, bubble drawings or cartoon tests (Boddy, 2004). These association and construction techniques may be applied to assist in revealing the unconscious thoughts of individuals (Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985). A third projective approach is 'completion' of sentences or stories (Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985; Burns, 1979; Donoghue, 2000; Will, Eadie & MacAskill, 1996). A fourth approach is 'expressive': "A subject is asked to role-play, act, draw or paint a specific concept or situation". Finally, 'choice ordering' refers to rating-scale methods that involve ranking, or categorising items. Will, Eadie and McCaskill (1996) also present these five categories as being the main types of projective techniques employed in qualitative

research and argue that through use of these it may be possible to reveal behaviour and attitudes beyond those evident within social conventions.

Hofstede *et al.* (2007) suggest that projective techniques are useful when applied to marketing research into brands. This is because it is difficult for individuals to explain their perceptions of the image of particular brands and implicit knowledge may become more pronounced through their ability to project their subjective beliefs onto other people or items. Hussey and Duncombe (1999) similarly state that projective techniques are useful in encouraging the articulation of motivations that are not rational or concrete.

In a brand-related study Hofstede *et al.* (2007) use two projective methods to investigate the brand personality of beer products. The first is a construction technique (Donoghue, 2000), using 'mood boards', where participants are asked to make collages featuring images of celebrities that they perceive as representative of particular beer brands. The second projective approach used is job sorting, where job-roles are connected to particular beer brands by participants. This is an association approach (Donoghue, 2000). These metaphor based approaches are considered useful as projective techniques.

Hussey and Duncombe (1999) apply two animation sets: cue-card photographs of selected animals and cars to allow identification of consumers' perceptions of the brand image of branded consumer goods (of: coffee, sliced bread, chocolate confectionery and breakfast cereal). Through use of this method they conclude that it is possible to identify the motivations behind brand choice through understanding the brand image perceptions that consumers have of these products.

It is apparent that the use of images and visual materials is central to many categories of projective techniques that have been applied to

consumer and marketing research in relation to image, brand image, perceptions, and motivation (Branthwaite & Lunn, 1985; Donoghue, 2000; Hofstede *et al.*, 2007; Hussey & Duncombe, 1999; Westwood, 2007).

8.5.2 Photo-elicitation

Photo-elicitation is a visual research method (Banks, 2001; 2007; Rose, 2007), and may be defined as the process of*:* "inserting a photograph into a research interview" (Harper, 2002, p.13). Photo-elicitation was first defined by John Collier (1957) in an anthropological study where psychological factors and mental health were examined.

It is argued that the value of photo-elicitation as a technique is that it allows greater flexibility during interviews by prompting participants (Fournier & Yao, 1997) and it can invoke specific memories, comments and discussion within an interview setting (Collier, 1957; Harper, 2002; Rose, 2007). Collier's (1957) study asserts that the use of photographs during interviews is more useful than interviewing alone:

> "The characteristics of the two methods of interviewing can be simply stated. The material obtained with photographs was precise and at times even encyclopaedic; the control interviews were less structured, rambling, and freer in association. Statements in the photo-interviews were in direct response to the graphic probes and differed in character as the content of the pictures differed, whereas the character of the control interviews seemed rather to be governed by the mood of the informants" (Collier, 1957, p.856).

Collier's (1957, p.858) study reports that photo-elicitation is beneficial across a number of areas. Simply, it functions as an aid to descriptive language in complex situations. Fundamentally, during interviews: "photos were capable of reaching deeper centers of reaction, triggering spontaneous revelations of a highly-charged emotional nature". Another important feature is: "a more subtle function of graphic images. This was its compelling effect upon the informant, its ability to prod latent memory, to stimulate and release emotional statements about the informant's life".

It is suggested that the use of photographs during an interview can sharpen memories and reveal greater insights (Banks, 2007; Collier, 1957). Furthermore, the images involved may be archival or contemporary (Banks, 2001). Harper (2002, p.13) agrees that images can: "evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words."

Images used in photo-elicitation techniques may be supplied either by the researcher, or informants (Banks, 2001, 2007; Harper, 2002; Mizen, 2005a; Rose, 2007). In addition to Collier's (1957) anthropological and sociological application of photo-elicitation; further research across this discipline has involved children's working environments as photo-diaries (Mizen, 2005a, 2005b); work and its meaning (Harper, 1986); and studies of recovering hospital patients (Radley & Taylor, 2003). Within tourism, Dann (1996) investigates the formation of destination image perceptions by tourists through the use of pictorial images from tourism brochures to measure perceptions of image, both pre-visit and while visiting Barbados. Similarly, MacKay and Fesenmaier (1997) investigate the contribution of visual representations of a destination to the formation of images of that particular destination through the use of photographs.

Harper (2002, p.13) discusses the use of photographs in photo-elicitation research as being upon a continuum. At one extreme is the scientific approach of visual inventories, involving people, artefacts and objects which are typical to anthropological studies. This continues to the use of photographs that depict institutional or collective experiences in the past, such as education and work in anthropological and sociological studies. Finally, photographs can depict identity: "the intimate dimensions of the social – family or other intimate social group, or one's own body. Elicitation interviews connect: "core definitions of the self", to society, culture and history." Reflecting this, the use of photo-elicitation is applied to defining the brand relationships; and investigates self-concepts of Fringe

stakeholders in relation to the Fringe, which is itself a social, cultural and historical entity.

Mizen (2005a) suggests that in uncovering the full potential of the photo-elicitation method it is important to ensure that the images used in photo-elicitation are contextualised. This is because without knowledge of their production in terms of the concepts and motivations behind them, photographs communicate visual images that may be striking, but can be "analytically thin" (Mizen, 2005a, p.125).

This consideration of context in the selection of images has implications to the use of a photo-elicitation approach in developing the Fringe brand relationship typology. As noted by Fournier and Yao (1997) in eliciting responses concerned with brand relationships the images supplied should describe and capture aspects of feelings and relationships.

8.5.3 Photo-elicitation and autodriving

It is evident that photo-elicitation can assume a number of uses in the qualitative interview process. Another approach may be termed 'photo-self-elicitation' where the research subjects are responsible for producing the images to be used and then engaging in a reflexive dialogue with them during interviews (Harper, 2002; Fournier & Yao, 2007; Mizen, 2005a).

Similar to the above approach is photo-elicitation involving autodriving. This is photo-elicitation using informant-created or-supplied images that are representative of their lives (Westwood, 2007). Thus, the use of autodriving in photo-elicitation ensures: "the interview is driven by informants who are seeing their own behaviour" (Heisley & Levy, 1991, p. 261).

Autodriving is useful therefore in consumer research because the images allow the informants to become observers and interpreters, rather than the

subjects of the interview (Heisley and Levy, 1991). As a technique, Heisley and Levy (1991) conclude that it can elicit meaningful insights within the areas being investigated:

> "The autodriving method highlights the informants' views of ordinary realities. As they observe the moments fixed in time by the photographs, informants distinguish among elements of the typical, the unusual and the ideal. Autodriving thus helps in recognizing and addressing the effects that the researcher introduces, in contrast to the common approach that neither assumes the researcher does not influence the informants or ignores that influence" (Heisley & Levy, 1991, p.269).

This reflexive feature of autodriving is relevant to the hermeneutical and dialectical methodology, and thus the constructivist paradigm of this research (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, 2005). As discussed in Chapter 5 hermeneutics is concerned with the theory and method of human action (Bryman and Bell, 2003) and its central concern is that within analysis it is important to understand the meaning imbued by the author (Baranov, 2004, Bryman & Bell, 2003; Schwandt, 1998).

Through photo-elicitation, and autodriving as a specific approach, the relativist ontological perspective and a transactional and subjectivist epistemology of the constructivism paradigm of this research is addressed.

As discussed previously constructivism perceives knowledge and realities as phenomena that are socially constructed. Knowledge is not objective, but is constructed, and in its creation aims to reach a construction that is more informed than those previous. Further, individual constructions may only be developed through interaction between the researcher and the object of investigation (Crotty, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b).

Westwood (2007) argues that informant-generated visual images are useful research stimuli and applies an autodriving approach to photo-elicitation of tourists' experiences on holiday and their relationships as

consumers with objects within their holidays. The strength of this approach is described thus:

> "By looking at a visual representation that they have made of a particular life situation, it increases their voice and authority, it affords some distance so they can view their everyday lives with a different perspective, and it gives them a way to explain and make it meaningful to others" (Westwood, 2007, p.301).

Westwood (2007) applies a multiple iteration approach to autodriving. Adapting the method of application advocated by Heisley and Levy (1991), this involves a series of sequential interviews based around images supplied by the informants and used as stimuli for the following conversations.

As noted previously, Fournier and Yao (1997, p.455) also apply an autodriven photo-elicitation approach to their research into brand relationships. Here informant generated images are used to elicit understanding of their coffee brand usage, loyalty, and relationships. Rather than using exclusively photographs, in this case, informants are encouraged to supply their images from a variety of sources, including: magazines, personal photographs, product labels, and tokens. This is because it is deemed that images should be selected: "to understand what coffee in general and the loyal brand specifically meant to the informant".

Fournier and Yao (1997) suggest a series of stages to the interview process they apply to assessing brand relationships through the use of photo-elicitation. The first stage occurs on initial discussion of the informant-generated images, and can be summarised as involving: image amplification; identification of central images; and laddering on elicited image meanings to gain an understanding of the full context of the informants' category meanings. Following this stage, there is a narrative approach used to: "yield a temporal understanding of informant's category usage" (Fournier & Yao, 1997, p.455). At this stage changes in attitudes and behaviours are identified and change-prompting triggers over time are

specified in relation to the identified loyal brand. Finally, the brand relationships are clarified through a narrative approach and further probing of the selected relevant images.

Heisley and Levy (1991) apply an iterative approach through the use of images to study the context of family meals and also suggest a series of stages to autodriving. The first stage is macroanalysis of the photographs where they are reviewed in chronological sequence and it is decided: "which images stimulate curiosity, which images might need further clarification, which images might be relatively distinctive… and what meaning or information the photograph might hold" (Heisley & Levy, 1991, pp. 262-263). Following this stage, the autodriving phase occurs: informants are interviewed using the photographs as stimuli. After this, another interview stage occurs, again using the photographs and also a recording of the interview to elicit responses about product associations, role associations and reactivity (Heisley & Levy, 1991, p.257). The findings reveal a: "negotiated interpretation".

Aggarwal (2004) examines brand relationships from the perspective that interpersonal relationships are used as the basis for assessing brands. This study involves a series of experiments based upon exchange and communal relationships. In interviewing Fringe primary stakeholders, an autodriving, photo-photo-elicitation approach is therefore adopted. This is discussed further in chapter 11 of this thesis in its application and results. As noted, this approach reflects the hermeneutical and transactional methodology of this research as constructions of realities are co-constructed by the researcher and the informants. It also informs the phenomenological perspective of the interview design and analysis.

8.6 Constructing the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology

The proposed Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology is based upon Fournier's (1998) typology of consumer brand relationship forms. In developing this framework, Fournier (1998, p.364) applies consumer descriptions of 112 brand relationships through a text-based analysis of the data and identifies seven prominent relationship dimensions: voluntary (deliberately chosen) versus imposed; positive versus negative; intense versus superficial (casual); enduring versus short-term; public versus private; formal (role-or task-related) versus informal (personal); and symmetric versus asymmetric.

Fournier (1998) emphasises the lack of research into many of these relationship dimensions within the consumer context. Such studies have a tendency to focus upon formal brand relations. Further, preference-driven and long-term connections receive more attention than avoidance-based and casual brand relationships. Available information on consciously deliberate brand choices far outweighs that on non-voluntary brand choices within the domain of consumer research. She suggests that this consideration of these seven domains can broaden the scope of inquiry.

Fournier (1998, p.361) applies the seven domains above to the development of fifteen meaningful relationship forms. These are described based upon theoretical relationship forms. Types of friendships, family relationships and marriages are identified; and a series of 'dark-side' relationships based upon dependencies, enmities and enslavements are presented as a description of brand relationships that fit with general concepts of addiction and compulsion (Hirschman, 1992; O'Guinn & Faber 1989; Rook, 1987). Another series are noted for their temporal qualities, including courtships and flings. For each relationship form, Fournier (1998) provides a descriptive illustration and an example from the informant generated stories.

Fournier (1998) argues that this portfolio of brand relationships can apply to an individual across different brands; or across individual cases for one brand. It is proposed that this research applies Fournier's (1998) brand relationship typology to the primary stakeholders of the Fringe as individual cases, in deliberating a series of relationships they have with the Fringe as one festival brand. Chapter 11 presents the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology. Here, Fournier's (1998, p.365) relationship forms and their particular dimensions are listed: [10]

- Arranged marriages: non-voluntary, long-term, exclusive commitment;

- Casual friends: low in affect and intimacy, infrequent engagement. few expectations for reciprocity or rewards;

- Marriages of convenience: long-term, committed relationships, imposed through influence rather than deliberate choice;

- Committed partnerships: long-term, voluntarily imposed, high in affect and commitment, exclusivity rules expected;

- Best friendships: voluntary union, reciprocal and symmetric principle. Congruity in partner images and personal interests is evident;

- Compartmentalised friendships: specialised and situationally confined, enduring friendships, lower affect and intimacy than other friendship forms, casual in terms of entry and exit;

- Kinships: non-voluntary union with lineage ties;

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[10] Fournier's (1998) brand relationship typology is presented in detail in chapter 11 of this thesis as it is applied to the Fringe and its primary stakeholders.

- Rebounds / avoidance driven relationships: characterised by the desire to move away from current or available partner, rather than an attraction to chosen partner.

- Childhood friendships: voluntary but infrequently engaged, highly affectively and reminiscent of earlier times, provides comfort and security of past self.

- Courtships: interim relationship which will develop into a committed partnership.

- Dependencies: obsessive, highly affective, selfish attractions characterised by feelings that the other is irreplaceable, separation from other causes anxiety, tolerant of transgressions;

- Flings: Short-term, time-bounded engagements of high affect, but lacking commitment and reciprocity demands;

- Enmities: Intensely involved, characterised by negative affect;

- Secret affairs: High affect, private relationship, considered risky if exposed;

- Enslavements: non-voluntary asymmetric relationship involving negative feelings, persists because of circumstances.

This study seeks to discover which of these types of brand relationships in their dimensions may be applicable to the Fringe and its stakeholders. As noted, the interview process undertaken, the analysis and findings are presented and discussed in chapter 11.

8.7 Ethical considerations of interviewing

In undertaking interviews it is essential that the researcher considers the ethical requirements of the process. These include gaining informed consent from the informants and ensuring they are made aware of the purpose of the research, and how the data will be used. Other issues that are important are assurances of confidentiality and transparency (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Carson *et al.,* 2001; Kvale, 1996; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Mason, 2002; Mishler, 1991; Warren, 2002).

In approaching this element of the interview process, the researcher adhered to the ethical principles of: the Edinburgh Napier University (2007) *"Code of practice on research ethics and governance"*; and the Market Research Society (MRS) (2010) *"Code of conduct".* The specific and contextual ethical approaches adopted by the researcher are presented in full in chapter 11 of this thesis where the interview process is discussed.

8.8 Summary

This chapter has presented a discussion and justification of the application of qualitative interviews to meeting the aim of this research. The interviews adopt a phenomenological perspective and apply the use of photo-elicitation and a narrative approach to address the third objective of this research, which is concerned with developing a typology based around Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships. In addition to discussing this method in detail, the chapter outlines the adherence of this particular approach to the constructivist paradigm of this research.

As noted, the Fringe primary stakeholder groups (as defined in chapter 10) are the population of interest in developing a Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology based upon Fournier's (1998) conceptual framework. The sampling method is "snowballing": potential informants, fulfilling the theoretical criteria of being members of a primary stakeholder category, are recommended by others (Carson *et al.,* 2001; Warren, 2002).

The specific Fringe stakeholder interview process and outcomes are presented in detail in chapter 11 of this thesis. Furthermore, the interview analysis, the findings and Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology is proposed and discussed in detail here also.

Part 4

Analysis and interpretation

This fourth part of the thesis turns to the analysis and interpretation of the findings from the previously-detailed research methods, in addressing the three objectives and overall aim of this study.

Chapter 9 opens with a discussion of the findings from the semiotic analysis of Fringe promotional materials in making a critical definition of the Fringe brand image. Chapter 10 continues by presenting the Fringe stakeholder model, defining thus its primary stakeholders. Chapter 11 concludes with the interviews analysis and presents the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology.

Chapter 9

Constructing the Fringe brand image

9.1 Introduction

A central element of this research in developing a Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology is brand image. This is a symbolic aspect of the brand concept and is determined by a brand's strength; favourability and uniqueness, and how these are perceived by the brand consumer (Aaker, D., 1991; Keller, 1993, 2008).

The brand relationship proposition implies that within situations of brand-consumer congruence relationships are formed (Aaker, J., Fournier & Brasel, 2004; Esch, 2006; Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Ji, 2002; Kates, 2000; Keller, 2008; Kressman *et al.,* 2006). It is suggested therefore that imbuing brands with personal meanings may activate the forces of specific psychological elements and facilitate the development of brand relationships.

Returning again to the first objective of this research, this is:

1) To critically define the brand image of the Fringe, as projected through its portrayal in branded visual promotional materials.

In addressing this objective, as noted previously, a semiotic analysis of annual Fringe programmes, as published by the Festival Fringe Society was applied. The semiotic analysis method is introduced in chapter 6 of this thesis in both its historical and conceptual contexts. Semiotic analysis is a hermeneutical research method concerned with uncovering the layers of meaning within sign systems: or texts (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998; Banks, 2001, 2007; Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Echtner, 1999; Ivanov & Bradbury, 1978; Jenkins, 2003; Manning, 1987; Rose, 2007).

In applying a semiotic analysis to this research, this was considered in its application to tourism and marketing (advertising and branding). It was concluded that in defining the brand image of the Fringe, through undertaking a semiotic analysis of its programmes, a structuralist-based semiotic approach was useful. This dictates that relational systems of signs, or structures, are viewed similarly to language. Deep structures are sought therefore beneath the denotative features of these sign systems (Berger, A., 1998; Bignell, 2002; Dyer, 1982; Chandler, 2002).

In addition to its function as a festival guide, the Fringe programme is a branded promotional tool for the Fringe. As media, such advertising methods are concerned with the exchange of goods and signs. It involves visual and linguistic signs constructing mythical meanings about products or services (Barthes, 1993; Bignell, 2002). Within advertising it is argued there are layers of meaning that are both overt and hidden. The referent, inter-textual, systems of advertising reflect aspects of the world that exist outside advertising and thus infer meaning within them.

Advertising can be purposefully imbued with symbolic meaning. It involves the use of conscious and unconscious inter-texts of themes, codes, and referent systems which presents a framework for the inter-textual analysis of advertising (Bal & Bryson, 2004; Berger, A., 1995; Dyer, 1982; Goldman, 1992; Noth, 1990; Oswald, 2007; Williamson, 2002). This is a structuralist-based semiotic approach where meanings imbued by the creator of the text; and the meanings understood by the perceiver of it, form systems of signs.

In developing an approach to undertake a semiotic analysis of the Fringe programme to define the Fringe brand image, a semiotic process modified from that suggested by Echtner (1999) for the analysis of tourism promotional materials was applied.

9.2   Preliminary analysis of the Fringe brand

Prior to undertaking the semiotic analysis of the Fringe brand image, the researcher reviewed an historic selection of Fringe programmes, dating from the past twenty-five years (1985 - 2009). This particular data-set was selected due to its accessibility, in the National Library of Scotland. Additionally, it allowed the researcher to determine during which period in the history of the Fringe it became possible to define a Fringe brand, in relation to its tangible and elements. Undertaking this review served the purpose of allowing an understanding of the chronological development of the Fringe brand over these years.

In considering the brand concept, and throughout this semiotic analysis, the Fringe brand is viewed as a collection of tangible (functional); and intangible, (symbolic) elements. Functional elements include names, logos and symbols and symbolic attributes relate to perceived brand image and include factors such as: personality; trust; and values (see: Aaker, D., 1991; Ind, & Bjerke, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2008; Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003; Patterson, 1999).

In determining the chronological development of the Fringe brand, the researcher's approach was therefore to investigate the tangible elements of the Fringe brand as these have developed over the selected years where functional brand attributes, such as the Fringe name, logotypes and associated symbols were evident.

In reviewing this selection of programmes, it was discovered that the tangible Fringe brand had changed in its functional attributes: and specifically the logotype of the Fringe name.

9.2.1 The Fringe brand 1985 - 1991

The first series of Fringe programmes to be reviewed with the purpose of identifying the tangible elements of the Fringe brand were those ranging from the mid-1980s until 1991. In addition to the programmes, promotional postcards of the same or similar designs to the programme cover were produced at this time, until the early 2000s, [11] and reference was also made to these.

In doing this, it was immediately seen that there was some evidence of a recognisable visual marker of the Fringe brand (in addition to the name) in the earlier years. Within many of the reviewed promotional materials there was a small logotype visible, resembling a fountain motif. This is illustrated in the following figure 9.1, where the 1985 and 1988 Fringe poster designs are included for illustrative purposes.

It was also evident that throughout these years there is no consistent tangible Fringe brand displayed upon programme cover designs. The names of the 'Edinburgh Festival Fringe' and 'Fringe' are visible on all programme covers: and the previously mentioned fountain motif symbol (see figure 9.1), otherwise it was not possible to define the functional elements of the Fringe brand during this era of the Fringe. The typeface for the title 'Fringe' is, for example, not consistent in appearance.

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[11] The Festival Fringe Society has been running a schools' poster competition for thirty years (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010). Until the early 2000s, the winning pupil's design featured on the Fringe programme cover and associated publicity. In more recent years, the Society elected to feature the winning design on posters and flyers for each year. Since this era a professionally designed Fringe programme cover has been commissioned instead (L. Page, meeting in Edinburgh on 4th March 2008).

Figure 9.1 Fringe 'fountain' motif logo, 1985 and 1988
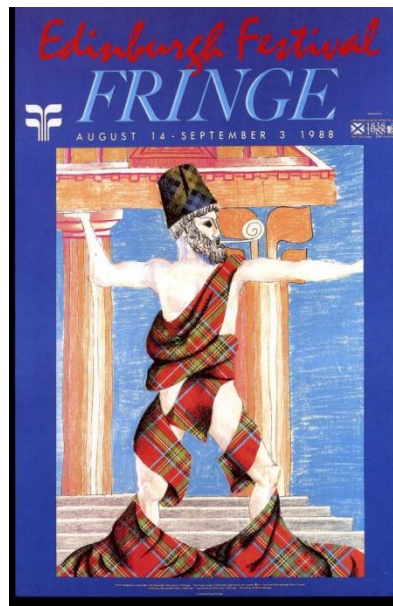
Images: 1985 poster and postcard; 1988 poster and postcard © Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society [12]

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[12] These images are of the Fringe posters/postcards for both the 1985 and 1988 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The fountain motif logotype is visible in these images. At this time, the communicated image of promotional materials was based upon an annual local schools' poster design competition.

9.2.2 The Fringe brand 1992 - 2000

Between 1992 and 2000, a consistent visual marker emerged. This was displayed upon the cover and within the introductory pages of each Fringe programme during this period. This logotype is identifiable as being a distinguishing name and symbol for the Fringe (Aaker, D., 1991) as it is composed of the title 'Edinburgh Festival Fringe': where the name of Fringe is emphasised and a small star symbol is included. An example of this era of the Fringe functional brand is included in appendix 9.2 where the Fringe poster designs for 1998 and 2000 are presented.

9.2.3 The Fringe brand 2001 - 2005

The following series of programmes to be reviewed were those dating from 2001 until 2005. During this time period, it was evident that a new visual marker or logo for the Fringe was introduced. This is first visible throughout the 2001 programme and remains a recognisable functional aspect of the Fringe brand until 2005. Examples of this version of the Fringe functional brand are included in appendix 9.3, where the poster designs for 2001 and 2003 are presented. During this era, the Fringe logo changed considerably and became consistent in typeface design. The name 'Fringe' remains emphasised, but has acquired a bolder visual appearance. Above Fringe, is noted 'Edinburgh Festival', in brackets. The letter 'e' in 'Fringe' is rendered at an angle, leaning towards the others; and the letter 'i' has been replaced by a human figure.

The feature of figures (including people, animals, birds and objects) replacing the letter 'i' in this version of the logo is a recognisable element at this time of the Fringe logo: the functional visual marker of the Fringe brand. It is depicted throughout the programmes between 2001 and 2005. Throughout these years figures include human depictions of characters including a cowboy; sailor; beauty queen; boxer; butcher; butler and super-hero. While this logo appears on the Fringe cover, it is depicted throughout the programme in the sections relating to the categories of

performances at the Fringe and other sections of the programme. Illustrative examples include: a clown figure replacing the letter 'i' in the listing sections related to children's shows and a man in a straight jacket depicted in the logo throughout the section related to comedy listings (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2003).

Another feature of this depiction of the Fringe logo is that the theme of the particular design of the programme has influence upon the figure replacing the letter 'i'. For example, in the Fringe programme for 2005 the theme of the programme design is based around Las Vegas. In this instance, the letter 'i' is replaced with various images, not all human figures, including: Marilyn Monroe depicted in neon; playing-cards; a bride and groom; Elvis Presley; and poker chips (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2005).

Figure 9.2 Fringe 'star' motif logo, 1998 and 2000

Images: 1998 poster and postcard; 2000 poster and postcard © Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society [13]

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[13] These images are of the Fringe poster for the1998 and 2000 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The Fringe name and star logotype can be seen in the top left section of these images.

Figure 9.3 A consistent Fringe brand, 2001 and 2003
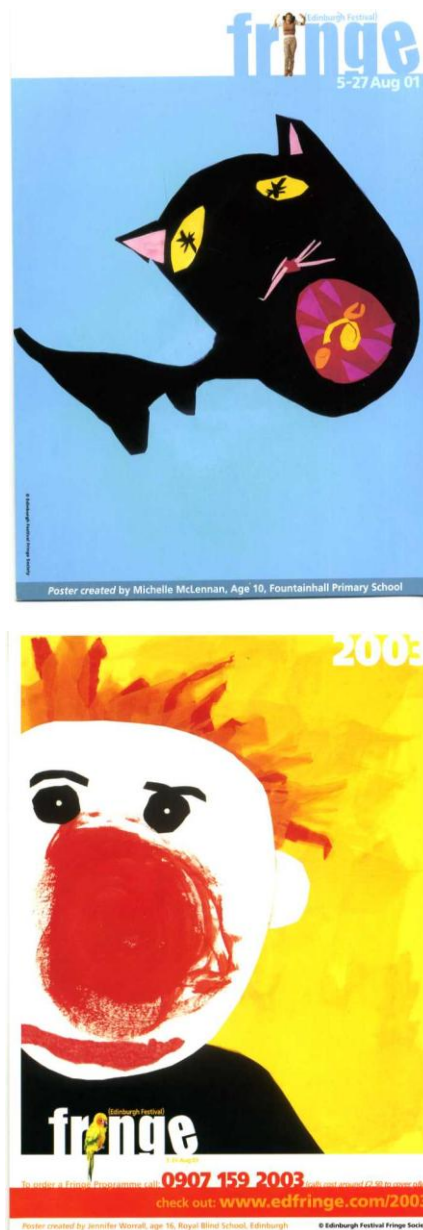
Images: 2001 poster and postcard; 2003 poster and postcard © Edinburgh
Festival Fringe Society [14]

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[14] These images are of the Fringe poster and postcard for the 2001 and 2003 Edinburgh
Festival Fringe. The Fringe name and new logotype; including figures of a dancing girl
and a parrot, replacing the letter 'i'; and the angled letter 'e' are illustrated in these
examples.

9.2.4 The current Fringe brand 2006 - 2010

The final series of programmes reviewed and included in the semiotic analysis, were those for the years of 2006 (the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe) until 2009. The 2010 Fringe took place between 5th and 31st August, by which time the data analysis was completed. It does of course display the current brand and is displayed in appendix A of this thesis for reference. [15]

These programmes display the current functional visual marker of the Fringe. The overall appearance here remains similar to the previous logo. The same typeface is used for the word 'Fringe': however the letter 'i' is no longer a figure and the letter 'e' is now aligned with the others. Furthermore, appearing in smaller letters above is 'The Edinburgh Festival'. This is no longer in brackets and includes 'The'. Examples of the current Fringe functional brand are included in figures 9.5 - 9.8, where images of the Fringe programme covers between 2006 and 2009 are presented. This particular era of programmes was investigated further by the researcher and formed therefore the basis of the semiotic analysis. All are included as figures here as a means of reference to the following semiotic analysis.

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[15] Fringe programmes for the years up to and including 2009 were included in the semiotic analysis, in keeping with the timing of this PhD study. The 2010 Fringe took place between 5th and 31st August, by which time the data analysis was completed. The Fringe programme design for 2010 was produced by Edinburgh-based: Whitespace, a design agency commissioned by the Festival Fringe Society. In 2010, the Fringe programme was created in a different way than previously approached. It was designed live by the Scottish illustrator Johanna Basford via online social networking web portal, Twitter. Over the course of two days, individuals provided 2,634 tweets about the associations and images they had of the Fringe, which Basford illustrated on camera (Whitespace, 2010). The 2010 programme cover is displayed in appendix A. In 2009 the Society updated the logotype through moving the words 'The Edinburgh Festival' to align differently with 'Fringe'. This can be seen in figure 9.8, and appendix A, which are the two most recent programme cover designs (A. Gibson, meeting in Edinburgh 20th October, 2009).

9.3 The semiotic process: Fringe brand image

The previous sections of this chapter discuss the recognisable functional or tangible aspects of the Fringe brand as this has appeared over the years. Concerns include therefore the Fringe name, visual marker and logo. These elements of the Fringe brand were reviewed with the aim of determining the chronological development of the Fringe functional brand though recognising the communicated visual elements of it.

The symbolic elements of the brand include perception-based factors such as brand knowledge, which is composed of brand image and brand awareness (Keller, 1993, 2008). The semiotic analysis was therefore applied to define this.

The specific semiotic process applied to this research was a modified six-stage approach, adapted from the framework developed by Echtner (1999) in analysing tourism marketing and promotional materials. This process was first presented in chapter 6 of this thesis and involves the following stages: selecting a closed and representative data-set for analysis; identifying those relevant elements of analysis; recording their frequency; examining the relationships amongst these elements; identifying the combinations and understanding their taxonomy. The final stage is to penetrate the denotative meanings to extract the connotative meanings.

A discussion of each stage of the semiotic process is now detailed. Following this there is a summary of the semiotic analysis findings for each of the programmes in relation to the prominent themes identified.

The entire account of the semiotic analysis of each programme cover, from 2006 – 2009, is presented as appendix B to this thesis, as this is a lengthy and detailed document.[16]

This chapter continues with a discussion of the concluded findings of the semiotic analysis by presenting the cross-case analysis of all of the programmes ascribed to by the later stages of Echtner's (1999) semiotic framework. The outcome of the semiotic analysis: the defined Fringe brand image, is presented thus at the end of this chapter.

9.3.1 Selecting a dataset for semiotic analysis

As described above, the first stage of the modified semiotic process is:

1)   Select a closed representative set of data to apply a synchronic perspective and analyse this independently of any historical data;

Echtner (1999, p.50) describes this initial stage as involving the selection of current promotional materials that are not historical in nature and: "a distinct self-sufficient system". In applying a synchronic perspective it is vital to focus upon the current structure of the item of inquiry and not the historical perspective.

In selecting a closed representative data-set, as discussed previously the researcher selected the four most recent years of Fringe programmes: from 2006, until 2009. These particular programmes were chosen because they are representative of the current Fringe brand in terms of its tangible visual markers. As noted previously the current visual marker, or logo, was first seen in 2006.

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[16] The semiotic analysis findings for the individual Fringe programmes are presented in full as appendix B to this thesis. These findings have contributed to the development of a lengthy and detailed document. While this contains in-depth elements and findings, some of these are repeated. The findings presented in this chapter in relation to each of the programmes are therefore in a summarised form here to ensure an overall account of the findings is reported for the purpose of this study.

Fringe programmes with covers displaying the current functional brand and visual marker of the Fringe were thus selected by the researcher as being a closed and representative data-set of texts for analysis. This selection allowed for the meaning of the data to be analysed separately from any historical context thus corresponded to the synchronic (current) nature of analysis particular to this stage (Carson & Taylor, 2009; Echtner, 1999).

9.3.2 Identifying elements of analysis

The second stage in the modified semiotic process was:

2)   Identify and specify relevant elements of analysis, including themes and phrases;

At this stage, the researcher reviewed the programmes to determine which elements (of themes and phrases) were to be analysed. On comparison of the Fringe programmes, it was immediately apparent that while the cover, inside cover, and first few introductory pages of the programmes differ every year in terms of design and content: the remainder of the programme is almost identical in layout.

The programme content, following a few introductory pages, is broken down by listings for Fringe performances. Colour-coded page headings in sections refer to the various alphabetical listings for: children's shows; comedy; dance and physical theatre; events; exhibitions; music; musicals and opera; and theatre. At the back of each programme there is a further colour coded venue guide and index, followed by a folding venue map which forms the back cover (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009).

As discussed, the Fringe as a festival organisation differs significantly from many other festivals. Rather than being responsible for the programming

and selection of the Fringe, the Festival Fringe Society is the legal entity responsible for the management and development of the Fringe. The open policy dictates that any person or organisation can participate in the Fringe on registering with the Society and securing a listing in the annual Fringe programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2004).

On reviewing the programmes the researcher decided that the semiotic analysis would be applied to those elements of the programme that were produced and communicated by the Festival Fringe Society. These are the visual branding; programme cover; and introductory pages of the programme. This allowed the data-set selected to be closed and representative, as required.

The internal event listings of the programme were deemed to be particular to the performing companies attending the Fringe. As such these are not included in this semiotic analysis of the Fringe brand image. The Fringe programmes in 2006, 2007 and 2008 state that the programme entries for all shows have been written by the performing companies and all entries have been standardised in terms of their layout (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, 2007, 2008).

Recent years have witnessed in excess of two thousand performances taking place during the Fringe. In 2010, for example, there were 40,254 performances of more than 2,543 shows in 259 different venues. An estimated 21,148 performers took to the stage and a total of 1,956,000 tickets were sold (MacKenzie, 2010).

In defining the Fringe brand image, it was important to secure a representative data-set for the semiotic analysis (Echtner, 1999). As the Festival Fringe Society is responsible for the Fringe brand, a decision was made to include only the Fringe promotional materials produced by the Society, rather than those produced for and by individual performers, venues, or companies.

It is essential that the identification of analysis elements is informed by the theoretical aim of this research: to provide an understanding of the brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders (Echtner, 1999). In doing this concepts and themes relevant to Fringe self-image congruence are investigated through defining the primary stakeholders and considering their specific lived experiences and life themes.

In identifying the relevant units of analysis for this stage of the semiotic process, it was decided to select the elements from within the programmes being analysed. The first series of elements, themes and phrases were selected from each of the Fringe programme front-covers:

- The overall theme and design of the programme cover.

- Fringe functional branding: positioning, scale and use of the Fringe logo;

- Phrases: used on the cover of the programme; both identifying the factual elements of the Fringe (year and dates) and pertaining to any potential and identified themes; [17]

- Images and photographs: portrayed on the cover of the programme and any identified themes particular to these;

- Elements within the images and photographs: including any actions or objects portrayed and any identified themes particular to these.

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[17] A number of words and phrases appearing on the covers Fringe programmes were common to all of the programmes being analysed. Examples of this include factual details: the website address, dates, contact details, and sponsors' logos. These elements in turn informed many of the themes that were common across all programmes under analysis.

The second series of elements, themes and phrases, were selected from the pre-listings introductory pages of each year's Fringe programme. These were:

- Phrases used within the introductory text of the programme: both identifying the factual elements of the Fringe (year and dates) and pertaining to any potential themes; [18]

- Phrases used within any personal introductory text produced by the Fringe Director (2006-2008); Chief Executive (2009) and Chair of the Fringe Board of Directors (2006-2009) noting any repeated phrases and may relate to any potential or identified themes.

- Images and photographs: portrayed throughout the introductory pages of the programme and any identified themes particular to these, the overall design theme, or to the images and photographs portrayed on the Fringe programme cover.

- Elements within the images and photographs, portrayed within the introductory pages of the Fringe programme: including any actions or objects portrayed and any identified themes particular to these.

At this stage, the elements of analysis had been identified, allowing the researcher to approach each programme with a framework of potential themes to consider. Within this process the overall data-set was separated into distinct units of analysis. This was in terms of the chronology of the programmes and specific elements of analysis.

Where appropriate, the researcher applied a checklist for analysing human elements as represented in advertising. This was proposed by Dyer

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[18] Similarly to the programme cover elements, a number of phrases and themes emerged from within the introductory pages of the Fringe programmes which suggested common themes.

(1982). Two of the Fringe programme covers included representations of human beings, the years of 2006 and 2007. This framework provided a useful framework of analysis in these instances in its consideration of: representations of bodies; manner; activity; and the props and settings depicted.

As the basis of her approach, Dyer (1982) suggests that the understanding of advertising may be approached by undertaking an inter-textual analysis. This is based upon the 'meaning' of the text, as communicated by the producer, and understood by the viewer or analyst. Dyer (1982) suggests an iconographic analysis for examining non-verbal communications in adverts and contends in order to understand the meanings of advertising featuring human figures (or actors) we can divide the non-verbal items into aspects of their appearance, gender, manner, and activity. To explain, the actor's appearance involves considerations of age; gender; national and racial characteristics; hair; body; size; and looks. In assessing the portrayal of manner, behaviour, and emotion, the facial expression, eye contact, pose and clothing of the actor should therefore be considered. Within these aspects, activity related to aspects of posture, touch, body movement and positional communication between the actor, other actors and objects is also important. Other elements to be evaluated are any use of props and settings within the overall image.

9.3.3 Recording the frequency of elements of analysis

This stage of the modified semiotic process involves making an inventory of the elements of analysis:

3)   Record the frequency of these features occurring;

The researcher made an evaluation of all four Fringe programmes: recorded the frequency of the selected elements occurring; and noted any combinations between any of the elements of analysis. At this stage of the

semiotic analysis, Echtner (1999) suggests that the process resembles a content analysis.

Detailed within appendix B is a complete account of the elements of analysis: including the prominent themes and phrases which were particular to each programme. A notebook of records was developed over the course of this process and this was used as a tool for the quantification of elements, as required. This also formed the basis on the notes presented for the semiotic analysis.

9.3.4 Syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures

The fourth stage of the semiotic process involved developing an understanding of the overall structure of the examined text: and how the elements being analysed form both syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships:

4)   Examine the relationship amongst elements through syntagmatic (linear progression of narratives) and paradigmatic (patterns of opposition) structures;

In undertaking a syntagmatic analysis of the Fringe programmes, each one was examined as a sequence of events: a narrative, to reveal its manifest meaning (Berger, A., 1995). Further, the findings from each were compared across cases (Echtner, 1999).

