

Counter-cultural and new age capitalist ideas

Wellbeing and the contemporary workplace

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This Thesis is dedicated to Azad Uygun and Aida Kunter. Without their strength and support it would never have happened. I would also like to thank my supervisor Professor Cliff Oswick for his immeasurable support and encouragement throughout this process. Thank you also to Stefano Harney for his inspirational ideas and support.

Abstract

This thesis examines the concept of wellbeing at work. It outlines a new type of organisation, that uses intellectual, immaterial and communicative labour power in order to provide a work ethic for both the production and consumption of their products. The thesis argues that the promotion and production of wellbeing in the workplace is in fact the production of the symbolic order of hegemonic powers in play.

The thesis investigates a shift in the treatment of wellbeing in the field of organisation studies, as a concept considered as being in the social realm, to one that now has an increasingly prevalent place in the corporate realm. This thesis approaches the concept of wellbeing from a critical perspective, in contrast to the prescriptive management theory currently presented in the mainstream organisation studies literature.

The analysis approaches the concept of ‘wellbeing at work’ as written and visual, and so a multi-media analysis is carried out. The fieldwork was undertaken within a single case study organization (i.e. Innocent Drinks) which was perceived to explicitly embrace the concept of well being. The general research approach used a critical ethnographic methodology and the data analysed in the thesis includes written field notes, self-made photographs, existing images, workplace and product design, colour use and typography.

The analysis of data considered the ways in which ideas about wellbeing are appropriated and consumed within the workplace, and outside of this formal workspace, and what this means for the individuals and for society in general. To this end, and based upon insights that emerged from the scrutiny of data, five inter-related themes were used to classify and explore these issues (namely: home and family; play and humour; nature, environment and society; non-business/non-bureaucratic activity; and, the idea of love).

The findings of this thesis identify that discourses about political and social wellbeing made through the construction of a culture both for employees and consumers alike, serve not to further the wellbeing of those people, but in fact to hijack the space once available for an alternative to the capitalist system. The research also reveals a new and emerging type of organization, that promotes wellbeing through consumption. Communication related to this type organisation not only expresses, but also organises the movement of globalisation. This form of legitimization rests on nothing outside of itself.

The primary contribution of this thesis is that it provides an alternative way of conceptualizing wellbeing within organizations and within the organization studies literature. More specifically, it offers an articulation of how ‘new type’ organisations

appropriate countercultural values and ideas into the realm of consumption, as a form of control over labour.

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Introduction

1.1 Background

Wellbeing and work is a topic that has received increasing attention over the past few years in the academic and popular field. Work and consumption have become arenas in which wellbeing can be realised, through identification with values and ideas once considered outside of the workspace.

Space is being transferred into something that is no longer within the boundaries of what has traditionally been referred to as work. Work has become a place where individuals can be at home, have fun, socialise and be 'free'. The shift towards a focus on individuals as makers of their own happiness and wellbeing through consumption is a key theme in them mainstream Organisation studies literature.

According to Sointu (2005), ideas about individual and societal wellbeing have increasingly been found in the remit of work and consumption. In addition to this, Ideas about the meaning of work are being communicated increasingly materially, through workspaces, and other forms of visual communication. Through reviewing the mainstream Organisation studies literature, although some studies do touch on the material aspects of

culture, it is proposed that this more tangible aspect of the discourse of 'wellbeing at work' needs to be fully considered if we are to understand the way in which counter-cultural and new age capitalist ideas are appropriated into the workplace, in relation to individual and ultimately social wellbeing. New alternative approaches to those already present in the mainstream Organisation studies literature need to be applied to these material and visual environments, in which symbols and artefacts serve to function as transmitters of a particular way of life and culture for all concerned (Lau, 2000).

1.2 Aims of the thesis

This thesis aims to fill a gap in understanding the material culture of this new type of organisation, defined from now on in the thesis as 'New age capitalist' organisations, and how the relationship between consumption and design may contribute to the culture. This study will aim to contribute to the literature on new age capitalism by investigating a case in which counter-cultural ideas are used in order to give meaning to work.

This thesis investigates these themes in the literature further in order to try to put into context the developments in the ways in which organisations approach employee wellbeing and motivation at work. The thesis uses culture as the dimension for analysis and takes an ethnographic approach, mainly visual, to the topic. The methodology of Critical ethnography is applied and visual and written text is considered as

discourse about the organisation. A written and visual account of the fieldwork carried out is presented in this thesis, and an analysis of data is presented.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

In this chapter, chapter 1, a brief introduction is given to the thesis and some of the key points of the argument. Chapter 2 analyses the wellbeing at work literature to date, highlighting along the way some of the gaps in previous research that this research can help to fill. It is found in this chapter, that there is a need for a contextualised, interpretive approach to researching wellbeing and work. Chapter 3 discusses critical ethnography. This reflects the way in which the methodology for the research is structured. Chapters 4 and 5 present the data and an analysis of the fieldwork carried out with words and pictures. Chapter 6 presents a discursive analysis of the data in chapters 4 and 5, highlighting the themes of home and family, play and humour, nature, environment and society, non-business / non-bureaucratic and Love. Chapter 7 then goes on to discuss the findings in the data and any conclusions that can be reached regarding the case study. Appendices A and B are for reference only, and are referred to in the main body of the thesis. The bibliography follows at the end.

Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will review the most recent literature on wellbeing and work. It was decided for various reasons including time restrictions, size of thesis and relevance of literature, to restrict the literature search to mainstream research into wellbeing and work. Although there is much literature addressing ‘wellbeing’ as a general concept in fields such as health and fitness, leisure and psychology, for the purpose of the literature review for this thesis, the focus will be on mainstream Organization studies literature on the concept of ‘wellbeing and work’.

It is however acknowledged by this study that the area of ‘wellbeing and work’ is interdisciplinary in nature, partly due to its infancy as an area and partly due to the fact that the idea draws on many schools of thought, some of which are related to the field of Organisation studies. This chapter therefore considers literature from areas such as Organisational psychology, Sociology, Business studies, Organisational aesthetics and New age spirituality. Although this takes us slightly away from the mainstream of the Organisation studies literature, the literature is either directly or indirectly about the subject in hand, and the literature included

in this thesis contributes to how we consider the concept of wellbeing at work.

2.2 The dimensions of wellbeing: A review of the Mainstream literature

In the mainstream Organisation studies literature, Wellbeing is said to have over the past two decades emerged within a social context, and has now moved increasingly into the corporate realm. The current focus is on the working self and body to govern their own productive capacities, with these sites becoming ways through which the practice of proactive agency and self-responsibility can be realised. There has since the 1980s, been a shift from a notion of collective solidarity to what is being termed the project of the self. This shift has also been described as one which has been a move away from the wellbeing of citizens produced through the strategies of national institutions, to an increasing emphasis on a wellbeing that is actively produced by the individual, functioning as a choosing consumer (Sointu, 2005; McGillivray, 2005; Costea, 2005).

The pursuit for wellness seems to have crept into every corner of contemporary working life. There has developed a trend to transform the body, into what is considered the other, a more desirable, socially accepted version of the self. These practices do not however rest just with the individual but transferred into communities and wider society. These

bodily practices are firmly embedded in the discursive fields, which make up our everyday activities. A result of this is that by taking up such activities for wellness, and through subsequent personal transformation, we are able to make political statements about social and planetary wellness through aligning ourselves with organizational values. (Lau, 2000).

The mainstream Organization studies discourse on 'wellbeing at work' speaks of a preoccupation with fitness, goodness, beauty, mental stability, health, happiness and hygiene in relation to the work place. The corporate aligned body is portrayed through organisational concepts as 'well'. There are also however, traces in the organisation studies literature of depictions of a body that is 'unwell', the former in this case being made possible often by the absence of the latter, sick counterpart. It is however the possibility of identifying the existence of the unwell in organisations that our understanding of what is 'well' seems to depend (Jack et al, 2005). The idea of wellness has been said to 'symbolise a secular state of grace' (Leichter, 1997, p.361; cited in McGillivray, 2005, p.125), and in doing so symbolises a form of governmentality or control. It is possible to link these ideas to those about governmentality and the subject argued most effectively by (Rose 1999).