The paradigmatic analysis, conversely, revealed the latent meanings, by searching for the hidden pattern of opposites embedded within the text (Carson & Taylor, 2009). This also occurred across each case and then was applied to the overall text.

At this stage the semiotician must ensure true opposites are elicited, rather than negations of positives. Further these opposites must be tied to elements or themes identified within the text (Berger, A., 1995).

9.3.5 Combinations and systems of elements

The fifth stage on the modified semiotic process was concerned with developing an understanding of the combinations of elements within the overall text:

5)   Identify the key combinations of possible elements and understand the system by which they are combined within the overall image;

At this point in the process it is important to uncover common themes. This occurs through investigating the combinations of elements within and throughout the structure of the text (Echtner, 1999). In analysing the Fringe programmes this was achieved through identifying recurring patterns of words, phrases and images or actions portrayed in the programmes, as well as depicted images.

This stage of the process had the aim of developing an understanding of themes common to the Fringe brand, within the elements, and their significance (Echtner, 1999). Furthermore, in comparing each year's programme it was possible to identify the common underlying layers of meaning (Carson & Taylor, 2009). This allowed progression to the final stage where the denotative and connotative meanings were assessed.

9.3.6 Interpreting the underlying meanings

The final stage of the modified semiotic process was concerned with interpretation of the layers of meaning to define the denotative and connotative sign systems, or myths (Barthes, 1993):

6)   Penetrate the denotative (surface) meanings to extract the
       connotative (underlying) meanings.

As discussed previously the paradigm of this study is constructivism; and its ontology is relativism, where realities are multiple and socially constructed. Semiotic analysis is underpinned by this paradigm as a hermeneutical research method, where meaning is experienced through the creation of understanding, and this fits with the subjectivist epistemology.

Within the constructivist philosophical framework, this semiotic analysis adopted a structuralist-based approach whereby it considered the broad visual signs within the texts beyond the linguistic elements.

Manning, (1987, p.46) in discussing this stage of the semiotic process suggests that it is important to resolve any "aesthetic matters". This is because the analysis of these connotative layers is interpretive and subjective in nature, so is unique to the researcher.

At this final stage of the semiotic analysis, the researcher constructed her definition of the Fringe brand image. This is presented at the close of the chapter.

9.4   The Fringe programmes 2006 - 2009

As detailed previously, the first stage of the semiotic process was to select a closed, representative data-set that would facilitate a synchronic analysis. Synchronic analysis is concerned with assessing the current structure of the Fringe brand image, rather than the historical perspective (Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Bignell, 2002; Chandler, 2002; Echtner, 1999; MacCannell & MacCannell, 1982; Manning, 1987; Noth, 1990). As noted, the most recent four years of Fringe programmes communicate the current Fringe brand so these were selected for analysis.

During the first three stages of the semiotic process each programme was analysed in turn. These stages of the analysis were concerned with identifying and specifying the phrases and themes forming the units of analysis.

The findings for each programme is summarised here in terms of these initial stages of the semiotic process. (As noted, the full account is presented as appendix B to this thesis).

Following the identification of prominent themes for each year's programme was the syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis, (stage four), then the analysis of the denotative and connotative meanings (stage five). The final stages of the semiotic process were then undertaken. The stages are discussed for each case.

The final stages of the semiotic process require comparisons to be made across all analysed texts. This cross-case comparison is presented after the summary of the findings for the individual programmes. This chapter concludes with a discussion and the definition of the Fringe brand image: addressing the first objective of this research.

The covers of all four of the programmes analysed are included here within this chapter as a means of providing visual references (please see figures 9.4 – 9.7).

9.4.1 Semiotic analysis summary: Fringe programme 2006

Figure 9.4 presents the cover of the Fringe programme for 2006. The Fringe name and logo is positioned prominently, occupying approximately twenty-five percent of the total cover image. It is a bright pink colour, reflecting the cover image design and theme. Rather than solid text it is pixelated; which immediately suggests a stylised and futuristic tone.

2006 was the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe and the overall theme of the programme design reflects and suggests the dual themes of past and future via a number of referential visual elements. The cover background itself is a cold blue-toned white. A female figure appears, also dressed in white, but wearing pink household style rubber gloves and she appears to be gardening. The woman's appearance is futuristic, with a modernist appearance, in relation to the style of her clothing and general appearance. The woman is also styled in a retrospective way reminiscent of the 1960s. The setting within which the woman appears resembles a closed capsule with white walls. She is standing on some bright green grass, which appears to be artificial, and is surrounded by a number of brightly coloured illustrated flowers.

The phrase: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, cover) appears. This alludes to both the sixty year history of the Fringe and its coming future. The use of the word 'trip' suggests various themes: the historical journey of the Fringe; the 1960s when this was a common slang term; and to the futuristic, outer-space and time-travelling allusions apparent throughout the design.

This image portrayed on the programme cover is thus simultaneously futuristic and retrospective. The woman's appearance is indicative of the overall theme of the programme (Dyer, 1982) and reflects the sixtieth anniversary aspect: but also suggests the fashion of the 1960s and the modernist future.

In addressing the second and third stages of the semiotic process: identifying and recording the occurrence of the elements and themes of analysis, the following elements of analysis became apparent:

- Past and future: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip"
- Journeying and travel
- Growth and development

- Traditional and modern
- Unconventionality and risk
- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

Having identified these themes, the next stage of the semiotic process (Stage 4) was concerned with examining the relationships amongst themes by undertaking a syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis. In completing this stage of the semiotic analysis, a series of relevant themes based around the above elements became evident. Those themes, as perceived by the researcher, can be defined in relation to the Fringe brand image.

A number of themes of the 2006 programme were suggested by particular phrases throughout the introductory text and these were later discovered to be common across all texts under analysis. A full account of all themes is presented in appendix B. To summarise those themes denoted within the programmes' introductory text across all years, these are: unconventionality and risk; wealth of talent and nurture of talent; services and support; and involvement and taking part.

The Fringe brand image in 2006 is therefore perceived as related to the past and future of the Fringe, the image of portrayal both traditional and modern. Throughout, the theme of the Fringe being unconventional and risky is suggested. Despite this, historically the Fringe has an image of being supportive. In 2006, it was the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe and there is a particular emphasis upon the notion of the journey or trip. This can be associated with the time-related journey, or the process of taking part in and experiencing the Fringe.

Figure 9.4 Fringe programme cover design 2006

Image: Fringe Programme Cover 2006 © Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society

9.4.2 Semiotic analysis summary: Fringe programme 2007

This programme design is presented in figure 9.5. The Fringe logo is again positioned prominently at the top of the programme cover. It is a rich and warm purple shade, and solid: similar to the warm hues seen elsewhere on the cover. This design communicates the general themes of indulgence and enjoyment. Upon the rich red background a young woman sits amongst a display of large cakes adorned with fruit and flowers. The foreground of the image contains images of fruit, smaller cakes and sweets. The woman is smiling with her mouth open, reaching for a strawberry that sits on the top of the largest cake, in the foreground of the cover image. She is wearing a lily in her hair, which is styled in ringlets. Her make-up is sumptuous and bright. The phrase: "Get stuck in" appears, alluding to the design theme of indulgence. As detailed below, this theme is repeated through the use of other phrases pre-fixed with: 'get' throughout the introductory pages of the programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, cover). Dyer's (1982) checklist provided a useful framework of analysis in this instance, as it did for the 2006 programme. Again, this considers representations of bodies; manner; activity; and the props and settings that are evident. The actor portrays a young, female figure. She is attractive, young and her appearance is alluring and glamorous, but also feminine and playful. Along with the cakes as props and the setting, this was perceived as referential to the French Queen Marie Antoinette. [19]

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[19] Queen Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) was the wife of King Louis XVI, who was famously beheaded by her own subjects during the French revolution As an historical figure, Marie Antoinette has become synonymous with the extravagance associated with 18th century, pre-revolutionary France. She was reported to have uttered the infamous "let them eat cake" comment (which allegedly preceded her by several hundred years) while referring to her impoverished subjects (Fraser, 2002). This comment, however, has become linked with representations of the French Queen. Within popular culture, she is frequently depicted as a joyful, glamorous woman surrounded by cakes. Indeed a recent film depicted her as a decadent character, in scenes similar in appearance to that of the Fringe 2007 programme cover (*Marie Antoinette*, 2006).

This form of inter-textuality, where conscious use is made of stylistic devices from preceding texts, is referred to by Berger, A. (1995) as: parody or indeed as postmodern pastiche (Robinson, 2008). It is dependent upon shared cultural experiences and knowledge within societies, or as discussed previously, what is termed by Barthes (1993) as myth.

In defining the elements and themes of analysis for the 2007 Fringe programme, these are therefore:

- Indulgence and decadence: "Get stuck in"
- Enjoyment and fun
- Unconventionality and risk
- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

A noted, the syntagmatic structures related to the other pertinent and repeated themes of unconventionality and risk; wealth of talent and nurture of talent; and services and support are similar to those in the 2006 programme, and were found to be communicated throughout the introductory texts in subsequent years.

The themes of indulgence and decadence; and enjoyment and fun are evident through the syntagms of the repeated phrases. These themes develop a narrative, detailing what benefits the Fringe can 'give' the reader, throughout the introductory pages of the programme. Paradigmatically, the overall design theme involving the sumptuous cake display and joyful woman, with the references to Marie Antoinette illustrates these themes through the images portrayed.

In examining the connotative layers of meaning, the researcher returned to the previously identified themes and applied these to find analogies within the system of signs. This involved defining the metanomic (metaphoric) and synechdochal signs that were evident (Berger, A., 1995; Dyer, 1982; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007). Metanomic signs can involve metaphor which suggests meaning through describing relationships between two items. Within the 2007 Fringe programme, the researcher interpreted the figure of the woman surrounded by cakes as being a metaphor for the themes of 'indulgence', 'enjoyment', and 'fun', through her resemblance to, and parody of (an iconic) Queen Marie Antoinette. Another metaphor which suggests the notion of the indulgence in the unknown is that of forbidden fruit, a biblical reference to immoral pleasures. The woman's appearance in reaching for the cakes and fruit around her was therefore regarded by the researcher as a synechdochal sign for the above themes. The abundance of cakes, fruits and sweets representing the potential, yet to be discovered, slightly decadent and indulgent riches, talent and variety of the Fringe

In undertaking a semiotic of the 2007 Fringe programme a series of symbolic themes were evident which can be attributed to the Fringe brand image. As noted, the main themes were perceived by the researcher as being symbols of indulgence and decadence; and opportunity to experience the enjoyment and unconventional nature of the Fringe. Similarly to the 2006 programme, the Fringe brand image in 2007 can be defined as being somewhat contradictory: simultaneously encouraging indulgence and enjoyment, and unconventionality and risk; while having features of longevity; nurture; and support.

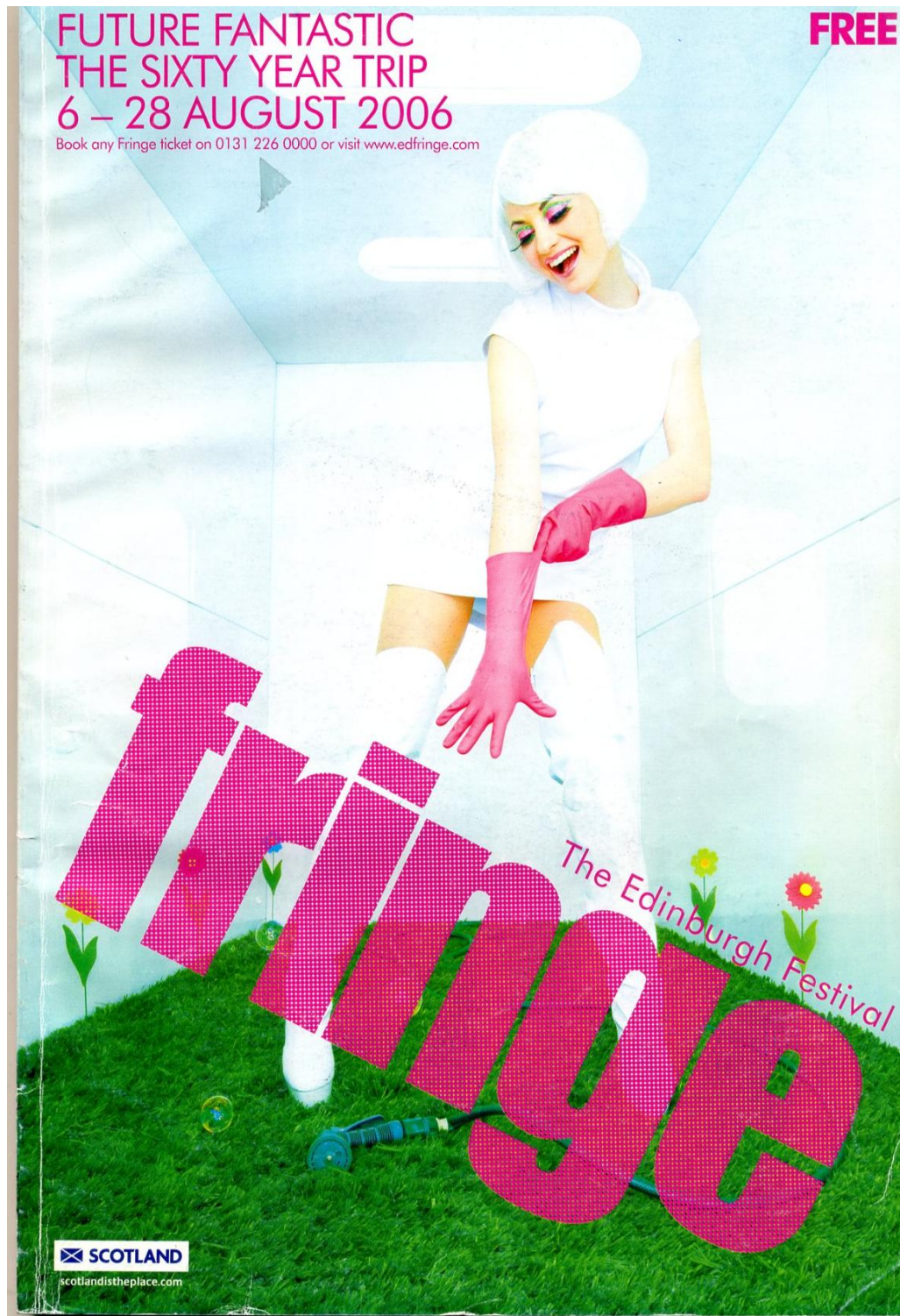**Figure 9.5 Fringe programme cover design 2007**

Image: Fringe Programme Cover 2007 © Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society

9.4.3 Semiotic analysis summary: Fringe programme 2008

The Fringe programme for 2008 is presented in figure 9.6. Similarly to the previous two years' programmes, the Fringe name logo occupies approximately twenty-five percent of the cover. It is prominently presented at the top of the programme cover and rendered in a solid white. Unlike the previous two years, the 2008 programme does not portray an image of a human being on the cover. The design theme appears instead to reflect a theme of the theatre, performance, or even cinema. It also alludes to Edinburgh as the festival city. This is evident through the visible representations of stylised images, which first appear on the cover and are also present in the introductory pages of this programme.

On the cover, there is an illustration of an unravelling roll of theatre tickets amongst which silhouettes of waving people stand. Above these images is a large illustration of a single-lens reflex style of camera with white stars around it, suggesting camera flashes. In the background there is a depiction of Edinburgh Castle, portrayed in a silhouetted form.

Further communicating the theatre, Edinburgh as festival city themes, the phrase: "The stage is set" appears on the cover beneath the Fringe logo and is repeated throughout (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, cover). The elements and themes of analysis for the 2008 Fringe programme are defined thus as:

- Theatre and performance: "The stage is set"
- Artistry and creativity
- Edinburgh as the festival city
- Discovery
- Unconventionality and risk
- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

As with the previous programmes, a syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis of these themes followed. The previously noted common themes became further emphasised at this stage and specific themes were developed.

A narrative is thus seen to develop around the main theme of theatre and performance which is an evident syntagm, involving images appearing on the cover and the repetition of these within the introductory pages of the programme. This theme is central to the Fringe as a festival and this is similarly true of the syntagmatic structures that suggesting Edinburgh's role and reputation as festival city. The use of the iconic image of Edinburgh castle and the description of the city using words comparable to those used within the literature describing the Fringe emphasises this.

The overall thematic context of setting the stage for the Fringe and the apparent theme of theatre and spectacle is therefore the most prevalent theme. This was perceived to suggest a relatively simple connotative meaning for the 2008 programme: suggesting the Fringe role of artistic and theatrical significance as a festival within Edinburgh.

In summarising the Fringe brand image for 2008, the researcher considered that this was defined as being simply associated with the role of the Fringe as a festival of creativity and artistry, appealing thus to associations of brand equity (Aaker, D., 1991; Keller, 2008). Further underlying elements of the festival's supportive and nurturing role, and its creative artistry; unconventionality and risk, were also evident across this and all other cases.

Figure 9.6 Fringe programme cover design 2008

Image: Fringe Programme Cover 2008 © Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society

9.4.4 Semiotic analysis summary: Fringe programme 2009

The 2009 Fringe programme was the final year subject to the semiotic analysis. This was the most recently produced programme, at the time of this research. Figure 9.7 is the Fringe programme cover for 2009.

The functional Fringe brand in the form of the logo was similar to the previous three years' representations in size and position. The Fringe programme 2009 design involves a simple visual depiction of a large egg-shaped object, upon a black background. The 'egg' is portrayed in a series of bright colours: green, yellow, purple, orange, red, pink and blue; upon different printed editions of the programme. The egg appears to be glowing from within and is reflecting a pool of self-coloured light around its base.

The researcher perceived this programme design to communicate the overall themes of an unknown entity, anticipation and discovery. There is the question of what will hatch from the egg? The themes of new life, (re)generation, fertility and (re)birth are evident immediately, given the symbolic meanings of the un-hatched egg.

Further adding to the unknown and anticipation theme of the egg is a new website address: www.thefringething.com, (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover) which first appears on the cover beneath the egg. This was found to link to a social-media web-portal which was an additional promotional tool in the form of a fictional blog from a fictional "Professor Ed Hegg". The Professor attempts to determine what 'the Fringe thing' is through research and undertaking experiments. The portal also allows people to contribute with suggestions to 'crack' the egg via online comments. Despite a series of experiments seen here, the Fringe thing is however indestructible and impenetrable. In contextualising and supporting the programme design the Fringe thing campaign also included

a series of similarly-themed impromptu promotional 'events', to raise interest in the media and with the public. [20]

Many of the themes evident upon the Fringe thing website, also appear within the introductory pages of the programme in terms of the images portrayed of the egg (the Fringe thing) being the subject of experiments. There are images of a small white egg undergoing medical examinations, being drilled and sawn into; and hit with a snooker cue. These are reflective of the web-portal. Within each image are hands in blue surgical gloves and a white paper overall, further suggesting science and experiments (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, pp.1-7).

In defining the overall design theme of the programme the researcher perceived this as being related to the discovery of the unknown entity of the Fringe thing and anticipation of its (re)birth. Further sub-themes of new life and fertility were also evident. These themes were depicted in a humorous manner through the images used and associated weblog.

In defining the elements of analysis for the 2009 Fringe programme, these are thus:

- Anticipation and discovery of the unknown
- (Re)birth and new life: "The Fringe thing"
- Wealth of talent and fertility
- Creativity and creation
- Theatre and performance

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[20] The Fringe 2009 creative marketing campaign involved the development of an "interactive thesaurus", via a web-portal. This allowed questions to be submitted and comments to be asked by subscribers. These appeared to be answered in real time, online, as short films of experiments on the egg and interactions with it could be seen in response. This was however pre-recorded as an element of this campaign. Each year in developing the Fringe campaign an important element of the brief is the "challenge to be better than the year before." This subsequently led to the development of the 2010 "Twitter picture" campaign (G. Carmichael and C. Gordon, of Whitespace, speaking at a guest lecture delivered at Edinburgh. Napier University, presenting on: Marketing for festivals and events, for the Event Management module, on Thursday 7th October, 2010)

- Enjoyment and fun

- Unconventionality and risk

- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent

- Services and support

- Involvement and taking part

- Edinburgh as the festival city

Many of these themes were further evident through the syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis, which is summarised in relation to the particular prominent themes. In considering the themes which are particular to the 2009 programme, a syntagmatic chain forms around the themes of anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and (re) birth and new life. Paradigmatically, these themes are seen further through the use of the image appearing with the phrase; "the Fringe thing" and the related phrases throughout the introductory section of the programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover).

In examining the deeper connotative meanings it is necessary to consider the themes that are particular to that programme and identify the analogies apparent within the systems (Berger, A., 1995; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007).

The recurrent image of the egg (the Fringe thing) was interpreted by the researcher as a metaphor for the major programme themes of the Fringe 2009: anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and birth or rebirth and new life. As discussed previously, metaphor in semiotics involves the use of a signified, acting as a signifier, but relating to a different signified (Chandler, 2007). In this case, the egg, while acting as a signifier to the themes of anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and birth and new life, is a metaphor of the Fringe itself. This is in relation to the viewer's expectations, and the 'birth' of the Fringe as the festival launches.

In 2009, it was concluded that the Fringe brand image therefore was perceived as related to: anticipation and subsequent discovery; the birth of something new; a wealth of talent; and fun to be experienced by all. An element of rebirth is also evident in terms of the annual occurrence of the Fringe, and perhaps the 2009 Fringe being a new era, following the previous year. Furthermore an element of unexpectedness and risk could be seen as an aspect of the Fringe brand image. This is also evident through the design theme.

Figure 9.7 Fringe programme cover design 2009
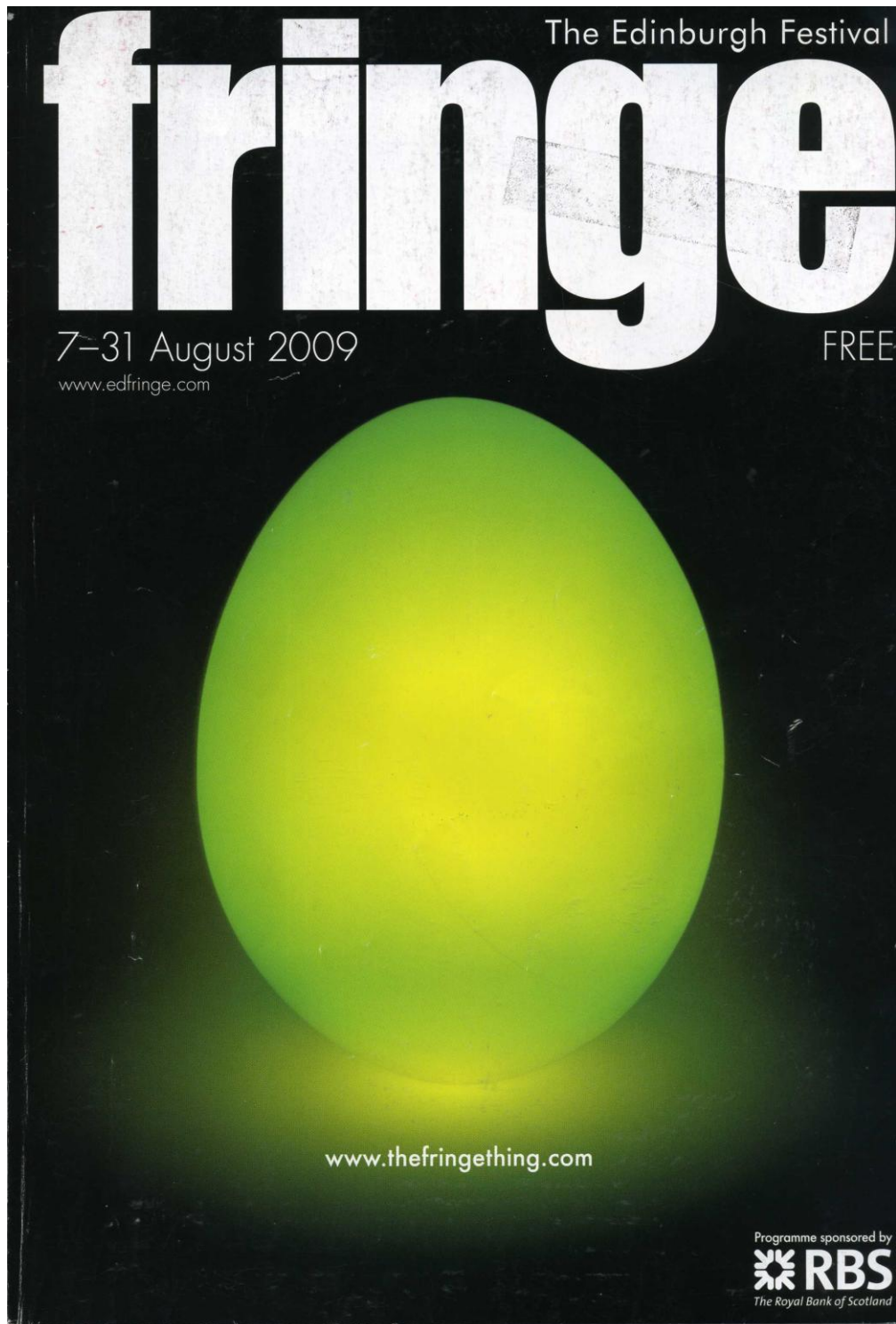
Image: Fringe Programme Cover 2009 © Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society

9.5 Semiotic analysis across cases: 2006 - 2009

It is suggested by Echtner (1999, p.51) that the purpose of semiotic analysis is: "not an examination of the parts, but an understanding of the relationship between the parts and the study of the structure as a whole." In adhering to this principle, the researcher assessed the findings of the semiotic analysis for each of the four Fringe programmes and compared findings.

At the final stages of the semiotic analysis, a comparison of denotative and connotative themes across the four texts was undertaken. As detailed previously, a number of themes could be seen that would contribute to the Fringe brand image definition.

These can be summarised in relation to firstly, their commonality across cases; and secondly as themes and connotative meanings particular to each year's programme. The final consideration was to therefore identify the connotative meanings imbued by each of the programmes.

Common denotative and connotative themes were evident in some form across all programmes. These were seen most clearly within phrases throughout the introductory sections of text and referred to qualities and elements of the Fringe as a festival and brand:

- Wealth of talent;
- Nurture of talent;
- Theatre and performance;
- Creativity and artistry;
- Enjoyment and fun;
- Unconventionality and risk;
- Services and support;
- Involvement and taking part;
- Edinburgh as the festival city.

All of the analysed programmes contained referent systems pointing to some or all of these themes and these were therefore elements to be included in the overall Fringe brand image definition (Berger, A., 1995; Rose, 2007).

9.6   Connotative meanings

In addition to the common meanings, all four texts analysed had an individual design theme. In all cases this was contributory to the connotative, symbolic meaning of the programme, as defined by the researcher.

These connotative meanings, as perceived by the researcher, can be summarised for each text:

- 2006: "Future fantastic: the sixty year trip." An emphasis was inferred to the history and past success of the Fringe; and its future growth. A simultaneous reference to retrospective and futuristic views could be seen.

- 2007: "Get stuck in." A playful invitation was presented to the consumer to indulge in the Fringe and enjoy the richness and variety of the programme.

- 2008: "The stage is set." This defined and described the role of the Fringe as a festival of celebration, performance, creativity, and artistry in Edinburgh, the festival city.

- 2009: "The Fringe thing." This portrayed the anticipation and discovery of a new and unknown Fringe festival: alive and fertile with talent. The birth or rebirth of a new year.

The common themes and the above individual symbolic meanings, as defined through the semiotic analysis, are central to informing the researcher's perceptions of the Fringe brand image, as resident in her mind (Aaker, D., 1991; Keller, 1993, 2003, 2008). These were used by the researcher to form her definition of the Fringe brand image through creating a series of elements which were intangible.

9.7 Defining the Fringe brand image

In considering the components of a brand, these are recognised as functional and symbolic (Elliot & Percy, 2007; Keller, 1993, 2003; Patterson, 1999). It is argued that the role of intangible brand elements is particularly evident within some brands, due to their complexity and high-involvement status. High value products and services, including tourism destinations and festivals may be considered to be within this category (Caldwell & Freire, 2004; Clarke, 2000; Henderson, 2006).

Brand image is defined within the realm of symbolic brand elements. While particular brand elements are communicated by brand owners, brand image is considered to be individuals' subjective perceptions of a brand.

In undertaking this semiotic analysis the researcher sought to define the brand image of the Fringe, as she perceives it based upon the findings of the semiotic analysis. As noted, the Fringe brand image was considered for the four years that were involved in the semiotic analysis across cases and on an individual basis.

In defining the Fringe brand image of the Fringe, the researcher reviewed all of the themes that had emerged from the semiotic analysis. The common themes, as evident across cases; and the individual themes seen in each of the Fringe programmes analysed were considered. These were then applied to develop a series of brand image elements, perceived by the researcher to define and describe the Fringe brand image.

The Fringe brand image elements are based upon themes evident within the shared and individual themes that emerged from the semiotic analysis of the Fringe programmes. They have been developed from the previously noted denotative and connotative meanings of the Fringe programmes and both common and individual themes have been considered.

As a series of descriptors these elements are considered by the researcher to define the brand image of the Fringe. It is evident that some of the descriptors appear contradictory: but the Fringe has a complex brand image which can be perceived differently depending upon which of its functions is considered.

9.7.1 Elements of the defined Fringe brand image

The Fringe brand image is defined as including the following descriptive brand elements. These brand image elements have been developed by the researcher in her analysis of the common and individual themes that emerged from the semiotic analysis to build a picture of the Fringe brand image. As discussed throughout this thesis, this definition of the Fringe brand image is subjective and particular to the researcher:

- **Established:** As a festival that has existed for more than sixty years, the Fringe has a brand image that suggests longevity and a hallmark status in Edinburgh. This can be seen throughout all the programmes and most strongly in 2006, ("Future fantastic: the sixty year trip); and also in the 2008 theme. The common theme contributing to this element is the repeated positioning of Edinburgh as the Festival City.

- **Undiscovered:** Despite the history of the Fringe and its associated myths, because of the variety and scale of the Fringe programme, it maintains an intangible feature of the previously unknown. This element can be seen across all programmes, but most strongly as a

theme in the 2008 programme ("The Fringe thing"; anticipation and discovery of the unknown). The element of the Fringe brand image being undiscovered could however also be seen in 2006 and 2007 through the connotative meanings of each: the simultaneous futuristic and retrospective views of the 2006 programme; and the invitation to "get stuck in" in 2007. The common themes contributing to this element are those of unconventionality and risk, which are reflected across many of the brand image elements.

- **Surprising:** The Fringe brand image has elements of being: surprising. It suggests the unexpected should be expected. Related to the undiscovered element of the Fringe brand image, the surprising elements are also seen across all texts analysed, but again most strongly in 2008. It was also evident in the 2007 programme with the invitation to "get stuck in". Again, the common themes contributing to this element are unconventionality and risk.

- **Unconventional:** Related to the surprising brand image elements, the Fringe brand suggests images of being on the edge and different from other festivals. This is seen most obviously through the name and logotype of "Fringe". A common theme contributing to this element of the Fringe brand image is that of unconventionality and risk. Further, the researcher felt that unconventionality was a brand element expressed by all of the individual years in their connotative meanings.

- **Playful:** This element is related to the unconventionality of the Fringe brand as it rejects traditional ways of thinking. As such, the Fringe certainly has an unconventional and playful element to its brand image. All programmes in their individual connotative meanings display elements of playfulness: 2007 most significantly in its overall design ("Get stuck in"); and also 2009 through "the

Fringe thing" theme. The common themes contributing to this brand image element are: enjoyment and fun; and theatre and performance.

- **Visionary:** As an arts festival, the Fringe is visionary and forward-looking in terms of its innovative programme of events. Its unusual organisational structure remains at the heart of its organic growth and this is an embedded connotative meaning throughout the texts. Common themes contributing to this brand image element are: creativity and artistry; and theatre and performance. The design themes and connotative meanings for 2006 and 2009 also contribute to this brand image element in their focus, with forward thinking elements of the future, time travel; anticipation; discovery and re(birth).

- **Creative:** The Fringe brand image includes many elements related to creativity and a co-created element can be seen due to the contributions and engagement of its many stakeholders. The common themes contributing significantly to this brand element are: wealth of talent; theatre and performance; creativity and artistry; and Edinburgh as the festival city. The individual programmes all reflect the creative element of the Fringe brand image, but the 2008 theme ("the stage is set") has the most denotative references to creativity.

- **Artistic:** The artistry of the Fringe as a festival of the arts, and its numerous contributors is strongly suggested throughout all of the texts in relation to the perceived syntagms. As such, the common themes most contributing to this element are: wealth of talent; theatre and performance; creativity and artistry. The artistic element is represented throughout all years' programmes, but again is most obvious in 2008, with its "the stage is set" theme.

- **Expressive:** This image is communicated through the expression of the Fringe itself as a creative festival and in its advocacy of the expressive arts. The expressive elements of the Fringe brand image are visible in the common themes of theatre and performance; creativity and artistry; and Edinburgh as the festival city. This brand element is also seen throughout the individual programmes and is most evident in the overall theme for 2008.

- **Talented:** The Fringe offers a wealth of creative talent across many areas and this is communicated throughout all of the texts analysed. Again, this brand image element is strongest in the 2008 programme design theme, but can also be seen throughout the other year's programme designs, the 2006, 2007 and 2009 designs all allude to the possibilities of the Fringe offering talent. This brand element can be clearly seen in the common themes of wealth of talent; nurture of talent; creativity and artistry; and theatre and performance.

- **Enjoyable:** It is a brand which communicates images of the fulfilment of the enjoyment of the Fringe by taking part in some way. All of the individual programme themes can be seen to display elements of enjoyment in relation to the Firing brand. The 2007 programme reflects the brand image element of enjoyment most clearly with its invitation to "get stuck in", and the metaphors related to indulgence that can be seen. Within the common themes, this brand element is seen in enjoyment and fun most vividly.

- **Indulgent:** elements of the brand image suggest and indeed encourage the act of being indulgent, accepting and enjoying the rich offerings communicated by the Fringe. This is most evident in the 2007 programme design which invites indulgence through its allusions to Marie Antoinette and the cover image in particular. This

element is also seen in the common themes of involvement and taking part and Edinburgh as the festival city.

- **Festive:** Festivity and celebration themes are evident in the anticipation of the Fringe and in its role as a public celebration in Edinburgh, the festival city. This brand image element is visible throughout all of the programmes in their individual themes. The common themes most suggesting this brand image element are: theatre and performance; enjoyment and fun; and Edinburgh as the festival city.

- **Supportive:** Some brand image associations are linked to the nurturing themes that are evident as a cross-case syntagm. The Fringe is supportive of its numerous stakeholders. This brand image element is most strongly communicated in the 2009 programme theme of the egg design (new life and (re)birth). This brand image element is strongly reflected in the common themes of nurture of talent; services and support; and involvement and taking part.

- **Inclusive:** The accessibility and inclusiveness of the Fringe as a festival for anyone and everyone is visible throughout all the texts. Each programme's individual theme offers an invitation of some sort to take part. 2006 looks to the future while reminding of past years of the Fringe; 2007 invites the reader to "get stuck in"; 2008 proclaims "the stage is set" for the Fringe; and 2009 suggest a new and unknown Fringe "the Fringe thing". The inclusive brand image element is strongly communicated in the common themes of involvement and taking part; services and support; and Edinburgh as the festival city.

The above defined elements of the Fringe brand image presents the findings from the semiotic analysis of Fringe programmes (2006 - 2009) as

undertaken by the researcher. As discussed in previous chapters the findings of the semiotic analysis are subjective and indeed are individual to the perceptions of the researcher.

The reflexive position of the researcher as a primary stakeholder of the Fringe; her own particular position in the social world of the Fringe; her historical and biographical background and her lived-experiences with the Fringe are contributory to this construction of the Fringe brand image. Of further note is that a relatively closed set of data was used for the purpose of this analysis. The Fringe by its nature has many stakeholders who in some way contribute to its brand image through their own communications of the brand, or by other means.

9.7.2 Further applications of the Fringe brand image

The above Fringe brand image elements as defined by the researcher were applied to the development and design of the stakeholder interviews to develop an interview guide (see appendix C). The elements were further used by the researcher at the interview analysis stage in developing codes of reference for the findings; and in contributing to the phenomenological perspective of the interview design and analysis. This was helpful in understanding stakeholder informants' lived experiences with the Fringe brand and their perceptions of its brand image, as described.

A further application of the Fringe brand image as defined was in the development of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology. The researcher was able to leverage her Fringe brand image elements to understand meanings of the Fringe brand as perceived by informants. This assisted in determining particular dimensions of the existing brand relationship types. The interview process is discussed in chapter 11 of this thesis.

9.8 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the semiotic analysis process that was applied to defining and making a construction of the Fringe brand image. In doing this, a review of Fringe programmes was undertaken to reveal that the current Fringe functional brand came into existence in 2006. The semiotic analysis of these was detailed before the brand image of the Fringe was defined by the researcher. A full account of the semiotic analysis findings for each Fringe programme is presented in appendix A. The Fringe brand image, as perceived by the researcher is defined thus as: established; undiscovered; surprising; unconventional; playful; visionary; creative artistic; expressive; talented; enjoyable; indulgent; festive; supportive and inclusive. This defined Fringe brand image is applied to developing the interviews Fringe brand relationship typology, along with findings of the interviews with primary Fringe stakeholders.

Chapter 10
Defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe

10.1 Introduction

The concept of stakeholders and specifically primary and secondary stakeholders was introduced in Chapter 4, where a literature review of academic research concerned with both generic stakeholder approaches and festival and event stakeholders is presented.

In Chapter 7, the research methods applied to defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe were introduced. The literature review findings were discussed as being applicable to defining the Fringe primary stakeholders; along with a consultation process with key informants at the Festival Fringe Society. In defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe, it was concluded that a Fringe stakeholder model would be developed based upon the literature review findings and this process.

Returning to the second objective of this research, this chapter of the thesis presents a discussion and analysis of these research findings. As noted previously, of consideration are defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe, as required by the second research objective:

2) To define the primary stakeholders of the Fringe.

Stakeholders are those individuals or groups who can influence or impact upon an organisation and can indeed be influenced or impacted by it (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, 2005).

The literature review discussed the stakeholder approach as an applied managerial concept: whereby the management of internal and external stakeholders is achieved through the application of practices that fit with the organisation; the particular stakeholder groups; and the greater festival

and business environment (Campbell, 1997; Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984).

10.2 Primary stakeholders: festivals and events

Chapter 4 of this thesis reviews stakeholder literature that is both related to organisational approaches and festivals and events. In defining the primary stakeholder groups of the Fringe literature involving the definition of festivals and events stakeholders, and festival and event stakeholder models is considered in further detail in chapter 7 and here.

An event stakeholder model of primary and secondary stakeholder groups is proposed by Reid and Arcodia (2002, p.496). This study seeks to examine the role of stakeholders in their contribution to successful events by developing definitions of primary and secondary stakeholders. The model presents the event organisation as being vital to the event itself, and illustrates the relationships that exist amongst the various stakeholders. The primary stakeholder groups of events are defined thus by Reid and Arcodia (2002) as: employees; volunteers; sponsors; suppliers; spectators; attendees; and participants.

In investigating the development of successful event brands through a marketing approach, Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005) develop a stakeholder-based theoretical model in relation to event marketing. Here, they argue that Freeman's (1984) stakeholder approach should be adapted to consider the important role of primary stakeholders within festivals and events, and they attempt to create a proactive model to illustrate a means of enhancing stakeholder relationships. The resulting analysis and management of stakeholders can therefore be applied to the development of more effective event brands.

In developing the model of primary event stakeholders, Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005) adopt a qualitative, case study approach of the

Brisbane Goodwill Games to develop a model of its primary stakeholders. The marketing manager of the event was asked to draw a stakeholder map identifying key stakeholders of the department. The marketing department itself was at the centre and the stakeholders deemed as most important to marketing the event were drawn closer to the centre.

This method of defining stakeholders applied an approach of a literature review and a consultation with the event organisation. The identified primary stakeholder groups of the marketing department of the Brisbane Goodwill Games may be defined as noted below, according to Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien, (2005) as: sponsors; the games' public relations department (as co-members of the cooperative team); 'Ticketek', ticketing agency; Government tourism agencies (Tourism Queensland and Queensland Events Corporation); licencees; venues athletes; and the public.

10.3 The approach to defining the Fringe stakeholders

For the present study, in defining the primary stakeholder groups of the Fringe, the researcher applied the findings of the stakeholder literature review to developing a stakeholder model. The above Reid and Arcodia (2002); and Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2006) stakeholder models were investigated and considered in relation to the context of the Fringe.

In attempting to define primary and secondary stakeholder groups of the Fringe, various stakeholder categories were considered in relation to festivals and events. This enabled a series of primary stakeholders to be defined and categorised, thus addressing the second objective of this research.

The researcher developed an initial list of potential primary stakeholder categories. This was based upon the event primary stakeholder groups

proposed by Reid and Arcodia (2002) and also considered the marketing stakeholder definitions described by Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005). Following the development of this list the researcher approached two senior staff members at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society and asked them to define the Fringe primary stakeholder groups, based upon the Reid and Arcodia (2002, p.494) assertion that their interaction results in the festival or event itself: "without the direct support of these stakeholders the event would not exist".

10.4 Initial Fringe primary stakeholder definitions

Initial definitions of potential Fringe primary stakeholders made by the researcher were based on the literature review (see chapter 4) and the further discussion presented chapter 7. These are: Fringe Society staff; Fringe Society members; performing companies; Fringe venues; promoters; bookers; Fringe audience members; Scottish Government; City of Edinburgh Council; Scottish Arts Council; Festivals Edinburgh; sponsors. In their categories, these definitions are informed by the Reid and Arcodia (2002), and the Merrilees, Getz and O'Brien (2005) models.

An initial consultation meeting took place between the researcher and two key informants: senior staff members at the Festival Fringe Society.[21] As the discussion began, the concept of Fringe primary stakeholders was introduced and discussed. The researcher asked both informants if they would consider and define primary stakeholders of the Fringe. This was based upon the definition of primary stakeholder groups, iterated by the researcher, as being those groups that are considered as essential to the existence of the Fringe, with their interaction and the Fringe organisation resulting in the Fringe itself. At this stage the researcher did not reveal the

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[21] One of the Fringe informant staff members contacted the researcher by email on 7th August 2009, during the Fringe, and offered to meet to discuss the research at a later date. A second staff member was then recommended by the first and both agreed to assist with defining the Fringe stakeholders. The researcher had posted a message on the Fringe website forums in late July 2009 with the aim of attracting interest from potential informants based at the Fringe, or in other stakeholder groups.

definitions of primary stakeholders she had developed based upon the literature review findings.

10.5 Interim Fringe primary stakeholder definitions

As noted by the researcher, based upon the above proposed definition of primary stakeholders, the Fringe informants suggested their own definitions. These were noted by the researcher during the discussion, as follows: [22]

- (Performing) companies;
- Fringe venues;
- ticket buying public;
- other Fringe attendees and participants;
- Fringe society staff, including both permanent and temporary staff, and volunteers;
- Fringe Society members;
- Friends of the Fringe;
- Box office (ticketing) suppliers;
- Bookers and programmers;
- press and media;
- sponsors, both long and short-term;
- Scottish Government;
- Edinburgh City Council;
- Scottish Arts Council;
- Festivals Edinburgh (organisation);
- Edinburgh's summer festivals;
- Fringe programme design agency;
- other suppliers and distributors;
- Edinburgh residents;
- Edinburgh businesses.

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[22] The consultation meeting took place in the Festival Fringe Society office in Edinburgh on 20th October, 2009.

During the discussion, there was debate about the defined stakeholders in relation to their roles as primary or secondary. The categories mentioned in relation to this were: press and media; other suppliers and distributors and Edinburgh residents and businesses and were specific to perceptions of each informant in terms of their own role within the Fringe.

At this stage, it was agreed that the researcher would devise a final list and supply this to both staff members by email for review.

10.6 Final Fringe primary stakeholder categories

Following the consultation meeting, the researcher devised a series of categories within which primary stakeholder groups could be defined. This allowed particular and specific stakeholder types (such as individual organisations) to be justified as primary rather than secondary in relation to the Fringe. In the literature reviewed, stakeholder categories may be defined in relation to labour and markets; and are often categorised in relation to customer, employee and ownership roles (Strong, Ringer & Taylor, 2001).

The first category of primary stakeholder groups defined was directly related to the Festival Fringe Society and the management of the Fringe as a festival and organisation. These primary stakeholders are defined within this category as Fringe Society staff, and members. Staff are essential to the running and management of the Fringe, and Society members are responsible for its strategic management.

There were stakeholder groups that could be categorised as participants in the Fringe and the festival would not occur if they did not take part. These are performing companies; independent Fringe venues; promoters, including bookers, programmers and talent scouts. The Fringe audience: composed of the ticket-buying public and other attendees of Fringe events, is included in this participating stakeholder category.

Primary stakeholder groups were further defined as being categorised in relation to being supporting stakeholders. These are groups without the support of which the Fringe would not survive. This category may be sub-divided into financial supporters: independent sponsors and funders; including the primary stakeholder groups of Friends of the Fringe and the public agencies; government; grant funding supporters and other supporters.

A further stakeholder group can be categorised as suppliers, and the corresponding primary groups of specifically the box office, and creative design agency responsible for the Fringe marketing and promotional materials development.

As a result of the literature review and consultation process, as detailed above, the final Fringe primary and secondary stakeholder categories were proposed and a model developed based upon these.

There were therefore perceived to be five main categories of primary stakeholders and some groups could be included within more than one category. The Fringe primary stakeholder categories are as follows:

- **Fringe society stakeholders:** Fringe Society staff and volunteers; and Fringe Society Board members;

- **Participating stakeholders:** performing companies; performers; independent venues; promoters (including bookers, programmers, and talent scouts);

- **Attending stakeholders:** audience, including ticket buying public and other attendees. This category is notable for the number of overlapping stakeholder groups who are members of other

categories, including performing companies, Fringe Society staff;
members and venues;

- **Supporting stakeholders:** both financial and non-financial in
nature, including grant funding supporters: Scottish Government;
City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Arts Council and
members of the Festivals steering group, including Festivals
Edinburgh and Scottish Enterprise. This category also includes
independent sponsors and funders;

- **Primary supplier stakeholders:** specifically the Fringe box office
supplier; and programme design agency[23].

On development of these primary stakeholder categories, the researcher
presented the above definitions to both key informants separately. There
was some further discussion around the previously mentioned categories
in terms of the informants' own perceptions in defining which groups were
primary and which were secondary stakeholders. In the first instance the
informants disagreed about the stakeholder roles of the media and
businesses in Edinburgh as one considered each of these to be primary.
On further discussion of those groups' impact upon the Fringe as a
festival, this was resolved. At this stage it was agreed that this list was
representative of the Fringe primary stakeholders.

10.6.1 Final Fringe secondary stakeholder categories

Secondary stakeholders are also important to the success and survival of
a festival or event as primary stakeholders; but they do not have the same
direct impact as primary stakeholders (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984;
Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

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[23] The particular primary supplier organisations were nominated by both of the Fringe
staff informants. The box office organisation works very closely with the Fringe and is
based in the Fringe office. The design agency is the company which devises the Fringe
marketing campaigns and promotional materials on an annual basis.

Secondary stakeholders of an event are defined by Reid and Arcodia (2002) as: government; the host community; emergency services; general business; media and tourism organisations.

Adapting this model of secondary stakeholders to the Fringe through consideration of its context and setting, the secondary stakeholder groups are presented thus as:

- **Government stakeholders:** civic local and national, not directly involved in the Fringe;

- **Media stakeholders:** including local and national media: print, televised, radio and online;

- **Emergency services stakeholders;**

- **Tourism organisations and agencies:** including VisitScotland; and EventScotland;

- **Visitors to Edinburgh:** tourists and excursionists not directly participating in the Fringe.

- **The host community;**

- **Edinburgh's Festivals:** there are a further eleven city-wide festivals in Edinburgh's festival programme;

- **General business in Edinburgh.**

The Fringe stakeholder model, [24] based upon these categories of primary and secondary stakeholders is presented in figure 10.1.

10.7 The Fringe stakeholder model

A stakeholder model of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe is presented in figure 10.1. This illustrates the network of relationships that exist amongst the Fringe and its primary and secondary stakeholder groups, as described above.

At the centre of the model, and a vital element, is the Fringe festival itself, which is represented in this instance by the Fringe logo. The festival in its occurrence is a result of the interaction amongst the Fringe Society and the five primary stakeholder groups. The primary stakeholder relationships are non-hierarchical, continuous, and dynamic. They assume interconnected stakeholder roles, as represented by their positions upon the presented stakeholder continuum. As well as the five primary stakeholder groups this includes both the Fringe Society and festival. The inter-related arrows illustrate the dynamic nature of the relationships amongst primary stakeholders as they operate in their continuum of Fringe primary stakeholders.

The Fringe secondary stakeholders are also important to the Fringe and are included as a non-hierarchical network of groups which is connected to the primary stakeholders' continuum. The secondary stakeholders' relationships to the Fringe (festival and Society) are represented by their overlap with the primary stakeholders' network and the Fringe itself, at the centre. The connecting lines and arrows are represented by non-solid 'dashed' lines as these groups do interact with one another and the Fringe Society in different direct and indirect ways, but they are not essential to the occurrence and survival of the Fringe as a festival.

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[24] An earlier version of the Fringe stakeholder model and selected elements of this chapter form the basis of a conference paper presented by the researcher in July 2010. The abstract of this conference paper is included as appendix F of this thesis.

Figure 10.1

A stakeholder model of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

10.8 Discussion: Fringe primary stakeholders

It is important to note that the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, as the festival organisation, is central to the Fringe stakeholder model and is integral to its stakeholder management approach. It is argued that as a successful festival the Fringe must incorporate all of its stakeholders within its strategic management process (Freeman, 1984; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

Reid and Arcodia (2002) suggest that while participating primary stakeholder groups for many events are not mutually exclusive; a need exists to differentiate amongst them. This is supported by Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) in their assertion that stakeholders may assume multiple roles affecting the organisation in different ways.

Primary stakeholders of the Fringe are of particular interest to this study because of their engagement and interaction with the Fringe as they actively consume it. The stakeholder model is applied to the development of a Fringe and stakeholder brand relationship typology. Of the five primary stakeholder categories defined, the role of each is considered in relation to their engagement with the Fringe.

10.8.1 Festival Fringe Society stakeholders

As Fringe stakeholder groups the Fringe staff and Festival Fringe Society members are considered primary in nature. They contribute directly to the Fringe and are influenced by the decisions of the Fringe as the event organisation as well as being in the organisational decision-making process (Freeman, 1984; Clarkson, 1995; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

It is suggested that an event cannot function without the support and participation of employees (Reid & Arcodia, 2002). For an event to be effective it is vital for the vision and philosophy of the event to be shared by all of the team from the managers to the temporary staff (Bowdin *et al.,* 2006). The Fringe operates with a core staff structure of sixteen staff

members working across five management functions of: administration; finance; participant services; external affairs; and marketing and sponsorship. In addition to this core structure, prior to, and during the Fringe the staff numbers increase significantly as more than one hundred temporary and seasonal paid staff, and a small number of volunteers are employed by the Fringe Society (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010).

The Edinburgh Fringe Society was formed in 1958. This is the charitable and limited company which elects a board of trustees responsible for overseeing the work of the Fringe staff. The Fringe Society determines the Fringe's open access policy which is settled through the annual election of the trustees and Board of Directors. The Fringe Society today is responsible therefore for ensuring the Fringe is continued to be managed in this way (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010).

10.8.2 Primary supplier stakeholders

Supplier stakeholders are identified as primary in nature when the goods or services they supply are provided directly to the festival or event (Reid & Arcodia, 2002). In the case of the Fringe there are two groups identified as being primary: the box office software developers; and the design and marketing agency contracted to the Fringe. As a small organisation, the Fringe does not have the internal staffing structure to support these vital functions and it is notable that these suppliers also provide the function of additional staffing to the Fringe in these areas.

10.8.3 Participating and attending stakeholders

The identified groups within the participating and attending primary stakeholder categories have varying levels of involvement. The performing companies and independent venues are involved with producing and presenting Fringe events and performances. The involvement of these particular groups forms the basis therefore of the Fringe programme. These primary stakeholder groups in particular may be regarded as having

various economic and social impacts upon the host community (Delamere, 2001; Delamere, Wankel & Hinch, 2002; Fredline, 2000; Quinn, 2005). This is considered to also be the case for the primary stakeholder groups of audience and other attendees.

10.8.4 Supporting stakeholders

Of vital consideration are the supporting stakeholders: the category which includes the funders of the Fringe and those non-financial supporters that are involved in the Fringe. These are groups such as the grant funding agencies and the steering committees that support the Fringe. This category of primary stakeholders has notable overlaps in its included stakeholder groups. It includes organisations such as Festivals Edinburgh: the umbrella organisation responsible for the strategic development of Edinburgh's festivals; the Scottish Arts Council; Scottish Enterprise; and various departments of the City of Edinburgh Council with involvement in arts development and the city's branding strategy. It is suggested that these groups are vital to festivals and events. The non-profit organisational model that festival organisations such as the Fringe adopt requires the addressing of various challenges associated with networking; resource acquisition; and financial viability (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007).

As discussed previously it is important to consider the stakeholder saliency attributes of power, legitimacy and urgency in the definition of primary stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984; Getz, 2007; Jawahar & McLaughlin, 2001; Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). It is suggested that sponsor stakeholders may be illustrative of the stakeholder saliency attributes. The sponsorship of festivals has the ability to increase brand awareness of festivals and increase perceptions of a positive brand image (Coughlan & Mules, 2001; Gwinner, 1997; Reid & Arcodia, 2002). Mossberg and Getz (2006) further argue that the involvement of key stakeholders, such as sponsors, in a festival's branding process is important to increasing positive brand equity.

10.9 Summary

The development of the Fringe stakeholder model concludes by presenting the definitions of primary and secondary stakeholder categories, which was the aim of this chapter. The construction of this model, as detailed above, informed the development of a Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology conceptual model, through providing a defined population of interest. This is presented in Chapter 11.

The brand relationship proposition suggests that within situations of brand and consumer self-image congruence, brands and consumers form relationships (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Kates, 2000). Additionally, imbuing brands with personal meanings involves considering brand image and personality and the development of brand relationships, or perceiving "the brand as a friend" (Elliot and Percy, 2007, p.64). It is argued thus that consumers possess a portfolio of brands with which they have brand relationships. Further, they display fluctuating levels of loyalty, trustworthiness and congruence to these brands. By their nature, primary stakeholders of the Fringe are engaged and involved with the Fringe as a festival brand.

Chapter 11

A Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology

11.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology addressing thus the final research objective. The overall aim of this thesis is to define a series of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships and these too are presented here. This chapter details therefore the process and the findings of the qualitative interviews undertaken with Fringe primary stakeholders. The final objective to be considered is:

> 3) To develop a typology of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders.

The qualitative interviews were designed and analysed from a phenomenological perspective and involved photo-elicitation and a narrative approach. The research method is presented in detail in chapter 8 in relation to its purpose and the constructivist paradigm as its conceptual underpinning.

Qualitative interviews are by their nature social constructions of reality and are thus reflective of the relativist ontological perspective. Indeed, the interactive nature of such interviews, taking place between the interviewer and informants, facilitates the occurrence of transactions. This is a subjective approach to the creation of meaningful information that becomes a social construct of reality (Carson, *et al.,* 2001; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; Kvale, 1994; Mason, 2002; Miller, de Chazer & De Jong, 2002; Shuy, 2002).

Qualitative interviews are relevant therefore to the hermeneutical and dialectical methodology of the constructivist paradigm underpinning this

research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Adopting a phenomenological perspective in the interview design and analysis allows the construction of an understanding of informants' lived experiences as Fringe stakeholders (Fournier, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). The specific approaches of photo-elicitation, laddering, and personal narrative also adhere to this perspective as they allow the construction of a reality describing a series of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships (Atkinson, 2002; Chase, 2005; Fontana, 2002; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Riessman, 2002).

This chapter details the interview process that was undertaken with Fringe stakeholders; before providing an analytical account of the findings, including presenting the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology.

11.2 Interview design: phenomenological perspective

As discussed in chapter 8, qualitative interviews are useful in allowing: "an understanding of the subjective meanings of consumers' lived experiences with brands… and establishing consumer validity of the brand relationship proposition as a whole" (Fournier, 1998, p.347).

The interviews adapt Fournier's (1998) approach to allow the collection of two types of complimentary information in the development of brand relationship conceptualisations. These are, in the first instance, informant accounts of their usage of, and history with, the Fringe as a festival brand; and secondly, contextual details about informants' lives, in relation to their stakeholder roles; life themes and perceptions. The interview format was a three-stage process adapted from that presented by Fournier and Yao (1997) and the design was modified from the phenomenological framework proposed by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.28). As introduced in chapter 8, this proposes twelve aspects for consideration in interview design. This is now considered in the specific and detailed context of the Fringe, as follows:

1) Life world: The interview topic is the everyday Fringe-stakeholder life world of each informant and his/her relationship to it. Qualitative interviews allow unique access therefore to the Fringe stakeholders' experiences of their life worlds.

2) Meaning: The meaning of central themes of the informants' Fringe stakeholder life world are sought and interpreted by the researcher. The meaning of what is said; and how it is said, is therefore registered and interpreted. Qualitative interviews seek to obtain information that is both factual and meaningful in nature and as such it is important that the researcher has knowledge of the interview topic and is observant of expressions, gestures, and vocalisations. The researcher may seek clarity of these aspects through inclusion of both questions of fact and meaning which may be achieved through a laddering process.

3) Qualitative: the knowledge sought by the interviews is qualitative. It is expressed in normal language and aims for detailed accounts of different aspects of the informants' lived experiences as Fringe stakeholders. Precise descriptions and stringent interpretations are important.

4) Descriptive: Open and detailed descriptions of aspects of the informants' life world as Fringe stakeholders are obtained. The researcher encourages informants to describe their perceptions with precision, as the interview focus is upon nuanced descriptions of phenomena, experiences, feelings and behaviour.

5) Specificity: Descriptions of specific situations are elicited in preference to general opinions. By encouraging comprehensive accounts from Fringe stakeholders, the researcher will acquire concrete meanings rather than general opinions.

6) Deliberate naivety: The researcher remains open to unexpected phenomena, rather than having prepared categories of interpretation. The researcher must have therefore a critical awareness of her own presuppositions and attempt to ensure descriptions elicited from Fringe stakeholders are inclusive and open to important themes within their life worlds.

7) Focused: The interview is concerned with particular themes. Questions are neither strictly standardised, nor completely non-directed. A series of open questions focuses the topic, but the informants direct the interview by developing important dimensions of their life worlds. Further, the researcher leads the informant towards themes, but not to specific opinions.

8) Ambiguity: Informants' statements reflect their life-worlds and may reflect contradictions. The researcher must clarify if any inconsistencies are due to faulty communication during the interview; or are reflective of contradictions in an informant's life, for example multiple stakeholder roles, or indeed within the greater world.

9) Change: The interview process can produce new insights and awareness causing the informant to change descriptions and meanings of a theme during and throughout the interview. Informants may discover new aspects of themes under discussion and a process of reflection can occur.

10) Sensitivity: Interviews with informants of different Fringe stakeholder categories are likely to produce various statements on the same topics and themes, even when the same interview guide is used across cases. Sensitivity to and knowledge about the research topic may influence the researcher's interpretation of

themes. This contrasts with the need for the researcher to be presuppositionless, and in this instance is reflected by the research context. The researcher is knowledgeable about the topic, yet has few suppositions of the lived experiences of particular stakeholder category members' Fringe life worlds.

11) Interpersonal situation: The knowledge obtained is elicited through interpersonal interaction and constructed through interaction between two people. It is noted that an alternative interaction may be created, resulting in the production of different knowledge if another researcher were to conduct the interviews.

12) Positive experience: A well carried out research interview can be an enriching experience for informants, who may obtain new insights into their life-worlds.

This phenomenological framework, based upon Kvale and Brinkmann's model, (2009, p.28) was applied to the design of the Fringe stakeholder interviews.

11.2.1 Questions and structure

The Fringe stakeholder qualitative interviews followed a loosely-structured and open-ended format. A series of themes was developed and all respondents were asked questions drawn from of these. In developing the themes around the Fringe brand, the previously defined Fringe brand image elements (see chapter 9) were considered and the potential questions structured with these and similar perceptions in mind. Informants required different probes and responses were elicited to different levels based on the initial answers given (Johnson & Weller, 2002; Mason, 2002; Mishler, 1991).

A laddering approach was applied to the elicitation of responses. As

discussed in chapter 8, this is a qualitative interview technique using directed probes through the application of means-end theory. Means-end theory is based on the ways in which informants translate consumer products' attributes and consequences in relation to their own values (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Gutman, 1982; Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Wansink & Chan, 2002).

The interview structure was based upon the three-stage methodology proposed by Fournier and Yao (1997) in their study into consumer-coffee brand loyalty. Based upon an interpersonal relationship perspective, this study involves depth qualitative interviews with purposefully selected informants, identified as loyal to particular coffee brands. This approach was adapted to Fringe primary stakeholders who were identified as loyal to the Fringe brand by similar means. The interviews involved photo-elicitation with informant generated images to amplify feelings expressed during the interview. A laddering process was applied to gain understanding of the stories recounted around the Fringe brand relationships.

In addition to an introduction and interview closure, the three stages were useful in gaining an understanding of the informants' brand relationships with the Fringe through a process of introducing topics related to their feelings about and use of festivals in general, before moving on to the Fringe and the Fringe brand specifically.

Appendix C is the interview guide, including a series of questions that were asked. As noted previously, not all informants were asked every question. The perspective adopted for the design of the interviews was phenomenological in the sense that it was important to gain an understanding of each informant's lived experiences with the Fringe (see: Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

11.2.2 Photo-elicitation

Interview elicitation techniques are applied to reveal informant knowledge which has been unarticulated (Johnson & Weller, 2002). There are a number of benefits in using a photo-elicitation technique within qualitative interviews. Informants can use images as stimuli to provide descriptions of particular aspects of their lives (Westwood, 2007). Any discussion prompted by elicited images may be leveraged by the interviewer to gain valuable insight (Clark-Ibanez, 2004). Further, the use of images collected by the informant allows the provision of unique visual records of experiences often linked to emotional responses (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004) and mythological concepts inherent to lived experiences (Johns & Clarke, 2001).

The Fringe stakeholder interviews adapted an autodriven photo-elicitation approach, where informants were asked in advance of the interview, to collect a selection of images (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Heisley and Levy, 1991; Westwood, 2001; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995). This approach allowed the informants the authority of image selection, yet encouraged perspective as a means to explain the meanings of images.

The photo-elicitation technique was adapted from Fournier and Yao's (1997) three-stage approach to assess consumer-brand relationships. The first stage was an initial discussion of the provided images, and involved: image amplification; identification of key images; and laddering on elicited image meanings to gain a contextual understanding of the informant's festival perceptions and associated meanings. Following this stage a narrative approach was used to gain an understanding of the informant's history with, and use of, festivals. The third stage repeated the photo-elicitation with images that were specified in relation to the Fringe brand. Finally, the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships were clarified through a narrative approach, and further probing of the selected relevant images.

Prior to the Fringe stakeholder interviews taking place, all informants were contacted in writing, in person, or by phone, and asked to supply up to five images that describe how they feel about festivals in general; and a further selection of up to five images that captured their feelings toward the Fringe specifically, as the pre-identified loyal brand (Fournier & Yao, 1997). It was specified that the images could be in any format or type of each informant's choosing. The images that were supplied proved useful because they were relevant to informants in addressing their own self-concepts and describing the Fringe brand. They were also of significance in determining elements of brand relationships informants have with the Fringe (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Westwood, 2007).

The resulting images were used during the interviews to define the brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. In developing the brand relationship typology, the self-concepts, life and identity themes of the informants were considered in tandem with the defined Fringe brand image, as presented in chapter 9

Prior to the interviews the informants had been asked to collect up to ten images: a maximum of five to describe their feelings about festivals in general and another five to describe their feelings about the Fringe. As noted, the purpose of this autodriven photo-elicitation approach was to encourage flexibility in the phenomenological investigation of stakeholders' lived-experiences, involving specific memories, comments and discussion (Banks, 2001; 2007; Collier, 1957; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Harper, 2002; Rose, 2007).

Of the twenty-one informants whose interviews were analysed, the majority of these (eighteen) supplied up to ten images for the photo-elicitation element of the interview. Five informants in total did not:[25] two participating, one Fringe Society, and two supporting stakeholders. Three

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[25] Twenty-four interviews were undertaken, and nineteen informants supplied images. Twenty-one of these interviews were suitable for analysis. This is discussed in 11.4.

of the informants had been unable to provide images due to other commitments: one cited the time-scale; one is based in London and had been unable to collect any in the limited time she was in Edinburgh; and the third had been out of the country until the day before the interview. These three informants had however thought about the type of images they would have selected and instead provided details related to this and referred directly to their own feelings and perceptions. This was useful for the interview process and analysis and was helpful in eliciting similar responses to images in relation to terms of references and language used. The fourth informant simply stated that she had chosen not to provide images. This interview provided a useful contextual account of the Fringe and the role of that stakeholder, but was not used as a means to assess the brand relationship due to a lack of detail. The fifth informant had also chosen not to supply images and this interview eventually was not analysed due to quality issues. This is discussed later in this chapter in relation to the interview analysis (see 11.4).

During the interviews, there was a variety of images and one three-dimensional sculpture supplied and image formats varied and included: photographs, books, magazine articles, newspaper reviews, paper flyers, online images and advertisements. A series of themes emerged from the photo-elicitation process and these are discussed in detail later in this chapter. A selection of the images provided by informants is included in appendix E of this thesis.[26]

11.2.3 Sampling and approaching informants

The sampling technique selected for the Fringe stakeholder interviews was 'snowballing' which is a widely-used theoretical sampling technique

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[26] During the interview process some informants provided personal images. Further, there were a number of similar images that were provided by more than informant. Many images were subject to copyright and could not be included in this thesis. A selection of five images is presented in appendix E to provide the reader with a contextual broad overview of the types of images provided. Each includes a brief summary of the informant, and a quotation illustrating the 'meanings' discussed.

(Goodman, 1961). Subjects are judged to be in a position to recommend potential further candidates for interview, based upon the criteria of them fitting within at least one of the Fringe primary stakeholder categories (Marshall, 1996). Snowball sampling as a technique is useful in situations where the sampling frame is unknown or difficult to determine (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997; Heckathorn, 1997). There are few issues of privacy in terms of the Fringe, as often associated with unknown samples. Nevertheless it is difficult to define a sampling frame for the festival in terms of many of the stakeholder groups involved.

Snowball sampling is therefore a chain-referral system which is actioned through the selection of an initial randomly selected sample of individuals, who then provide details of further individuals meeting the required theoretical criteria. Snowball sampling relies on the existence of social networks and therefore may include members of the researcher's own social circle (Johnson & Weller, 2002; Warren, 2002). The process of referral continues until new themes cease to emerge and thematic and theoretical saturation is met (Carson *et al.,* 2001; Marshall, 1996). Potential informants identified by the researcher through her own social circle and who were members of the five Fringe primary stakeholder categories were approached first. They were invited for interview if they demonstrated brand loyalty to the Fringe. The Interviews were undertaken with these informants until saturation of emerging themes and theories could be seen, at which point the interview process was terminated.

The brand loyalty indicator applied was adapted from Fournier & Yao's (1997) attitude-plus-behaviour measure. In determining the presence of Fringe brand loyalty the identified Fringe stakeholders were asked if they were concerned about festival brands; if they used the Fringe as a festival brand regularly, based upon their involvement and engagement; and if they had a strong preference for, or link to, the Fringe as a festival brand

over others (Fournier & Yao, 1997). All potential informants responded positively to these questions prior to the interview, and were therefore suitable candidates.

11.2.4 Narrative approach

A narrative approach was applied to the interviews during the second stage, as detailed above. Informants were asked to discuss their lived experiences with festivals to allow the researcher to gain an understanding of how each of the informants constructed their lives and realities as Fringe stakeholders (Atkinson, 2002; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Mishler, 1991; Riessman, 2002). This narrative approach allowed a detailed account to develop of the informants' life experiences with festivals in general and the Fringe in particular (Fournier & Yao, 1997). Narrative approaches infer that individuals understand their lived experiences through their senses of continuity and process (Bryman and Bell, 2003; Mishler, 1991) and therefore present stories about individuals' experiences and lives. It is an approach that is dependent upon subjectivity (Riessman, 2002).

11.3 The interview process

Interviews were arranged with Fringe stakeholders throughout the course of three months.[27] The interviews varied in duration, lasting between thirty-six and ninety-two minutes, with most around seventy minutes. Interviews took place with members of all five primary stakeholder groups: Fringe Society stakeholders; primary supplier stakeholders; attending stakeholders; participating stakeholders; and supporting stakeholders. There were between two and nine informants interviewed within each of the five categories, determined by how informants described their strongest Fringe stakeholder role. The research findings revealed a significant overlap amongst all five stakeholder roles.

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[27] The interviews took place at various times and locations in Edinburgh between February and April of 2010.

Prior to commencing the interviews, in January 2010 a pilot interview was conducted with an informant within the researcher's social circle. In addition to pre-testing the interview process, this began the snowballing sampling process (Johnson & Weller, 2002; Warren, 2002). Pilot interviews are useful because allow the researcher to identify and correct any flaws in the interview design (Birn, 2002; Wilson, 2003). In addition to this, pilot interviews allow the researcher to identify any issues with questions; and they can assist with application of the coding scheme at analysis stage. In situations of probability sampling the eventual use of pilot interview data is not recommended as this may affect the representativeness of the remainder of the sample (Bryman & Bell, 2003). As snowballing is a non-representative theoretical sampling method (Goodman, 1961) and the pilot interview was successful in design and execution, this was included in the final results.

Interviews took place at various locations in Edinburgh including: informants' homes and offices; in cafes; and private rooms in the Library at Edinburgh Napier University. The researcher suggested a few potential locations to informants and encouraged each of them to select a location that they felt comfortable with, or to suggest an alternative location (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

11.3.1 Ethical issues

As introduced in chapter 8, in interview situations informed consent to be interviewed is an ethical requirement for research (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Carson, *et al.,* 2001; Kvale, 1996; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Mason, 2002; Mishler, 1991; Warren, 2002). This involved the researcher ensuring that informants were informed about the overall purpose of the research; the features of the research design; and how the data was to be used. In addition to this, those participating had to do so voluntarily and had to be informed that they had the right to withdraw at any time.

Confidentiality issues were also addressed by the researcher, including access rights to materials and potential publication of information. Furthermore, there was a need for transparency about the subject and purpose of the project and data-collection activities. It was essential for the researcher to maintain integrity throughout the data-collection process to the best of her ability. This included the theme and design of the interviews; confidentiality; transcription; analysis; verification and reporting (Kvale, 1996; Mason, 2002). The researcher attempted to ensure she addressed all of these issues adequately throughout the process.

This research adheres to the principles outlined in the Edinburgh Napier University (2007) *"Code of practice on research ethics and governance"*, which stipulates an ethical code of practice for those undertaking any research associated with the university. Additionally, this research follows the professional principles advocated by the Market Research Society (MRS) (2010) *"Code of conduct".* Both of these documents state the need for informed consent, transparency, and confidentiality.

In advance of the Fringe stakeholder interviews, the researcher discussed these issues with all informants in person, in writing, or by email. Prior to the interviews all informants were thus given a brief synopsis of the research project; an explanation of how the data would be used; and they were informed that participation was voluntary and they could withdraw at any point. Informants were assured that their own participation was confidential and within the written materials they would not be referred to by their own names[28], although their stakeholder group categories would be discussed. This was in accordance with the rules of the MRS code regarding informants' rights to anonymity: "The anonymity of Respondents must be preserved unless they have given their informed consent for their details to be revealed or for attributable comments to be passed on" (MRS, 2001, section B8). Finally, informants were asked to give consent for the

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[28] All names attributed to stakeholder informants throughout this thesis are pseudonyms to preserve their anonymity.

interviews to be recorded (by digital audio recording) and transcribed by the researcher, who would have sole access to this data.

11.4 Interview analysis

As noted, interviews were digitally audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. This aided the recollection and recording of important social and emotional aspects of the interview. A meaning-based analysis method was selected for the interviews. This involved revisiting the defined Fringe brand image elements, as presented in chapter 9. It also meant that a phenomenological perspective was applied to the analysis. This was in keeping with the dialectical methodology and constructivist paradigm of this research, where realities are co-constructed and re-constructed to create understanding (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

There were a total of twenty-four interviews undertaken and twenty-one of these were suitable for the analysis. As noted, one informant had not supplied images and could commit only to a brief interview. The other two interviews were not used because of quality issues with the sound recordings, and one of these informants had also not supplied images. Despite not being fully analysed for the purpose of explicating brand relationship forms, these three interviews did provide some useful contextual information of how the stakeholders themselves perceived the Fringe. The researcher had sufficient materials from the remaining twenty-one interviews and it was at this stage she became aware of thematic and theoretical saturation across the stakeholder categories.

11.4.1 Phenomenological analysis

The analysis of the interview data, similarly to the design, adopted a phenomenological perspective. To gain an understanding of the meaning of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships an idiographic analysis, followed by a cross-case method was adopted (Evashkevich, 2005; Mick &

Bhul, 1992; Thomson, Locander & Pollio, 1989; Thompson, Pollio & Locander, 1994).

This approach was based on the particular method used by Fournier (1998) in her development of a typology of consumer brand relationship forms. The present study sought to adapt elements of this framework to apply to the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship context. As such, the approach was similarly applied.

As noted, the phenomenological perspective assumes that individuals and the life worlds they inhabit are inseparable. The informants' lived experiences as Fringe stakeholders were therefore investigated during the interviews. Further, according to the twelve aspects of phenomenological interview design: interviews are semi-structured and flexible; while being descriptive and specific (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). They are designed to address the aim of the approach: "to attain a first-person description of some specified domain of experience" (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989, p.138).

In beginning the analytical process and in accordance with the phenomenological perspective, the first stage of analysis involved the verbatim transcription of the interviews by the researcher and the assignation of pseudonyms to the informants (Evashkevich, 2005) to preserve their anonymity (MRS, 2010).

11.4.2 Idiographic and cross-case analysis

The completed interview transcripts became the basis of the phenomenological interpretation and the process was based upon the hermeneutical circle continuous back and forth process (Kvale, 1996) approach of: "a part-to-whole mode of interpretation" (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989, p.141).

The transcripts were therefore subjected to an idiographic, followed by a cross-case analysis (Fournier, 1998). The idiographic analysis involved viewing each transcript as a whole and interpreting each one by relating particular parts of the text to its overall meaning. Following this, a cross-case analysis involved relating all the interview transcripts to each other to identify common patterns, or 'global themes' (Fournier, 1998; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

There are three relevant methodological criteria within a phenomenological perspective to data interpretation applying the hermeneutical circle approach and these are reflected through the reliance upon interpretation of the informants' terms of reference to gain an understanding of their lived experiences (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

The first is creating emic knowledge through gaining an understanding of the informants' points-of-view, thus contributing to the understanding of broader, etic, cultural meanings (Spiggle, 1994).

The second criterion is autonomy of the text as there should be no attempt from the researcher to verify informants' descriptions of their experiences; and the interpretation should not include any assumptions made beyond the provided evidence (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

The third criterion is for the researcher to 'bracket' any presumptions they may have, in order to gain an understanding of the informants' lived experiences. Bracketing is described as approaching the research data with a deliberately open mind (Richards, 2005). In adopting a phenomenological perspective, this can involve utilising an interpretative group setting for the data, where each group member reviews the data in addition to the researcher to ensure specific preconceptions arising (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). Within the present context, as a PhD study, there was an individual researcher undertaking the interviews,

so a group approach was not practical. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest that bracketing can however be approached by the researcher herself making a conscious phenomenological reduction, calling for:

> "a suspension of judgment as to the existence or nonexistence of the content of an experience. The reduction can be pictured as a 'bracketing', an attempt to place the common sense and scientific foreknowledge about the phenomena within parentheses in order to arrive at an unprejudiced description of the essence of the phenomena" (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009, p.27).

This suspension of judgement approach was thus adopted by the researcher for the purpose of this study.

The idiographic analysis involved an interpretation of the personal and socio-cultural contexts of the informants' life worlds and the brand relationships they have with the Fringe within those worlds (Fournier, 1998). At this stage, the transcripts were analysed by re-reading them and linking the parts and primary codes back to the whole (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). This may be approached as a of type naïve reading (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004) where the text is read a number of times by the researcher, to grasp its meaning without judgement and thus ensure a bracketed approach (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Richards, 2005).

The resulting idiographic analysis interpretations were produced in relation to the informants' personal and socio-cultural contexts in defining their life-worlds as Fringe stakeholders. After this the meaningful Fringe brand relationships within this world were interpreted and common threads identified. As noted by Fournier (1998, p.348) this was helpful in developing a clear picture of each informant's Fringe brand relationship through: "descriptive analyses of relational phenomena are seeded throughout these stories for development" and the later cross-case analysis.