Rose (1999) argues that during the past two decades, the image of the economic function of individuals has changed. The ‘protestant work ethic’ for which work was for moral, personal and social good has given way to an image of the modern citizen as a consumer. It is through this consumption and associated purchasing power that we select our personal lifestyle and so make our lives meaningful. The boundaries between producing and consuming have become blurred so that we find ourselves simultaneously purchasing products and services as well as managing and marketing ourselves. The move of wellbeing from the social to the corporate realm (Sointu, 2005) can be thought of as an illustration of the blurring of those boundaries (Rose, 1999):

‘The worker is portrayed neither as an economic actor, rationally pursuing financial advantage, nor as a social creature seeking satisfaction of needs for solidarity and security. The worker is an individual in search of meaning, responsibility, a sense of personal achievement, a maximised ‘quality of life’, and hence of work. Thus the individual is not to be emancipated *from* work, perceived as merely a task or means to an end, but to be fulfilled *in* work, now construed as an activity through which we produce, discover, and experience ourselves’ (Rose, 1999, p.103).

The aim of this review is to approach the existing mainstream organisation studies ‘wellbeing at work’ literature from a critical perspective. Central to this is the assumption that, it is through work people achieve their potential as human beings, and it is the conditions under which work is carried out that determines whether or not this is possible. The aim here is therefore to understand the world, and our experience of organisations

and work, as a process, and not as a static or permanent thing. In other words, the conditions we are part of are in flux. This is an ontological position that sees the world as being perpetually constituted and reconstituted out of the processes that created it in the first place, a process that is assumed therefore to have both historical and contextual components. Epistemologically, the assumptions here are that when developing theories about the world, the current state we see and hear is generated through relations and flows, and is therefore of a transient nature. This form of dialectical enquiry sees discourse as resulting from a constructed knowledge, which has embedded within it a set of ethical, moral and political choices. This resulting discourse is therefore a part of a play of power, and is directed towards a particular set of goals and values (Harvey, 1996). This process of (Marxian), dialectical thinking, leads naturally to the exploration of potentialities for change, for self-realisation and for a new social order. With this in mind, wellbeing at work will be considered in this review as a generative principle affecting social life.

The existing mainstream Organisation studies ‘wellbeing at work’ literature raises some questions about the phenomenon of wellbeing and work; is wellbeing only talked about in literature called wellbeing? If not, then where is it talked about? What is wellbeing? Under what conditions has it emerged?

2.3 Wellbeing at work

It is argued that until recently little academic attention has been paid to the subject of wellbeing at work in mainstream organisation studies literature, and the little that has, has tended to be dominated by positivist and functionalist analysis (McGillivray, 2005). There has however, been a focus on identifying interventions in order improve the efficiency and effectiveness of organisational wellness initiatives (Thompson et al, 2005; Renwick, 2002; Daniels, 2000) as opposed to research that explores how and why these discourses have come to be so prevalent within our organisations.

It has been argued that in order to develop our understanding of the topic within the mainstream Organisation studies literature of ‘wellbeing and work’, it is not so much a case of needing more research, as much as the case for the need for good data and even basic information about the topic (Briner, 2000). It is argued that subjective wellbeing has traditionally been described using socio-demographic characteristics such as age, level of education, religion, ethnicity, marital status and gender. The literature seems to agree however those studies have repeatedly demonstrated that these variables account for little of the variance in wellbeing (Diener, 1999; Ryff, 1989). More attention therefore has been paid recently to understanding the processes that underpin happiness. There has therefore recently been a greater focus on the role played by

people's goals, coping efforts and personalities in their overall wellbeing and a greater focus on how individuals react differently to seemingly similar work environments (Diener et al, 1999; Harris et al, 2003; Ryff, 1989). A move therefore has been made, to look beneath the broad social structural factors to the actual life experiences they afford or deny (Thompson et al, 2005; Diener, 1999; Harris et al, 2003; Briner, 2000). It is argued that the field of psychology has in fact traditionally devoted much more attention to human unhappiness and suffering caused by work than to the causes of positive functioning. On a more general level, it has been argued that the increase in interest in the study of psychological wellbeing follows from the recognition of this over-emphasis on causes of human unhappiness and suffering rather than to positive functioning (Ryff, 1989). There is however the danger of an assumption here that positive functioning automatically results in the opposite of human unhappiness, happiness. It has not however been made explicit in the study by Ryff (1989) in which context positive psychological functioning has being studied, and therefore who or what is determining how these positive attributes are being defined. There is however a welcome acknowledgement in the paper of the differences between short-term affective wellbeing, which is defined as happiness, and the more enduring life challenges such as having a sense of purpose and direction.

Focusing more on wellbeing in a work context, the literature here in

general seems more aware of the various factors within organisations apart from what is formally thought to be of a positive nature. Although the increased tendency to study the more positive and beneficial impacts of work on individuals is reflected here also, it is very much as one of a pair, alongside an awareness of the importance of understanding the negative alongside the positive aspects of organisations. According to Briner (2000), context is clearly described as the psychological environment, the features of the work environment which are relevant to worker behaviour. By behaviour, three related types of psychological phenomena are considered: Affect, cognitions and behaviours. Much of the paper reflects this focus on the more negative impact of organisations on wellbeing, although there is an attempt made to consider also the benefits of work on physical and psychological wellbeing (Briner, 2000).

Another critical discussion of organisational wellbeing by Kaulingfrek and Bos (2005) considers what is seen as contamination or as unwanted in organisations. There is a focus here not on the negative affect of organisations on the wellbeing of individuals in organisations, but on what is considered as negative *by* organisations. The relationship between organisation and contamination is considered, and through this consideration organisation is described as a process that channels or excludes various kinds of influences that are considered damaging. In this discussion the process of organizing is described as 'Hosophobic', which

means a fear of dirt or the impure (Kaulingfrek and Bos, 2005). The argument here is that dissatisfaction or displeasure with the world is a key aspect of organisational thought, and that the aim of organisations is to detach the individual from this world. The term Neognosticism is used here to emphasize the individual's discontent with the world. Ideas of the machinique and méchanique are introduced, the former likening organisations to bicycles, with almost an osmosis type reaction occurring between the person and the bits of metal and wheels to become a bicycle. The main point there being that the person merges with the machine, nothing that may be considered as harmful or negative is kept away. In the case of the méchanique, the individual stands in front of the machine (meaning organisational diagrams such as the tree, the pyramid, the flowchart etc), and does not become part of it. Through such processes a 'hierarchy' is introduced through established means of working. The two entities are quite firmly separated (Kaulingfrek and Bos, 2005).

The article by Kaulingfrek and Bos (2005) brings us to the question 'what is considered to be unwell?' It is argued that the concept of an organisation itself relies on its ability to keep factors that are considered as contaminating such as chaos, contingency, disorder and irrational choices out, and that a negative side effect of this kind of organising is the possible exclusion of ideas, emotions, conflicts and other potentially positive 'disorderly' aspects of life (Kaulingfrek and Bos, 2005). The

concept of order as positive and disorder as negative is a modernist concept held few but not by all. According to Lau (2000), in the discussion of new age capitalism, it is the opposite of this that is considered to be unwell. It is the rationality and linearity of modernity and its associated icons, such as televisions, computers, telephones and money, that are seen as the sources of the very suffering we seek to escape from. It is suggested that taking up aromatherapy, for example, can help us to escape from such ills by becoming closer to nature, a kind of nostalgia for a kinder world that once was. This lost past is seen to free us of the ills of our modern world: from the causes of war, political bias, and economic disaster. Aromatherapy therefore is seen as being a part of an alternative lifestyle, an alternative to modernity (Lau, 2000). Psychological wellbeing at work has also been linked to job performance, which has been defined as whether or not employee behaviours fulfil their formal organisational roles and other organisational goals (Daniels, 2000). There is here an assumption that an employee is un-well if they do not contribute to organisational goals. The attention is therefore diverted from the organisation and the structure within which the individual is working in, to that of the individual. There is a danger here that wellbeing can be framed in such a way so that the real systemic or organisational issue is obscured, and the responsibility to be well is put wholly onto the individual. This brings this discussion to the next question ‘who decides what wellbeing is?’ In the case of the paper by Daniels (2000), it is the

organisation through its formal job descriptions and more informal expectations that decide what it is that is considered to be 'well at work'.