The laddering approach adopted during the interviews was based upon informants' perceptions of festivals in general and use of informant-generated image, progressing to the Fringe specifically. This allowed the development of descriptive and interpretive informant profiles as Fringe primary stakeholders (Fournier & Yao, 1997; Mick & Buhl, 1992; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989; Thompson, Pollio & Locander, 1994). These stakeholder analyses produced narratives about the informants' interactions with festivals and the Fringe within the context of personal life; world themes; and the timely evolution of festival and Fringe attitudes and behaviour (Fournier & Yao, 1997).

An example of idiographic interpretations of informants' interviews are provided for each of the five primary stakeholder categories in appendix D of this thesis. [29]

11.4.3 Interpreting the text and coding

Qualitative coding of the interviews took place throughout the project and served the purpose of providing descriptive terms for sections of the text that generate categories or themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Richards, 2005).

Following the transcription of the interviews, a series of primary freely-structured codes for each text was created with the support of 'Nvivo' software. Primary codes were based upon the terms expressed by the informants during the interviews and were continually revised into both free and tree structures (of nodes) throughout the impressionistic reading and re-reading of the transcripts to develop a series codes in relation to each text (Richardson, 2005).

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[29] Idiographic analyses of five of the interviews are provided as reference in appendix D. All names have been changed, in keeping with the ethical requirements of this project. All five stakeholder categories are represented by one example.

The coding process involved the researcher identifying the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of each of the Fringe stakeholders in relation to the Fringe as a festival and a festival brand. It also involved interpreting informants' perceptions of their own life themes and identities (Fournier, 1998). The primary coding process at this time was concerned thus with identifying informants' perceptions as they relate to the Fringe brand in their life worlds. As prescribed by the phenomenological perspective, this involved relying upon the informants' own descriptions of their lived experiences of and their use of words and phrases. Each transcript was read and re-read and codes for each were created. The use of the 'Nvivo' software facilitated this process and then became a valuable tool for the cross-case analysis stage.

In illustrating the coding process and the part-to-whole approach, a series of primary free-node codes were therefore created for each text. An example of this is the initial code of *excitement*, indicating informants' feelings towards the Fringe as a festival. On analysis of all the texts, it emerged that eight of the informants had on nineteen occasions used the word *excitement*, or a derivative of it, in describing their feelings towards the Fringe. At the cross-case analysis stage, a series of tree-node codes were created, returning to the above example: *positive (Fringe feelings).*

Free-nodes were therefore created based upon the idiographic analysis of the texts to reveal particular individual meanings. The individual texts were then related to produce the common global themes which allowed the development of tree-nodes (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989)

As analysis progressed, the part-to-whole approach continued various codes were cross-referenced in developing the brand relationship typology (Kvale, 1996; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). These were then compared to the fifteen brand relationship forms, as defined by Fournier (1998) for common features. Again returning to the previous example:

positive (Fringe feelings) such as *excitement,* could be cross-referenced to individuals' perceptions of their own *personalities* as *passionate* and their perception of their *Fringe relationship* quality as *friendly* to give an eventual indication of a global theme of *strong affective friendship.* At this stage, the themes common to each of the five primary stakeholder groups were identified and the resulting Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology was developed. As noted, the coding and cross-referencing of the themes was throughout the process undertaken by the researcher and facilitated through the use of the software.

At this stage, the researcher revisited her own definition of the Fringe brand image elements from the semiotic analysis, as presented in chapter 9. While these particular elements were not used in coding the interviews, there were some similar brand image elements repeated within the informants' accounts. These are mentioned in the discussion around stakeholders' perceptions of the Fringe as a festival brand (see 11.6.1).

11.5 An overview of findings from the interviews

The eventual Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology is based upon Fournier's (1998) classifications of forms of brand relationships. First, a descriptive overview of the cross-case interview findings is presented as a means of contextualising these brand relationship forms in the world of the Fringe and its stakeholders.

11.5.1 Global themes in the interviews

As noted, the cross-case analysis revealed a series of global themes which were reflective of the topics posed in the interview guide (Fournier, 1998; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). These could be broadly categorised across three areas. Firstly, themes were evident in terms of festivals in general, concerning positive and negative feelings and historical and present day involvement as stakeholders. The second area of global themes emerged around the Fringe as a festival and a festival

brand. This was again centred around positive and negative feelings towards it, as both a festival and festival brand. Further historical involvements with the Fringe and stakeholder experiences of it were strong global themes. The third area where particular global themes became evident was related to relationships with the Fringe. These were seen in relation to perceptions of types of relationships; stakeholder roles in these relationships; and also in terms of perceptions of Fringe-stakeholder-self-image congruence.

Within these global themes, there were a series of common sub-themes concerned with particular types of emotions and perceptions of the global themes. In addition to the broader themes, there were some further themes of interest and worthy of mention at this point.

11.5.2 Stakeholder role overlap

There was found to be a significant level of overlap and blurring of categories amongst the stakeholders (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Reid & Arcodia, 2002). As noted, the snowballing sampling method relied upon referrals made by others whereby informants were recommended based upon fulfilling the theoretical criteria of being a member of a Fringe primary stakeholder (Johnson & Weller, 2002; Warren, 2002).

While informants were approached under the premise of being a member of one particular group, it quickly became apparent that distinctions were blurred. In keeping with the applied phenomenological perspective, at the start of the interviews all informants were asked to define themselves as Fringe stakeholders. Only three were easily able to do this within one category. When asked how she would describe her stakeholder role, for example, Kate could simply do this and described herself as an attending stakeholder: "(I am) a very proactive audience. Very proactive! I'm not a fair weather fan, I'm a dedicated follower!"

As noted, the incidence of stakeholders describing themselves as within one exclusive category occurred in only three cases. These were in terms of being attending stakeholders for two informants, and a supporting stakeholder in the remaining case. For the remaining interviews, it was found that eighteen of the informants described themselves as having a second stakeholder role, most commonly as an audience member (attending stakeholder). This was unsurprising in the sense that the majority of Fringe stakeholders interviewed assumed their 'official' stakeholder role, but also attended Fringe events. Of these, five informants had a third stakeholder role and these were described across attending, participating, and Fringe Society categories.

In illustrating the above, when asked about his strongest feelings for festivals, Daniel, a supporting stakeholder, was very clear about how this differed between his 'professional' role and his more personal position as an audience member: "I'd say my… professional one would be, erm… the *spectacle*, so the transformation of the city. For me personally, I think there is, you know, the *unique experience*, because I'm there, and I'm going too!"

Despite the few individual cases, it was thus more commonly found that informants viewed themselves across a number of categories. Many were able to define themselves in one current role: but were keen to emphasise they also assumed further roles at present, or had done in the past. This was particularly evident across the attending and participating stakeholder categories.

Another example of this is, Sophie at the time of the interviews defined herself as an audience member, so could be classified as an attending stakeholder. She did also have recent history as a Fringe Society stakeholder, as she had previously been employed by the Society. Further, she was soon to embark upon a new career as a promoter:

> "As a stakeholder, I am now an audience member, and I am very probably going to be working for a venue. Yep, I'll be a promoter, which is what I used to service, so that's it - I'll be promoting shows and, or venues, and I'll be an audience member" (Sophie, attending stakeholder).

Similarly, John, a participating stakeholder: a member of a performing company, described himself as a stakeholder across further participating categories, in working with venues; and also as an attending stakeholder (audience member):

> "I've had a number of different roles really. I worked as a performer last year and again this year and I'm also a producer. Almost all of our company have worked in Fringe venues. I mean, I've worked as a front-of-house steward and I've always been an audience member" (John, participating stakeholder).

This situation of informants assuming stakeholder categories was evident across all five categories to some extent. Susan, a current Fringe Society stakeholder, has a long history with the Fringe. She was able to specifically position herself as presently within this stakeholder category, but was particular in her explanation of her previous stakeholder roles:

> "I'm quite clear on that! I'm first and foremost a member of Fringe Society staff! I've also been coming to the Fringe for eighteen years as an audience member. I've worked at venues, and I've worked on shows, and I used to work for the newspaper that covers all the festivals" (Susan, Fringe Society stakeholder).

This phenomenon of Fringe primary stakeholders assuming multiple roles could be seen in cases where informants had previously had a specific role, but had since changed and become another category of stakeholder. Robert, currently an attending stakeholder, had also worked for the Fringe for a number of years in many roles, and was keen to mention this. Both supplier stakeholders interviewed, Tom and Andrew, regularly attended Fringe performances and events as audience members. This was also evident across the majority of supporting stakeholders, who outside their more 'official' primary stakeholder roles, saw themselves personally as being attending stakeholders.

11.5.3 Festival and brand confusion

Another theme that emerged across many of the interview cases was visible within the global themes related to the Fringe as a festival brand. This can be described as a perception of 'brand confusion' amongst Edinburgh's festivals and festival brands. This was a common opinion amongst stakeholders from all categories. While all of the informants could themselves identify the Fringe brand amongst Edinburgh's festival brands, there were terms of reference made about 'other people' being confused: "The interesting thing is when people say Edinburgh's festivals, they always refer to the summer festivals and when somebody describes the city of festivals, most people can't differentiate in their mind between the Tattoo, the Jazz Festival, the Fringe and the International Festival" (Robin, supporting stakeholder).

11.6 Informants' images of the Fringe

A sample of the informant generated images is provided in appendix E. Some images were provided by the informants with permission for reproduction in this thesis. The majority of images were personal to the informants, so were not retained by the researcher. Further images supplied by informants, were in the public domain, so these could be reproduced. Informants' images were provided in various formats. Many personal images were brought to the interview for reference in scrap books, programmes, and magazines. Some informants supplied personal photographs depicting themselves, friends, family or colleagues experiencing festivals and the Fringe. One informant brought a three-dimensional sculpture, which was a "Spirit of the Fringe" award. [30] Of the performing and venue stakeholders, within the participating stakeholders'

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[30] The Fringe currently presents more than twenty awards to performers, venues and media and these are sponsored and supported by various organisations and individuals. 'Mervyn Stutter's Spirit of the Fringe Awards' were established in 1992.These six awards recognise those who show commitment in the face of little support or funding or those who have consistently provided audiences with quality entertainment over the years. (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2010)

category, the majority supplied promotional images for their own Fringe performances and some had press cuttings and reviews of successful performances.

The images provided were themselves varied. As noted, some were literal representations of activities that invoked particular memories or feelings. These were personal photographs and images. An example of this was provided by Sophie (attending stakeholder) in her own personal photograph of a Fringe event she attended with a group of friends: "It's just the guys on the Meadows really and I think it even has a Fringe brochure in the picture! It's just that enjoyment, that atmosphere of going and being a part of a festival, with friends." For Sophie, this image evoked memories of taking part and having an enjoyable and relaxing day in the sunshine at the Fringe.

Other images were symbolic in their representation of particular experiences or feelings. An example of this was evident from John (participating stakeholder) who as a member of a young performing company supplied an image to describe the risky element of submitting work for festivals:

> "This one is just a man walking across a tightrope with crocodiles below *(laughs)* and this is one that's just the way I feel about all festivals. It's the element of risk involved in a festival and it's a lot. When you're bringing work to a festival, it's all about calculating risk" (John, performer: participating stakeholder).

In further discussing this theme of feelings of risk, John presented a photograph of an empty theatre auditorium:

> "It's just the empty seats of a theatre. And I think it's an image that's thought about, especially in someone who's performing a piece of theatre. You're very much at the risk of no audience and that's always something you're *completely* at the risk of, which you're completely open to, with festivals. It's not like having your show booked by a venue, when you've, you know, got a guarantee there that it's going to work, it's professional, whereas with a festival it's kind of make it or break it and it's

always that fear going into every show!" (John, performer: participating stakeholder).

Another participating stakeholder: Emma, who has been a performer at the Fringe for more than twenty years, provided a series of programmes and press-cuttings of plays and performances she had appeared in. These served to illustrate her positive memories of performing and also highlighted the fun and enjoyable times she had when she was younger, had fewer responsibilities and more time to take part:

> "This is the programme for it (Mary Queen of Scots). Leith Rep. no longer exists! It was a young company, erm… and it was the passion of one person, who moved on and everybody then moved on, but we got a *superb* write-up! That was in 1990. It's a shame the company folded, but you know there's an awful lot of transience associated with the Fringe. People come into these things and go on and then their lives become more structured with sometimes less room allowed for things like that, especially to the extent that we were living it, if you like. Mind you, I wasn't even that young then in 1990, I don't know who I'm trying to kid! (laughs) It was fun, it was *superb* fun!" (Emma, performer: participating stakeholder).

While some images were personal to individuals, another series of images were not. These tended to be images of particular iconic venues or performances. An image of the 'Udderbelly' [31] venue, which is designed as a large purple upturned cow was provided by three of the informants all of whom described it as humorous, explaining how it was, despite its oddity, a venue typical of the Fringe:

> "This image is the Udderbelly at George Square, the giant purple cow. It just typifies the Fringe, and you just know the Fringe is here if you come in to the area and he is there… or *she*! (laughs) And that for me is when you kind of know it's really here - it's the festival and the buzz kind of really starts. The buzz is so phenomenal! So yes, the Udderbelly - I just think it's such a cool venue!" (Kate, audience member: attending stakeholder).

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[31] The Udderbelly venue is part of the Underbelly production and independent venue company. This particular venue has been situated in Bristo Square outside the University of Edinburgh in a south-central area of Edinburgh.

Another type of image which appeared frequently was of street performers. Photographs were provided of jugglers, magicians and other similar performers. Two informants supplied the same image of a street performer who during the 2009 Fringe travelled around the city on a bicycle while playing the piano. Susan, a Fringe Society stakeholder described how seeing this represents how she feels about the Fringe being unexpected and special:

> "It's a man who had this piano and he had put it on a bicycle. I saw him when I was leaving work quite late one night and it was towards the end of the festival. It had quietened down a bit and it had been raining, and as I was walking, there weren't really that many people around, but I was walking out of Fringe Central across Bristo Square, and he suddenly came around the corner and he was lit-up by the lights and it was all kind of sparkly and he was playing quite a gentle tune, and erm…it was just *completely* unexpected to see this - the piano, and it was *really* beautiful! I think that for me that kind of summed-up the whole thing: being this explosion of things that happen and that anything can happen, and for a man to come up with a piano and that is the atmosphere that the Fringe creates, you know with that going on the city, at that time of year, and a cycle on a piano and you kind of go, *what*? I think it was really valued in the Fringe. I mean it wasn't a big show, it was just part of that stuff that happened, and I think that for me really summed it up - what the Fringe is about. You know? And why it's so special and the expansion of activities that are so self-perpetuating" (Susan, Fringe Society stakeholder).

Given the constraints of this thesis, it is not possible to discuss all of the images presented by the informants. The photo-elicitation was found to be helpful in prompting informants, however. As mentioned previously, a selection of images, including some of the above, is provided in appendix E to illustrate and contextualise some of these findings.

11.7 Stakeholders' perceptions of the Fringe

As described, there were three types of global themes. The first was based around informants' history with and use of festivals and their perceptions about festivals in general. The second was history, use, and perceptions of the Fringe as a festival and festival brand. The third were elements of informants' stakeholder relationships with the Fringe as a

brand. For these global themes, sub-categories were generally positive. A few negative terms of reference were noted but these were minimal.

In the interest of contextualising the forthcoming Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology, the perceptions of the informants as stakeholders of the Fringe and their lived experiences with the Fringe are considered important in underpinning the brand relationship descriptions.

11.7.1 Perceptions of the Fringe as a festival brand

When asked to describe their feelings towards the Fringe specifically as a festival brand, a total of thirty positive terms of reference were identified as sub-themes.

The most common themes communicated by the stakeholders were: the brand strength; the Fringe-Edinburgh relationship; variety and diversity; global recognition and world-wide appeal; creativity; innovation; unexpectedness; the edginess and challenging nature of the Fringe brand; and the uniqueness of the Fringe experience.

Many of these themes were reflective of the researcher's defined Fringe brand image, as presented in chapter 9. The semiotic analysis uncovered Fringe brand image elements of the Fringe brand being established in the city of Edinburgh; unconventional; surprising; inclusive, creative and artistic.

Five themes were negative. The negative theme most widely related to the Fringe brand was a perception of it having become over-commercialised in nature. This term of reference was mentioned by four of the informants. The four remaining negative themes each appeared only once and related to individual's experiences.

On completion of the cross-case analysis the positive brand themes most commonly arising, and mentioned by most informants were those related to the strength of the Fringe as a festival brand: "I think the Society does an exceptional job in creating that sort of *umbrella* that makes everybody think of the Fringe and in fact some people don't think there is anything else but the Fringe. I think it's extremely strong" (Alison, independent venue producer: participating stakeholder).

Another common positive brand theme was the relationship between the Fringe brand and Edinburgh: "I can't think past the word, *Edinburgh.* It's very much so that I think you can't have the Fringe without Edinburgh" (Kate, audience member: attending stakeholder). The relationship between the Fringe and Edinburgh as a festival city was seen in the researcher's brand image elements of it being an established and festive brand in the city.

Of further note were the prevalence of terms of reference to the common themes of difference, variety and diversity: "If you think Fringe, you think diversity", (Mark, Fringe Society stakeholder). The worldwide appeal of the Fringe brand was noted in references made to perceptions of: "global leadership in the festival world and industry" (Robert, audience member: attending stakeholder). In further recognition of this: "the Fringe is like a world-wide brand that people know and recognise" (Tom, supplier stakeholder). These perceptions of the Fringe brand are again similar to the Fringe brand image elements of it being established and can also be seen in the researcher's perceptions of the brand image as talented and visionary.

The accessibility of the Fringe brand was also noted: "It is more accessible because everybody, even people who don't go to a particular show, can be part of it" (Kate, attending stakeholder). This element of the Fringe brand image was described by the researcher as being inclusive and supportive in her brand image definition.

Creativity was another global brand theme as a number of informants described perceptions of the Fringe as a creative brand: "and it's creative, every form of artistic and cultural experience can be had at the Fringe" (Robin, supporting stakeholder). The researcher's brand image elements reflecting this were creative, artistic, visionary, talented, expressive and festive.

There were numerous references made to the Fringe brand being edgy, innovative and challenging and these terms were commonly found within statements of the brand being creative: "it's sort of daring, innovative, creative, challenging" (Clare, supporting stakeholder). The researcher's semiotic analysis of the brand image uncovered elements of it being surprising, unconventional and playful, and these are again similar references.

Despite the edgy and challenging nature of the Fringe brand, it was also widely viewed as being professional: "there's obviously efficiency in terms of the administration. It's immensely organised and efficient and you know, managed really well!' (Clare, supporting stakeholder). The researcher's definition of the Fringe brand image was established, festive, supportive and inclusive, and is reflected in this perception of professionalism.

Unpredictable, unexpected and surprising is thus how informants describe the Fringe as a festival brand. Also of note was the use of the terms fun and exciting: "I think it retains the element of surprise and has the ability to shock, to inspire, and to stimulate thought', (Gordon, performer: participating stakeholder). The researcher's semiotic analysis of the Fringe brand image described similar elements of it being playful, surprising, and unconventional.

Another common theme was energy: "you just feel this real sense of creative energy, which you know, it's like an adrenalin rush in the city' (Clare, supporting stakeholder).

Many informants referred to the unique experience of the Fringe; and this perhaps characterises overall positive perceptions of the Fringe as a festival brand. The unique references were in relation two particular types of experiences. The first referring to personal experiences specific to the Fringe: "My Fringe is different to the next person's. I've got my own memories" (Robert, audience member: attending stakeholder). Further terms of reference related to this unique perspective were made about settings, the unusual and often temporary venues and the city itself, in this case an outdoor venue: "that just kind of typifies the Fringe, because you're sitting outside and you're overlooking a bird sanctuary and the actors are acting away, and then dusk comes down and the birds start making a noise and then the mosquitoes come out!' (Kate, audience member: attending stakeholder).

It is apparent that there were numerous themes associated with stakeholders' feelings towards the Fringe as a festival brand. These were similar to the defined Fringe brand image, as perceived by the researcher. There are some differences in the language used and terms of reference presented: but the perceptions of the Fringe brand image held by the researcher had key similarities to perceptions of the Fringe brand presented by the informants.

11.7.2 Perceptions of the Fringe as a festival

The informants' strongest feelings towards the Fringe as a festival produced generally similar themes and terms of reference to those in relation to the Fringe as a festival brand. There were a total of thirty-three positive common themes and thirteen negative evident in relation to feelings about the Fringe as a festival. Of the positive themes, those

emerging in addition to the commonly reported Fringe brand perceptions included: pride; the importance of the Fringe personally, to stakeholder roles, or to Edinburgh; participation; and most frequently referred to, the overall unique Fringe experience.

The negative perceptions of the Fringe echoed those terms of reference made in relation to the Fringe brand. The most frequently cited theme was again a present-day over-commercialisation of the Fringe. Others of significance were negative statements about the risks and financial costs of performing at the Fringe; and to a lesser extent the financial costs of attending the Fringe. Working during the busy Fringe period, as described by some Fringe Society, supplying, participating and supporting stakeholders, can produce feelings related to feeling tired, under pressure and experiencing stress. Poor weather was referred to also in a negative context across all stakeholder categories: namely frequent rainfall during August in Edinburgh, as being prohibitive to enjoying the festival. Three informants provided images of black rain clouds and heavy rain fall to highlight this.

It is apparent that primary stakeholders of the Fringe have extremely positive perceptions of it as a festival brand. All of these groups are actively engaged with the Fringe as a festival: they interact with the Festival Fringe Society and are essential to it taking place. Feelings about the Fringe as a festival and brand most commonly describe its global position of as a strong and accessible festival brand and its importance to Edinburgh, while emphasising its creativity, unpredictability and dynamism.

Negative themes are quite limited and focus on the perceived over-commercialisation of the Fringe today in comparison with its origins. It may be suggested that the individualistic and self-expressive nature of the Fringe are features less commercial and thus linked with festival consumer emancipation (Kozinets, 2002). Sixty-four years after its conception, it

seems however that the Fringe continues to grow in scale and consumption. Indeed, its organic and non-selective artistic policy, encouraging creativity and freedom, may be in part responsible for this growth.

11.7.3 Stakeholders' Fringe self-image congruence

Self-image congruence occurs in situations where individuals favour brands that they perceive would be preferred by persons they consider as similar to themselves (Belk, 1988; Chon, 1992; Gardner & Levy, 1955; Kressman *et al.,* 2006; Levy, 1959; Malhotra, 1981, 1988; Ross, 1971; Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy 1985; Sirgy *et al.,* 1997; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Solomon, 1983).

The purpose of this research was not to measure the Fringe stakeholders' self-image congruence with the Fringe as a festival brand. As informants they were however encouraged to discuss their own perceptions of their congruence or similarity as a 'person', to the Fringe as a festival brand.

The majority of informants considered themselves to be similar in some way to the Fringe as a festival brand. This was particularly evident in the Festival Fringe Society, attending and participating stakeholder groups where there were some positive comparisons made. This is likely to be influenced by the individual stakeholders within these categories having made personal choices to become associated with the Fringe. The professional stakeholder categories of supplier and supporting stakeholders did also reveal elements of congruence. Only one informant felt they had little in common with the Fringe brand when asked. Somewhat surprisingly this was Kate (attending stakeholder) who despite this lack of self-perceived congruence, described herself as being proactive and dedicated in following the Fringe as an audience member. This could be explained by her comments related to her passion for the theatre and individual performances, rather than for the Fringe itself: "I've

always loved theatre. Always! Before the Fringe I was at the theatre, probably more in fact."

Some informants described their own backgrounds and personalities as being influential upon their involvement with the Fringe. Sophie (attending stakeholder) described how her own passion for creativity and theatre impacted upon her previous role as a Fringe Society stakeholder: "The fact that I am passionate about creating and producing work has meant that I got involved in festivals, and particularly within my role as a liaison between bookers and shows because I *get* how work is made, and how work is put on". Supplier stakeholder, Tom, described how the approach and ethos of his organisation, as a stakeholder, was similar to that of the Fringe: "I wouldn't say that we were anarchic or edgy, similar to things that the Fringe are, but I would say that we do share the desire to want to do something a bit different".

11.7.4 Stakeholders' Fringe brand loyalty

Brand loyalty is based upon consumer trust in a brand (Aaker, D., 1991; Lau & Lee, 1999). It is a result of maintaining positive brand equity and a strong relationship between individuals' attitudes and repeat use of brands (Dick & Basu, 1994).

As described previously all of the informants were identified as being loyal to the Fringe brand in advance of the interviews through the screening process. Further, based upon their positions as stakeholders and the evidence of their engagement and repeated patronage of the Fringe, all informants were considered loyal to it. The determination of loyalty applied an approach based upon Fournier & Yao's (1997) attitude-plus-behaviour measure.

During the interviews, if they did not mention their loyalty, informants were asked if they considered themselves as loyal to the Fringe as a brand. The majority did, but three informants considered themselves not to be loyal to

the Fringe as a brand. One informant, a performer (participating stakeholder), Emma, indicated she viewed the Fringe differently as she had matured. She now felt a greater loyalty to the theatre groups she performed with than the Fringe: "I like dipping my toe in, maybe a foot! But that's about as far as it goes now. But before I was swimming in it, and I think that's a lot to do with lifestyle and it changes as you get older, you know?"

Alison, an independent venue producer, (participating stakeholder) stated she was more loyal to what she described as the "product brands" of performing companies and venues that exist underneath the "umbrella brand" of the Fringe. Finally was Neil, an audience member (attending stakeholder) who also did not consider himself as loyal to the Fringe as a brand. Neil was loyal instead to the programme of performances: "I don't think I'm loyal to the Fringe as a brand. I think I'm loyal to what it does in the sense that it will put out new acts and different things, and mad things."

Loyal informants included Andrew (supplier stakeholder) who described himself as being "one-hundred percent" loyal to the Fringe brand. Robert (attending stakeholder) as a current audience member, who has assumed a number of previous stakeholder roles, also viewed himself as loyal and illustrated this though his commitment to the functional brand: "the Fringe has a brand that yes, I am loyal to, because I wear the t-shirts and I have the poster up in my flat".

11.7.5 Perceptions of the Fringe's brand personality

Brand personality is the affective element of brand image (Hosany, Ekinci & Uysal, 2006; Keller, 1993; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000) and is an important contributor to brand loyalty and equity. Brands are attributed with personalities by consumers as anthropomorphic responses to these affective associations (Aaker, J., 1997; Blythe, 2006; Fournier, 1998;

Cooke & Harris, 2007; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Ekinci & Riley, 2003; Guthrie, 1997; Hirschman, 1994; Keller, 2008).

In addition to perceptions of the Fringe brand, detailed information was sought about elements of the Fringe brand personality. This was then applied to forming the Fringe stakeholder-brand relationship typology. During the interviews informants were asked to describe their perceptions of the Fringe brand personality and this revealed a number of themes. When probed, a sense of ambiguity was the most commonly-described, with terms of reference related to contradiction and split-or multi-faceted personality: "Well it's schizophrenic, it's changeable and it's multi-faceted", (Susan, Fringe Society stakeholder). Similarly: "it's a lot of things to a lot of people, so it's schizophrenic in a good way', (Andrew, supplier stakeholder). Many respondents in discussing the Fringe brand personality described this as one would describe a person. Common terms expressed emphasised an 'off-beat' and unpredictable personality type: particular references were eccentric, eclectic, extravagant, intoxicating, and unpredictable in behavior, but entertaining. Further common brand personality themes were related to creativity and excitement.

11.7.6 Stakeholders' personalities

During the interviews informants were also asked about their own personalities and across all cases there were a total of thirty terms of reference to individual or organisational personalities. There were some common terms and the most frequently supplied descriptors were related to being passionate about performance and festivals. This was most common across the participating and attending stakeholders. Many of the supporting stakeholders described themselves, in their stakeholder role, as being supportive and encouraging of the Fringe: "(my organisation is) very supportive, it's very engaged, it's encouraging", Catherine (supporting stakeholder). The notion of support and nurture in relation to the Fringe was a theme evident throughout the responses of supporting

stakeholders, which given their role was not unexpected. Informants in this stakeholder category were members of organisations that support the Fringe through funding, lobbying and sponsorship: "in terms of personality, it is kind of nurturing, as well as challenging, I would say, as well. You know, we are challenging them to improve and we are challenging them to raise the game in certain areas," Daniel (supporting stakeholder).

Further frequently supplied terms were creative and artistic, particularly across the cases of participating, Fringe Society and attending stakeholders: "I think I'm fairly artistic, but not necessarily in my own talent but in my interests," Susan (Fringe Society stakeholder). Similarly, working in a creative way was mentioned by performing and independent venue stakeholders: "we want to work in an imaginative way and stimulate imagination, "John (participating stakeholder).

Finally, of some interest, five of the informants described themselves as having gregarious or outgoing personalities or similar.

11.8   Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships

As discussed previously, of interest in developing the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology are the consideration of the lived experiences and identity themes of the informants in their roles as Fringe primary stakeholders (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997).

The Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology presented here is based upon Fournier's (1998) typology of brand relationship forms. As discussed in chapter 8, Fournier (1998, p. 346) applied consumer descriptions of 112 consumer-brand relationships to develop seven identified relationship dimensions. In summary these are:

- voluntary (deliberately chosen) versus imposed;
- positive versus negative;

- intense versus superficial (casual);

- enduring versus short-term;

- public versus private;

- formal (role-or task-related) versus informal (personal)

- symmetric versus asymmetric.

These seven relationship dimensions were then applied to the development of fifteen forms of meaningful relationships. These relationship forms all demonstrate the above dimensions (Fournier, 1998).

Fournier's (1998) brand relationship typology proposes thus the fifteen forms of relationship. All of these demonstrate dimensions related to the seven identified. Of interest to the present study of the Fringe stakeholders it was of interest to investigate which forms of Fournier's (1998) relationships were applicable to primary Fringe stakeholders. Depending upon particular roles, some stakeholder relationships were imposed rather than voluntary; public rather than private and indeed formal rather than informal.

In advance of examining which of Fournier's (1998) fifteen brand relationship types could be applied to the Fringe stakeholders, it was important to consider the dimensions of each. Table 11.1 provides a summary of each brand relationship form and its particular dimensions. Within the table are a series of Fringe-stakeholder case examples for each form of relationship. These commentaries are excerpted from the idiographic analyses of the informant interviews. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the Fringe-stakeholders' brand relationships. It should be recognised that the informants are categorised according to their first identified primary stakeholder role.

Table 11.1 A Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology [40]

Brand relationship form	Dimensions	Fringe stakeholder case examples
Arranged marriages	- Non-voluntary union; - Imposed by preferences of third party; - Intended for long-term; - Exclusive commitment; - Low levels of affective attachment.	**i) Margaret's position as a Fringe Society stakeholder.** Margaret was recommended for her post by its previous occupant. She has been involved for more than ten years; and has an exclusive relationship with the Fringe. Her previous low emotional connection to the Fringe has transformed however through her position, as she has learned and experienced more of the Fringe. She is now: "hugely proud of it".
Casual friends	- Friendship low in affect and intimacy - Characterised by infrequent engagement. - Few expectations for reciprocity or rewards.	**ii) Emma's role as a participating stakeholder.** As a performer, Emma has been involved with the Fringe "on-and-off" for more than twenty years. In the past she had "superb fun" performing in amateur productions. In recent years, Emma has "grown-up and moved on". She characterises her emotional connection to be strongly associated with performing and the performing companies to be stronger than her commitment to the Fringe itself: "I'm not very loyal at all, no!"
Marriages of convenience	- Long-term; - Committed relationship; - Precipitated by environmental influence versus deliberate choice; - Determined through the need to satisfy rules.	**iii) Gordon's role as a participating stakeholder.** Gordon has been involved in amateur dramatics for forty years and has attended and participated in the Fringe since its beginning. Gordon is a keen audience member on a personal level, "it's the highlight of the year", but his involvement in his participating stakeholder role is because of the financial need for his theatre company to be involved for its year-round survival: "it's purely commercial".

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[40] This table is adapted from Fournier's (1998, p.362) "A typology of consumer-brand relationship forms" in terms of relationship forms and dimensions. These are applied to the Fringe primary stakeholder interviews of the present study as described in this chapter.

Marriages of convenience (continued)		**iv) Alistair's role as a participating stakeholder** Alistair works in a year-round operating independent venue which produces its own Fringe programme on an annual basis. Alistair also enjoys the Fringe on a personal (attending) level. In his professional stakeholder role he views it as a business partnership, offering new opportunities and platforms for his organisation to produce new work: "it's completely different to what we do normally".
Committed partnerships	- Long-term; - Voluntarily imposed - Socially-supported union high in love, intimacy, trust; - Committed to stay together despite adverse circumstances. - Adherence to exclusivity rules expected.	**v) Andrew's role as a supplier stakeholder** Andrew's organisation has been involved with the Fringe as a supplier for seventeen years and has a supportive relationship with the Fringe which is high in trust and commitment. Andrew's company works very closely with the Fringe on an exclusive basis: "we wrote our systems specifically for the Fringe". **vi) Alison's role as a participating stakeholder** Alison is currently an independent venue producer, and has in the past worked for the Fringe Society. She has been involved in her current role for more than twenty years and favours working with the Fringe: "the Fringe gave you that opportunity to create your own professional history through determination". Alison is committed to the Fringe, but as a venue producer, felt the negative 2008 box office issues have caused lasting reputational problems for the Fringe with its participating stakeholders: "I think there's a huge lingering mistrust." **vii) Lydia's role as a participating stakeholder** Lydia is an independent venue producer with an artistic role. She has been aware of the Fringe since being a small child and first performed at the Fringe in the 1970s. Having worked as an artistic programmer for

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Committed partnerships (continued)		more than twenty years, Lydia describes herself as a "sensationalist" about festivals. She has very positive feelings towards them, but feels that because of festivals, other art forms can lose out on attention and funding opportunities. Lydia describes the Fringe as: "a phenomenon".
Best friendships	- Voluntary union; - Based on reciprocity principles; - Endurance ensured through continued provision of positive rewards; - Characterised by revelation of true self, honesty and intimacy; - Congruity in partner images and personal interests common.	**viii) Susan's role as a Fringe Society stakeholder** In her role, Susan has an extremely close and positive relationship with the Fringe. As a former reviewer, performer and venue manager, Susan has had a relationship with the Fringe since being a student in Edinburgh. Susan is highly enthusiastic about the Fringe and the opportunities it has afforded her. Susan believes the Fringe is reflective of her own interests and background and she has a high level of affect for it: "I feel very involved. I feel this is just not a job here. I feel very affectionate towards it and also quite protective of it."
Compartmentalised friendships	- Highly specialised; - Situationally confined; - Enduring friendships characterised by lower intimacy than other friendship forms but highly socio-emotional rewards and interdependence; - Easy entry and exit attained.	**ix) Tom's role as a supplier stakeholder** Tom's organisation has been a Fringe supplier stakeholder for three years. He works in a specialised role and within this has a high attachment to the Fringe. Tom views the Fringe as being a rewarding and enjoyable opportunity for his organisation to work creatively, rather than a pure business relationship: "our clients are across the board because we couldn't just work for the arts… the Fringe is unique, and it's such a high profile thing, it's something were very keen to be involved in." It is possible that Tom's relationship could evolve over time to become more committed (perhaps on a similar basis to Andrew's supplier-Fringe brand relationship).

Compartmentalised friendships (continued)		x) Jenna's role as a participating stakeholder Jenna's Fringe-brand relationship is different to the other venue-stakeholders, as an independent venue manager. Jenna manages a series of independent venues which are leased to production companies during the Fringe. These venues are owned by the same organisation and operate in a different capacity outside of the Fringe. Her organisation depends on having a trusting and open relationship with the Fringe: "it does bring a lot into the organisation as a whole."
Kinships	• Non-voluntary union with lineage ties.	xi) Mark's role as a Fringe Society stakeholder Mark is a Fringe Society stakeholder, but defines himself as just as much an independent venue producer. Mark sees his stakeholder relationship with the Fringe as being similar to a dysfunctional but close-knit family. This permeates throughout his Fringe venue, which operates as an independent venue throughout the year: "we're all part of a big dysfunctional family and people support each other." Mark very much values the Fringe as a platform for his venue, but feels it is in danger of becoming over-commercialised: "I think the Fringe is getting a bit battered by some of the mega venues that have got so much control, such commercial power. That there's a lot of things the Fringe might like to do that are the spirit or the ethos of the thing that it started, but it doesn't do." **xii) Daniel's role as a supporting stakeholder** Daniel works in an organisation which supports all of Edinburgh's festivals and he has previously worked with a number of individual arts festivals and organisations, including the Fringe. He enjoys the Fringe as an attending audience member on a personal level, and within his supportive stakeholder role describes the relationship as: "nurturing but challenging, we've got influence, but we've got no power." Daniel

Kinships (continued)		describes the relationship as being a kinship because of its mutual necessity;" I would say in a family relationship you're not just choosing to be together, you know, you *have* to be together." **xiii) Catherine's role as a supporting stakeholder** Catherine works in an organisation that supports the Fringe. In her stakeholder role she compared the brand relationship to being like one of siblings: "I'm not saying we're the bigger brother, but maybe like the older brother?" **xiv) Moira's role as a supporting stakeholder** As a stakeholder who supports the Fringe in her role, Moira describes the brand relationship as being "a close partnership" and "trusted". As her stakeholder role involves working in a team with other organisations lineage ties were evident. **xv) Robin's role as a supporting stakeholder** Robin's role is within an organisation that supports the Fringe. He believes that all Edinburgh's festivals contribute to the brand image of the city and that the Fringe is: "a showcase for creative talent in Scotland." In terms of the brand relationship, he describes a family network: "we're part of a big family I guess, cousins rather than brothers and sisters!"
Rebounds / avoidance driven relationships	• Union precipitated by desire to move away from prior or available partner, as opposed to attraction to chosen partner	No examples were found for this category of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship.
Childhood friendships	• Infrequently engaged; • Affectively laden relation;	**xi) Clare's role as a supporting stakeholder** Clare describes her organisation's Fringe stakeholder-brand relationship

Childhood friendships (continued)	• Reminiscent of earlier times; • Yields comfort and security of past self.	as having been very much influenced by perceived congruity and "associations" between both organisations. Once close, this relationship has now grown more distant which she attributes to a change in personnel and direction of both organisations, although this could change again: "it was like a good friend, you know, it was reliable, it worked, it was open, you could talk there was communication. But I don't think that that's there anymore, I think we're quite remote now!" **xvii) Robert's role as an attending stakeholder** Robert has around fifteen years' history with the Fringe as an audience member and has in the past worked with the Society and venues. He describes himself as: "an audience member *now,* but one who is definitely interested in the success of the Fringe Society and the success of the Fringe Festival." Robert has strong and fond memories of working at the Fringe and attributes his experiences there to contributing to his own interests, development and career. While Robert is clearly sad to not be as fully involved with the Fringe as he once was, he acknowledged that as he has grown older he has had to move on: "I don't think I'll ever see forty shows in a festival again! So now I want to see as much as I can, but, it tends to be in a fairly concentrated burst. Yes, if a friend comes to stay, I'll try and take a couple of days' holiday and maybe we'll go and see ten shows over the course of a weekend or something." Robert describes his brand relationship with the Fringe as being like a friendship with someone: "a close friend and sometime colleague who you trust and can rely on, but don't have to be in contact with all the time!"

Childhood friendships (continued)		**xviii) Sophie's role as an attending stakeholder** Similarly to Robert, Sophie now considers herself as an audience member, although has plans to become a participating stakeholder. She has a history of around eight years of working with festivals: including the Fringe until relatively recently. Sophie aims to move on to new experiences, but describes her relationship with the Fringe as being similar to an old friendship: "buddies that have a good old rant about the way that things are. I think it would be long term, but it wouldn't be weekly. It probably would be seasonally and be fine! We'd catch up when we're in town."
Courtships	• Interim relationship state; • Will develop into committed partnership contract.	**xix) John's role as a participating stakeholder** John is a founding member of a young company who have performed at the Fringe for the past three years, gaining tangible funding from an arts organisation for this first time this year, based on previous years' success. John's brand relationship with the Fringe is based upon the provision of opportunity by the Fringe counterbalanced by taking financial and personal risks. As his company become more established this relationship is likely to develop into more of a partnership. At present, John sees the Fringe as: "very welcoming but very demanding." He describes the Fringe itself as being: "like a bear getting the honey and the honey is really nice. The Fringe has got all the honey you can have, but it's also got all the bees that can sting you!"
Dependencies	• Obsessive; • highly emotional, selfish attractions cemented by feeling that the other is irreplaceable;	**xx) Kate's role as an attending stakeholder** Kate is an audience member of the Fringe who although describing herself as being a "dedicated follower" of it, also defines herself as not brand loyal to the Fringe. She is a life-long theatre goer, but uses the Fringe as an intensive opportunity to attend her favourite types of

Dependencies (continued)	• Separation from other yields anxiety; • High tolerance of other's transgressions results.	performances by local amateur dramatic companies. Despite this lack of Fringe-brand loyalty, Kate would be disappointed if the Fringe didn't take place: "it's very important to me. If it wasn't there I would absolutely hate it! I *love* the Fringe! If it wasn't there, it would be *horrible*! It would be *awful*! What would I do with myself in August?" Every year Kate keenly awaits the release of the Fringe programme in June, which she then uses to plan her bookings: "I look forward so much, and I plough through it religiously! I get two copies, one to go through the first time and I score out the ones I'm not interested in and then I've got the other one and I've got an excel file of them, because there are so many of them So, yes, I've got an excel file! It's a massive job! It takes me, a good couple of weeks anyway until I can work out which ones I can go to actually, because it's every day, virtually, that I will go to one". Kate does describe herself as selfish in her role as an audience member of the Fringe as she will often aim to attend performances alone as she prefers this: "I am selfish! I go to shows myself, because then I don't have to worry about anybody else enjoying it. It's purely selfish!" Kate believes the Fringe has become "over-commercial and over-priced" in recent years, but this does not deter her in attending affordable performances by companies she prefers.
Flings	• Short-term; • Time-bounded engagements; • High emotional reward, but devoid of commitment and reciprocity demands.	**xxi) Neil's role as an attending stakeholder** As an audience member of the Fringe, Neil does not describe himself as brand loyal to it as a festival. He has enjoyed the atmosphere in the city that the Fringe engenders, since he arrived in Edinburgh around twenty years ago: "I see that as huge kind of buzz and vibrancy and lots of activity as being good thing. I wouldn't want it all year round, but it's like *wow*! That to me signifies the festival is here!"

Flings (continued)		Neil is loyal to the types of performances he associates with the Fringe, and is happy to experience the unexpectedness of the programming: "I think it tries to live by its name, which is on the fringe, on the edges, doing different things and that's why I kind of quite like the fact that it puts on a lot of rubbish!" Neil particularly enjoys music and comedy: "if it's a comedy I'll always sit on the front row just because I know I'll have more of a laugh! You get picked-on sometimes, but I quite like that! I find that quite entertaining! Although people think I'm weird because I do that quite often." Neil does not attend comedy performances outside the Fringe. But does attend music events. He believes the Fringe offers a less-expensive option to experience quality music events than the Edinburgh International Festival.
Enmities	• Intensely involved; • Characterised by negative affect and desire to avoid or inflict pain on the other.	No examples were found for this category of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship.
Secret affairs	• Highly emotive; • Privately held relationship, considered risky if exposed.	No examples were found for this category of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship.
Enslavements	• Non-voluntary union governed entirely by desires of the relationship partner; • Involves negative feelings but persists because of circumstances.	No examples were found for this category of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship.

11.8.1 Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types defined

As primary stakeholders of the Fringe, the informants who contributed to the interviews are because of their roles engaged with the Fringe as a festival. As a brand their relationships with it are interactive, mutual and continuous (Fournier, 1998; Hinde, 1979).

Many of the informants did have multiple or blurred stakeholder roles (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Reid & Arcodia, 2002). Those who were classed as Fringe Society, supplier, participating or supporting roles also defined themselves to varying extents as audience members. Some, for example: Susan (Fringe Society stakeholder); Robert (attending stakeholder); and Gordon (participating stakeholder) had indeed been attending stakeholders for many years before assuming their current stakeholder role. All stakeholders for the purpose of this study were viewed in their current 'main' role and this was self-defined at the start of the interview. It should be considered however that other factors, such as historical experiences and existing perceptions of the Fringe may have influence upon individual Fringe-stakeholders' brand relationships.

As presented in table 11.1, it was possible to define all twenty-one of the informants' Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships in accordance with a broad selection of Fournier's (1998) typology of consumer-brand relationships. Eleven of Fournier's (1998) brand relationship types were found to be evident for the Fringe primary stakeholders and the Fringe. This meant that there were four of Fournier's (1998) proposed relationship types that did not apply to the Fringe stakeholders.

A discussion is now provided to summarise the types of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships across each of the five stakeholder categories as well as the relationship types that were not apparent in relation to the Fringe and its stakeholders.

11.8.2 Fringe Society stakeholders-Fringe brand relationships

There were three types of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship identified for Fringe Society stakeholders: a 'best friendship'; an 'arranged marriage'; and a 'kinship'. All of these relationships have elements of longevity in common and are characterised by their exclusivity and intensity. The element of the relationships being voluntary or imposed by a third party was largely determined by each individual stakeholder as either having actively sought-out their role; or having been nominated for it.

Of the three informants within this category, Susan could be seen to have the strongest relationship in relation to levels of affectation and reciprocity. The Fringe brand relationship for Susan is a 'best friendship'. This relationship is voluntarily formed, intense and enduring over time. Susan views her own interests, background and herself as being congruent to the Fringe and states her affection for it:

> "It's (the Fringe is) something I really, really value and want to find out about. I'm interested in it - in the thing that happens and in the thing that people create and the thing that people react to. I'm very, very loyal (to the Fringe) we've got a long-standing relationship" (Susan, Fringe Society stakeholder: best friendship).

Margaret's situation is different to Susan's. While she is a patron of the arts, she was recommended for her particular position with the Fringe Society in an 'arranged marriage' brand relationship. Although, always taking her position seriously, it has taken Margaret time to reach her current position as a concerned and caring partner of the Fringe:

> "I feel very responsible for it, at this stage, because it's gone through a crisis. Do I worry about it? Well, I suppose in a way, but I just feel it needs proper care and attention, and I'm giving it that. Previously, I perhaps never worried, because it just seemed to be, you know, it was going on fine! … As an Edinburgh citizen I just think it's the most wonderful thing ever! You couldn't invent it! It just grew and that's fantastic! I talk about it everywhere I go!" (Margaret, Fringe Society stakeholder: arranged marriage).

Mark has a slightly less defined role as a Fringe Society stakeholder, as he was keen to emphasise his dual-role as a participating stakeholder. His relationship is one of 'kinship'. He compares his stakeholder relationship in turn as a "dysfunctional family" and as a "gang of friends you play with." In both stakeholder roles there are elements of the non-voluntary aspect of the relationship, but an obligatory aspect, similar to family relationships can be seen:

> "It's like a gang of friends… I think at best what it should try to do, is to help you get on with your parents. It (the Fringe) can assist you in dealing with third party regulators in the way that, you know, you would expect with a bunch of peers to get advice about how to deal with things" (Mark, Fringe Society stakeholder: kinship).

11.8.3 Supplier stakeholder-Fringe brand relationships

There were two supplier stakeholder informants interviewed and both demonstrated different brand relationships with the Fringe. The brand relationship types identified within this category were a 'committed partnership' and a 'compartmentalised friendship'.

Both of these types of brand relationships are enduring. The 'committed partnership' that Andrew has with the Fringe has developed throughout the course of the years his organisation has been a supplier of the Fringe. Andrew's stakeholder-brand relationship with the Fringe is thus characterised by high levels of support, commitment and trust, which are reciprocal and exclusive. This relationship is well-established and would endure any adverse circumstances because of the intimacy inherent to it:

> "I would say *close* is the main word, it couldn't be closer (it is) part of what we do - we don't just supply, one of the key things that we do is that we move in with people and we try and help them to build their business, because we've got experience… so we kind of are the Fringe as much as much as the Society. So we're the same kind of people, we have an extremely close relationship!" (Andrew, supplier stakeholder: committed partnership).

Tom's supplier brand relationship is currently a 'compartmentalised friendship': although depending upon the development of the current contractual situation this relationship could become more established. At present, this relationship is characterised by being confined to the specific supplier context: however, Tom views the relationship as being a positive opportunity for his organisation to exercise its creative talent, and to acquire associated socio-emotional benefits. Due to the contractual nature of this relationship entry and exit would currently be easily attained. Nevertheless, this particular 'compartmentalised relationship' could easily develop into a more 'committed partnership', as has been the case for Andrew as a supplier stakeholder:

> "So actually our relationship is pretty professional. (Is it) a friendship? Yeah, definitely, there is! I mean, I *think* there is - there's a mutual respect… I think that is why I was so keen to get involved, and I did feel like it was one of those things that I needed to do" (Tom, supplier stakeholder: compartmentalised friendship).

11.8.4 Participating stakeholder-brand relationships

There were seven informants who were participating stakeholders. This group included performing companies and performers, independent venue producers and managers, promoters and programmers. Although a widely-defined category, these stakeholders all contribute to the Fringe by participating in it.

There were five brand relationship types identified here: a 'courtship'; a 'casual friendship'; a 'compartmentalised friendship'; two 'committed partnerships'; and two 'marriages of convenience'.

John's stakeholder brand relationship can be seen as a 'courtship'. This is described as being an: "interim relationship state on the road to committed partnership contract" (Fournier, 1998, p.362). John is a young co-founder of a performing company that was established approximately three years ago on leaving university. John has since worked as a performer and

producer during the Fringe with his company and has also worked in venues in a front-of-house capacity. He was an audience member in advance of this. John's brand relationship is positive, but tentative. It is likely to become more established as his company develops. Despite this evident positive element to the relationship, John does ascribe this to the "luck" his company has had in attaining funding. Throughout the interview, John referred to the balance between the opportunities offered by the Fringe as a "platform" for his creative work; and the risk of taking new work to the Fringe, as a festival which has an open-access artistic policy. The relationship he has with the Fringe is thus very much determined by the benefits it has allowed his company to acquire so far. It is a relationship that demonstrates some of the features of the more committed partnership in the sense it is voluntarily imposed and socially supported. There is evidence of trust and commitment within this courtship, but this is yet to develop to maturity. John's brand relationship with the Fringe is founded on this balance between opportunity and risk:

> "It really does add to the risk factor because, again, it goes back to that empty audience, because in any festival you can end up with an empty audience but in this festival you've actually invested in having those bums on seats. This is something that's been good this year, we've been very lucky to get funding which means we can put on a show this year. Whether we enter into that relationship (with the Fringe) comes down to directly to the financial situation. I suppose it's one of those things. You might not actually get money back on the festival side as well. As a stakeholder you're going into it perhaps giving more than you're going to get out initially, because you're not investing in the immediate festival: you're actually investing a lot more in getting your work seen and taking it on elsewhere" (John, participating stakeholder: courtship).

There were two instances of 'committed partnership' brand relationships with the Fringe within the category of participating stakeholders. Both informants who demonstrated this type of brand relationship with the Fringe are programming venue producers. 'Committed partnership' brand relationships are developed over a long period of time; are entered into voluntarily and are high in affect: trust, love and intimacy. There is a level of commitment inherent to this type of relationship which causes the

relationship to continue despite instances of adverse circumstances. The first informant with a 'committed partnership' brand relationship with the Fringe was Alison. As an independent venue producer, Alison programmes and produces a range of performances throughout the Fringe, on an international basis, in a series of venues. When the Fringe is not taking place, the venues she uses have other functions, such as churches and university buildings. Alison's history with the Fringe is long and she has worked within the Society in the past. It was evident that Alison values the Fringe and sees it as a vital element of her working life. She highlighted the levels of work involved in producing and programming work for the Fringe, and compared it to "juggling jelly". Despite having a strong and committed relationship with the Fringe, and demonstrating obvious indicators of fondness for it, Alison was critical of the Society for the 2008 issues with the ticketing and box office services. She suggested that while this was a "problem" for audience members: for independent venues and performing companies, it had a financial impact, which caused a lack of trust to develop, she describes as: "a slight sort of detached feeling. There is a very long way to go before it will be regarded as being a full sort of sense of community." Despite this recognition of these issues, it is evident that Alison's brand relationship with the Fringe is committed:

> "But it's really become a complete love, hate: with absolutely nothing, then the buzz. Then every year when it comes to certain points, and it's the feeling of *why do we do this*? There just has to be an easier and less stressful way of living your life! (laughs) But, you know there are two extremes: you can either be bored, or hover somewhere around the middle, or it's utterly thrilling. When it all, all comes together it's utterly thrilling! It's fabulous, when you see shows that look superb, and you see audiences coming out that have been really affected by what they've seen, either because it's been magical, or it's been funny and you just know that their hour has been a totally excellent experience for them. It's completely worth it!" (Alison, participating stakeholder: committed partnership).

Lydia is also a programming venue producer, but her venue operates on a year-round basis. Lydia's brand relationship with the Fringe is also a 'committed partnership'. The dimensions of this differed to Alison's

relationship in some ways because of this. Lydia too has a long history with the Fringe, hers as a performer and audience member. As a result, she has a real fondness for the Fringe as a festival:

> "I mean it's the whole heritage, the concept of the Fringe Festival, I have very, well *deeply* warm feelings about it. I think it's an amazing phenomenon actually. And, I'm talking about the *concept* of the Fringe, yeah? It's a phenomenon: it's exciting; it can be dangerous; it's unpredictable. It must be unpredictable! So, it can be boring, thrilling, irritating, life-changing, cheap, expensive, pretentious, honest, you know? All of those things! And, from a performer's perspective, it's exhausting! Well actually it can be (exhausting) for audiences as well. It's exhausting, and it's an absolute right of passage! I would say that everybody, at some point in their life, should do the festival at least once!" (Lydia, participating stakeholder: committed partnership).

Two participating stakeholders demonstrated having brand relationships with the Fringe that may be described as 'marriages of convenience'. These relationships are long-term and committed, but rather than being entered into on a voluntary basis, they form over time because of "environmental influence" (Fournier, 1998, p.362). In the case of both stakeholders, the influence has been exerted by the organisations they work with in their stakeholder roles.

Gordon has been attending the Fringe as an audience member since "the Fringe started." From this perspective Gordon evidently views the Fringe with a sense of enjoyment, describing it as: "some would say (it) is a highlight of my summer!" His participant stakeholder role is one of obligation, as a former performer and director and today a managing member of an amateur dramatics company that has performed at the Fringe since 1983. The performances during the Fringe are accessible and chosen to attract an audience and to allow the group to bond: "it's a team-building exercise". He describes the Fringe as being "the bread and butter" that helps his company to remain financially viable throughout the year and to produce "more challenging" work at other times of year:

> "We regard it as a purely commercial venture, I mean the standard is maintained, we do set ourselves a pretty high standard! We get good reviews, but you know, we rely on it to help maintain our premises and also to allow us to do something a bit more challenging in May and November" (Gordon, participating stakeholder: marriage of convenience).

Alistair works in a venue that operates on a year-round basis as a practitioner's studio and performance venue. During the Fringe his venue runs its own programme of events and operates as a promoter and booker for performers. Alistair works in a marketing role. The images he provided for the photo-elicitation stage of the interview were reflective of the successes of his venue's Fringe programme, and included: press-cuttings, reviews and an award. Alistair described himself as enjoying the Fringe as an audience member, and as a participating stakeholder he very much views it as an opportunity to be involved in producing and promoting a creative and artistic programme of work which is different to the year-round activities of his venue:

> "I completely embrace it, and look forward to it. It's a really nice time because there're lots of companies visiting and it's an unknown quantity, I suppose. When it's being programmed, and between the prep time and when it's really happening, it's exciting because things will not go necessarily as you want them to, and you know, little things will pop-up and, you know, it's a very creative time. As well as going to see lots of other shows and getting lots of ideas from different things that you're seeing and different venues that you're visiting. So it's, you know, lots of people that you know from London and lots of different practitioners that are up, and so it's a nice time to actually be, focussing upon the performance I suppose, which we do less of year round" (Alistair, participating stakeholder: marriage of convenience).

Jenna is also involved in Fringe venues. Her role is one of managing a series of venues which are available to lease during the Fringe. In recent years her organisation has started to programme events for their own venues during the Fringe. Throughout the year these venues operate with an alternative function. Jenna's brand relationship with the Fringe is therefore a 'compartmentalised friendship'. This is a specialised relationship which is confined to being responsible for the venues. It is a relationship which is enduring and involves a reciprocal level of trust.

Similarly to the other informants, Jenna is a keen audience member of the Fringe on a personal level and often attends festivals: "I mean, personally, I love festivals, and even in my spare time I will still go to other festivals." In her participating stakeholder role she sees the relationship as being valuable to her organisation and an opportunity to do something different:

> "I think of the Fringe really fondly! Good memories of this year, and of that year. I think we're kind of office based a lot of the time, so actually being out and doing sort of account work, or just organising the event, running a team, it's just a bit more of a team feeling, I think, when we're running these events" (Jenna, participating stakeholder; compartmentalised friendship).

The final type of Fringe brand relationship identified within the participating stakeholders' category was a 'casual friendship'. This type of relationship has dimensions which are low in affect, and demonstrate infrequent engagement (Fournier, 1998, p.362). Emma is an actor who has performed at the Fringe with a number of amateur dramatics companies. While Emma demonstrates a real fondness for the experience of doing this it is apparent that her loyalties are today with the companies and performances rather than the Fringe. Emma provided a number of examples of her experiences of performing in the past:

> "So every night you went, you did your performance. You were working, so you did your performance, went to the Fringe Club. You were there until three or four o'clock in the morning, then you got up the next morning and went to work! For me that was the best Fringe experience I've *ever*, *ever* had!" (Emma, participating stakeholder: casual friendship).

Emma does not describe herself as being brand loyal to the Fringe: "I'm not loyal… I think you move on, you get a bit older and a bit more bogged down with work, and so on, so you do less." She was keen nevertheless to highlight her past enjoyment of it as an experience. There were indicators that Emma's relationship with the Fringe has changed as she has matured in life and taken on other interests and further work. Her case may have been different had her Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship been considered twenty years ago when she was first engaged as a performer

and participating stakeholder: "as time has gone on, I've got involved with an older group. I'm doing a little less performing and the Fringe connection become much slimmer".

11.8.5 Attending stakeholder-brand relationships

Within the attending stakeholders category there were three types of Fringe brand relationships identified. These were two examples of 'childhood friendships', a 'fling' and a 'dependency'.

Similarly to the participating stakeholders those attending the Fringe are a group with a varied background and this is reflected in the types of relationships identified. Attending stakeholders of the Fringe can include ticket-buying members of the public, those attending un-ticketed or free events. Also in this category are those who experience the Fringe through visiting the various centres of street performance, such as the High Street area, while the Fringe is taking part. It may be possible too for some individuals to define themselves as attending stakeholders of the Fringe, when in reality they were attending other events taking place in Edinburgh at the same time as the Fringe, or events that were elements of other festivals. Despite recognising a level of confusion in 'other people' over the summer festival brands, there was some evidence that a number of the interviewed informants also had some uncertainty over which festival some events they had attended were attributable to.

This uncertainty has been reported to be the case for many years, particularly in terms of the Fringe and the Edinburgh International Festival. In fact, the now iconic "*Beyond the Fringe*" revue,[41] first seen in 1960, was at the time (and has since been) commonly perceived as a Fringe event, although in reality it was a programmed performance of the EIF, and:

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[41] As noted in chapter 1 of this thesis, 'Beyond the Fringe' featured the talents of: Peter Cook, Dudley Moore, Alan Bennett, and Jonathan Miller. One of the informants interviewed had attended this and attributed it to being a Fringe event.

"probably did more to broadcast the name of the 'Fringe' than anything else at the time" (Moffat, 1978, p.41).

Two of the attending stakeholders exhibited 'childhood friendship' brand relationships with the Fringe brand. These relationships are high in affect and tend to evoke feelings of comfort and security, while providing fond memories of earlier times in a person's life. Having once been frequently engaged, these brand relationships are now less so (Fournier, 1998, p.362). Both Robert and Sophie have 'childhood friendships' with the Fringe. Currently both are audience members, but share relatively similar historical associations with the Fringe as stakeholders. Both worked with the Society over a number of years in their early post-university careers, and each see their current stakeholder role as being of a high level of audience interest. Each also envisage the possibility of moving into other stakeholder roles in the future: possibly by participating in, or supporting, the Fringe in some way.

Robert declares himself an audience member today, but at the start of the interview, stated that because of the numerous roles he had held previously: "it probably is difficult to pigeonhole me as one particular stakeholder of the Edinburgh Fringe." Robert has been attending the Fringe since the mid-1990s and his early experiences as an audience member were influential upon his decision to attend university in Edinburgh. While at university, and since leaving, Robert has worked with a selection of Fringe venues. He has also been employed by a few other festivals in Edinburgh; and with the Fringe Society in a series of positions. Robert believes the experience he gained with the Fringe helped him to find work in overseas festivals: "the whole Edinburgh period, meant that I made some contacts and that helped me get jobs in Melbourne with the Melbourne Comedy Festival, and the Adelaide Fringe". Robert now works in another role which is related to his experiences and background in festivals, but does not involve working directly with them. When Robert

discussed his time at the Fringe it seemed that he very much valued and had fond memories of his time there and describes his relationship with it as: "not as close as it once was". Robert chose to move on to a new position of employment because he felt it would offer him more stability and opportunities for development, and he values his current role immensely. Despite this, he does speak fondly of his time at the Fringe:

> "Yes! I go and see shows. I mean, I *want* to be more a part of it than I have over the last couple of years, but that's because, you know, I've got another job now? You have to devote some of your summer holidays to being relaxed and unwinding" (Robert, attending stakeholder: childhood friendship).

When discussing his relationship with the Fringe, Robert describes it in terms of being a 'childhood friendship', someone he would see now and again, and who he is fond of: "so your relationship would be one of great strength and warmth, but one that didn't need to be reaffirmed every week."

Sophie's background with the Fringe is similar to Robert's. Sophie first came to Edinburgh on a school trip and experienced the Fringe at the Traverse Theatre: "I went to see three shows and I thought they were good, bad, and brilliant! And then we got on the bus and went home again! I wasn't aware that the festival was anything other than the Traverse… I didn't really *get* that we'd been to the Fringe." Sophie moved to Edinburgh to study at university and at that time began to work in venues and then worked with the Fringe, and Imaginate (the children's festival in Edinburgh) for around six years. Until recently Sophie had been working on a full-time basis with the Fringe, but left as she felt it was time for her to pursue her interests as a producer of work for the arts and theatre: "it made me want to be an artist and to create work. That's my passion, creating work… I feel thankful towards the festivals for getting me to a place where I feel I can go out on my own, freelance, and be doing what I want to do." Sophie had many fond memories of the Fringe and the images she brought to the

interview were very personal to her. She described her relationship with the Fringe as someone she would catch up with; "when we're both in town." Sophie saw herself as being congruent with the Fringe in relation to her interests. Had she not moved on from her previous position, as a Fringe Society stakeholder it seems likely that Sophie's Fringe brand relationship could potentially have been similar to Susan's 'best friendship':

> "I feel like I get both sides of the coin. I understand where the audiences come from and where the performers come from, and that's really important to get. So we probably interpersonally get on very well as a result of that because we are both gunning for the same things" (Sophie, stakeholder: childhood friendship).

There were two further informants within the attending stakeholder category. Both defined themselves as being members of this category only, but have quite different Fringe brand relationships.

Neil has a brand relationship with the Fringe which may be described as a 'fling'. This type of relationship is short-term and time-bound in engagement. It has dimensions of high emotional reward in terms of enjoyment, but low levels of commitment (Fournier, 1998, p.362). Neil enjoys attending comedy and music as part of the Fringe. He is not a regular festival attendee otherwise, but has also attended the Edinburgh International Festival on a regular basis. Neil's main motivator for attending the Fringe is: "entertainment and enjoyment" and the "atmosphere in the city." Neil first attended the Fringe twenty years ago when he moved to Edinburgh and he has tried to buy tickets most years since. In recent years he has found it more difficult to find time to go because of work commitments, but he still manages to fit in some performances. Neil does not feel loyal to the Fringe as a festival brand, but he enjoys the type of performances and the atmosphere. He wouldn't mind if he was attending the Fringe, or not: "It just sort of happens that the Fringe is doing that, so as far as I've seen it." When asked to describe how

his strongest feelings about the Fringe, his response illustrated the enjoyment and entertainment factors that he values:

> "I like it! Just because of the fact that there's so much to choose from. I mean, there's a great variety, it does get people doing wacky things, and it's enjoyable, it's a fun time. It's in the summer, and although I am working very hard at that time I try and get to as much as I can" (Neil, attending stakeholder: fling).

The final type of brand relationship identified within the category of attending stakeholders was a 'dependency' relationship. Kate as an audience member of the Fringe reported many of the dimensions particular to this type of brand relationship. 'Dependencies' are referred to as a type of "dark side" relationship and can cause brand-level instances of compulsive behaviour (Fournier, 1998; Hirschman, 1992; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989; Rook, 1987).

In Kate's case the elements of dependency were evident through her passion for the Fringe as a festival. As a life-long Edinburgh resident who has an interest in the theatre, Kate looks forward to the Fringe every year. During one year she attended thirty-three performances in a short period of time, which she later thought: "was just too many." Kate was clear about her feelings for the Fringe and finds it very important in her life: "It's very important. If it wasn't there I would absolutely *hate* it! I *love* the Fringe! A feature of a dependency-based brand relationship is one of selfishness. These are attractions which can be underpinned by feelings that the relationship partner is irreplaceable (Fournier, 1998). Kate mentioned during the interview that she considers herself to be selfish when it comes to her enjoyment of the Fringe:

> "I'm extremely selfish in one way. Yes, I give lots to charity, I give food for the wild birds and all of that, and yet most of the time I go to shows by myself, because then I don't have to worry about anybody else enjoying it! It's purely selfish! I go to many of them on my own so I can enjoy it, take it in, and not have somebody sitting there going *'sigh'* or yawning! Which there's nothing worse than, you know? So for many years I've done that,

whenever I go to the theatre, I quite often will specifically go on my own"
(Kate, attending stakeholder: dependency).

Despite "loving" the Fringe and being an "extremely loyal" person, Kate
says she is not brand loyal to it as a festival. Rather, Kate's passion is
amateur dramatics. In pursuing her interest, every year Kate awaits the
release of the Fringe programme so she can carefully plan her own
programme of attendance for each day: "you've got to plot them, colour
code when they're on, and look for gaps. There are favourites: theatre
groups I will always go and see. They get priority".

Kate has been attending the Fringe for as along as she can remember.
She does feel however much of it has become over-priced and over-
commercial in recent years. Kate was quite clear in her criticism of this:
"that's so frustrating, it lost that kind of small, intimate (feeling) because
the corporate people got a hold of it and kind of, squeezed everybody for
what they could get, and I found that incredibly sad!"

11.8.6 Supporting stakeholder-brand relationships

There were five supporting stakeholders interviewed and all but one
demonstrated a 'kinship' Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships.
'Kinships' are described as: "non-voluntary unions with lineage ties"
(Fournier, 1998, p.362). This evident similarity of four of the supporting
stakeholders was unsurprising as these are all organisations that work
within the same arena: indeed in some cases they work in partnerships or
networks. They all support the Fringe in some way, be it financially or
through lobbying. All of the supporting stakeholders demonstrating
'kinship' brand relationships referred to the other stakeholders in the family
network, so the relationships were seen to be networks rather than linear.
Two of these stakeholders were particular in mentioning how their
supporting-stakeholder brand relationships with the Fringe had improved
since the ticketing problems encountered in 2008: "when the Fringe hit a
very difficult period, in advance of that period the relationship with us was

very separate… then that shifted to us being one of their many partners" (Catherine, supporting stakeholder). Moira, also stated that her stakeholder brand relationship had changed and become more "trusting" since 2008: "coming through that, I think there's now quite a trusting relationship all round."

In describing his organisation's brand relationship with the Fringe as a supporting stakeholder, Daniel made a comparison between friendship being a voluntary relationship, and kinship as unavoidable: "I would say it is a family relationship. It's slightly different to a friendship, because I would say in a family relationship you're not just choosing to be together… you have to be together".

Catherine too referred to her organisation's brand relationship with the Fringe as being similar to a family situation. Keen to emphasise that she saw the relationship: "not as parent and child. Not as controlling as that", she felt that her organisation had a similar position to the Fringe as an "older brother" would have to a younger sibling in terms of support and positioning within the family network unit.

Moira, also a member of a supporting stakeholder category represented her brand relationship as being "business-like" but like a family network in the sense of being: "it is (like a family), it's a supportive and very strong trusting relationship."

Robin alluded to a family network in his description of his stakeholder-Fringe brand relationship as well:

> We're trying to give that sense of place and festivity and kind of out of the ordinary, putting the 'gladrags' on. So those are the kind of areas where we work with one another. We're part of a big family I guess, cousins rather than brothers and sisters!" (Robin, supporting stakeholder: kinship).

As illustrated these four supporting stakeholders viewed themselves as having a family based relationship with the Fringe. All informants felt this relationship involved other members, and was a network similar to cousins or siblings, rather than a prescriptive or controlling linear (parent-child) relationship.

The final supporting stakeholder brand relationship type was one of a 'childhood friendship'. This type of relationship was described by Clare who has a more individual role as a supporting stakeholder. Clare felt that her brand relationship with the Fringe was now "lacking" when it had once been "very strong". Clare felt that the relationship had therefore grown distant. As a stakeholder she very much supports the Fringe; "it is quite unique and quite different. You will see things that you'll never really see anywhere else in the world". She feels however that due to a change in personnel and other circumstances the current brand relationship has grown distant. There is however an opportunity to renew this and she feels the previous strength of the relationship could be regained: "I think it really does need revisiting."

11.9 Brand relationship types not represented

Across all of the interviews there were four of Fournier's (1998) brand relationship forms not represented in the cases of the five Fringe stakeholder categories. These are "dark side" relationships (Fournier, 1998) and include 'enmities', 'enslavements' and 'secret' affairs. As noted these relationships are found to occur in situations where consumption of brands could be related to addiction. Addiction can cause compulsive and impulsive behaviour as well as ritualised activities (Hirschman, 1992; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989; Rook, 1987).

Another type of relationship not accounted for was the avoidance driven or 'rebound' type of brand relationship which is fuelled by a need to avoid or move away from the use of a particular brand to a preferred brand

(Fournier, 1998). In many respects the Fringe is unique as a festival, this may account for this relationship not being evident here, although a number of the informants did mention the substitutability of the Fringe and the EIF, for example.

There was one incidence of a relationship that was seen as a dependency. Kate openly admitted her selfishness, and her intense emotional attachment for the Fringe, or rather the elements of the Fringe that are important to her. Despite this categorisation there was little evidence of any darkness to Kate's brand relationship with the Fringe. Conversely, she seemed to benefit from her relationship and value it. The other brand evident relationships evident fell across a selection of friendship, partnership and kinship types.

11.10 Why define Fringe brand relationships?

Fournier (1998) developed the fifteen previously discussed brand relationships as a conceptual system for labelling types of relationships to define these and thus suggest further areas of research within this little considered field. Fournier (1998) believes that her classification of relationship types may be applicable across different brands and consumers. This chapter of the thesis has addressed the brand relationship proposition outside of the realm of consumer goods and described how this model may be applied to the Fringe as a festival brand and its stakeholders.

The delineation of the Fringe brand relationship types is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, different types of relationships can be seen to provide contributions and benefits to a stakeholder's own personality. An example of this may be through ego support evident through 'best friendships', such as Susan's Fringe Society brand relationship. This relationship provides Susan with much pleasure and personal and professional growth in the arts. Similarly, the highly specialised

'compartmentalised friendships' can engender stimulation of the ego. This is demonstrated through Tom's supplier stakeholder relationship with the Fringe: allowing his organisation to apply its creativity to an interesting project, and provide an artistic perspective, which is different to a pure business transaction, common to many of his other relationships.

Another consideration is that maintenance levels for particular relationship types vary. This can be seen in Margaret's 'arranged marriage', which in recent times has moved beyond the realms of obligation to a nurturing, caring relationship. 'Committed partnerships' also require continuous maintenance to remain exclusive and mutually beneficial. Further, 'kinships' can be seen to provide security either through individual relationships, or indeed through the extended family networks as seen for the Fringe and its supporting stakeholders.

Of some consideration is the evidence that brand relationships can change over time. Some enter a decline, such as Clare's 'childhood friendship', which she feels has become weaker than it previously was. Deterioration of relationships may be through lack of maintenance or through an active dissolution (Fournier, 1998).

On the opposite side of the continuum other brand relationships grow stronger. It is possible, for example, that John's current courtship with the Fringe may develop into a committed partnership. There is also evidence that individual brand relationships change on a regular basis, in this case depending on the particular stakeholder's current stakeholder role. This is illustrated by Robert and Sophie's 'childhood friendships' with the Fringe. Both accept this is the way things are for now, but are open to changes in their relationships, in the future.

Fournier's (1998) study into brand relationships (which the present study is applied to) continued to consider conceptualising the strength of brand

relationships and this is perhaps a valid direction within which to extend this study into the Fringe and its stakeholder brand relationships. This notion and other potential future developments of this research are addressed in the final chapter of this thesis.

11.11 Summary

This chapter has presented the analysis and findings of a series of qualitative interviews with a sample of twenty-one primary stakeholders of the Fringe. In keeping with the constructivist paradigm of this research, the interviews were designed as transactions occurring between the researcher and informants to reach a co-constructed understanding of Fringe stakeholders' brand relationships (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, Kvale, 1994; Mason, 2002; Miller, de Chazer & De Jong, 2002; Shuy, 2002). The purpose of the interviews was to develop a brand relationship typology for the Fringe and its stakeholders in response to the third objective of this research. This led to addressing the overall aim of this research which is to define a series of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders.

In developing the interviews, a snowballing sampling approach was applied, where informants were recommended by others based on them fitting the theoretical criteria of them being a primary stakeholder of the Fringe (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997; Goodman, 1961; Marshall, 1996). The interview selection of informants and design was adapted from Fournier & Yao's (1997) approach considering brand loyalty and relationships for coffee brands and consumers. To allow a narrative approach and the recollection of stakeholders lived experiences with the Fringe a photo-elicitation approach was useful in gaining a deeper insight into the informants' lived experiences with the Fringe and their perceptions of it as a festival brand (Banks 2001, 2007; Collier, 1957; Harper, 2002; Mizen, 2005a, 2005b).

The interviews involved a phenomenological perspective in their design and analysis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). Idiographic analysis of the transcripts followed by a cross-case analysis allowed the development of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types. The findings of the interviews were then related to the fifteen brand relationship types proposed by Fournier (1998).

The Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types varied across the five stakeholder categories and included eleven of Fournier's (1998) proposed relationship types. Within the Fringe Society stakeholder group there were three types of brand relationship evident: 'best friendship', 'arranged marriage' and 'kinship'. The supplier stakeholder group demonstrated two types of brand relationship: 'committed partnership' and 'compartmentalised friendship'. Participant stakeholders' brand relationships were varied, as the group itself was in its various types of members. The brand relationship types noted here were: 'courtship', 'casual friendship', 'compartmentalised friendship', 'committed partnership', and 'marriage of convenience'. Within the attending stakeholders' category there were three types of brand relationship: 'childhood friendship', 'fling' and (a light) 'dependency'. The supporting stakeholders' category had two types of brand relationship evident. This group of stakeholders was however the most homogeneous and based upon organisations relationships with the Fringe rather than individuals'. Four of the supporting stakeholders clearly exhibited 'kinships', while the final member of this supporting group's brand relationship was a 'childhood friendship'.

It is evident that brand relationships are therefore dependent upon the stakeholder role of the individual: but are also likely to be influenced by the individual themselves within their self-concepts and self-image congruence with the Fringe. Furthermore their own subjectivity, history, affectation, perceptions, lived experiences and beliefs are likely to also have an impact

upon the types of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships that have formed. Of further consideration, and merely touched upon in this study is the manner in which the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships contribute to individuals' own personalities through appealing to or stimulating the ego, a natural life-cycle of growth and decline, issues of relationship maintenance, (Fournier, 1998) or indeed other features not considered here. In considering these areas further, the final part, and chapter of this thesis presents the broad conclusions of this research and potential future areas of research, of which Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship strength and maintenance is one of many to be considered.

Part 5

Conclusions

"Images were first made to conjure up the appearance of something that
was absent. Gradually it became evident that an image could outlast what
it represented; it then showed how something or somebody had once
looked – and thus by implication how the subject had once been seen by
other people. Later still the specific vision of the image-maker was also
recognised as part of the record. An image became a record of how X had
seen Y" (Berger, J., 2008, p.3).

This final part and chapter of the thesis presents the conclusions of the
study in relation to the aim and the three objectives of this research. The
findings are therefore presented for each objective and discussed in their
relationship to the aim of the study. The contributions to knowledge and
understanding made by this study; reflections on the research process;
and limitations of the research are also considered here.

Although this is the last chapter of the thesis and by its design brings this
research to its conclusion, the chapter continues by discussing potential
future areas of research arising from the conclusions drawn here. The
thesis concludes with a reflexive summary.

Chapter 12

Conclusions and reflections on the research findings

12.1 Introduction

In setting the stage for the last part of this thesis, and the research process undertaken in reaching the conclusions, this final chapter presents these conclusions in relation to the aim of the research. Further, the contribution to knowledge and understanding is considered in terms of the research methods applied, and the findings of this study. A reflective account of the research process is provided which considers further and future directions of this research, limitations of the study, and a reflexive summary closes the chapter.