According to Prichard (2005) organisations can be considered as complex hubs of political, cultural, economic, interpretive and material processes. The ways in which various organisational issues are articulated are often highly restrained and in some cases 'support the legitimacy of social institutions and extend the hegemony of the prevailing system supportive ideologies' (Prichard, 2005, p.98). Through multiple reading strategies as an analytical approach, and interpretive and political economic analysis as a methodology, a complex organisational event such as a fatal accident inquiry is analyzed. Using an interpretive perspective, the discursive and symbolic resources by which owners and managers emphasize and develop some accounts and courses of action, and disable others are explored. The method of interpretive closure employed by a government inquiry into health and safety is highlighted and problematised. It is argued here that by using key terms in business discourse such as; 'culture', 'attitudes', 'increased productivity' and 'systems', the political relations between workers, managers and owners can be obscured (Prichard, 2005). It is found that because at no point of the inquiry was attention drawn to the workers culture, employer's attitudes, or to the agency and systems involved and how they may have contributed to the accident, it is quite possible that the inquiry did not actually deal with the health and

safety problem within the organisation. This poses a real threat to the wellbeing of those working in the organisation. Because it has been imposed by the overriding institution (in this case the government) through the use of certain language, that the responsibility for wellbeing in this case resided at the individual level and that it was no fault of the system within which these individuals were located, there is a possible risk posed for the wellbeing of individuals within the organisation.

2.4 Wellbeing as political action

In addition to discursive and symbolic resources employed to define the process of wellbeing in the workplace, media such as television, books, magazines and web pages can be used to transmit powerful messages about wellbeing. An example of this is a study of New age capitalism using data collected from such sources in consumer society. Four activities are explored as three individual case studies. These are: aromatherapy, macrobiotic eating, yoga and Tai Chi. It is concluded that the discourses surrounding each of these activities stems from the desire to stand up to the hegemonic power of western modernization. However, rather than help to subvert any aspect of the hegemonic western thinking, the way in which these discourses are presented and consumed within US society serve to reinforce this overriding system by responding to the marketing devices and sales strategies that support it. It is argued that although participation in these alternative health activities may suggest

political action, the consumption of these alternative status symbols actually does very little to deal with the environmental, health and social problems that face the world (Lau 2000). These studies deal critically with various structures and systems in society, and the discursive and symbolic systems employed in determining what is considered as ‘well’.

It has also been argued by Harris et al (2003) that although through previous research, a link has been established between work and psychological wellbeing, reasons through which work can become harmful to psychological wellbeing have not yet been completely understood. It is argued that one reason for this is that individuals react differently to similar environments. Researchers have therefore begun to examine the context provided by people's experiences, values and goals when assessing the influence of external events on wellbeing. Factors such as an individual's temperament and cognitions, goals, culture and adaptation coping efforts are seen to have a moderating effect on the influence of factors such as circumstance and events on subjective wellbeing. The idea of goal attainment and individual goal importance have emerged as being key elements in whether, or not, wellbeing is achieved by an individual. It is argued that the attainment of goals considered important by an individual is more likely to satisfy needs and values that are central to the individual.

This has been investigated using a daily diary study of such goals. It is suggested here that the method of daily diary tracking captures data about changes in wellbeing, goal importance and goal attainment as they occur. Another advantage suggested by Harris et al, is that this method decreases the chance of distorted recollection as feelings about wellbeing are recorded at the beginning and end of every day. This research finds that the attainment of work goals might influence changes in wellbeing over various time periods and across different aspects of wellbeing. The importance of giving greater attention in research to individual's goals when looking at wellbeing is therefore underlined (Harris et al, 2003). This exploratory semi-structured method enables an understanding of the individual and transient ways in which people experience wellbeing at work. It also argued that a way of developing our understanding of wellbeing at work is to take into account the influence of various contexts on the work and wellbeing relationship; that these contexts may include individual qualities and personality attributes of the worker and also the particular context of the work environment. The research addresses the call for a move from the more traditional approaches to research into wellbeing, which look at demographic characteristics or bottom-up oriented approaches, towards a recognition that a theory that helps understanding for a worker in one context may not be useful for another worker in a different context (Diener, 1999; Briner, 2000; Ryff, 1989). The research by Harris et al (2003) puts into action this call for a focus on

individual attributes in organisations, and so improving our understanding of the subject.

Taking a slightly different approach to wellbeing at work, according to Thompson et al, 2005, research into factors influencing for example the participation of minority or underserved populations in worksite wellness programmes has been carried out. The aim of this research is to engage more members of the minority and underserved community at work in America in worksite wellness programmes (WWPs). The conclusion of this research is that culturally sensitive and appropriate WWPs must be developed in order to appeal to those members of the community who are the most in need of these preventative healthcare mechanisms. The aim here is to reduce the portion of the nation's healthcare costs being paid out by employers and employees (Thompson et al, 2005). Although the topic of inquiry is similar here, the agenda for inquiry differs to the research previously reviewed.

The paper by Thompson et al (2005) seems to reinforce managerial and organisational interests by ensuring that employee health needs are addressed in the context of organisational goals and objectives, whereas the previous research (Diener, 1999; Briner, 2000; Harris et al, 2003) aims to understand the ways in which individuals react to their actual work environments, thus improving our understanding of wellbeing at work.

There has also been a focus on the location of wellbeing within society. It has been observed that theories of positive psychological functioning are manifestations of middle-class values. It has been because of this realisation that it has subsequently been argued it may be in error that studies of wellbeing create targets for self-evaluation: That they are maybe unattainable, unattractive, or even irrelevant for individuals at different locations in the social structure. It is therefore argued that there has been an oversight in understanding the competing conceptions of wellbeing caused by differences such as culture, history, ethnicity and class. It is suggested in light of an acknowledgement in the literature of these differences, that the research should lead to new targets of empirical inquiry in order understand better the fit between theoretical conceptions of well-being, and the values and ideals of those to whom they are being applied (Ryff, 1989). The study however by Ryff (1989) fails to address these factors by focusing on the very demographic characteristics it is suggesting are avoided, such as age, gender and level of education. There is in fact an assumption before the study is carried out that the results will be an example of 'optimal positive functioning' (Ryff, 1989, p.1072), due to the high level of education possessed by the respondents. There is no mention in the study of the differences such as culture, history, ethnicity and class of the respondents.

2.5 A change in language

A study analysing the changes in the way two newspapers have reported the idea of wellbeing over the last two decades focuses on the middle class end of the newspaper spectrum, namely the Guardian and Daily Mail newspapers. There is an argument here that many of the practices geared to the production of wellbeing, such as new age practices, are more prevalent among those whose demographic characteristics are more middle than working class (Sointu, 2005). A trend is therefore emerging of wellbeing as a middle class preoccupation.

The way in which wellbeing is communicated and represented is discussed in the literature. Discourses of organisational wellness are considered as encompassing both language and practices (the said and the seen), which work to institutionalize wellbeing in organisational settings (McGillivray, 2005). Work places have been personalized through the use of family photographs, plants and other symbols of personal identity.

'These kinds of (home making) activities seeking to 'soften' the working environment serve to blur distinctions between the public and private spheres. If home could be seen to be a place of belonging and ownership, then practical wellbeing activities aimed at 'making home' at work can be seen to perform significant alternative functions beyond discourses of wellbeing playing a role in the production of appropriate workers. Through making or performing wellbeing in everyday life, people were being subjects to discourses of wellbeing, but also often taking ownership over different domains of these discourses' (Sointu, 2005, p. 268).

In consumer culture, wellbeing is communicated through the promise of identities that become commodities to buy, and like other commodities, there are competing identities on the market. Media such as advertisements, popular books, magazines and websites communicate messages telling us how we can ensure the choices we make are both social and individual. The display of purchased goods and services serves as a set of symbols and signifiers of the purchased identity. In the market of new age capitalism, individuals can recreate themselves choosing to, for example, make a stand against a particular system by purchasing a particular product associated with that political standpoint (Lau, 2000). This is an important analysis of the discourse of wellbeing at work. The theory supports this assertion as, according to Berger (1972), the emotion we feel when we are exposed to these discourses is described as personal social envy, a contradiction between what we are and what we would like to be. There is then subsequently a realization of this contradiction resulting in a struggle for full democracy, entailing the overthrow of capitalism, or else a continued existence as subjects to this envy. In other words the working self envies the consuming self.

Baudrillard (1968) argues that such an analysis must ultimately imply an analysis of discourse about objects. The subliminal messages contained in advertising comprise of images and discourse. It is through advertising for example, that we are told what it is we actually consume through

objects. Through this discourse and image playing their role, advertising supplies us with the ideal object and its system of thought. These objects are heavily connotated and so are self-referential (Baudrillard, 1968). They are objects that can be envied; carrying with them the promise of another so called better self.

As a parallel discussion to the concept of ‘wellbeing at work’ in the mainstream Organisation studies literature, during the last 20 years, there has been a shift socially from the notion of ‘collective solidarity’ to what is termed the ‘project of the self’ (Beck, 2000; Lau, 2000; Rose, 1999; Sointu, 2005). This shift has also been described as a move away from the wellbeing of citizens produced through the strategies of national institutions such as the welfare state and government, to an increasing emphasis on a wellbeing that is actively produced by the individual that functions as a consumer (Costea, 2005; Heath and Potter, 2005; McGillivray, 2005; Sennett, 2006; Sointu, 2005). It has been argued that as a result of this shift towards individualism, and the move away from the wellbeing of society as the responsibility of national institutions, we have been faced with less progressive politics and often disenchanted workers and citizens (Sennett, 2006; Heath and Potter, 2006). Individuals therefore within organisations in this structure will be presented with new ways of realising their potential in the workplace and for ensuring the

wellbeing of themselves and others around them. The body will become a site of political action.

It has been pointed out that the increase in individualism and the emergence of the ‘project of the self’ (Rose, 1999) does not necessarily mean a shift towards increased consumerism (Beck, 2000). According to Beck (2000), this focus on the local and the self is in fact an opportunity to address the diverse and fragmented issues we as a society are now faced with. It is through constructing these ‘communities’ that common issues can be identified, clarified and addressed. With the collapse of hierarchies, authorship, and a growing intervention by citizens in politics; lack of interest in national politics can be confused with a lack of interest in politics full stop. It is argued however that young people in fact have highly developed moral ideas about a range of issues such as environmental destruction, healthy eating, human rights, ethnic minorities and world hunger (Beck, 2000). There is however a danger that the interest in and subsequent advance of this moral politics can be confused with the need to increase consumption of products associated with these ideal, and in doing so function as counter to the advancement of these political ideas (Heath and Potter, 2005; Lau, 2000).

Sointu (2006) has conceptualised individual alternative health practices in terms of social responsibility and agency. In relating experiences of increasingly holistic (Lau, 2000; Sointu, 2005) medical healing to wider

societal understandings of self-hood, it was found in this recent study that consuming these alternative practices was often associated with personal fulfilment, wellbeing and a recognition not often achieved through the mainstream medical professions. It is argued here therefore that the consumption of ‘alternative’ methods for wellbeing is an attempt to critique the ‘mainstream’ and in turn the ills of modernity themselves actually works to support the system it aims to weaken (Heath and Potter, 2005; Lau, 2000). The following section will show how these shifts in the literature towards a focus on the individual in society and their individual actions as being ‘political’ can be seen as having an impact on the workplace and its cultural conceptualizations of wellbeing

2.6 A shift in meaning

Recent changes in the concept of ‘wellbeing at work’ have been investigated by Sointu (2005). Through a data gathering process of newspaper articles spanning five periods from 1985 to 2003, Sointu (2005) searched for the way in which the idea of wellbeing has been conceptualised in the press. The search focused on two national newspapers, the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*. According to Sointu (2005), ‘The searches sought to highlight not only a growing prevalence of the notion of wellbeing, but also to throw light on a variety of changing contexts in which the term was being utilised’ (Sointu, 2005, p.257). It was found that the use of the term ‘wellbeing’ had risen from 53 mentions in the *Guardian* newspaper in 1985 to 665 in 2003. It has also risen from 55

mentions in the *Daily Mail* newspaper in 1989 to 440 in 2003. The most striking findings of this study for Sointu (2005) were that first, although during the mid 1980s there had been a tendency to conceptualise wellbeing in relation to the wider societal structures, such as a strong and successful economy, and solid national security, it was found that there had been a shift in the next four years, between the years 1989 to 1990, towards a focus on individual bodies and lives in relation to wellbeing; the production of wellbeing having increasingly become the responsibility of the individual.

According to Beck (2000), global capitalism in the west has by dissolving the core values of the work society broken the bond between capitalism, welfare state and democracy. This seems to mirror the changes in the way in which wellbeing has been framed in recent mainstream Organization studies literature, with there being a shift in focus from the idea of welfare and the state, to that of individual wellbeing (Sointu 2005).

The focus on individual wellbeing as opposed to a collective welfare can be related to changes in the work ethic and the ‘spirit of capitalism’. According to Rose (1999);

‘The most powerful images of the economic function of the citizen have altered. There has been a shift away from the old ethics of the ‘protestant work ethic’ in which hard work was for moral, personal and social good, towards an image of the

consumer. It is through consumption that we are encouraged to shape ourselves through the use of purchasing power. It is therefore through this consumption that we are presented with the possibility of making our lives meaningful through the selection of our own personal lifestyle from those available on the market. There is therefore a simultaneous purchase of products and services alongside the management and the marketing of one's self; 'This is the new image of the productive subject' (Rose, 1999, p.102-103).

It is through consumption in the west that we are invited to make not only ourselves well, but also to give meaning to our lives through work. According to Weber (1930), the origins of capitalism as work being carried out as a 'calling' in relation to god and the community has given way to an alternative spirit. According to Boltanski and Chiapello (2005), capitalists who are not owners of their own labour or gain satisfaction from the abstract processes they take part in to earn their wage, struggle to find a justification in the labour process. They go on to define the spirit of capitalism as an ideology that justifies engagement in capitalism.

Like Rose (1999), Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) argue that this spirit is currently undergoing a significant crisis in that there is a movement away from the spirit of capitalism defended by Weber (1930) in which capitalism was a process to which people could devote themselves firmly and steadily. There has been a shift away from the hierarchy and authority of formal religion to a more subjective, spiritual experience in which the emphasis is on the connection with the self (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005). According to Weber (1930), people need powerful and moral

reasons for rallying to capitalism, Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) argue also the need for a dominant ideology; a schema in order for individuals to construct meaning and attach justification for the order they are a part of. According to Hardt and Negri (2000), new theories of subjectivity must be formulated that operate through knowledge, communications and language. Hardt and Negri (2000) argue that those in power produce not just commodities but also subjectivities such as social relations, bodies and minds. It is a form of legitimization that supports itself by only itself and develops its own language of communication and validation. There is in this way a symbolic production of the enemy (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p.36).

This justification for the capitalist enterprise might therefore be found according to the literature in the form of an increase in the co-optation of alternative and counter-cultural activities into the workplace. For example, an article on ‘floating’ in the Guardian newspaper in 1989 which is described as an ‘exotic’ therapy provided by an alternative and natural health centre, is used in a study by Sointu (2005) to illustrate how activities previously regarded as ‘exotic’, ‘alternative’ or counter-cultural are increasingly being presented as acceptable and are more commonly being mentioned. The argument by Sointu (2005) here is that the idea of wellbeing has begun to emerge as a counter-balance to the stresses of contemporary living; a resource to aid those leading a busy life. It is

argued here therefore that overcoming the stresses of mainstream hectic lives is not so much achieved by ‘dropping out’ but rather by consuming various relaxation techniques, like floating for example, in affirmation of what they have to offer (Lau, 2000; Sointu 2005). According to Lau (2000), if you don’t practice yoga or t’ai chi yourself, you probably know of someone who does. Aside from this, you will have come across such practices and associated products in newspapers, magazines or catalogues. Lau (2000) refers to ethno mimesis (the imitation of another culture’s traditions and practices) and that it is through this that the rhetoric of alternative health and holistic living is spread. There has developed a trend to transform the body, into what is considered the other, a more desirable, socially attractive version of the self.