As the first part and introductory chapter of the thesis alluded to, this study set itself the task of going 'round' and 'beyond' the Fringe. The aim was to provide an understanding of types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. In doing this there was a series of questions that had to be answered. These formed the basis of the three research objectives of this study in its concern with: festival images and how these relate to the Fringe brand image; Fringe stakeholders; and the relationships between all of these on a conceptual and empirical basis.

The second part of this thesis, the literature review, was concerned with the subjects of image; brand image; brand relationships; and festival stakeholders. These were central questions of this study in its aim and objectives, so it was essential that they should be considered. The review of academic literature assisted in defining and contextualising these constructs; and in informing the approaches that would be applied in their exploration in relation to the Fringe and this research.

This study was underpinned by the constructivist paradigm. This was in keeping with the Fringe itself, as a co-constructed festival, of experiences and realities. The third part of this thesis, and specifically chapter 5, presents a detailed account of constructivism as an alternative and legitimate metaphysical approach to that presented by more positivist paradigms. In the judgment of an inquiry constructivism prescribes to considerations of its trustworthiness in its credibility, transferability and confirmability. Further it demands authenticity which includes fairness; the development of personal constructions (ontological authenticity); the understanding of informants' constructions (educative authenticity) and stimulation and empowerment into action (catalytic and tactical authenticity) (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

A relativist approach to the understanding of the Fringe realities and a transactional and subjective approach to the creation of knowledge therefore followed. Texts, with their inherent systems of signs; and informants' lived experiences of the Fringe were central to this inquiry. The methodology was hermeneutical and phenomenological in its perspective to develop understandings of these texts and experiences.

In constructing the Fringe brand image, the research method of semiotic analysis studied the system of signs inherent to the current Fringe brand through its promotional programmes. A series of qualitative interviews with its primary stakeholders involving photo-elicitation then facilitated meeting the aim of this research: by matching Fringe primary stakeholders to the Fringe brand and devising a series of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships.

12.2 Defining 'a' Fringe brand image

In arriving at an informed understanding of the Fringe-stakeholders' brand relationships, the first objective to be considered was concerned with defining the Fringe brand image.

There can be no single definitive description of the Fringe brand image, as this is a subjective construct, particular to the individual. It was necessary however to seek 'a' definition of this as a means of informing the following interview design. In later defining the existing Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships, the method applied an existing typology of product brand-consumer relationships to the Fringe-stakeholder context. Unlike the Fringe, consumer product brands such as coffee and household products are generally more easily defined in their functional and symbolic elements. These are brands which are tightly managed and controlled by the brand owner. Service brands, including tourism and festivals as 'products', have by their nature many more contributors to the ownership of the brand. The Fringe with its wide network of contributors to the communicated brand is not controlled like most product brands and therefore is not easy to define in its functional or symbolic elements.

A semiotic analysis of Fringe programmes was applied to the question of defining a Fringe brand image. This method is discussed in detail in chapter 6 and the findings in chapter 9.

In considering the Fringe brand image, it was at the outset necessary to attempt to firstly identify what image actually is through the literature review, before applying the resulting ideas to the Fringe. In its fundamental definition, image is a symbolic construct perceived by individuals as being representative of another tangible or abstract entity (see: Berger, J., 2008; Boorstin, 1961). The literature review considered research into destination image. Image was defined here as a perceptual construction (Crompton, 1979b). One focus was the role of image in motivation, to select a destination or attend a festival such as the Fringe (Crompton & MacKay, 1997). Another was to consider the components and formation of image and it was found that it is composed from elements that are varied in nature: cognitive, affective and conative (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 1991). These are dynamic, formed over time, and

involve variables that are personal, organic, and related to other influences, including actual experience and promotional materials including brands (Gartner, 1993; Gunn, 1972).

A brand, in its functional elements of visual markers, is controlled and managed by the brand owner. The symbolic element of brand image is however perceived by the individual (Aaker, D., 1991; Keller, 1993, 2003).

12.3 Conclusions from the semiotic analysis

In considering the Fringe brand image and in designing the semiotic analysis, it was necessary to first identify the Fringe's functional brand. Of concern at this stage was the selection of the particular promotional materials to be included in the analysis.

With its many contributing stakeholders, the Fringe brand is widely communicated. The venues, performing companies, and other participating stakeholders, all contribute to the Fringe brand by developing their own Fringe promotional materials. This phenomenon raised the question of what and who else communicates the Fringe brand: the media; Edinburgh's other summer festivals; tourist organisations; and other businesses may also be perceived as part of the Fringe as a festival 'product' and thus contributors to the brand.

The selected method of semiotic analysis required a closed and current data-set to be selected (see: Echtner, 1999). In ensuring a closed data-set it was therefore decided that Fringe Society produced branded promotional materials would be selected for the analysis: specifically the Fringe programmes. A review of these revealed that the current functional brand was first visible in 2006 and remained until the present day, which at the time of the analysis included the 2009 programme. This meant a closed and current data-set of four years was selected for the semiotic analysis.

The semiotic analysis of the programmes revealed a series of common themes to the Fringe brand image, which were seen throughout the years being analysed. These were both linear progressions of themes identified in each programme; and paradigmatic patterns of oppositions. The common themes were related to the historical founding and ethos of the Fringe as a festival of unconventionality and a risky proposition for audience and those participating. Also evident were common themes of it being a supportive and inclusive environment, engendering artistic and creative talent and celebrating Edinburgh as the festival city.

Each programme was found to exhibit additional and individual brand image themes that built upon these commonly recognised themes. These also contributed to the Fringe brand image. Particularly strong across individual programmes, but echoed in the others, the themes ranged from a celebration of the Fringe past and present; to an invitation to indulge in its richness; to a celebration of its artistry and performance; and finally to its (re)birth.

All of the above identified themes were evident across the Fringe programmes and were used to construct a Fringe brand image, as perceived by the researcher.

The Fringe brand image was defined as being a contradictory and ambiguous mix. Of note is its established hallmark status and longevity. Despite this long history the Fringe remains perpetually undiscovered: every year there are more and more contributors, performances, and myths. The Fringe retains brand image elements associated with its name in its surprising, unconventional and playful role within the festival programme of Edinburgh. As an arts festival, it has innovative and visionary elements in its brand image: unafraid of looking forward. Creativity and artistry are strong themes evident in the brand image: in its

function and in the co-created Fringe itself.[42] The Fringe brand image is one associated with expression of the arts and talent. Further, it suggests enjoyment and indulgence in taking part and the associated public festivity. Final brand image elements relate to the inclusiveness, supportiveness and accessibility of the Fringe as a festival brand. It is open to all and by its role and nature offers a network of support.

This definition of the Fringe brand image provided a basis for the researcher. This was in terms of her subjective understanding of it; in developing the later interview framework; and in understanding terms of reference made by informants about their own perceptions of the Fringe brand.

12.4 Fringe primary stakeholders

The experiences and realities of the Fringe as a festival are co-created constructions amongst its stakeholders and the Fringe as it is lived. In considering brand relationships, existing research has been concerned with consumer brands rather than festivals such as the Fringe (Fournier, 1998; Fournier & Yao, 1997).

The Fringe brand image was now defined in its meaning: but it was also necessary to consider those who consume the Fringe. As a festival, the Fringe has a population of consumers which is difficult to measure and define. This is in terms of both its scale and its membership. There are those who engage with the Fringe as: performers, staff, venues, audience, supporters, and others. The population of Edinburgh, the other festivals in the city, local businesses, and many more, are also involved with the Fringe. At this stage, a pertinent question was how can these consumers of the Fringe be defined?

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[42] The co-creation of the Fringe brand is considered in a forthcoming book chapter co-authored by the researcher and based upon the findings of the interviews with Fringe stakeholders undertaken for this PhD study. Appendix G to this thesis is the abstract from this book chapter.

The brand relationship proposition is built upon theories of interpersonal relationships and it suggests that consumers have a series of brands with which they engage and interact. This engagement is mutual and has continuity. Brand relationships are therefore purposive, adding meaning and structure to peoples' lives. Further, they are most defined in situations of self-image congruence (Keller, 2003) and can influence the development of personality (Hinde, 1979; Fournier, 1998). It was evident that in investigating the Fringe brand relationships, and in considering consumers of the Fringe, this could involve a much broader categorisation than a defined group of users or consumers of a brand, such as the coffee and household product brands investigated in the existing brand relationship research. As such, a more purposeful approach was necessary to define the Fringe consumers. They had to be interacting with the Fringe and engaged to it: active consumers rather than passive.

There has been no research identified into festivals and brand relationships: indeed there is little consideration into concerns of festival brand image. There has however been some research into festival stakeholders. The notion of stakeholders was of interest and the literature review so turned first to organisational stakeholder theories. Stakeholders are commonly considered to be those groups or individuals that have an interest in and impact upon an organisation, or indeed can be impacted by it (Clarkson, 1995; Freeman, 1984). As suggested by their name, stakeholders have a 'stake', or an engaged relationship, with an organisation. Much of the literature is concerned with management of stakeholders, their saliency: power, legitimacy and urgency within the organisational structure (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). In reviewing stakeholder theories in relation to festivals and events the concept of primary and secondary stakeholders emerged and was relevant to the concerns of this study. Stakeholders may be categorised as either primary or secondary and both are important to festival organisations. Primary stakeholders are however those groups who in their interaction with the

festival organisation cause the festival itself to occur, continue, and survive (Reid & Arcodia, 2002). This study in its application sought to define those most engaged and interacting with the Fringe. Stakeholder models for festivals were thus considered in their categorisation of primary and secondary stakeholders were applied to the Fringe (Mossberg & Getz, 2006; Reid & Arcodia, 2002). A stakeholder model of the Fringe was the result and the primary stakeholders, as those groups essential to the Fringe in their engagement were thus the consumers of the Fringe brand most likely to have relationships with it.

The Fringe primary stakeholders were categorised in five groups, and while each exists separately there is a great deal of blurring of distinctions and multiple-stakeholder group membership evident (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

The Fringe primary stakeholders are: Fringe Society stakeholders; supplier stakeholders; attending stakeholders; participating stakeholders; and supporting stakeholders.

12.5 The Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types

The approach to investigating the existing Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships was qualitative interviews with a phenomenological design and analysis. In fitting with the prescribed relativist ontology and subjectivist transactional generation of theory, it was necessary to investigate the lived experiences of the informants as primary Fringe stakeholders. It was also useful to consider their own life themes and identities, including elements of their perceived congruence to the Fringe as a festival brand.

A phenomenological approach to the interviews allowed the generation of theory to be based upon informants' own accounts and thus contributed to the induction of theory. The three methodological criteria relevant to the

interpretation of the data in a phenomenological approach are firstly to gain an understanding of the informants' perspectives to create theory, thus contributing to a broader understanding of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships. Secondly it is necessary for the text to be autonomous with no attempts of verification imposed by the researcher. Thirdly, it is important that the researcher approaches the interpretation devoid of any presuppositions of the informants' experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Spiggle, 1994; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

The interview format was based upon a three-stage model developed by Fournier and Yao (1997) to investigate stakeholder brand loyalty and relationships with coffee brands. The interviews involved an autodriven photo-elicitation technique, where informants were encouraged to supply images with the purpose of allowing a greater depth of discussion and understanding to develop of their lived-experiences as Fringe stakeholders (Banks 2001; 2007; Collier, 1957; Fournier & Yao, 1997; Harper, 2002; Rose, 2007).

Interviews were then transcribed verbatim, as prescribed by the phenomenological approach. An idiographic, followed by a cross-case analysis, was then undertaken for each interview in order to identify themes that could be applied to understanding the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships (Fournier, 1998; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

In developing the eventual Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology, each of the Fringe-stakeholder informants' relationship dimensions were compared to those proposed by Fournier (1998) as being particular to the brand relationships described in her typology of consumer-brand relationship forms.

The results indicated that eleven of Fournier's fifteen (1998) brand relationship forms were applicable to the Fringe and its primary

stakeholders. The evident relationship types included those related to friendships (best friendships, compartmentalised friendships; casual friendships and childhood friendships); marriages (arranged marriages and marriages of convenience); partnerships (committed partnerships; flings; and courtships) and kinships.

There was one incidence of what is described as a 'dark side' (Fournier, 1998) brand relationship recognised in a 'dependency'. It seemed however that this relationship (Kate, attending stakeholder) did not have any 'dark' qualities associated with it. On the contrary, it was a positive relationship. The other dark side relationship forms (enmities; secret affairs; enslavements; or rebounds) were not apparent in this study as being types of relationships existing between the Fringe and its stakeholders.

As noted, there was a significant incidence of multiple-membership of many of the interviewed Fringe stakeholders to more than one of the five primary stakeholder categories. Furthermore, the self-proclaimed definitions for some stakeholders were blurred (Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007; Reid & Arcodia, 2002). The Fringe-brand relationship findings indicated that although there were some commonalities in types of relationships within individual stakeholder categories: this seemed more evident for most in situations where the informants had similar backgrounds or histories with the Fringe: see for example Robert and Sophie's 'childhood friendships'; or Lydia and Alison's 'committed partnerships'. There was some evidence that more tentative brand relationships could develop into longer term and stronger commitments, such as John's current 'courtship' with the Fringe as a performer. Of further interest was the evidence that brand relationships could contribute to individual stakeholders' personal and professional development; interests; and egos: for example Alistair's 'marriage of convenience'; Susan's 'best friendship'; and Tom's 'compartmentalised friendship' in addressing professional goals and satisfying personal interests in the arts.

It was apparent that brand relationship can change over time. Some require maintenance from both partners to remain strong and exclusive (see Andrew, Alison and Lydia's 'committed partnerships'). Some can decline, such as Clare's 'childhood friendship' which differs in its dimensions to the fonder examples of Sophie and Robert. Others shift emphasis, for example Margaret's 'arranged marriage' and Emma's 'casual friendship'.

Despite the individual nature of the twenty-one Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships defined, there was one primary stakeholder category where four of the five informants interviewed shared the same type of brand relationship with the Fringe. This was the supporting stakeholders' category. Four of these informants have 'kinships' with the Fringe which were described by them broadly in terms of family networks of siblings and cousins, rather than in a hierarchical or linear parent and child type of relationships. The similarities here could be explained by the fact that the individual informants within the supporting stakeholder organisations do indeed operate as a network with the Fringe. Further, and potentially of significance too was the snowballing sampling method. Within this category informants did recommend their own contacts within other supporting organisations. As a result the interviews while truly taking place with individuals who are supporting stakeholders of the Fringe, also involved informants with similar professional remits. Nevertheless, this was the object of the interviews for this stakeholder category: as its members were those who support the Fringe.

12.6 Contributions to knowledge

As an independent academic study this research makes a series of significant contributions to knowledge and understanding. The outcomes and svalue of these from an academic and practical perspective are now presented in detail.

The Fringe (and indeed similar arts festivals) has received little academic attention. There has never been a major in-depth study of the Fringe undertaken before now, so this research is unique in its subject. As presented, this study has demonstrated a number of findings which are both specific to the Fringe; and applicable to other festivals and events. These findings provide a number of significant contributions to knowledge and understanding.

Also of significance in their contribution are the research methods of this study. These have previously been applied in the contexts of disciplines including tourism, social sciences, anthropology, and marketing-related areas. Nevertheless, it is notable that semiotic analysis and phenomenological interviewing have never been applied to academic studies concerned with festivals; festival brand image and stakeholders; or brand relationships.

The research undertaken here has considered elements of the cultural significance of the Fringe by investigating its brand image and addressing perceptions of its key consumers. The results are underpinned by the constructivist paradigm and existing academic studies across: marketing and consumer research; tourism management; festivals and events management; the arts; social sciences; and philosophical studies.

12.6.1 Outcomes of the study

As first presented in chapter 1, and mentioned above, this study had the purpose of investigating the cultural significance of the Fringe through considering its brand image; its stakeholders; and the brand relationships that exist between these entities. Until this study, there had been no major in-depth research undertaken into the Fringe. Furthermore, as discussed the research methods applied to this study were unique to this subject and to the discipline of festival and event management. The outcomes of this

study are presented in some detail below, and include a number of significant findings.

Of some note are the key findings of this study: the Fringe brand image definition; the development of a Fringe stakeholder model; and the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology. These are all unique to the Fringe and are significant for this reason. The findings are also notable because of their transferability to further festival and event contexts and related areas. The research findings are therefore of significance academically and to the festivals' industry.

Of further contribution is the application of methods and frameworks, which were previously limited to marketing and tourism studies, to the context of the Fringe as a festival. The success of this in achieving the outcomes and addressing the objectives of this study suggests their use is applicable across other contexts.

As previously discussed, brand image; primary stakeholders; and festival-stakeholder brand relationships had been neither individually, nor collectively,g researched before. The primary concern of this study was the cultural significance of the Fringe. The findings, as presented, suggest that the Fringe is of real cultural value and creative significance in terms of its brand image; the positive perceptions of its stakeholders; and the types of relationships they have with the Fringe, both as a festival and brand.

12.6.2 Festival brand image

The first contribution to knowledge and understanding made by this research is in its concern with the festival brand image construct. There is limited academic research concerned with festival brands, and brand image in particular. The application of a semiotic analysis, underpinned by existing academic theory, has never been applied to investigating definitions of festival brands, or indeed brand image. It is notable therefore

that another contribution to knowledge and understanding is the application of the semiotic analysis method to addressing the definition of festival brand image. The method applied by this study is transferrable to further festivals and events in defining their brand image and this has significance to the wider festivals' and events' context.

12.6.3 A definition of the Fringe brand image

A further contribution to knowledge and understanding made by this research is made in providing a specific definition of the Fringe brand image. There has been no previous attempt made to define the Fringe brand image in terms of its functional and symbolic elements. The discussion and definition of the Fringe brand image made by this study is thus a contribution to knowledge and understanding. While the Fringe brand image defined is subjective, it is also unique in providing an academically rigorous definition of brand image for the Fringe specifically. As noted, the semiotic analysis method of defining the Fringe brand image has previously not been applied to a festivals' context and is therefore of significance to the wider festivals' and events' environment in its application to understanding definitions of brand image.

12.6.4 The semiotic analysis approach

The research method of semiotic analysis in its approach has never been applied to studies into investigating festivals themselves, or festival brand image as a construct. Previous academic studies applying this method have focused upon tourism and marketing disciplines such as advertising. Here, these approaches have been adapted successfully to the Fringe as an arts festival. The application of semiotic analysis as a research method in this study is therefore a further significant contribution to knowledge. This approach and conceptual underpinning may prove applicable to other festivals and events by providing a philosophically underpinned method of analysing festivals and in defining brand image. Based on the findings of this study, this semiotic analysis approach can be applied to develop a

deeper understanding of this little considered but significant construct which is of significance to the marketing of festivals and events.

12.6.5 The Fringe stakeholder model

A further contribution to knowledge and understanding of this research is made by the development of the Fringe stakeholder model. This conceptually underpinned and empirically developed framework was devised as a means of defining the primary stakeholders of the Fringe. The resulting Fringe stakeholder model is underpinned by existing academic festival and event stakeholder research. It adapts a generic event stakeholder conceptual model (Reid & Arcodia, 2002) and considers the development of further festival and event stakeholder models. The results provide an extension to existing research in this area in the development of a stakeholder model which is particular to the Fringe.

The development of the Fringe stakeholder model is a contribution to knowledge as there has been no attempt made to define the stakeholders of the Fringe. This contribution to knowledge has relevance in a wider sense as it is applicable in both its findings and in its method. It could be significant in considering the Fringe stakeholder categories' 'fit' with further festivals and events and in devising approaches to developing stakeholder models for these.

12.6.6 Festival primary and secondary stakeholders

In addition to developing the Fringe stakeholder model, another contribution to knowledge and understanding is the definition of Fringe primary and secondary stakeholder categories. The development of this empirical model adapted the conceptual study devised by Reid and Arcodia (2002) as its initial source. From this study so too emerged the categories of primary and secondary stakeholders of the Fringe. This research was concerned with those stakeholders who were most engaged with the Fringe as consumers of it as a means to investigating their brand

relationships. Reid and Arcodia's (2002) model proposed conceptual categories of primary and secondary stakeholders for a generic event. This research therefore applied the parameters of this model to the Fringe as a context. The primary and secondary stakeholder concept has been little investigated for festivals and events, and there has never been an attempt to categorise these for the Fringe. This application of theory to build an empirically devised specific model is of significance in the wider festival and event context both in its findings for the Fringe, and in its application to other festivals and events.

12.6.7 Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship types

As another significant contribution to academic knowledge, in its aim, this research has provided an understanding of brand relationship forms that exist between the Fringe and its primary stakeholders. There have been academic studies made in relation to stakeholders and their roles, power, and influence within festivals and events. There have not however been any studies concerned with the types of brand relationships that exist between the Fringe and its stakeholders (or indeed other festivals and stakeholders). The Fringe-stakeholder relationship typology is therefore a significant contribution to knowledge in the development of this conceptual framework. This is based upon an existing typology of brand-consumer relationship forms and the application of an empirical study into the perceptions of Fringe stakeholders through the interviews.

The findings have therefore informed the construction of a typology of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship forms. This is based upon an existing typology of relationship forms detailing types of consumers' product brand relationships, based on a conceptual and empirical study. The results are specific to the Fringe, but applicable to the wider festival and event context.

Through the empirical research undertaken here, particular types of existing brand relationships have been found to be applicable to the Fringe. These are all relatively positive and rewarding relationships based upon dimensions of friendship, partnership and marriage, and do not include any 'dark' or negative relationships.

This conceptually underpinned and empirically founded model of festival-stakeholder brand relationship types is particular to the context of this research in its provision of a foundation for further research into the Fringe and its stakeholders. As noted, the contribution of knowledge it makes to the wider festivals context is its application to similar studies into festivals and stakeholders brand relationships.

12.6.8 Contributions to festivals' industry

In its contribution to the festivals industry, this research although being a study concerned with the creative significance of the Fringe, is underpinned by empirical inquiry. The setting of the Fringe and the stakeholder informants provided the opportunity for the research process to unfold in a natural setting. The findings described above are of significance to the Fringe as a festival organisation in considering its approach to future branding approaches or strategies; and of interest in terms of the definition of its stakeholders. This is relevant to management and branding approaches; the continued engagement of existing stakeholders; and the identification of further stakeholders.

In its specific concern with the Fringe, the findings reported here are of significance to further festivals and events. This is in terms of the classifications made of Fringe stakeholders, its brand image, and indeed the Fringe stakeholder-brand relationship typology.

The research in its underpinning with academic theory, as well as in its findings and conclusions, is therefore of relevance to the festivals industry.

This is in relation to management and marketing approaches; branding practice; and stakeholder definition and engagement.

Another significant contribution of this research is the application and transfer of the stakeholder categories and brand relationship types to other festivals. In classifying those stakeholders most engaged with the Fringe, and identifying types of existing positive brand relationships, the findings of this research suggests potential approaches to considering festival market segmentation and positioning. The classifications of stakeholder categories and brand relationships are applicable in findings and method to other festivals and events in their marketing management approach.

12.7 Further contributions of the research findings

While the conclusions reported here bring this particular study to a close, there are a number of further applications for the findings of this research. Academic research into festivals is still a relatively new discipline. There has been very little academic research into Edinburgh's festivals: although as noted in the first chapter of this thesis, there have been a number of commissioned industry-based studies into their quantifiable measures of sustainability and success. The artistic and creative significance of the Fringe has consequently received little attention and this is an area where the findings of this study may be applied.

There is abundant research into the brand image construct in the domain of marketing, particularly within consumer research. This concept has so-far not been applied to festival brand image to a great extent. Arts festivals, such as the Fringe, have also received less attention than sports, music, or cultural events in terms of marketing and branding inquiries.

In undertaking a semiotic analysis of the current Fringe programmes, the researcher defined the Fringe brand image. The semiotic approach has been widely applied in tourism research, and is commonly used in

research in the marketing-related disciplines of advertising and branding. Semiotic methods are also used in the development of advertising and branding within the creative marketing industry. Also applied across media and the arts, semiotic analysis was thus a fitting method to assess the brand image of the Fringe. As an arts festival with a rich and mythical history, which is co-created, organic, and an amalgamation of artistry and creativity, the Fringe is inherent with signs and symbolic significance. The research method of semiotic analysis, as applied here, may therefore prove a useful approach in making further similar investigations into festival brand image due to transferability in its application.

There has been some academic research into festival and event stakeholders. This study defined those groups that are most engaged with the Fringe in their interactions with the aim of investigating their brand relationships with the Fringe. In considering who these groups are, a model of the Fringe stakeholders was developed. This model is both unique to the Fringe; and may prove useful in method, or application, to further festivals or events in defining who their key stakeholders and consumers are.

The Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology offers a number of further applications. Existing brand relationship research is concerned with consumer product brands. The Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology was developed through its application to an existing model first proposed by Fournier (1998). There were some notable findings evident here. Firstly, it was possible to fit the Fringe and its stakeholders to many of the proposed relationship forms that exist between consumers and their product brands. Also of interest, was the dynamic nature of the brand relationships and their apparent capacities to change over the course of time. The brand relationships between the Fringe and specific individual stakeholders could reveal more forms of relationships. Longitudinal research in this area may indeed reveal how relationships can be

maintained or transformed to produce positive and mutually beneficial results. The brand relationship proposition and method of this study could therefore be applied to other festivals and events to determine potential marketing communications and branding strategies.

An element of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships not addressed thus-far is relationship strength. Following the development of the consumer brand relationship typology, Fournier (1998) investigated this based upon relationship quality, depth, and strength through considerations of stability and durability over time. It was inducted by Fournier (1998, p.363) that in addition to the brand relationship dimensions there is a six-faceted brand relationship quality construct (BRQ) which in combination can foster strength and durability over the course of time. This is based on: "the pull of positive feelings: affective and socio-emotive attachments (love/passion and self-connection), behavioural ties (interdependence and commitment), and supportive cognitive beliefs (intimacy and brand partner quality)". It is in this particular direction that this study may be taken further, to yield findings that reveal answers about Fringe stakeholder brand relationship durability, strength, stability, and indeed brand loyalty. This could too be applied to other festivals and events.

12.8 Potential future areas of research

In addition to the further directions this study could be extended to, as mentioned previously, there are additional concerns which are of interest in the future.

In the context of the Fringe, application of the semiotic analysis could be extended to include the online presence of the Fringe brand. It was of particular interest to observe the means in which the Fringe brand is presently being led through the 2009 and 2010 Fringe promotional campaigns. These extend and compliment the co-creation of the Fringe as

a festival and brand through virtual co-constructions utilising websites, online social media, linked events, and other approaches which are innovative in their communication of the Fringe brand, and in the inclusion of stakeholders on a creative basis.

As noted, further investigation of the Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships would be helpful in yielding an understanding of the quality, depth, and strength of the relationships in considering the brand relationship quality construct (BRQ), as developed by Fournier (1998).

In terms of the Fringe primary stakeholders, it would be of significance to further investigate their engagement with the Fringe. Their lived-experiences on a longitudinal basis are of relevance and reflected in their brand relationships. Of particular interest here are the participating and attending stakeholders: particularly given the evidence of blurring between these two categories.

The impact that perceptions of the Fringe brand image and stakeholders' brand relationships may have upon festival consumption, both in the context of Edinburgh and elsewhere, is another potential direction of inquiry from this point.

Finally, the further application of a phenomenological visual approach to produce stakeholder narratives serves as an interesting perspective from which to view the brand relationship construct in operation. An individual and directed photo-elicitation approach, such as informant-generated visual narratives of Fringe lived experiences, would contribute to the knowledge in this area. These are a selection of potential future directions for this research: there are of course many others.

12.9 Limitations of the research

In considering the limitations and challenges of this study, of some significance is the nature of the subject inquiry: the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

In seeking to define the brand image of the Fringe it is notable that as a festival it is difficult to categorise, particularly in relation to its many and variable contributors. In aiming to define the Fringe brand image it was necessary to consider this as 'a' definition, rather than 'the' definitive truth or reality of the Fringe brand image. A reference and starting point had to be identified from where the functional brand image could be reviewed.

As mentioned throughout this thesis, the Fringe has existed for more than sixty years. Its conception was not managed; and its subsequent growth has occurred in a largely organic manner. This is reflected in the Fringe brand as it is displayed in its functional form. Further despite the central communication of the brand by the Festival Fringe Society, there are numerous further potential contributors to the Fringe brand, as it has been represented throughout its history. Consequently, if all of these contributors to the communication of the Fringe functional brand were to be considered, it would be potentially impossible to either conceptually define, or physically locate a complete data-set of the Fringe brand to review.

The semiotic analysis was undertaken with a relatively small data-set which allowed a manageable set of materials for review. As the study was concerned with the current Fringe brand image this was suitable and effective for purpose, but it meant that a historical perspective was not fully considered.

Of particular note too in considering the perceived limitations to this research, and the semiotic analysis, is that the findings of the semiotic analysis are based on purely subjective perceptions of the researcher herself. As noted in chapter 5, the researcher is a primary stakeholder of

the Fringe: in being at present an attending and supporting stakeholder. Indeed, she was previously, although relatively briefly, a Fringe Society stakeholder, in the past through temporary positions of employment. The researcher's own history and background in the arts and marketing may have had an impact upon the semiotic analysis findings also. Considering all of the above debate, the Fringe brand image as defined in this study is 'one' definition, of which there could be many such subjective definitions. These are completely dependent on the materials analysed and the researcher her-or himself.

This study is underpinned by constructivism, which subscribes to the belief that truths and realities are co-constructed and multiple. Constructivism assumes a relativist ontological perspective and a transactional and subjectivist epistemology. Meanings are therefore constructed by the researcher and informants as they interact and arrive at more informed understandings of realities (Berger, P., & Luckman, 1979; Breuer & Roth, 2003; Crotty, 2003; Delanty, 1997; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b).

The issue of subjectivity could be considered as a limitation throughout this research, particularly to any scholars who subscribe to paradigms such as positivism or post-positivism. Rather than authenticity and trustworthiness, these approaches prescribe to validity and reliability as measures of judgment. It is contested that in a qualitative study of perceptual constructions, such as those addressed in the present study of brand image and brand relationships: these measures of validity and reliability are less relevant than those of authenticity and trustworthiness. In addition to the semiotic analysis, the other primary research method was the qualitative interviews with Fringe stakeholder informants. In their phenomenological perspective and interpretation these were reliant on the criteria of: understanding of and inducing insider theory based on accounts of lived-experiences of Fringe stakeholders; and valuing the autonomy of the texts of the informants' accounts. Further and of relevance too was the

need for the researcher to bracket the findings by ensuring no suppositions in interpreting the text (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

A further potential limitation of the research could be the stakeholder informants interviewed in relation to their roles; the numbers interviewed; and the sampling method. As a qualitative study using a theoretical sampling method in snowballing, many of the informants approached were recommended by others based upon social networks of contacts, as prescribed by this method. The sampling method was thus not a representative sample of the population of Fringe stakeholders, but was concerned with informants' relevance to the study. As discussed in chapter 11, the nature and diversity of the Fringe means it is virtually impossible to define its population of stakeholders. This study is inductive, so relies upon the construction of theory, based upon reflections of the empirical world as viewed through the experiences of the stakeholders (Carson, *et al.*, 2001).

A total of twenty-one individual interviews were analysed across all five identified stakeholder categories and at this point there were a number of themes that could be seen to be repeated and findings replicated across stakeholder categories and brand-relationship forms. As discussed, the stakeholder categories were devised as a means of identifying those most engaged with the Fringe in its consumption. There was however a great deal of blurring across stakeholder categories and multi-membership of these. It should be emphasised that because of the individuality of the stakeholder informants interviewed in many cases it was not possible to see findings replicated in terms of their precise types of existing brand relationships. This study should be viewed as one which constructs theory by presenting a series of existing stakeholder-brand relationship types. These are by no means definitive and there are likely to be many more 'types' of relationship that exist between individual Fringe stakeholders and the Fringe brand. The particular brand relationships defined by this study could be applied to Fournier's (1998) existing typology of consumer-

brand relationship forms and illustrated eleven of the fifteen relationship types presented for consumers and product brands.

As noted, in addition to the changing roles of individual stakeholders, and the impacts this has upon their perceptions of the Fringe, brand relationship quality and strength alters over time and this is related to additional factors to stakeholders' perceptions and experiences. This study is significant because it provides evidence that Fringe stakeholders in their various roles, and at various stages in their relationships with the Fringe, do indeed have types of relationships with the Fringe that are generally positive, rewarding and reciprocal in nature; rather than negative or 'dark'.

Further investigation of the Fringe and its stakeholders would be required to find if there were any incidences of the 'dark' brand relationship types proposed by Fournier (1998) in her study. As noted there was one case of a 'dependency' relationship type, but this did not display associated negative dimensions. The 'dark' brand relationships presented are based upon dimensions related to addiction, pain, and compulsion. They tend to be secretly held and often are non-voluntary and in Fournier's (1998) typology all relate to consumers and household product brands. It seems these dark relationships do not have an obvious fit with the identified primary stakeholders who by their nature are engaged with the Fringe on generally voluntary and public bases. As an arts festival, it seems unlikely that any primary stakeholders identified by this study would be addicted to the Fringe, or would admit to wanting to inflict pain upon it. Perhaps if further interviews had been undertaken either with more primary stakeholders, or with others, who may have fitted secondary stakeholder categories, then 'dark' or negative relationship types would have been identified. There are likely to be individuals who have had less positive experiences with the Fringe in their stakeholder roles. Examples could include former staff, unsuccessful performing companies or venues. The sampling method applied here may have precluded any potential informants fitting these categories. It was concerned with identifying those

meeting a set of theoretical criteria that reflected a current level of engagement with the Fringe as a stakeholder which was relevant to the study (Carson *et al.,* 2001).

12.10 Theoretical considerations

> "…the results of qualitative research are a function of contexts and the theoretical sensitivity and skills of the researcher. Indeed much of its value is context–based relevance and appropriateness" (Carson, *et al.,* 2001).

Throughout this qualitative, inductive study which is authentic and trustworthy in its execution and delivery, the researcher ensured the research process was undertaken with due care of attention, logic, consistency, and accuracy. This approach is accounted for and explained throughout the thesis and particularly in parts 3 and 4, where the methodology and analysis of findings are presented.

In assessing the theoretical elements of this study, as noted of concern are considerations of its trustworthiness and authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). This study occurred within the context of the Fringe, and its stakeholders and was concerned with the co-construction of inductive theory by interactions amongst the researcher and other constructors.

Trustworthiness in the constructivist paradigm is concerned with criteria of credibility, transferability and confirmability, which correspond to the positivist and post-positivist criteria of external validity. In ensuring trustworthiness of the research findings throughout the process the researcher applied a number of techniques as suggested by qualitative researchers. These include having undertaken the research in the natural setting of the Fringe as a phenomenon. Of further consideration was the application of theoretical sampling in selecting respondents based upon their relevance, rather than representativeness. The researcher ensured that results were compared across different contexts and cases: as seen in the semiotic analysis and in the interviews with different categories of

stakeholders. The interviews were in-depth and intimate in the phenomenological approach (see discussions in: Carson *et al.,* 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b).

Authenticity criteria in constructivism correspond to the positivist and post-positivist concerns of internal validity and credibility. These relate to the sense, credibility, and authenticity of the findings, as presented, and how these relate to the research subject and readers (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In this study the authenticity criteria relates to fairness, or ontological authenticity, which occurred through the development of informants' personal constructions in the interviews, and the application of a phenomenological perspective as described in chapters 8 and 11. The ontological authenticity is further evident through the development of the researcher's own personal construction of the Fringe brand image through application of a semiotic analysis technique prescribed by Echtner (1999). Of additional authentic concern is that the researcher should develop a greater understanding of the constructions of others: or educative authenticity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1998; Mason, 1996). This was ensured through the application of the phenomenological perspective applied to the interviews, which states individuals and the life worlds they inhabit are inseparable (Fournier, 1998; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989).

12.11 A reflexive summary

> "Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognised before it can speak. But there is also another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain the world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled" (Berger, J., 2008, cover).

In undertaking this PhD study and having presented its conclusions, a reflexive account of these findings has been made. The researcher's own position in the process is also of significance and is now acknowledged. This is first presented in chapter 5, within the context of introducing the philosophical paradigm of this study (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). As a qualitative inquiry this study is concerned with interpreting phenomena related to the Fringe within its natural setting. This has occurred through the experience of the Fringe as a festival and through engaging with those who co-construct it.

As discussed throughout part 3 of the thesis where this methodology and the specific methods are presented: the constructivist paradigm involves the researcher as the creator and writer of this project; and co-constructor of the findings. As detailed in chapter 5, the narrative voices of researchers are varied, including the authoritative, supportive and interactive. Within this study, as a "bricoleur" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.5), the researcher assumes an authoritative interpretative voice with the purpose of highlighting the differing dimensions of the informants' narrations and her own understanding of meanings. These are concerned with meeting the aim of this project in defining a series of Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships (Chase, 2005).

The researcher's own position within the research is important in relation to her own historical, biographical, and social dimensions (Breuer & Roth, 2003). For example, as a primary stakeholder of the Fringe, she does have her own lived experiences with it. As presented in chapter 5, the posed festival image construct, as the inquiry of this study, is a particular concern of this research which may have been influenced by the researcher's own history as an academically trained (and formerly practising) artist; with a specific concern for critical artistic history and theory. As someone who has had a life-long interest in the arts and arts festivals, from a subjectivist perspective of viewing (or indeed seeing): the

researcher may have had some advantages within this project in its concerns with image. With a more recent professional history in communications and marketing and working for arts festivals, in the media and educational environments the researcher has attempted to create knowledge which is in-depth, and specific to the context. Had the researcher's historical, biographical and cultural experiences been different, so would have been the genesis and development of this study and its eventual conclusions. It is important to note therefore that the researcher's own experiences and history will have been influential upon this study and its findings, in fitting with the constructivist paradigm of this research.

The reliance upon the main disciplines of marketing and tourism, festival and event management and the philosophical approach of constructivism in the analysis and interpretation of the findings was also influential upon the methods of research. As presented these were concerned with 'seeing' and understanding images: in both the semiotic analysis and phenomenological interviews that involved photo-elicitation.

Here in this final chapter, the Fringe has been investigated: 'a' brand image defined; primary stakeholders identified; and a series of Fringe-stakeholders' brand relationships determined. Future potential research inquiries have been presented and considered. This study has reached its conclusions. Within these there remains more to be considered and a number of potential future inquiries to be taken forward.

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Appendix A

Fringe programme cover design 2010

This Fringe programme cover design for 2010 is discussed in chapter 9. Although not included in the semiotic analysis it is of interest in terms of the co-created nature of the design and brand. Produced by Edinburgh-based Whitespace, the marketing and design agency commissioned by the Festival Fringe Society, the 2010 Fringe programme was created in a way different to previous approaches. It was designed live by the illustrator Johanna Basford via online social networking web portal, Twitter. Over the course of two days, individuals provided 2,634 tweets about the associations and images they had of the Fringe, which Basford illustrated on camera to produce this design (Whitespace, 2010).