The term counter-culture will be defined in this study as a cultural group whose values and norms of behaviour run counter to the social mainstream of the day. According to Roszak (1969), the counter-culture is defined by ‘a period of mass dissent between the post second world years of 1942-1972’ (Roszak, 1969, p.25). It was out of this dissent, which had emerged from the overly excessive industrial wealth of the post war US and Europe that grew the most ambitious agenda that the societies have ever produced, ‘values called into question were those of family, work, education, child rearing, male-female relations, sexuality, urbanism, science, technology and progress’ (Roszak, 1995, p.26). According to

Heath and Potter (2005), 'rebellion of this kind was felt to be an especially potent threat to capitalism, which relied upon an army of docile, pacified workers, willing to submit themselves to the soul destroying discipline of the machine' (Heath and Potter, 2005, p.33). A counter-cultural group possess norms and values therefore that run counter to those of the social mainstream of the day. One example of when there has been a counter-cultural uprising were the student riots of 1968 which came very close to toppling the French government. Hippies are a well-known counter-cultural group who were made up of the youth of the 1960s and 1970s. They believed in peace, love, compassion and fellowship. They believed that a monolithic entity had emerged during the 1950s composed of corporate industry, corporate media, the military and government and that this was exercising undue power over their lives. According to Frank (1997), the cultural changes that would become labelled as the 'counterculture' actually began well before 1960, and whilst most accounts of this period of youth culture describe it as a reaction to the cultural and economic environment of the post-war years, such studies ignore a parallel development, one that involved the activities of managerial thought and organisational behaviour. In a study of the co-optation of the counterculture by corporate decision makers, Frank (1997) describes that way in which corporate America 'mimics and mass produces fake counterculture in order to cash in on a particular demographic' (Frank, 1997, p.7).

Following this period however, according to Frank (1997), the idea of 'hip' would become the overriding principle of the 1960s transforming a dislike of consumerism of a certain demographic into the actual fuel behind consumer society. Ideas of what is cool were incorporated into the corporate sphere, including references to music, youth, drugs related references, and a marrying of the counter culture and creativity: the privileging of hip over square. According to Frank (1997), 'admen' saw in the counterculture 'the consumer society of advertising reflected back at them' (Frank, 1997, p.121). According to Frank (1997), advertising found opportunity in the newfound values during the 1960s and early 1970s of the counterculture. There was in this sense an emergence during this time in the US of an idea of a corporate protest, which took the form of an appropriation of the symbols of this protest by the site of protest. In this way advertising agencies encourage the youth market to realize through consumption these countercultural values. Ideas evolved in advertising to the point where approaches to corporate cultural representations included no one being shown in corporate images whilst carrying out work activities, only during leisure or play activities, and no one is shown doing anything that may at that time have been considered as 'normal' by the mainstream. Alternative activities were therefore privileged. Such ideas were also applied to fashion, where the 'rebel' began to make up a brand new set of fashion rules that tried hard to break the rules – the new rule

was no rules: ‘Hip’ became the official corporate style. Finally, Frank argues that in relation to the counterculture and organisations, ‘the sixties are more than merely the homeland of hip, they are a commercial template for our times, a historical prototype for the construction of cultural machines that transform alienation and despair into consent’ (Frank, 1997, p.235).

According to Ross (2003), in an ethnographic study of two hi-tech companies in the satirically named ‘Silicon Alley’ in New York, one employee at ‘Razorfish’, a comment was said that ‘everyone agrees that working at Razorfish is as good as it gets in corporate America. The trouble is that Razorfish has duped everyone into thinking they’re not part of corporate America. These people honestly don’t believe they are part of the mainstream. What are they thinking? They’re working for Schwab, Ford, IBM. They’re working for the man. Its how the counterculture was duped into thinking they’re not working for corporate America’. According to Ross (2003), managers at Silicon Alley were seeking to create an environment that contained all the attributes of an ‘artists’ environment their habitat, lifestyle, clothing, work-patterns and customs (Ross, 2003, p.138). According to Ross (2003) in discussing the implementation of a knowledge management system at ‘Razorfish’, one employee said, ‘We are a company of subversives who don’t just want to take a template off the shelf. There is no way you could ever impose a knowledge

management system on this company. That's not how we think, how we work or what we value. Its like the difference between following a recipe and really being able to cook" (Ross, 2003, p.241).

According to Harvey (1990), the arena of cultural production is one where the struggles that were once confined to the arena of production have spilled out to make it one of social conflict. Harvey (1990) argues that the cultural evolution that has taken place since the early 1960s has not occurred in a social, economic or political vacuum. It is the mobilization of fashion, pop art, television and other forms of media coverage and the variety of lifestyles that have become included in daily life under capitalism. Popular culture is therefore an arena in which statements regarding political and social ideas can be made. It is argued however that mass consumerism breeds a lack of interest in politics and an increased interest in the self (Heath and Potter, 2005; Sennett, 2006). This study is interested in how ideas about the counter-culture and the New age capitalism can be appropriated into the cultural sphere by organisations for the benefit of those it was intended to critique.

2.7 New age capitalism: A review of the alternative literature on wellbeing and work

New age capitalism is a concept where western culture is characterised by an individual, eclectic approach to spiritual exploration. 'New agers'

typically construct their own spiritual journey based on material taken as needed from the mystical traditions of the worlds religions including Shamanism, Neopaganism and Occultism. As a part of new age capitalism, products and logos associated with these ‘alternative’ health practices come to mark the consumer landscape in which it is our bodies that become signs. New age capitalism looks eastward for its inspiration, and relies on a nostalgia for a lost past in order to construct contemporary cultural dialogues about modernity and anti-modernity. Lau (2000) points out that ‘alternative’ health and exercise activities previously situated at the cultural periphery, like yoga, seem to have changed their social status from one that is considered counter-cultural and intended for ‘hippies, flower children and ‘granolas” (Lau, 2000, p.2). Links to movie stars, musicians and upscale yoga studios have meant that the practice of yoga has taken its place in the cultural centre. In considering yoga, along with t’ai chi, aromatherapy and macrobiotic eating, it is argued however that there is a tension between the spiritual roots of these practices and the ways in which they are positioned in advertising as part and parcel of all things ‘eastern’. It is this tension between the spirituality of ‘alternative’ activities and the way that they have been transferred into commodities for the market economy that is of interest here. Both Yoga and t’ai chi trace their roots backs to classical eastern religious texts; Indian and Chinese respectively. It is argued that in the process of being commodified for the contemporary market place and subsequently

practiced in the US, yoga and t'ai chi are distanced somewhat from their original philosophical contexts, whether sacred texts or philosophy, and practiced largely as physical exercise regimes. The aim of the commodification of such new age practices however is that due to their associated discursive fields, when consumed, seemingly personal transformations become political, as through these philosophical and cultural associations the wellbeing of individuals is directly linked to the wellbeing of society and the planet (Lau, 2000). It is this critique of modernity this study is interested in, and how the appropriation of various New age symbols and cultural influences can actually be used to advance the system they aim to critique.

There is evidence that the critique of modernity is being made accessible through consumption of the attractive options in the market place of new age capitalism. It was found in the study that during the late 1990s, wellbeing in the context of work was one of the areas that emerged as an important site for discussion. It is in this context that Sointu (2005) found the discourse of new age capitalism and its reference to the 'alternative' and 'exotic'. In the study, it was found that working lives were being conceptualised as integral to the real and authentic being of individual employees. In analysing an advertisement for a car, Lau (2000) shows how the discussion of the amount of recycling we do can be attached to the purchase of a car. She goes on to argue that 'once again, public

concern about environmental protection is transferred from the formal political realm to the everyday realm of consumption' (Lau, 2000, p.139). Nature and the natural world can be associated with eastern philosophy like Buddhism as eastern such philosophies are imagined as being close to nature and from a place of natural splendour and growth.