Appendix B

Semiotic analysis

Findings from a study of the Fringe programmes, 2006-2009

B1.   Introduction

This appendix to the thesis should be read with chapter 9. This describes the semiotic analysis of the Fringe programmes in detail. The covers of the four programmes analysed are included as figures in chapter 9 as a means of providing visual references (see figures 9.4-9.7). The first series of elements, themes and phrases were selected from each of the Fringe programme front-covers. Here, these are detailed and inventoried, as prescribed for the second and third stages of the semiotic process. Following this, the remaining stages of the process are discussed for each programme, before an analysis is made across the texts to define the Fringe brand image.

B2.   Fringe programme tangible branding: 2006

The Fringe-name logo is positioned prominently. It is angled to reflect the composition of the overall cover image, in relation of the position of the female figure. The logo occupies approximately twenty five percent of the total cover image. It is a bright pink colour, again reflecting the cover image design and theme. Rather than solid text it has the appearance of computer screen pixels; which immediately portrays a futuristic appearance.

B3.   Fringe programme design theme: 2006

2006 was the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe and the general theme of the programme design reflects and suggests the themes of past and future via a number of referential visual elements. The cover background itself is a cold blue-toned white. A female figure appears, also dressed in white, but wearing bright pink household style rubber gloves and she appears to be gardening. The woman's appearance is both futuristic, with a modernist appearance, and referential of the 1960s in relation to the style of her clothing and general appearance.

The woman is dressed in a mini-dress and long boots and has white hair styled in a retrospective way reminiscent of the 1960s. The setting within which the woman appears resembles a closed capsule with white walls. She is standing on some bright green grass, which appears to be artificial, and is surrounded by a number of brightly coloured illustrated flowers.

The phrase: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2006, cover) appears on the cover of the programme. It is evident that this alludes to both the sixty year history of the Fringe and its future. The use of the word 'trip' can be indicative of the historical journey that the Fringe has made; the 1960s where this was a common slang term; and to

the futuristic, outer-space and time-travelling suggestions apparent throughout the design.

B4.   Representations analysis of human elements: 2006
At this stage in the process the checklist of human representations in advertising, as presented by Dyer (1982), was applied. This was applied to the Fringe programme covers of 2006 and 2007 to allow an understanding of the non-verbal: "conveyers of meaning" (Dyer, 1982, p.97) of images of humans used within advertising. Findings were as follows:

In relation to the appearance of the actor, a young woman is portrayed. She is white and appears attractive, slim and tall. Dyer (1982) argues that often where women are portrayed in promotional materials, the emphasis is upon associations with youth and femininity. Further, gender is communicated according to traditional stereotypes. In this case the young woman is attractive and feminine and is seen to be wearing household rubber gloves while possibly gardening, thus adopting a traditional home-maker role. Her expression is positive and humorous. Her eye-contact is focused downwards towards the gardening hose and gloves. The pose the woman is engaged in is active and functional in relation to the overall image.

As noted previously, the clothing worn and hairstyle suggests both the past and the future. The props and setting are futuristic and somewhat artificial: a sealed white environment with fake grass and flowers. This suggests a humorous inter-textual perspective upon the role of the woman in the image both in relation to the past and present as a home-maker and it also addresses the past and future theme.

This image portrayed on the programme cover is simultaneously futuristic and retrospective. The woman's appearance is indicative of the overall theme of the programme and reflects the sixtieth anniversary aspect: but also suggests the fashion of the 1960s and the modernist future.

The action portrayed in the image of the female figure is one where she appears to be pulling-on rubber gloves to pick up a garden hose and water the grass and flowers that are within the capsule or room. This can again be indicative of the overall future and past theme in relation to growth and development and the role of the woman.

B5.   Phrases on the programme cover: 2006
There is a selection of phrases displayed on the programme cover. The first category identifies the factual elements of the Fringe and provides information. It is specified that the programme is: "Free" of charge. The dates of: "6-28 August, 2006" are also identified. Finally, the viewer is informed they can: "Book any Fringe ticket on 0131 226 0000 or visit www.edfringe.com" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2006, cover). The

logo of the programme sponsor is also included on the cover, in this case: "scotlandistheplace.com".

The second category of identified phrases pertains to the themes of the programme. As noted, the phrase: "Future fantastic the sixty year rip" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, cover) appears above the festival dates. This phrase is indicative of the programme's design theme which as discussed above, alludes to space and future time travel; while simultaneously adopting a retrospective visual appearance suggesting the modernist style of the 1960s.

B6.   Phrases in the introductory text: 2006
The 2006 Fringe programme elements for analysis, in relation to the introductory pages (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, pp.1-7), were as follows:

Particular phrases both identified the factual elements of the Fringe (year and dates) and pertained to the themes first viewed on the cover. For example, the phrase: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip", appears again on page 1 and: "The 60th Edinburgh Festival Fringe", is detailed below this.

The remaining pages generally do not allude to the 60th anniversary theme, although it is discussed on page 5, titled: "Introduction: 60 years on". Pages 1, 2, and 3 contain factual information detailing: programme contents; booking information; sponsors details listed as logos, and similarly pages 6 and 7 contain information relating to special events and listings. It is pages 4 and 5 that contain introductory text where themes can be identified. Page 4 is detailed below. Page 5 returns to the future and past theme through presenting a summary of both the first and sixtieth Fringe: here the following phrase is repeated under both headings as a means of communicating the ethos and development of the Fringe: "There were/ are three defining features of the first/sixtieth Fringe – none of the performers were invited to take part, they used small and unconventional theatre spaces and were obliged to take all of their own financial risks, flourishing or failing according to public demand." (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, p.1-5)

The 2006 programme does not include an introduction from the Director. However, in noting any repeated phrases that relate to any potential or identified themes, page 4 introduces the Friends of the Fringe scheme, where Fringe patrons can become a financial supporter of the Fringe and receive tangible benefits. An introduction appears from the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and within this the following phrases are notable: "providing continuing support for what is now the largest arts festival in the world"; "our mission is to provide a variety of services for performers and audiences alike"; "wealth of new writing"; "hottest new talent from all over the world". (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, p.4)

There are no images included that relate to the general design theme: although two archive Fringe performance photographs are displayed. Further, as mentioned above, the logos of sponsors appear on page 3 of the programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006).

B7.   Defining the elements of analysis: 2006

In addressing thus the second and third stages of the semiotic process: identifying and recording the occurrence of the elements and themes of analysis, the following elements of analysis became apparent:

- Past and future: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip"
- Journeying and travel
- Growth and development
- Traditional and modern
- Unconventionality and risk
- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

Having identified these themes, the next stage of the semiotic process (Stage 4) is concerned with examining the relationships amongst themes by undertaking a syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis.

B8.   Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis: 2006

A syntagmatic analysis involves a text being examined as a linear (chain) progression of elements forming a narrative (Berger, A., 1995, 1998; Chandler, 2002; Rose, 2007).

A notable narrative structure of all the Fringe programmes begins from the themed cover design and then progresses through the introductory pages of the programme: contents; booking information, and so on.

Paradigmatic analysis is concerned with the structure of meaning through selection: examining the hidden pattern of opposites that generate meaning in a text. Berger (1995) suggests that signs are oppositional and thus acquire their individual meaning from the contrasts that are evident amongst them.

In investigating the Fringe programme for 2006, a repeated syntagmatic phrase is: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip". This chain progresses throughout the introductory pages: page 5 returns to past and future theme through presenting a summary of both the first and sixtieth Fringe. The same phrase is repeated under both headings as a means of communicating the ethos and development of the Fringe during its history.

Paradigmatically this is linked with the overall discourse of the programme design, where the notion of past and future is evidently linked to the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe. The use of the word trip refers both to a

travel and time theme and is referential of the simultaneously futuristic, modernist and retrospective design theme. Furthermore, this is the case for the theme of journeying, both through the past sixty years of the Fringe, and future travel.

The messages of tradition and modernity are communicated paradigmatically through the appearance of the simultaneously futuristic and retrospective female figure. Further, the themes of growth and development and nurture of the new, are communicated paradigmatically through the tending of the artificial grass and flowers: which could refer to the growth and development of the Fringe over sixty years and its role in nurturing talent. This theme occurs also through the linear syntagmatic structure of the following statements: "providing continuing support… our mission is to provide a variety of services for performers and audiences alike". Further, this syntagmatic theme progresses: "wealth of new writing"; "hottest new talent from all over the world". (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, p.4)

The theme of unconventionality and risk is syntagmatically evident through the narrative describing the first and sixtieth Fringe as having the same ethos, despite the sixty year trip: "they used small and unconventional theatre spaces and were obliged to take all of their own financial risks, flourishing or failing according to public demand." (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, p.4). This theme was present throughout all Fringe programmes analysed.

B9.   Combinations of systems: 2006
At this stage of the semiotic process, Echtner (1999) suggests the semiotician should attempt to develop an understanding of the rules systems of the combinations of elements. This involved identifying the recurring patterns of language and images.

In this case, and as detailed above, the past and future themes was identified through the combined phrase of: "Future Fantastic the Sixty Year Trip" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2006, cover); the indication that 2006 was the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe; and the simultaneously retrospective and futuristic image of the woman. In terms of defining the brand image of the Fringe, this stage involved the comparison of these system rules across all texts of 2006-2009.

B10.   Denotative and connotative meanings: 2006
This next stage of the semiotic analysis was concerned with the layers of signification (Echtner, 1999) and involved penetrating the denotative, or surface, meanings to extract the underlying connotative meanings.

This stage of the semiotic process applies Barthes' (1993) concept of the mythical meanings of signs as communications of political, cultural and

social ideologies to the decoding of media as sign systems. The media in this instance were the Fringe programmes.

Furthermore, at this stage, as noted, it is essential to ensure that the process is underpinned by a relevant philosophical framework, in this case the constructivist paradigm and a structuralist-based approach to the semiotic analysis which is applied in inter-textual analysis of promotional materials (Dyer, 1982); considering the visual signs beyond linguistic signs.

This stage in the semiotic process is particularly subjective and interpretive. The semiotician is required to make decisions based upon their own perceptions and develop a convincing case in relation to the analysis (Echtner, 1999; Carson & Taylor, 2009; Manning, 1987).

The 2006 Fringe programme is rich with linguistic and visual signs and these were subject to a syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis. The denotative meaning of the 2006 Fringe programme can be defined in terms of its purpose: as a promotional tool for, and guide to, the sixtieth Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The repeated phrase of: "Future fantastic the sixty year trip" communicates this notion (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2006).

To examine the deeper, connotative layers of meaning, it was necessary to return to the themes identified. The connotative aspect of the analysis was based upon identifying analogies within the systems of signs (Berger, 1995; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007). Analogy is defined in relation to metanomic and synecdochal signs. Metaphor and metonymy are metanomic signs: they convey connections and identities as perceived by individuals Metaphor is concerned with suggesting meaning through an association or relationship between two items. Synecdochal signs are those where the sign represents a part of an item representing a whole, or vice versa (Berger, 1995; Dyer, 1982; Rose, 2007).

In considering the 2006 Fringe programme, the researcher interpreted the image of the woman dressed in white and within the cold, white setting as being a metaphor for the past and future in relation to her dual appearance: simultaneously retrospective and futuristic. Further, her tending of the artificial foliage was viewed as a synechdochal sign. This could represent the growth and nurture of the Fringe: both in relation to its past and future, and in the role that the Fringe has in supporting emerging talent.

The Fringe brand can be perceived as being composed of functional and symbolic elements. The functional elements include the logo and associated visual markers that identify the tangible brand. As a symbolic brand element, the brand image concept is widely identified as consumers' perceptions of the image of a particular brand (Aaker, D., 1991; Elliot &

Percy, 2007; Hankinson, 2004a, 2005; Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Keller, 1993; Paterson, 1999; Tasci & Kozak, 2006; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

The connotative meanings can be described as in 2006: "Future fantastic: the sixty year trip." An emphasis was inferred to the history and past success of the Fringe; and its future growth. A simultaneous reference to retrospective and futuristic views could be seen.

B11. Fringe brand image summary: 2006

It is concluded that in undertaking a semiotic analysis of the Fringe programme for 2006, a series of themes became evident. Those themes, as perceived by the researcher, can be defined in relation to the Fringe brand image. The researcher perceived the Fringe brand image in this case to be one related to the past and future of the Fringe. The Fringe brand is further portrayed as having an image which is both traditional and modern, while being unconventional and risky; although historically it is has an image of being supportive.

In 2006, it was the sixtieth anniversary of the Fringe and there is a particular emphasis upon the notion of the journey or trip. This can be associated with the time-related journey, or the process of taking part in and experiencing the Fringe.

Having made this analysis of the 2006 programme, the researcher considered the programmes of 2007, 2008 and 2009 in relation to the Fringe brand image.

B12. Fringe programme tangible branding: 2007

The same semiotic process as discussed above was applied to all four Fringe programmes. Here, the process is discussed as it was applied to the 2007 programme, before progressing to those corresponding to 2008 and 2009. Figure 9.5 is an image of the Fringe programme cover for 2007. The Fringe-name logo is positioned prominently at the top of the programme cover. The logo occupies approximately twenty five percent of the total cover image. It is a deep warm purple shade, and solid. The colour of the logo is similar to the warm hues adopted elsewhere on the cover.

B13. Fringe programme design theme: 2007

The Fringe programme 2007 design communicates the general themes of indulgence and enjoyment. A rich red background is evident, and upon this a young woman sits amongst a display of large cakes adorned with fruit and flowers. The foreground of the image contains images of fruit, smaller cakes and sweets.

The woman is smiling with her mouth open, and reaching for a strawberry that sits on the top of the largest cake, in the foreground of the cover image. She is wearing a lily in her hair, which is styled in ringlets. Her

make-up includes red lipstick, red painted nails, and deep-purple-lidded downcast eyes with long eyelashes. The phrase: "Get stuck in" appears, alluding to the design theme of indulgence. As detailed below, this theme is repeated through the use of other phrases pre-fixed with: 'Get' throughout the introductory pages of the programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, cover).

B14. Representations analysis of human elements: 2007

As detailed above, the image portrayed on the cover is that of a young woman who appears to be enjoying indulging in a selection of cakes, fruit and sweets. Dyer's (1982) checklist provided a useful framework of analysis in this instance, as it did for the 2006 programme. Again, this considers representations of bodies; manner; activity; and the props and settings that are evident.

Similarly to the 2006 programme, the actor portrays a young, female figure. The woman is attractive, young and her appearance is alluring and glamorous, but also feminine and playful.

Dyer (1982, p.98) commenting upon the representations of hair suggests that: "This is one of the most potent symbols in cultural communication. Female hair in particular is considered to be seductive and narcissistic, meaning an object of love or self-admiration." The woman in this image has shiny black hair which is in ringlets. Along with the cakes as props and the setting, this is referential to the French Queen Marie Antoinette (1755-1793): the wife of King Louis XVI, who was famously beheaded by her own subjects during the French revolution. As an historical figure, Marie Antoinette has become synonymous with the extravagance associated with 18th century, pre-revolutionary France. She was reported to have uttered the infamous "let them eat cake" comment (which allegedly preceded her by several hundred years) while referring to her impoverished subjects (Fraser, 2002). This comment, however, has become linked with representations of the French Queen. Within popular culture, she is frequently depicted as a joyful, glamorous woman surrounded by cakes. Indeed a recent film depicted her as a decadent character in scenes similar in appearance to that of the Fringe 2007 programme (*Marie Antoinette*, 2006).

This form of inter-textuality, where conscious use is made of stylistic devices from preceding texts, is referred to by Arthur Berger (1995) as: parody or indeed as postmodern pastiche (Robinson, 2008). It is dependent upon shared cultural experiences and knowledge within societies, or as discussed previously, what is termed as 'myth' by Barthes.

B15. Phrases on the programme cover: 2007

As is the case upon all analysed programme covers, there is a selection of phrases displayed. The first category identifies the factual elements of the Fringe and provides information. It is specified that the programme is:

"Free"'. The dates of: "5-27 August, 2007", are also identified; "www.edfringe.com" website is listed. Finally, the programme sponsor's name and logo is included: Royal Bank of Scotland (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, cover).

The second category of identified phrases pertains to the design themes of the programme. As noted, in 2007 the phrase: "Get stuck in" is noted on the cover and this can be related to the overall programme design theme of indulgence, enjoyment and decadence. As noted below similar phrases, urging the reader to: "Get" different aspects of the Fringe, are noted throughout the introductory pages (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2007).

B16.   Phrases in the introductory text: 2007
The introductory pages of the programme, are most notably all titled with a phrase prefixed with 'Get'. These are: "Get booked; get friendly; get thanked; get involved; get free; get sorted; get around; get going; get organised" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, pp.1-9). This can be linked to the overall theme of indulgence and decadence and the "Get stuck in" phrase displayed on the cover and page 1 (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, p.1).

Similarly to the 2006 programme, in 2007 there is no personal introductory text from the Director; however there is a statement on page 3 the Chair of the Board of Directors, which is identical to that of 2006 in introducing the Friends of the Fringe scheme. Again, the following phrases are notable: "Providing continuing support for what is now the largest arts festival in the world"; "our mission is to provide a variety of services for performers and audiences alike"; "wealth of new writing"; "hottest new talent from all over the world" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, p.4)

Other phrases throughout the introductory programme refer to the booking process and the listings. There are no images included that relate to the general design theme: although an archive Fringe performance photograph are displayed. Further, as mentioned above, the logos of sponsors appear in the programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2007, p.5).

B17.   Defining elements of analysis: 2007
In defining the elements and themes of analysis for the 2007 Fringe programme, these are:

- Indulgence and decadence: "Get stuck in"
- Enjoyment and fun
- Unconventionality and risk
- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

The syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis of these themes continues below.

B18.   Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis: 2007
The themes of indulgence and decadence; and enjoyment and fun are evident through the syntagm of the phrase: "Get stuck in". These themes develop a narrative, detailing what benefits the Fringe can 'give' the reader, throughout the introductory pages of the programme: "Get booked; get friendly; get thanked; get involved; get free; get sorted; get around; get going; get organised" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2007, p.1-9).

Paradigmatically, the overall design theme involving the sumptuous cake display and joyful woman, with the references to Marie Antoinette illustrates these themes through the images portrayed.

The syntagmatic structures related to the other pertinent and repeated themes of unconventionality and risk; wealth of talent and nurture of talent; and services and support are similar to those in the 2006 programme, as these are elements that are repeated in the text (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2007, p.1-9).

B19.   Combinations of systems: 2007
During this stage of the semiotic process, the researcher developed a taxonomy of the combination of elements and themes of the 2007 Fringe programme. This involved identifying the recurring patterns of language and images (Echtner, 1999).

The themes of 'indulgence' and 'decadence' and 'enjoyment' and 'fun' are evident through the recurring use of the phrases prefixed with: "Get" that appear throughout the course of the introductory pages of the programme. The reader is invited to indulge in receiving all the different features that the Fringe offers. Furthermore, the appearance of the woman and the referential notion of Marie Antionette, suggested by her appearance, also suggest these themes.

B20.   Denotative and connotative meanings: 2007
As discussed previously, this stage of the semiotic process involved the semiotician making decisions based upon her own subjective perceptions of the meanings of the Fringe programme.

As this is the programme for the Fringe in 2007, its denotative meaning is as a promotional and informational tool for the festival in that year. It introduces the Fringe and describes it as a festival in terms of its dates and ethos, while inviting the reader to: "Get stuck in", to the Fringe (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2007, cover).

As noted, in examining the connotative layers of meaning, the researcher had to return to the previously identified themes and to use these to find

analogies within the system of signs. This involved defining the metanomic (metaphoric) and synechdochal signs that were evident (Berger, A., 1995; Dyer, 1982; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007).

Returning to metanomic signs: metaphor suggests meaning through the relationship between two items. Within the 2007 Fringe programme, the researcher interpreted the figure of the woman surrounded by cakes as being a metaphor for the themes of 'indulgence' and 'enjoyment', and 'fun', through her resemblance to, and parody of, Marie Antoinette. There is a further metaphor that suggests the notion of the indulgence in the unknown: forbidden fruit (perhaps a biblical reference to immoral pleasures).

Further, the woman's appearance in reaching for the cakes and fruit around her was regarded by the researcher as a synechdochal sign for the above themes: the cakes, fruits and sweets representing potentially, yet to be discovered, riches of the talent and variety of the Fringe. The connotative meanings are thus perceived as: 2007: "Get stuck in." A playful invitation was extended to the consumer to indulge in the Fringe and enjoy the richness and variety of the programme.

B21. Fringe brand image summary: 2007
In undertaking a semiotic of the Fringe programme for 2007 a series of symbolic themes are evident which can be attributed to the Fringe brand image.

Brand image is an intangible, or symbolic brand element. As a symbolic brand element, brand image is considered to be consumers' perceptions of the image of a particular brand (Aaker, D., 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Hankinson, 2004a, 2005; Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Keller, 1993; Paterson, 1999; Tasci & Kozak, 2006; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

As noted, the main themes were perceived by the researcher as being symbols of indulgence and decadence in terms of inviting the perceived of the brand to: "Get stuck in" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2007: cover) and experience the enjoyment and unconventional nature of the Fringe. Similarly to the 2006 programme, the Fringe brand image in 2007 can be defined as being somewhat contradictory: simultaneously encouraging indulgence and enjoyment, while having features of longevity; nurture; and support.

B22. Fringe programme tangible branding: 2008
Similarly to the previous two years' programmes, the Fringe logo occupies approximately twenty-five percent of the cover. It is a prominent title: presented at the top of the programme cover and is rendered in a solid white.

B23. Fringe programme design theme: 2008

Unlike the previous two years, the 2008 programme does not portray an image of a human being on the cover. The design theme appears to reflect the theme of the theatre (or cinema) and performance; and also Edinburgh as the festival city. This is through the visible representations of stylised images which first appear on the cover and are also present in the introductory pages of the programme.

On the deep-turquoise cover, there is an illustration of an unravelling roll of theatre tickets amongst which silhouettes of groups of waving people stand. Above these images is a large illustration of a single-lens reflex style of camera with white stars around it, suggesting camera flashes. In the background there is a depiction of Edinburgh Castle, portrayed in a silhouetted form.

Further communicating the theatre, Edinburgh As festival city themes, the phrase: "The stage is set" appears on the cover beneath the Fringe logo (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, cover).

The depiction of theatre-themed stylised and illustrated images continues throughout the introductory pages of the programme. A theatre mask and lipstick are evident; three silhouetted pairs of applauding hands; the repeated image of Edinburgh Castle; and the camera flashes are also visible (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, pp.2-9).

B24. Phrases on the programme cover: 2008

Similarly to the previously analysed Fringe programmes, the phrases on the 2008 programme cover may be categorised in two ways. The first category reflects the factual elements of the Fringe. It is again specified that the programme is "Free", and the dates of: "3 – 25 August" are noted along with: "edfringe.com". The programme sponsor is visible through the logo and name of the Royal Bank of Scotland (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, cover).

The second category of identified phrases again refers to the overall design themes of the programme. As noted above, the phrase "The stage is set" appears, thus further suggesting the themes of theatre and performance; and Edinburgh as a festival city, or indeed becoming the festival city.

This theme is further evident throughout the introductory pages of the 2008 programme from identification of phrases here. These are detailed below.

B25. Phrases in the introductory text: 2008

Within the introductory pages of the Fringe programme for 2008, there are a series of phrases that continue to suggest a 'theatre' and 'Edinburgh' as a festival city', themes.

"The stage is set" is repeated on the contents page. Throughout the introductory pages, a series of phrases appear as headings for different pages. "Take your seats" relates to opening times and ticket purchasing. "Supporting cast" to the Friends of the Fringe scheme and: "Take a bow!" refers to sponsors. "Step into the spotlight" provides information for performers while: "Free-for-all", refers to the free elements of the Fringe. "Sharing the stage", lists the other Edinburgh summer festivals and: "From the top", describes the listings (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, p.1-9).

This programme includes an introduction from the Fringe Director (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, p.1) and many of the phrases seen here also reflect the themes of theatre and performance; and Edinburgh as a festival city. The phrases used by the Fringe Director suggest the themes of the previously analysed programmes, indicative of: unconventionality and risk; services and support; and wealth of talent and nurture of talent. Notable phrases include: "a spectacular international celebration of the arts", which relates to the identified theme of theatre and suggests a celebratory aspect which could link with the Edinburgh as festival city theme.

There are phrases that relate to the identified elements of wealth of talent and nurture of talent; and these include: "creative talent"; "across a whole range of art forms". The word "artists" is evident in this programme, although the Fringe is described by the Director as: "something for everyone". The themes of 'unconventionality' and 'risk' emerge again through the following phrases: "choose your unique festival route"; "take some chances"; "so much going on". These and the use of the words: "journey"; "adventure"; and "discoveries" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, p.1) are indicative of themes related to those of journeying and travel; and one of discovery.

Similarly to the previous two programmes, the themes of services and support are visible through the introductory pages. The Friends of the Fringe introduction is again provided by the Chair of the Board of Directors, and appears under the heading of: "Supporting Cast". There are phrases used here that allude to the mission of the Fringe as open access and supportive: "Our mission is to provide a variety of services for performers and audiences alike, while also managing free events on the Royal Mile and Fringe Sunday." (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, p.4).

The services and support theme is further evident throughout this section of the programme, and the themes of talent and artistry is also visible: "… we can proudly present an annual programme featuring a wealth of writing and the hottest new talent from all over the world" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, p.4).

This programme contains a more descriptive element of Edinburgh than the previous programmes reviewed, which alludes to the theme of

'Edinburgh as festival city' that is suggested within the overall theme. Some of the phrases used to describe the city are: "…remarkable"; "…unique and exciting"; "…living history, vibrant culture" and further reflecting the theme is the phrase: "Edinburgh is a show unto itself" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, p.7). This suggests the theme of 'Edinburgh as festival city' through a synechdochal allusion.

B26. Defining elements of analysis: 2008

The elements and themes of analysis for the 2008 Fringe programme are defined as:

- Theatre and performance; "The stage is set"
- Artistry and creativity
- Edinburgh as the festival city
- Discovery
- Unconventionality and risk
- Wealth of talent and nurture of talent
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

As with the previous programmes, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis of these themes is detailed below.

B27. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis: 2008

A narrative is seen to develop around the main theme of theatre and performance which is an evident syntagm of the images appearing on the cover and the repetition of these within the introductory pages of the programme. Furthermore, this theme is central to the Fringe as a festival. This is similarly true of the syntagmatic structures that suggest the role of Edinburgh as festival city: the use of the image of the castle and the description of the city using words comparable to those used within the literature describing the Fringe.

The syntagmatic structures suggesting theatre and performance progresses in addition to the use of related images through the use of the phrases: "The stage is set" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008: cover) and the following page headings, which state: "Take your seats"; "Supporting cast"; "Take a bow!"; "Step into the spotlight"; "Free-for-all"; "Sharing the stage"; and "From the top" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe: 2008: 1-9) and as noted above these phrases link to the other identified themes of artistry and creativity and Edinburgh as a festival city.

The syntagmatic structures related to the repeated themes of unconventionality and risk; wealth of talent and nurture of talent; and services and support; are similar to those in the 2006 and 2007 programmes as these are elements that are repeated throughout the introductory text (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2008, pp.1-9).

The paradigmatic analysis uncovered the overall theme of the programme based upon the structure of meaning through the selection of the signs within the text (Berger, 1995; Rose, 2007). In examining the signs those most visible were the images suggesting the themes of theatre and artistry: the cover of the programme depicted illustrations of a camera; groups of people and theatre tickets beneath Edinburgh castle.

B28. Combinations of systems: 2008

Again, this stage of the process involved identifying the recurring patterns of language and images in order to develop an understanding of the systems by which the various elements are combined to form the themes (Echtner, 1999).

Language projecting images of the theatre, stage and festivals frequently filters through the introductory pages of the programme. As detailed, this is combined with the use of images suggesting the same theme.

Further, the image representation of Edinburgh Castle, accompanied with the emotive language about the city is a combined indication of the theme of Edinburgh as festival city.

B29. Denotative and connotative meanings: 2008

Similarly to the previous analysed programmes, the denotative meaning of the 2008 Fringe programme can be defined in terms of its use: a promotional tool for, and guide to the Fringe.

In penetrating the denotative meanings of the is programme, the researcher's perceptions of the underlying meanings involved considering the visual sign systems that are visible beyond the linguistic signs (Berger, 1995, 1998; Dyer, 1982; Echtner, 1999; Noth, 1990).

As detailed above, the overall thematic context of setting the stage for the festival and the apparent theme of theatre is the most prevalent theme. This was perceived to suggest a relatively simple connotative meaning of this year's programme of the Fringe having a role of artistic and theatrical significance as a festival within Edinburgh. The connotative meaning is characterised as: 2008: "The stage is set." defining and describing the role of the Fringe as a festival of celebration, performance, creativity, and artistry in Edinburgh, the festival city.

B30. Fringe brand image summary: 2008

In summarising the Fringe brand image for 2008, the researcher considered that this was defined, through the semiotic analysis, as being simply associated with the role of the Fringe as a festival of creativity and artistry. The other underlying elements of the festival's supportive and nurturing role were also evident across this and all other cases.

Returning to the concept of brand equity, this may defined as the non-financial assets and liabilities linked to a brand that may influence the value of the brand as perceived by the customers. It is considered vital for a brand to have positive brand equity. Brand equity is composed thus from consequential consumer perceptions of: brand awareness and brand image, which form brand knowledge (Keller, 1993, 2003). Further components of brand equity include: perceived quality; confidence or trust in the brand; loyalty to the brand (Aaker, 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007) and brand-consumer relationships (Ind & Bjerke, 2007)

It was considered by the researcher that the brand image of the Fringe for 2008 was appealing to a positive brand equity by representing a set of festival-related associations (Aaker, 1991) as perceived by the consumer. The Fringe brand image in 2008 was indentified therefore as being concerned with the core function of the Fringe as the largest arts festival in Edinburgh.

B31.   Fringe programme tangible branding: 2009
The final Fringe programme subject to the semiotic analysis was that of 2009. This was the most recently produced programme, at the time of this research. The functional Fringe-name brand in the form of the logo was similar to the previous three years' representations. The logo occupies approximately twenty-five percent of the cover, as before. It is a prominently displayed at the top of the programme cover and is rendered in a solid white.

B32.   The Fringe programme design theme: 2009
The Fringe programme 2009 design involves a simple visual depiction of a large egg-shaped object, upon a black background. The egg is portrayed in a series of bright colours: green, yellow, purple, orange, red, pink and blue; upon different printed editions of the programme. The object appears to be glowing from within and is reflecting a pool of self-coloured light around its base.

The researcher perceived this programme design to communicate the overall themes of an unknown entity, anticipation and discovery. There is a poised question of what will hatch from the egg? Further, the themes of new life, fertility, birth (and rebirth) are evident immediately, given the symbolic aspect of the un-hatched egg.

Further adding to the unknown entity theme of the egg is the website address: "www.thefringething.com", (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover) which first appears on the cover beneath the egg. This was found to link to a social media website which was an additional promotional tool in the form of a fictional blog from a Professor Ed Hegg, who is seemingly attempting to determine what 'the Fringe thing' (the egg) is through research and undertaking experiments. This includes a series of blogs

between May and August 2009, prior to the start of the Fringe. The introduction reads as follows:

> "Greetings from my laboratory! I'm the senior professor here at the Fringe-funded International College of Ovology in Edinburgh. Which makes me the egg head! My students almost always howl with laughter when I say that. Yes, almost always!" (The Fringe thing, 2009)

In addition to the blog element of this site, there is the opportunity for visitors to subscribe, and to visit: "The Test Zone" webpage. Here there are a series of short films depicting different experiments on the Fringe Thing. Site visitors may select examples from a drop-down menu and then watch short films, such as attempts to crack the Fringe thing; cut it open and so on. Between the short films there is an image of the Fringe thing as it slowly changes colour and glows (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009). As noted above this website serves the purpose of an additional promotional tool for the Fringe, and it provides a link to the for the Fringe box office.

Many of the themes evident upon the Fringe thing website, also appear within the introductory pages of the programme in terms of the images portrayed of the egg (Fringe thing) being the subject of experiments. There are images of a small white egg being listened to with a stethoscope; drilled and sawn into; and hit with a snooker cue. Within each image are hands in blue surgical gloves and a white paper overall, further suggesting science and experiments (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, pp.1-7).

In defining the overall design theme of the programme the researcher perceived this as being related to the discovery of the unknown entity of the Fringe thing and anticipation of its birth. Further sub-themes of new life and fertility were also evident. These themes were depicted in a humorous manner through the images used and associated weblog.

B33.   Phrases on the programme cover: 2009
Returning once again to the dual categorisation of the phrases on the programme cover, these may be considered as the factual elements of the Fringe. The programme is: "Free"; dates are: "7-31 August 2009"; and "edfringe.com" is listed. Once again, the programme sponsor of Royal Bank of Scotland is noted (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover).

The second category of phrases related to the overall theme, and as previously detailed this refers to: "www.thefringething.com" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009).

B34.   Phrases in the introductory text: 2009
Throughout the introductory pages a series of phrases referring to the Fringe thing appear (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, pp.1-7). These are: "The Fringe thing", on the introduction page; "It's a pick and choose thing",

on the booking page; "It's a support thing", on the pages referring to Friends of the Fringe and Sponsors; and: "It's a take part thing", which details how to get involved.

The programme for 2009, similarly to previous years, the themes of services and support emerge throughout the introductory pages. An identical Friends of the Fringe introduction is provided by the Chair of the Board of Directors, and appears under the heading of: "It's a support thing" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, p.5). The services and support themes are too further evident throughout this section of the programme, and the themes of talent and artists is repeated thus.

This programme includes an Introduction from the Chief Executive (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, p.1) and within this a number of phrases appear which relate to previously identified themes in the Fringe programmes. These phrases can be categorised as related to the following themes. Firstly, phrases that relate to the themes of enjoyment and fun are: "delight, excite", captivate, challenge and entertain you"; "be enlivened, gain insight and laugh out loud". An additional theme of involvement and taking part becomes evident here.

A number of phrases reflect this theme and further link to the themes of theatre and artistry: "feast of events"; "largest explosion of culture"; "inspiration"; "full of shows"; and "immerse yourself in the most exhilarating, extraordinary show on Earth". These phrases may also be identified with the previous theme of wealth of talent, as can: "breathtaking array of talent across all art forms"; "what is about to unfold before you is the result of the talent, dedication, ambition and creativity of Fringe participants"; and "staggering wealth". The previous theme of unconventionality and risk are also evident through the phrases of: "astonishing adventure"; and "take some chances.

Finally, there is a re-emergence of the theme of Edinburgh as festival city in this introduction, as the phrases: "all taking place in the beautiful, historic Festival City of Edinburgh" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, p.1).

B35. Defining elements of analysis: 2009
In defining the elements of analysis for the 2009 Fringe programme, these are:

- Anticipation and discovery of the unknown
- (Re)birth and new life: "The Fringe thing"
- Wealth of talent and fertility
- Theatre and performance
- Enjoyment and fun
- Unconventionality and risk
- Services and support
- Involvement and taking part

Many of these themes were further evident through the syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis, which is summarised below in relation to the prominent themes particular to the 2009 programme.

B36.   Syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis: 2009
In considering the themes which are particular and prominent to this year's programme, a syntagmatic chain forms around the themes of anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and birth and new life. This is visible through the use of the image of: "the Fringe thing" upon the programme, and the use of the images of the experiments used within the introductory pages. As noted previously, a link to the Fringe thing website continues this theme out-with the physical programme.

Paradigmatically, these themes are seen further through the use of the image appearing with the phrase; "the Fringe thing" and the related phrases throughout the introductory section of the programme (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover).

B37.   Combinations of systems: 2009
The elements of the 2009 programme relating to the prominent themes of anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and birth and new life, were combined most evidently through the use of the phrase and image of the egg-shaped object: "the Fringe Thing" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover).

First appearing on the cover, this combination was seen further through the introductory pages: the images of the egg experiments are combined with the headings which both mention the Fringe Thing and relate to different aspects of introducing the Fringe.

B38.   Denotative and connotative meanings: 2009
In determining the layers of signification, similarly to the previous analysed years, the 2009 programme is defined in terms of its purpose: a guide and promotional tool to the Fringe.

In examining the deeper connotative meanings it is necessary to consider the themes that are particular to that programme and identify the analogies apparent within the systems (Berger, 1995; Noth, 1990; Rose, 2007).

The image of the egg (the Fringe thing) was interpreted by the researcher as a metaphor for the major programme themes of the Fringe 2009: anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and birth and new life. As discussed previously, metaphor in semiotics involves the use of a signified, acting as a signifier, but relating to a different signified (Chandler, 2002). In this case, the egg-shaped object, while acting as a signifier to the themes of anticipation and discovery of the unknown; and birth and new life, is a metaphor of the Fringe itself. This is in relation to the viewer's expectations, and the 'birth' of the Fringe as the festival launches. The

connotative meanings associated with 2009 are: 2009: "The Fringe thing." The anticipation and discovery of a new and unknown Fringe festival: alive and fertile with talent. The birth or rebirth of a new year.

B39.   The Fringe brand image: 2009
It is suggested that brand image should be defined from the perspective of the consumer of the brand. Additionally, as argued by numerous scholars, image may be regarded as an 'output' of the overall brand concept to which personal value is attached by consumers via their perceptions (Aaker, 1991; Elliot & Percy, 2007; Hankinson, 2004a, 2005; Hosany, Ekinci & Usyal, 2006; Janonis, Dovaliene & Virvilaite, 2007; Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003; Patterson, 1999; Plummer, 2000; Tasci & Kozak, 2006).

The prominent themes of the Fringe programme in 2009 identified by the semiotic analysis, were perceived by the researcher as being relevant to defining the Fringe brand image. In 2009, it was concluded that the Fringe brand image therefore was perceived as related to: anticipation and subsequent discovery; the birth of something new; a wealth of talent; and fun to be experienced by all. Further an element of unexpectedness and risk could be seen as an aspect of the Fringe brand image. This is evident through the design theme of "the Fringe thing" (Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2009, cover).

Appendix C

Fringe stakeholder interview guide

Introduction

- Thank informant for agreeing to interview;
- Introduction to self and brief summary of topic;

  Q1: How would you describe your stakeholder role in relation to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (probe: *if more than one is mentioned, seek clarification)*?

Stage 1. Image amplification: feelings about festivals

- You were asked to collect approximately five images that describe how you feel about festivals in general. Can we consider each of the (5) images you have selected and discuss these in the first instance?

  Q2: What is this image and what story does it tell? How does this image describe how you feel about festivals?

  Q3: You say this image makes you feel […...] why is this important in describing the way you feel about festivals?

- Referring again to these images we have been discussing that describe your feelings towards festivals.