A newspaper article is used in the study by Sointu (2005) to illustrate this point. According to Sointu (2005), at a new wellbeing centre within an organisational context, employees can take advantage of the facilities in order to meditate, eat organic food, enjoy reflexology, do arts and crafts and also wonder around the Chinese gardens. There is a pick and mix approach taken here to eastern philosophies in a western work context. Aspects of 'alternative' approaches are appropriated into a centre for wellbeing through which employees can realise their true potential at work. The assumption here is that individuals need to be real and true to themselves at work in order to be more productive.

For the purpose of this study, material culture will be defined as the relationship between people and things (The Dictionary of Human Geography, 2000). It is argued that employees should not only understand their working lives in terms of their ability to achieve personal fulfilment, but also whether or not workplaces and spaces provide this potential for autonomy and individuality (Sointu, 2005). It was found by

Sointu (2005) in her study of newspapers that in the year 2000, working environments were commonly conceptualised as being able to materially affect the wellbeing of employees and that their wellbeing can be enhanced through certain connections to their work surroundings. According to Harvey (1990), symbolic orderings of space and time do provide a framework within which we are able to understand how we fit into society and the values we attach to ourselves. It is one of modernism's missions to take the production of new meanings for space and time in a world of natural ephemerality and fragmentation.

In defining the forms of the discourse of organisational wellbeing might take, McGillivray (2005) considers both language and practices (the said and the seen), which work to institutionalise wellbeing in organisational settings. This introduces the idea of a material culture of wellbeing in our workplaces and through the products we consume. Work places have been seen to be personalised through the use of family photographs, plants and other symbols of personal identity.

These kinds of (home making) activities seeking to 'soften' the working environment serve to blur distinctions between the public and private spheres. If home could be seen to be a place of belonging and ownership, then practical wellbeing activities aimed at 'making home' at work can be seen to perform significant alternative functions beyond discourses of wellbeing playing a role in the production of appropriate workers. Through making or performing wellbeing in everyday life, people were being subjects to discourses of wellbeing, but also often taking ownership over different domains of these discourses (Sointu, 2005, p. 268).

This material aspect of wellbeing needs to be fully considered if we are to understand the way in which counter-cultural and New age capitalist are appropriated into the workplace in relation to individual and social wellbeing. New methods need to be applied to these material and often-visual environments in which symbols and artefacts function as transmitters of a particular way of life and culture (Lau, 2000).

In discussing ways of researching and understanding material and other aspects of organisational culture, Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) argue for a movement from the dominant approach to organisational culture which seeks to produce a reading of the culture, to a post-modern view, which seeks to appreciate the organisation as an interweaving of a variety of texts and textual features (Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992, p.333). It is through this approach that the construction of work surroundings can be considered in terms of how the organisation of space can define relationships between 'people, activities, things and concepts' (Harvey, 1990, p.216). Harvey (1990) goes on to argue that the organisation of space can be conceived of as a text in that it 'talks about' social concerns that are important to the relations between those who work there. There is therefore recognition here for a need to understand the relationships between objects and people which is considered an important site for investigation for this thesis.

2.8 Control and governmentality in organisations

A more critical approach taken by Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) is that the rational frequency of the symbolic within an organisation masks complex and indeterminate political, sentimental and ideological formations, even serving to legitimate, normalise and render credible their basic uncertainty. The idea of normalisation and legitimisation refers in this sense not to what is ‘normal’ but what is ‘considered’ normal. Society decides ways of living that are normal and then individuals are coerced and persuaded to conform to these standards and to perpetuate them. It has been argued that ideas incorporated by organisations regarding wellbeing are functioning as a form of governmentality or control (McGillivray, 2005). It is possible to link these ideas about control and management to those about governing the subject (Rose 1999). According to Rose (1999), the management of subjectivity has become a central task for the modern organisation. Rose (1999) goes on to argue that organisations have evolved in a way in which it is in their interests to fill the space between the ‘private’ lives of citizens and the ‘public’ concerns of those in power. These new ways of thinking and acting affect those in organisations; their personal beliefs, wishes, aspirations, in other words, their ethics.

Through its consumption, wellbeing is communicated through the promise of identities that become commodities to buy, and like other commodities,

there are competing identities on the market. Media such as advertisements, popular books, magazines and websites communicate messages telling us how we can ensure the choices we make can contribute to both social and individual wellness. The display of purchased goods and services serve as a set of symbols and signifiers of the purchased identity.

Zizek (2006) argues that according to those who ironically refer to themselves as 'liberal communists', the commercial market and improving social responsibility are not polar opposites, but can be united for mutual benefit. According to Liberal Communists, 'there is no exploited working class today, only concrete problems to be solved: Starvation in Africa, the plight of Muslim women, religious fundamentalist violence' (Zizek, 2006). By taking up activities for our wellbeing that are offered to us by New age capitalist organisations, which aim to eradicate these inequalities and differences on a global scale, through subsequent personal transformation, we are able to make political statements about social and planetary wellness (Lau, 2000).

According to Lau (2000), the individual is offered through the commodification and consumption of seemingly subversive cultural critiques and according to Sointu (2005), increasingly as part of the culture of the workplace, the ability to create his or her own strategy for living in the modern world. There is however an inherent contradiction

here in addressing social, political and cultural disenchantment through consumption. It is argued that New age capitalist organisations create the conditions for the problems they seek to counteract. Issues of class and equality are overlooked and brushed over by the commodification of 'alternative' practices. It is argued therefore that consumption is not political action and believing it to be so could be a dangerous misconception leading to the most serious risk of modernity, the appropriation of liberty into the mainstream system (Lau, 2000; Heath and Potter, 2005; Zizek, 2006).

2.9 Conclusion

The wellbeing at work literature suggests areas for further research in order to improve our understanding of the way in which the discourse of wellbeing at work operates within organisations and society. It is apparent through this review that the more established ways of defining wellbeing at work using socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender and education, are slowly giving way to new ideas regarding culture, ethnicity, class, history and their associated personal goals and values. There is a call for more attention to these personal attributes and the ways in which they moderate wellbeing at work.

Wellbeing is getting personal. The emphasis is on the individual, rather than institutions. A shift from ideas of collectivism to those of the personal

transformation of the self is apparent in the literature. The focus is on the body. It has been found that there is a danger emerging in the literature of focusing on the positive, and excluding the negative. It has been shown however through studies of discursive and symbolic aspects of organisations, that in order to understand what it is we are being presented with, we need to understand the other side, what we are not being presented with. Wellbeing is being communicated through our workplaces, the objects we buy and the words we read. These systems of objects carry messages about who we are, or who we aspire to be.

Wellbeing seems in one sense to have become a commodity, something that can be consumed in relation to the individual that is consuming it. Political social and ethical statements are increasingly (Sointu, 2000) being made through our choices in the marketplace and the ways in which we see ourselves as being ‘well’; as a society and as individuals. In addition to this, wellbeing has been transferred to the realm of work, as something that can be realised through work and through consumption. Our wellbeing now depends on us and on our choices in the marketplace, which is a shift from a collective responsibility to an individual one. Wellbeing seems in some cases to be linked to identity, and identity in relation to a product on the market, and the promise of an identity that ‘does good’. But does it?

Through reviewing the literature, it has become apparent that individuals within organisations are being presented with new ways of realising their potential in the workplace and for ensuring the wellbeing of themselves and of others around them. In relating experiences of increasingly holistic (Lau, 2000; Sointu, 2005) medical healing to wider societal understandings of self-hood, it was found in recent studies that consuming these alternative practices was often associated with personal fulfilment, wellbeing and a recognition not often achieved through the mainstream medical professions (Sointu, 2006). Research reviewed shows that there has been a shift in focus from the idea of welfare being the responsibility of the state, to that of individual wellbeing; the focus of this being on the actions of individuals.

It is argued that reasons for working are currently undergoing a significant crisis in that there is a movement away from the spirit of capitalism defended by Weber (1930) in which capitalism was a process through which people could devote themselves firmly and steadily. There has been a shift away from this hierarchy and authority of formal religion to a more subjective, spiritual experience in which the emphasis is on the connection with the self (Heelas and Woodhead, 2005). Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) go on to argue for the need for a dominant ideology; a schema in order for individuals to construct meaning and attach justification for the order they are a part of. In reviewing the literature it

has therefore been found that this justification for the capitalist enterprise can be found in the form of the co-optation of alternative and counter-cultural activities into the workplace.

It is therefore the purpose of this study to understand how the appropriation of so called ‘alternative’ and ‘counter-cultural’ activities can in fact serve to give meaning to work. There is however a concern in the literature that these counter-cultural values support the system they are originally supposed to critique. It is the mobilization of fashion, pop art, television and other forms of media coverage and a variety of lifestyles that have become included in daily life under capitalism. Popular culture is therefore an arena in which statements regarding political and social ideas can be made. It is argued however that mass consumerism breeds a lack of interest in politics and an increased interest in the self (Heath and Potter, 2005; Sennett, 2006). This thesis is interested therefore in how ideas about the counter-culture and the New age capitalism can be appropriated into the cultural sphere by organisations for capitalist interest.

It has been found that ‘New age capitalism’ looks eastward in its approach to health and wellbeing and is in turn appropriated as a part of the counterculture. New agers typically construct their own spiritual journey based on a ‘pick and mix’ approach to taking material from the mystical

traditions of the world including Shamanism, Neopaganism and Occultism. As a part of the approach of New age capitalism, products and logos associated with these 'alternative' health practices come to mark the consumer landscape in which it is our bodies that become signs. New age capitalism looks 'eastward' for its inspiration, and relies on a nostalgia for a lost past in order to construct contemporary cultural dialogues about modernity and anti-modernity. However, it is argued that this critique of modernity is being made accessible through consumption; that concerns about environmental protection are transferred from the formal political realm to the capitalist realm of consumption.

The literature points to a shift in the 'spirit of capitalism' and to the need for further critical empirical research into the appropriation of counter-cultural and new age spiritual discourse by capitalist organisations. There is a gap in the literature here as focused empirical research is lacking in looking at the appropriation of these new ideas surrounding wellbeing at work and the implications of this for those working in organisations. The discursive shift identified by studies of society, organisations and alternative health practices points towards a shift in meaning of wellbeing for those at work. There is however a lack of empirical research into how the approach of New age capitalism is used in order to give meaning to work.

Methodology: Critical Ethnography

3.1 Introduction

Following on from the analysis of the literature, there has been identified a need for what is considered situated and contextual research into wellbeing at work. A way of achieving this is through participant observation and ethnographic study. Chapter 4 outlines the developments in participant observation methods or ethnographic methods, discusses the ways in which they have been used previously, and how they will be used in this study. Critical Ethnography provides a way of gaining knowledge about a particular subject in a contextual and reflective way. The chapter begins with a review of previously carried out ethnographic studies of organisations. Then, recent developments in ethnographic research and anthropology will be outlined and presented and the reason for choosing the perspective of Critical Ethnography will be outlined. Visual ethnography as a sub-category of Critical ethnography is addressed specifically. A critical approach uses several source of data for analysis, and does not restrict itself to traditional forms of analysis.

3.2 Ethnography and organisations

According to Linstead (1997), full-length ethnographies of organisations are few in number and although there are interesting examples of the application of this methodology to organisation studies, very few of these aim to focus specifically on management and management practices. According to Bate (1997), those investigating organisational behaviour take little interest in anthropology, as tend to do anthropologists in organisations. It is argued however by Bate (1997) that despite this, the tradition of using ethnographic methods in studying organisations has actually been present.

It is argued however by Linstead (1997), that management is in fact a suitable field for social anthropological research. First, management is a social process, involving a constant negotiation and construction of meaning to get things done. Hierarchies, common in work organisations, can often mean that even those doing the jobs fail to get a full understanding of what is going on. Second, management is embedded in socio-economic contexts, which is seen as a process, in other words not just a set of tasks to be performed, but a set of relations that are in flux, affected by the series of events. These events are considered to be 'communication, perception, behavioural problems and style' (Linstead, 1997, p.88). Finally, according to Linstead (1997), management involves

thought and emotion, power struggles and conflict. It is often involved in the production and consumption of both goods and identities through its discourse. It is through this discourse that ideologies and beliefs leading to the minimising of the risk of dissent are imposed, or that the possibility of alternatives are minimised. According to Linstead (1997), this can be seen as central to the continued domination of particular groups in the workplace. Taking these factors into consideration, there needs to be a methodology applied in researching organisations that considers various aspects of organisations in order to enable a better understanding of their culture.

It is argued by Linstead (1997) that in studying organisations an approach should be taken that enables a close observation of managerial life. Organisations therefore need to be studied by a method that emphasises description, and concentrates on understanding meaning. There is also a need for a method that needs reflexively to consider the researchers role both in the production of knowledge and also their effect ideologically. This so called post-modern approach to understanding culture seeks to include the 'tacit, implicit and unsaid, but includes that which seems to be unsayable and unrepresentable, including silence and spacing as well as talk' (Linstead, 1997, p.88).

The method of ethnography has a lot to offer the study of organisations as it attempts to use the study of culture at a micro level, in order to understand wider social processes, which may or may not extend to longer time periods. According to Van Maanen (1988), ethnography ties together fieldwork and culture. It is through fieldwork that the understanding of others, close and distant, is achieved. It demands the full-time involvement of the researcher over a lengthy period of time (Van Maanen, 1988, p.2). It is this consideration of the detailed, complex and diverse nature of organisations that makes ethnography a useful tool for understanding organisational culture.

In considering ‘traditional’ social anthropology or ethnography, there is some concern voiced by those extending this approach to the study of organisational cultures. The concern is about whether or not the approach advocated by Linstead (1997) of ‘studying up’ can be considered as ethnographic. Nader (1972) quoted in Rorvik (2006) has outlined opportunities for ‘studying up’, or in other words, ‘studying the colonisers rather than the colonized, the culture of power rather than the powerless, the culture of affluence rather than the culture of poverty’ (Nader, 1972, p.289 in Rorvik, 2006, p.6). The associated therefore study of the elites and ‘studying up’ poses problems for anthropologists and their view of themselves as ethnographers. According to Rorvik (2006), anthropology itself carries with it an elitist history in that it has traditionally been

performed by and for white, western, middle class academics educated from the most prestigious universities. This group is seen by Rorvik (2006) as an educational elite, reproduced by their interest in the 'exotic' other, at the expense of political and social institutions in their own societies.

As a result of the nature of the field, anthropological studies of the elite would require some sort of political self-reflexivity. It is argued here by Rorvik (2006), that the problem lies not in the object of study, but that it is embedded in the field of anthropology and the methodology of ethnography itself. The problem is that in the field the study of elite groups such as managers and western businesses is not being readily accepted as being 'real ethnography' and that this is embedded within the politics of the field of social anthropology.

According to Bate (1997),

'cultural analysis in management studies 'challenges every pedestal upon which the popular business texts have been constructed: central to ethnography is criticality and the way in which authors challenge their readers to question and re-examine their taken for granted beliefs: contrast this with what they say is so simple, so obvious, and so commonsensical that it is beyond question' (Bate, 1997, p.1153).

The application therefore of ethnographic methods to management research seems to be problematic in that there are many limitations in the

field of anthropology itself for its full acceptance as a viable method for the study of culture.

It can be seen therefore that the reasons for the limited use of ethnographic methodology in management research may have something to do with the institution within which the methodology is embedded. The application of ethnographic methods to management research often entails a critical self-examination: a challenge taking many of those in the tradition out of their privileged comfort zone and into murkier waters. Bearing these issues in mind this section will review some ethnographic studies of organisations and management.

3.3 Critical Ethnography

This thesis approaches the concept of culture from a critical perspective. The study presented here assumes that any findings are constructed by the interaction between the researcher, and the researched. There is a construction here therefore from cultural and societal influences of the researcher (me) and the researched (materials, people and text). The critical ethnographic approach taken here looks at the concept of 'wellbeing at work' from a reflexive perspective, acknowledging the influences of the researcher and the researched. This 'post-structuralist' approach to cultural study and ethnography enables a more accurate understanding of a concept, that is Generative. This is in line with Harvey

(1997) and the process of Dialectical thinking and the generative process of interaction within society.