  Q4: Which of these images best captures how you feel about festivals? Can you explain why/how?

  Q5: How would you describe your strongest feelings towards festivals?

Stage 2. Narrative stage: use of festivals

- Now it would be interesting to hear about your own history with festivals in general, so I can understand your interaction with festivals and your attitude towards them.

  Q6: Can you tell me a bit about your own life history in relation to festivals?

Q7: Can you tell me about your first festival experience (probe: *as an audience member, a staff member, performer, etc*)?

Q8: Can you describe your history of involvement with festivals up until the present day?

Q9: Can you describe your attitude towards festivals, both in the past and today? Has your attitude changed over time?

Q10: Can you describe how festivals fit within your life, (probe: *in terms of what is important to you in life*)?

Q11: How important are festivals to you, and why?

Q12: How would you describe yourself as a person (your personality)?

Q13: Can you describe ways in which you believe your personality contributes to and / or influences your experiences with festivals (if any)?

Stage 3. Explicating the brand relationship

- You were asked to collect up to five images that capture your feelings towards the Fringe. Can we consider each of the (5) images you have selected and discuss these in a similar way to the first set of images.

  Q14: What is this image and what story does it tell?
  Why did you choose this image?

  Q15: How does this image capture your feelings towards the Fringe brand (*how do you feel about the Fringe brand*)?

  Q16: You say this image makes you feel… Why is this important in describing the way you feel about the Fringe?

- Considering the images we have just been discussing:

  Q17: Which of these images best captures how you feel about the Fringe?

  Q18: How would you describe your feelings towards the Fringe?

  Q19: Can you describe your loyalty to the Fringe brand?

Q20: Which other brands *(two or three)* do you use *(in everyday life)* that you are similarly loyal to *(as the Fringe brand)*?

Q21: Can you describe how each of these brands relates to *(important features of)* your life *(work, motivations, life themes and projects)*?

- This part of the interview is concerned specifically with the Fringe brand, and how you see your relationship with it

Q22: Can you describe the history of your involvement with the Fringe?

Q23: Can you describe your *(primary stakeholder)* involvement with the Fringe today?

Q24: If the Fringe were a person, how would you describe its personality?

Q25: Considering the Fringe as a person with whom you have a relationship of some sort, how would you describe this (probe*: for interpersonal relationship types)*?

Q26: Can you describe your relationship with the Fringe brand (probe*: for commitment; dependence; equality; etc)*?

Close interview

- Thank informant for taking the time to contribute;
- Ask if there are any other comments they would like to make; and/or details they would like to add.

Appendix D

Idiographic analysis

Informant accounts of their Fringe-stakeholder brand relationships
The following accounts are summarised versions of five of the idiographic analysis transcripts of the informant interviews with Fringe primary stakeholders.

While there is one example included from each Fringe primary stakeholder category, the blurring between categories for some of the informants is evident here.

In the interest of protecting the anonymity of the informants all names have been changed (as they were throughout the reporting of the findings), and only summarised accounts of the full interview transcripts have been included here.

Interview 1: Susan's best friendship

Susan's festival background:
Susan is a Fringe Society stakeholder and has a long history with theatre: "I grew up in a very erm… theatre-going environment." Consequently Susan has been involved in theatre from her early childhood when she first appeared in school plays. Her involvement continued throughout her adult life and as an adult Susan has "always" worked in this area: "I knew I was probably wanting to work in theatre."

Due to her family background, Susan has always somehow been aware of the festivals in Edinburgh: "not professionally, but recreationally", when she was growing-up. Her parents: "liked the theatre," and this meant she was from a young age conscious of the festivals in Edinburgh:

> "when I grew-up I was always aware that there was this *thing* in Edinburgh. So I had always been aware of it."

Susan's first visit to Edinburgh was eighteen years ago as a teenager, with her parents, who are originally from Edinburgh. Having always been aware of the festivals, she remembers experiencing them for the first time: "I actually remember feeling blown-away about how much there was to see. I was walking around on my own, seeing everybody having a great time."

Susan's early experience of Edinburgh during the festivals, and the Fringe specifically, influenced her decision to move to Edinburgh to study: "one of the reasons I decided to come to University in Edinburgh was because of the Fringe."

While at University, Susan began to work for Fringe venues. Her first post

was working for a venue's box office. She also began to get involved in stage management and this ultimately became her career, before her current position with the Fringe. During her time at university Susan came to realise that she very much enjoyed working in a festival environment and decided that the arts, theatre, and festivals could be her career:

> "I'd never worked in a festival environment before. It was my first work at a festival. And it was *amazing* because it was the first time I'd sort of *ever* got up in the morning in order to do that, and that was what I did all day!"

While still at university, Susan decided to set-up and manage her own student festival; "of new work", and this was "a fantastic learning experience", and "hard work", although at the time she "didn't really think of it as an understanding of what it tales to run a festival." Still while studying, Susan's experiences led her to work in a management role with the National Student Theatre Company and she also continued to work for venues during the Fringe. As Susan reached the end of her studies in Edinburgh, she worked as a festival reviewer for a publication and this continued after she graduated and moved away from Edinburgh to work in stage management in London, so keeping her connections with the Fringe:

> "So from that year on, my connection with the Fringe never stopped, but I had my own career and I was working around that."

Previously to returning to Edinburgh to work with the Festival Fringe Society, Susan worked with a few other festivals, but most of her work was in the arts and specifically theatre on a year-round basis.

Susan describes how her work experience with festivals has changed her attitude to them over the years. Today she still enjoys them, but also has a greater understanding of the work and commitment involved:

> "Probably just being less wide-eyed about it I would think! When I started I was *just* overwhelmed and kind of amazed. But the more you work in it the more you get to understand what's behind it. It doesn't it's any *less* fun, or you're any less excited by it but it's just that you can understand it".

Susan's Fringe:
Susan describes herself as being "completely engaged" with the Fringe on a professional level. Although she was very easily able to specifically position herself as presently within her Fringe Society stakeholder category, she was particular in her explanation of her previous stakeholder roles:

> "I'm quite clear on that! I'm first and foremost a member of Fringe Society staff! I've also been coming to the Fringe for eighteen years as an audience member. I've worked at venues, and I've worked on shows, and I used to work for the newspaper that covers all the festivals."

Susan describes how important the Fringe is to her in her stakeholder role and how today it has become her "community" which overlaps from work into her personal life:

> "I think it becomes sort of community, erm… I think that's probably true of all professions, but particularly with the arts where the community you work in becomes overlapped with the community where your friends are. So there is a definite separation between personal life and work life, but (laughs) there is also this big grey area in the middle where it all overlaps and I know I can go out with a good friend and within half-an-hour we'll be talking about work and it will be like having a work meeting!"

In discussing the Fringe and its role in Susan's life, she describes this as being very important to her on both a practical and personal level:

> "It pays my rent…yeah…but, this is a job I *really value* as well, and you know if I left tomorrow, erm…even if I didn't do something that was to do with festivals, I *would* still come to the Fringe and other festivals. I would *still* be interested in them. So yes they always will be, whether it is my job or not!"

In her current Fringe Society stakeholder role, it is apparent that Susan has an extremely close and positive relationship with the Fringe. This is also evident throughout her previous stakeholder roles as a reviewer, producer and venue staff and a manager, Susan's Fringe relationship is long-term and she has actively pursued her involvement with the Fringe.

Susan is highly enthusiastic about the Fringe and the opportunities it has afforded her. She believes the Fringe is reflective of her own interests and background and she has a high level of affect for it:

> "I feel very involved. I feel this is just not a job here. I feel very affectionate towards it and also quite protective of it."

In describing her own personality, Susan considers herself to be "relatively outgoing, but not hugely". Her interest in the arts is what has fuelled her Fringe relationship: "I think I'm fairly artistic, but not necessarily in my own talent but in my interests." She describes herself as being "flexible" and believes that this trait along with a "real interest" is common to those who work in the arts and with festivals.

Susan produced a number of images for discussion during the interview. All of her images referred to her feelings about the Fringe, but one. She found it "difficult to think beyond" the Fringe. Her non-Fringe specific image was of fireworks which signified celebration:

> "a concentration of lots of different activities and a celebration of that. And it's fun and exciting and intense."

Susan's images were all related to the Fringe in some way apart from the fireworks. For one of her images, she produced a photograph of a street performer who had attached a piano to a bicycle, which he then played while cycling around. Susan describes her own feelings for the Fringe as being "affectionate" and "protective" towards it. She also describes it as "special", "exciting", "unexpected" and "fun". Susan described how seeing this represents how she feels about the Fringe specifically being "unexpected" and "special":

> "It's a man who had this piano and he had put it on a bicycle. I saw him when I was leaving work quite late one night and it was towards the end of the festival. It had quietened down a bit and it had been raining, and as I was walking, there weren't really that many people around, but I was walking out of Fringe Central across Bristo Square, and he suddenly came around the corner and he was lit-up by the lights and it was all kind of sparkly and he was playing quite a gentle tune, and erm…it was just *completely* unexpected to see this - the piano, and it was *really* beautiful! I think that for me that kind of summed-up the whole thing: being this explosion of things that happen and that anything can happen, and for a man to come up with a piano and that is the atmosphere that the Fringe creates, you know with that going on the city, at that time of year, and a cycle on a piano and you kind of go, *what*? I think it was really valued in the Fringe. I mean it wasn't a big show, it was just part of that stuff that happened, and I think that for me really summed it up - what the Fringe is about. You know? And why it's so special and the expansion of activities that are so self-perpetuating?"

In describing the personality of the Fringe, Susan emphasises its complexity: "it's schizophrenic, it's changeable and it's multi-faceted". In explaining how she views her own relationship with the Fringe, she compares it to a best friend who has "unpredictable" qualities:

> "I think they'd be someone you'd want to have as your best friend, but you might find them pretty unmanageable (laughs) at times! Yes, it would be someone you would be very close to and very fond of, but it would be quite difficult to handle (laughs). Yes, it would be quite unpredictable! So you would never quite know what that person was going to do next."

Susan could be seen to have a Fringe brand relationship which is a best friendship. Her relationship is defined in terms of its levels of affectation and reciprocity. The relationship is voluntarily formed, intense and enduring over time. Susan views her own interests, background and herself as being congruent to the Fringe and easily states her affection for it:

> "It's something I really, really value and want to find out about. I'm interested in it - in the thing that happens and in the thing that people create and the thing that people react to. I'm very, very loyal (to the Fringe) we've got a long-standing relationship."

Interview 2: Andrew's committed partnership

Andrew's festival background:
Andrew is a supplier stakeholder and he has worked with theatre venues, particular Fringe venues, and the Fringe itself for seventeen years in this role:

> "last year was my sixteenth festival, erm… and I kind of started off in this business about twenty-three years ago, working in a box office, but that was somewhere else. Yeah, then I came to Edinburgh for the first time and ran a venue box office for a couple of years, and then went away and did some other things and I came back to Scotland about twenty years ago".

In addition to his stakeholder role, Andrew does attend Fringe events as an audience member. He has a history of working for events in his stakeholder role, but in recent times this has been connected to the Fringe more than other festivals.

Andrew describes his attitude to festivals as being related to managing people, which is largely because of his Fringe stakeholder role:

> "festivals are about people and they're about crowds. So from our point of view, that's exactly what it's all about. It's about managing those people and for the Fringe, how do you take 1.8 million people and actually work out where they go, and how we're going to do that, and all that sort of stuff?"

Andrew's Fringe:
Andrew's organisation has been involved with the Fringe as a supplier for seventeen years and has a supportive relationship with the Fringe which is high in trust and commitment. Andrew's company works very closely with the Fringe on an exclusive basis: "we wrote our systems specifically for the Fringe".

In acknowledging the importance of the Fringe to his organisation, Andrew feels that his stakeholder role is also important to the Fringe's survival:

> "I suppose, to be involved in it in a minor way, I mean, we're not big players in getting people on stages and stuff, but, equally it couldn't happen without somebody like us doing the stuff that we do."

Andrew describes how the way he has worked with the Fringe has changed his opinion of it over the years. Today he enjoys working with the Fringe and is proud to do so

> "I don't think it has changed that much to be honest! I mean the initial shock when you first, erm, start to talk to people at the Fringe of actually how big the job is! Then it's just hard work after that, and so opinion has

not changed that much! It's *fun*, it's actually fun to do, and it gives you a bit of pride."

Is addition to feeling "pride", Andrew describes himself as being "one-hundred percent" loyal to the Fringe brand, although he found it difficult to describe it as a festival brand: "I don't think there is anything else quite like it." Andrew believes the Fringe is "different" to the other festivals in Edinburgh: "Anybody can do anything they want, in any venue and at any time". Andrew does describe the Fringe band as "extremely strong" and of a "high quality".

Andrew considers that the Fringe Society and the many other stakeholders involved in the Fringe are "really committed" to it in the effort they put in to the Fringe every year, as his organisation is:

> "Because of what we do, we know how much effort goes into building and stuff, so I suppose it's the building of the whole thing and it's actually quite amazing! What people do and how they do it, and that they come back and do it again.

Working with the Fringe is described by Andrew as involving: "a huge number of challenges from all sides." It is also "enjoyable" and "rewarding". Andrew supplied a number of images to describe his relationship with the Fringe and how he feels about it. These were all related specifically to technological elements, Fringe venues and crowds. He also produced an image of dark rain clouds because it "always rains" during the Fringe.

Andrew describes the personality of the Fringe as: "it's a lot of things to a lot of people, so it's schizophrenic in a good way." He goes on to describe the Fringe as having "multiple personalities" because it has to "wear a lot of different hats".

In describing his own organisation's personality, Andrew focuses on its levels of "determination" and "pride" in working as it does with the Fringe:

> "I think it's really determination. For us as a company and for the Fringe it means that we're out on the street all the time, and because we have so many clients and because we've got twenty-three sites around Edinburgh, we spend a lot of our time out and about. We're a technology company, and therefore we test new things, and we have to go out there."

Andrew's stakeholder brand relationship with the Fringe is a committed partnership. This is an enduring relationship which has developed throughout the course of the years that his organisation has been a supplier of the Fringe. Andrew's stakeholder-brand relationship with the Fringe is thus characterised by high levels of support, commitment and trust, which are reciprocal and exclusive: "we have a sort of common goal". This relationship is well-established and would endure any adverse circumstances because of the intimacy inherent to it:

> "I would say *close* is the main word, it couldn't be closer (it is) part of what we do - we don't just supply, one of the key things that we do is that we move in with people and we try and help them to build their business, because we've got experience… so we kind of are the Fringe as much as much as the Society. So we're the same kind of people, we have an extremely close relationship!"

Andrew describes his partnership relationship with the Fringe as being like a "very close friend" or "almost like family ties, because we occasionally fall-out!" Despite this, today he says: "it couldn't be closer. We don't just supply… one of the key things that we do is that we move in with them and we try and help them".

Interview 3: Sophie's childhood friendship

Sophie's festival background
Sophie is an attending stakeholder of the Fringe who has a number of other stakeholder associations with it. Sophie's first festival experience was when she came to Edinburgh as a teenager.

Sophie is interested in festivals of the arts: "I prefer performing arts, as opposed to music festivals." Her first festival and Fringe experience was at the Traverse Theatre when she was taken on a school trip:

> "I went to see three shows and I thought they were good, bad, and brilliant! And then we got on the bus and went home again! I wasn't aware that the festival was anything other than the Traverse… I didn't really *get* that we'd been to the Fringe."

Sophie moved from her family home to Glasgow first to study "an acting course at college". She found however that her interests lay more in the production side of drama, so she moved to Edinburgh to study drama at university. Around this time she began to work in venues in Edinburgh and then worked with the Fringe and Imaginate (the children's Festival in Edinburgh) for around six years. This gave her an opportunity to gain "lots of admin experience."

Today Sophie aims to build a career in theatre production and to apply her interests and experience in festivals and the theatre to do this. She describes herself as being "very engaged" with festivals because of her history: "once you're engaged with it *that* way, you can't see how people don't in a way."

Sophie believes that festivals are extremely important in her life and she describes how they "cover my rent" on a practical level and also provide her with "inspiration" in her own work. Further, she considers them important because of the opportunities they can provide for people like her:

> "They are like the biggest and the best platform to show off your work to erm… a large number of people."

Sophie's Fringe:

Until recently Sophie had been working on a full-time basis with the Fringe for around six years, but left as she felt it was time for her to pursue her own interests as a producer of work for the arts and theatre. She describes her feelings towards the Fringe as "thankful" for fuelling her interests to do this:

> "It made me want to be an artist and to create work. That's my passion, creating work… I feel thankful towards the festivals for getting me to a place where I feel I can go out on my own, freelance, and be doing what I want to do."

Sophie defines herself as an audience member at present, so could be classified as an attending stakeholder of the Fringe. She had until recently been employed by the Society and she was soon to embark upon a new career as a promoter, so she could be seen (And indeed described herself) as having associations across stakeholder categories:

> "As a stakeholder, I am now an audience member, and I am very probably going to be working for a venue. Yep, I'll be a promoter, which is what I used to service, so that's it - I'll be promoting shows and, or venues, and I'll be an audience member".

Sophie at times referred to herself as still working for the Fringe, but was conscious of doing so, and amused that she did this:

> "I keep saying 'our' and 'me', and 'ours' and 'we', (laughs) and I'm not there any more!"

Sophie supplied a broad selection of images. Most of these were her own personal photographs of events she had attended at the Fringe and at other festivals. In discussing one personal photograph of a Fringe event she attended with a group of friends, she spoke about her memories:

> "It's just the guys on the Meadows really and I think it even has a Fringe brochure in the picture! It's just that enjoyment, that atmosphere of going and being a part of a festival, with friends."

For Sophie, this image evoked memories of taking part and having an "enjoyable" and "relaxing" day in the sunshine at the Fringe. Other images she supplied described her "pride" of working for the Fringe, and the "exhaustion" and "stress" at busy times. Another strong feeling she described was "hope" in her expectations for "success" and good quality artistic work"

Sophie describes her personality as being "passionate", "very driven" and "brave", as being influential upon her involvement with the Fringe. She

described how her own passion for creativity and theatre impacted upon her previous role as a Fringe Society stakeholder:

> "The fact that I am passionate about creating and producing work has meant that I got involved in festivals, and particularly within my role as a liaison between bookers and shows because I *get* how work is made, and how work is put on."

As noted, while Sophie now considers herself as an audience member, she now has plans to become a participating stakeholder. She has a history of around eight years of working with festivals: including the Fringe until relatively recently. Sophie believes that her ongoing relationship with the Fringe has impacted upon her personal life:

> "I've met most of my friends and colleagues from being part of that and my work is definitely inspired by it."

When asked about her feelings towards the Fringe brand, Sophie described "pride" as her strongest feeling:

> "The brand is something to be proud of as having worked there, but also for the shows that I helped along the way and how they use it."

Sophie today aims to move on to new experiences, but describes her relationship with the Fringe as being similar to an old friendship:

> "buddies that have a good old rant about the way that things are. I think it would be long term, but it wouldn't be weekly. It probably would be seasonally and be fine! We'd catch up when we're in town."

Sophie has a childhood friendship with the Fringe. She is currently an audience member, but has a number of historical associations with the Fringe as a stakeholder and good memories of these times. She worked with the Society over a number of years in her early post-university career, and views her stakeholder role as being of a high level of audience interest. Sophie sees the possibility of moving into other stakeholder roles in the future: possibly by participating in, or supporting, the Fringe in some way.

Sophie had many fond memories of the Fringe and the images she brought to the interview were very personal to her. She described her relationship with the Fringe as someone she would catch up with; "when we're both in town." Sophie saw herself as being congruent with the Fringe in relation to her interests:

> "I feel like I get both sides of the coin. I understand where the audiences come from and where the performers come from, and that's really important to get. So we probably interpersonally get on very well as a result of that because we are both gunning for the same things."

Interview 4: John's courtship

John's festival background:
John is a participating stakeholder as he is a founding manager of a young performing company which he established with some friends when he left university. He describes himself as a stakeholder across further participating categories, in working with venues; and also as an attending stakeholder:

> "I've had a number of different roles really. I worked as a performer last year and again this year and I'm also a producer. Almost all of our company have worked in Fringe venues. I mean, I've worked as a front-of-house steward and I've always been an audience member."

John's own stakeholder background with festivals is mainly with the Fringe, as an audience member while at university in Edinburgh, studying "drama and theatre arts", and then in the roles he describes.

John first came to Edinburgh to live when he commenced his studies at university. He always had an interest in theatre and the arts, and first attended youth theatre while living at home with his family, but he was the only one in his family who had this interest:

> "None of my family were interested in theatre, I was never brought along to a Fringe show, so I'd never experienced it… so, erm, I suppose I started off almost simultaneously working at festivals and being an audience member."

In addition to the Fringe, John has experience as a stakeholder of Imaginate (the children's festival in Edinburgh) and in presenting work at another arts festival. He describes festivals as providing "great opportunities to get involved" and as "platforms" for creative work. Further, he classifies festivals as "inspiring" to his theatre group as they develop new work. John describes festivals as having "a sort of focus point of sharing work", which for his company is a very useful way of "bonding" and "getting a vision" of the sort of work they would like to showcase at festivals.

John's Fringe:
As a founding member of a young company who have performed at the Fringe for the past three years, John has gained tangible funding from an arts organisation for this first time this year: based on previous years' successes.

> "Again this is something that's been good this year, we've been very lucky to get funding which means we can put on a show this year, but if we didn't have that we couldn't! So a lot of our decisions relate purely to finance."

John supplied a selection of images during the interview and most of these described his feelings about the Fringe. These were mostly related to "opportunity" and "risk". One image was of a man walking a tightrope with crocodiles below and this elicited descriptions of the risky element of submitting work for festivals:

> "this one is just a man walking across a tightrope with crocodiles below (laughs) and this is one that's just the way I feel about all festivals. It's the element of risk involved in a festival and it's a lot. When you're bringing work to a festival, it's all about calculating risk".

In further discussing this theme of feelings of "risk," John presented a photograph of an empty theatre auditorium:

> "It's just the empty seats of a theatre. And I think it's an image that's thought about, especially in someone who's performing a piece of theatre. You're very much at the risk of no audience and that's always something you're *completely* at the risk of, which you're completely open to, with festivals. It's not like having your show booked by a venue, when you've, you know, got a guarantee there that it's going to work, it's professional, whereas with a festival it's kind of make it or break it and it's always, and it's always that fear going into every show!" (John, performer: participating stakeholder).

John described the Fringe brand as being "strong" and "trustworthy," and "supportive". His brand relationship with the Fringe is based upon the provision of opportunity by the Fringe counterbalanced by taking financial and personal risks. As his company become more established this relationship is likely to develop into more of a partnership.

At present, John sees the Fringe as being: "very welcoming but very demanding." He describes the Fringe itself as being:

> "like a bear getting the honey and the honey is really nice. The Fringe has got all the honey you can have, but it's also got all the bees that can sting you!"

John's stakeholder brand relationship can be seen as a courtship. He has worked as a performer and producer during the Fringe with his company and has also worked in venues in a front-of-house capacity. He was an audience member in advance of this. John's brand relationship is positive, but tentative. It is likely to become more established as his company develops. Despite this evident positive element to the relationship, John does ascribe this to the "luck" his company has had in attaining funding. Throughout the interview, John referred to the balance between the opportunities offered by the Fringe as a "platform" for his creative work; and the risk of taking new work to the Fringe, as a festival which has an open-access artistic policy. The relationship he has with the Fringe is thus very much determined by the benefits it has allowed his company to acquire so far. It is a relationship that demonstrates some of the features

of the more committed partnership in the sense it is voluntarily imposed and socially supported. There is evidence of trust and commitment within this courtship, but this is yet to develop to maturity. John's brand relationship as a courtship with the Fringe is therefore founded on this balance between opportunity and risk and he suggests that as a performer you are: "susceptible… in terms of everything":

> "It really does add to the risk factor because, again, it goes back to that empty audience, because in any festival you can end up with an empty audience but in this festival you've actually invested in having those bums on seats. This is something that's been good this year, we've been very lucky to get funding which means we can put on a show this year. Whether we enter into that relationship (with the Fringe) comes down to directly to the financial situation. I suppose it's one of those things. You might not actually get money back on the festival side as well. As a stakeholder you're going into it perhaps giving more than you're going to get out initially, because you're not investing in the immediate festival: you're actually investing a lot more in getting your work seen and taking it on elsewhere".

Interview 5: Daniel's kinship

Daniel's festival background:
Daniel is a supporting stakeholder of the Fringe. He works in an organisation which supports all of Edinburgh's festivals and he has previously worked with a number of individual arts festivals and organisations, including the Fringe for around six years: "my first real job was at the Fringe".

Daniel first came to Edinburgh to study at university, and his first festival experience was of the Fringe:

> "Well, my first experience of the festivals was when I was a student at Edinburgh University and I was volunteering at the Traverse Theatre… I had never heard about the Festival at all!"

Having experienced the Fringe in Edinburgh, Daniel "was completely seduced". He enjoyed the fact that "everyone was descending on the city". At that time, he began to seek further opportunities:

> "I suppose it was a mix of kind of feeling really *proud* of the city and the total hedonism of just being in the middle of it, and as a young person wanting to kind of get experience, and think about what job I was going to have on my CV."

Daniel went on to work for the Festival Fringe Society and describes his time there are being: "a dream", and "brilliant". Following this he worked in similar roles in other festivals in the UK and in Australia. Daniel describes his feelings towards festivals as being "transformative" and "inspiring". He

believes that festivals are important to Edinburgh, and finds them important to his life on a personal level for the opportunities they have afforded him:

> "that's why festivals are really appealing, to think, it provides a time-limited, curated, and time of the moment, and you know, it feels like something special."

Daniel believes: "the global brand of Edinburgh's festivals can't be underestimated."

Daniel's Fringe:
As well as being a supporting stakeholder, Daniel enjoys the Fringe as an attending audience member on a personal level. He describes his stakeholder feelings towards the Fringe as being related to it being "brilliantly inspiring" and "special". On a personal level of attending the Fringe he also feels there is: "so much choice" and that it makes Edinburgh feel like "it's the place to be". He believes the Fringe gives Edinburgh a "unique atmosphere" and particularly because of the "crowds" and the "activity in the high street" and "the thrill of choice".

Within his supportive stakeholder role Daniel describes the relationship as "underpinning" the Fringe and being: "nurturing but challenging, we've got influence, but we've got no power." He describes the relationship between his organisation and the Fringe as having two business functions and dual roles as both a "client" and a "mentor".

Daniel describes the brand relationship as being a kinship because of its mutual necessity:" I would say in a family relationship you're not just choosing to be together. In describing his organisation's relationship with the Fringe, Daniel says: "the Fringe is an integral part of our brand". He also described the Fringe brand:

> "The Fringe brand I would say would be inclusive, confident, funny, accessible, trustworthy, and sort of commercial and amateurish at the same time."

Daniel's description of the personality of the Fringe is: "energetic" and "loveable" and he believes as a festival, it thrives on "organised chaos."

Daniel describes his stakeholder-brand relationship as being "really close". He again describes his organisation's personality as being "nurturing" towards the Fringe, but also "challenging" of it.

> "kind of nurturing, as well as challenging, I would say, as well. You know, we are challenging them to improve and we are challenging them to raise the game in certain areas,"

Daniel's stakeholder brand relationship with the Fringe is involuntary, long term and has ties of lineage. Daniel compares his organisation's relationship with the Fringe and delineates between friendship being a voluntary relationship, and kinship as unavoidable:

> "I would say it is a family relationship. It's slightly different to a friendship, because I would say in a family relationship you're not just choosing to be together… you have to be together".

Appendix E

A selection of images from the interviews: photo-elicitation

During the photo-elicitation stage of the interviews informants provided a selection of images. Some of these were personal photographs; others were taken from non-credited copyrighted sources. A number of informants either provided permission for their images to be reproduced in this thesis, or their images were from sources that allowed reproduction. There were two images supplied by more than one informant. A number also supplied images which were very similar in content.

Here is presented a small selection of four images that can be reproduced for reference. These have either been supplied by informants with permission to use, for are from *creative commons* [*] online sources.

Each of the images reproduced here is accompanied by one quote from a corresponding informant as a means of contextualising what was discussed during the interview. In keeping with the requirements for anonymity of the informants, no images have been included that could identify any participating individuals.

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Image 1: "Piano-cycle"

This image was supplied by two informants as a means to describe their feelings about the Fringe.

Image: 'nocturnal singing cycling piano 6', accessed from:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/7512717@N06/3858887753

Susan's primary stakeholder role is a Fringe Society stakeholder and she has a best friendship with the Fringe. Susan gave a detailed account of the significance of this image and why it represents the Fringe for her:

> "It's a man who had this piano and he had put it on a bicycle. I saw him when I was leaving work quite late one night and it was towards the end of the festival. It had quietened down a bit and it had been raining, and as I was walking, there weren't really that many people around, but I was walking out of Fringe Central across Bristo Square, and he suddenly came around the corner and he was lit-up by the lights and it was all kind of sparkly and he was playing quite a gentle tune, and erm…it was just *completely* unexpected to see this - the piano, and it was *really* beautiful! I think that for me that kind of summed-up the whole thing: being this explosion of things that happen and that anything can happen, and for a man to come up with a piano and that is the atmosphere that the Fringe

creates, you know with that going on the city, at that time of year, and a cycle on a piano and you kind of go, *what*? I think it was really valued in the Fringe. I mean it wasn't a big show, it was just part of that stuff that happened, and I think that for me really summed it up - what the Fringe is about. You know? And why it's so special and the expansion of activities that are so self-perpetuating?" (Susan, Fringe Society stakeholder).

A similar image to this was also supplied by Sophie, (attending stakeholder, childhood friendship). Her photograph depicted the same cyclist on a rainy evening as she wanted to highlight the wet weather that can occur during the Fringe and how this is counterbalanced with her earlier images of sitting in the park on a sunny day with friends.

Image 2: "The Udderbelly"

An image of the E4 sponsored Udderbelly Fringe venue (Underbelly) was supplied by three informants as a means of describing their feelings towards the Fringe.
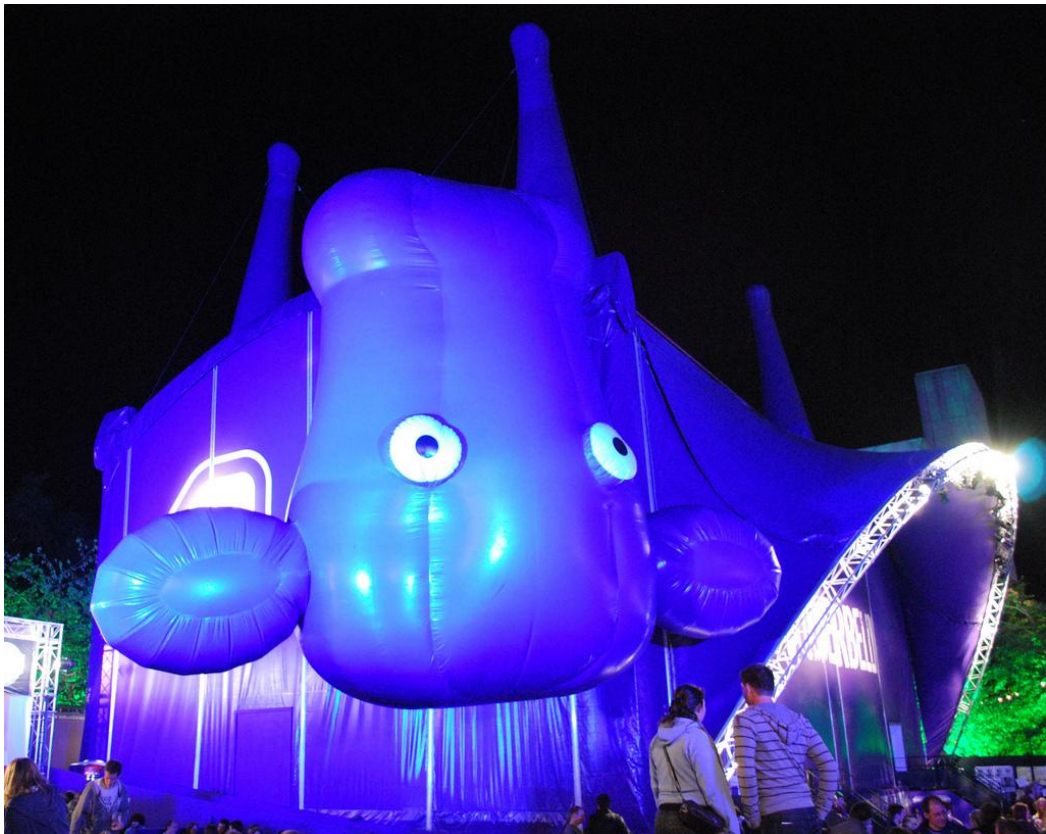

Image: 'Udderbelly', accessed from:
http://www.flickr.com/photos/51857345@N00/3873654441

Kate's primary stakeholder role is as an attending stakeholder and her brand relationship with the Fringe is a dependency:

"This image is the Udderbelly at George Square, the giant purple cow. It just typifies the Fringe, and you just know the Fringe is here if you come in to the area and he is there… or *she*! (laughs) And that for me is when you kind of know it's really here - it's the festival and the buzz kind of really starts. The buzz is so phenomenal! So yes, the Udderbelly - I just think it's such a cool venue!" (Kate, attending stakeholder).

A similar image of the Udderbelly venue was supplied by Clare (supporting stakeholder, childhood friendship). Clare highlighted how unusual it is as a venue and how people don't quite believe what they see when they first come across it.

Another image of the Udderbelly was supplied by Emma (participating stakeholder, casual friendship). Emma commented that when you can see this upturned purple cow in the city you know that the Fringe is coming.

Image 3: "Street performers"

This image (and a number of similar photographs) of street performers in Edinburgh's High Street and other areas were supplied by six of the informants in describing their feelings towards the Fringe.

Image: 'Wow', accessed from: http://www.flickr.com/photos/81004917@N00/4891305532

Neil's primary stakeholder role is as an attending stakeholder and his brand relationship with the Fringe is a Fling. He describes what the street performers mean to him in relation to the Fringe:

> "So that's one I've picked out, and that's just the classic one of people juggling, and I think they're always there! I remember coming up to Edinburgh and the first time I came to Edinburgh was in ninety one for a festival, and I've got photos from back then of these people doing that. I don't know if it was the same person, but this kind of idea of performers, and all the buzz, and all the crowds, that very much reminds me of the Fringe and it's like, *wow, fantastic!*, and it's all kind of going on and whether that's the Fringe, so much, as the festivities in general, I don't know. I see that as that huge kind of buzz and vibrancy and lots of activity and as being a good thing. I wouldn't want it all year round, but it's, it's like *wo*w! That to me, kind of signifies the festival is here!" (Neil, attending stakeholder)

Similar images were also supplied by: Emma (participating stakeholder, casual friendship); Kate (attending stakeholder, dependency); Gordon (participating stakeholder, marriage of convenience); and Andrew (supplier stakeholder, committed partnership). All of these informants commented that such images were typical of what they expect to see during the Fringe and remind them of the Fringe.

Alison (participating stakeholder, committed partnership) said of her similar image of street performers that she believes it must be frustrating for the Fringe to constantly be represented by photographs of jugglers and other street performers as these are not reflective of the full programme of performances and events that the Fringe offers.

Image 4: "The Fringe programme"

Photographs of Fringe programmes from recent years were supplied by four informants during the interviews to describe their feelings for the Fringe.

Image: The Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2006 programme (front cover), accessed from: http://www.flickr.com/photos/theedinburghblog/164235660/in/photostream/

Robert's primary stakeholder role is an attending stakeholder and his brand relationship is a childhood friendship. Robert previously worked with the Fringe and described the Fringe programme as being a fond memory of his time there. He continued by discussing what it represents for him:

> "The Fringe does certain jobs very well most of the time: producing the programme, selling the tickets, providing a central source of information. So I think that to an extent is what that represents. The core objectives of the Festival Fringe Society are there in that document. Until that programme is produced no-one knows what is happening across that festival overall" (Robert, attending stakeholder).

An image of the Fringe programme was also supplied by Emma (participating stakeholder, casual friendship); Kate (attending stakeholder, dependency); and Clare, (supporting stakeholder, childhood friendship) all of whom commented on its use as a guide to what is taking place and how to them it signifies the Fringe image in some way.

Appendix F

Conference paper abstract

Todd, L., 2010. A stakeholder model of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. **In**: proceedings of: UK Centre for Events Management, AEME (Association for Events Management Education). *Global Events Congress IV: Festivals and events research: state of the art. Incorporating the 8th AEME Events Management Educator's Forum.* UK Centre for Events Management, Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds. 14th-16th July, 2010.

A stakeholder model of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe: Abstract

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is one of the largest arts festivals in the world and a key component of Edinburgh's festival programme. Dating from 1947, the Fringe has inspired the creation of similar festivals world-wide.

There has been limited research undertaken into the stakeholders of arts festivals such as the Fringe, and the brand relationships that exist between stakeholders and arts festivals. The purpose of this paper is to develop a stakeholder model of the Fringe and in doing so, define its primary and secondary stakeholders. Stakeholders may be defined as either primary or secondary by the nature of their engagement with an organisation. Clarkson (1995) suggests that the satisfaction and participation of primary stakeholder groups is essential to the continued survival and success of an organisation. Secondary stakeholder groups are defined as those groups that have an ongoing interest within an organisation, but are not essential to its survival.

The classification of primary and secondary stakeholder categories may be applied to festivals. Primary stakeholder groups are deemed essential to festivals and events and their interaction with the festival organisation results in the festival itself (Reid & Arcodia, 2002).

In defining the primary and secondary stakeholder groups of the Fringe, a series of festival stakeholder literature was reviewed. In particular, research concerned with the definition of primary stakeholders was consulted to develop the Fringe stakeholder model. Further, senior staff members of the Fringe were consulted to assist in the development of this model. This stakeholder model will be useful in underpinning the development of a Fringe-stakeholder brand relationship typology.

Keywords: Edinburgh Festival Fringe; stakeholders, brand relationships

[This conference paper is based upon research undertaken for the purpose of this PhD study. A copy of the paper is provided in a separate document]

Appendix G

Abstract of forthcoming book chapter

Ind, N., & Todd, L., Forthcoming. Beyond the Fringe: creativity and the city, **In:** Go, F. M., & Govers, R., Forthcoming. *International place branding yearbook 2011: "Reputation under pressure".* 1st ed. Palgrave Macmillan.

Beyond the Fringe: creativity and the city: Abstract

This chapter argues that creativity is best nurtured by an organic and dynamic approach to place branding. Using research conducted into the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (the world's largest cultural event), the authors show that a brand can be built in a co-created space that brings together diverse stakeholders.

Key words: creativity, organic, brand, stakeholders, co-creation

[The researcher's contribution to this book chapter is based upon research undertaken for the purpose of this PhD study. A copy of the chapter is provided in a separate document]