According to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), the study of organisational culture should focus closely on: 'The clandestine (secretive) forms taken by the dispersed, tactical and makeshift creativity of groups and individuals already caught in the nests of discipline' (Burrell, 1988, p.226 cited in Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992, p.332). In order to help understand the forms culture may take, the notion of a 'bricolage' can be used in order to investigate and understand what is assumed to be a creative process of meaning making by users. There is here in line with the methodology of Critical Ethnography, a movement from the dominant approach to organisational culture, which seeks to produce a single, monolithic, generalised reading of the culture, to a more post-modern view, which seeks to appreciate the organisation as an interweaving of a variety of texts and symbols. This is the approach that this thesis will take, one of Critical ethnography in line with a more post-modern approach to research.

According to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), the term most commonly used for organisational culture is Corporate culture. Corporate culture is defined as 'a culture devised by management and transmitted, marketed, sold or imposed on the rest of the organisation, including action and

belief, the rites, rituals, stories and values which are offered to organisational members as part of the seductive process of achieving membership and gaining commitment' (Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992, p.333). The discussion of corporate culture by Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) goes on to consider the ideas of organisational culture and cultural organisation and also considers whether or not the existence of subcultures has the ability to destroy the value of an overall culture.

It is argued here that through the symbolic communication of quite straightforward messages, a rational frequency of communication can serve to mask the often underlying complex and indeterminate political and ideological formations, and in the end even serve to normalize and legitimate their basic uncertainties. This has been seen according to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) by Derrida as a 'text', a 'text' to which readers of organisational culture or ethnographers bring their own awareness of other texts, of 'other cultural forms, other evocations and explosions of meaning to their reading of any text, and enter into the text, changing its nature and reproducing it as they consume it; As difference illuminates, consumption is an inseparable part of production' (Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992, p.344).

Further to this, according to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), the understanding of organisational culture requires the careful consideration

of everyday practices within particular organisational and socio-historical contexts. Just as reading is a formative process, the consumption of corporate artefacts in the form of product or image is a significant and neglected part of the process of the re-creation of subjectivity. The exploitation of the margin, in Derrida's (1982) sense, is to turn the meaning of the term, to overturn the direction of the discourse, to deconstruct the culture. It is in this way that the emergence of the force of the other culture can be enabled.

In studying organisational or corporate culture, the position of the researcher as a vessel through which information regarding an organisation's culture needs to be considered and included as part of this re-creation of subjectivity. It is only in this way that it will be possible to come closer to understanding research data for what it is capable of telling us about a given situation. This is the approach of Critical ethnography.

According to Van Maanen (1988), the most familiar and popular form of ethnographic writing is the realist account of a culture when 'A single author typically narrates the realist tale in a dispassionate, third person voice' (Van Maanen, 1988, p.45). There is an assumption in the realist tale of an authenticity of the cultural representations conveyed by the text. Van Maanen (1988) goes on to outline four characteristics of a study

which make it in the form of a realist tale. The first is the almost complete absence of the author from the finished text. According to Van Maanen (1979), there are first order facts and second order theories derived from any ethnographic enquiry. There is reliance here on the possibility if uncovering a truth and on a realist account.

Second, there is a focus on the minute and mundane details of everyday life of the people studied. Third, a belief that the native's point of view has been accurately recorded and presented in the final text and finally, a fourth characteristic of realist ethnography is a firm belief that the account presented is correct and that the culture has been fully understood and accurately represented. It is argued by Van Maanen (1988), that no ethnography is written in a social and historical vacuum, and that there are always factors outside of the direct fieldwork experience that determine the information obtained.

Another aspect of Critical ethnography is outlined by Linstead (1997). Linstead (1997) argues that the point of social anthropology is not simply to explain a situation as an external observer, but to understand what the members of the studied group think is happening as insiders. The rigour involved in ethnography comes from its constant exposure to the group being researched, the descriptions and accounts of this studied group and also a reflexive approach by the author of their role in the final accounts.

According to Geertz (1988), the tendency towards realism in ethnography and the sidelining of the ‘author’ often to appendices has resulted from a pre conception, or misconception, that the inclusion of the author or their subjectivity will obscure the uncovering of some kind of ‘reality’. The epistemological assumption made in this case is one of realism; that there is a truth or reality of a situation to be found, and with a careful enough approach, free from as much bias and contamination as possible, an accurate and true account of a reality can be recorded.

3.4 Previous ethnographic studies : Strengths and weaknesses

A study by Kunda (1992) investigated aspects of the culture at a large corporation that designs, develops, manufactures, sells and services a number of popular high-tech products’ (Kunda, 1992, p.26), referred to in the study as ‘Tech’. The fieldwork for this study was carried out in 1985 as part of a doctoral dissertation and subsequently published as a book in its own right. Kunda’s role within the organisation at this time was as an unstructured observer.

In this study by Kunda (1992), the issue of why Kunda (1992) chose to undertake a fieldwork project in order to gain a better understanding of organisations is tackled by describing parts of his background (mainly work and educational). He also addresses aspects of his personal background, including aspects of his culture that are different from the

culture of the country he did his fieldwork in. Kunda (1992) goes on to describe how his cultural background influenced the likelihood of him taking an interpretive approach to studying organisations entailing an approach of self-exploration and discovery. This ‘confessional’ piece (Van Maanen, 1988) in relation to the story of ‘Tech’ that is the study ‘Engineering culture’, is presented as an appendix; as supplementary to the main text.

Kunda (1992) explains in the first few lines of this section of this appendix that ‘This study belongs to the genre known as ‘ethnographic realism’ (Kunda, 1992, p.229). The confessional presented in the appendix at the end of the book is designed to supplement the main text presented; a way of understanding why certain things were done in the way they were during this study. The rest of the study however contains very little reflection as events occur and uses a ‘fly on the wall’ descriptive style to present these events.

The study of ‘Tech’ considers themes such as the organisation’s ‘ideology’, ‘presentational rituals’ and the ‘self and organisation’. There is a tendency in this study towards a realist approach to ethnography according to Van Maanen’s (1988) characteristics of the ‘realist tale’ as described in the previous section. There is in actual fact a complete absence of the author throughout the final work, but the prominent

presence of a description of the mundane details of everyday life with the final written account presented in a no-nonsense way leaving very little room for alternative interpretations. There is however throughout the study a consideration of the symbolic and textual aspects of the culture. Myths, stories, aesthetics, artefacts and organisational symbols are all considered and analysed as a part of this study.

According to Gowler and Legge (1992), it is through the rhetoric of bureaucratic control, i.e. the use of highly expressive language, that management prerogatives can be constructed and legitimised in terms of a rational, goal directed image of organisational effectiveness. But that it is not just that verbal activity involved the use of rhetoric, but that formal systems of word delivery, identified in this study of 'Tech', that involve several layers of texture and meaning. These symbolic aspects of the culture are considered and analysed in this study.

In another ethnographic study of an organisation and management practices, Beynon (1973) looks at the culture at the Ford Motor company and presents his work in the form of a book; He begins the study with the statement 'This book is about these men. It is about the men who are paid to make motorcars for one of the largest companies in the world. A company dominated by one of the world's largest family fortunes. It is about the men who work for Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company'

(Beynon, 1973, p.12). One striking feature of this study is that the organisation has not been anonymised. The study is critical of the Ford Motor company and even goes as far as to print official documents such as letters obtained whilst Beynon was at the organisation; However, Beynon (1973) chooses not to anonymise the organisation and proceeds to analyse it from a critical perspective. This is unusual in the final presentation of organisational ethnographies however there are times when anonymity takes from the final analysis in hand.

The study by Beynon (1973) is structured in such a way that chapters represent themes within the culture at the Ford Motor company. Chapter headings are include 'On the line', 'controlling the line', 'insecurity and struggle', 'The roots of activism', 'Leaders and followers' and '1969:strike'. The first four chapters before these present a history and background of the Ford Motor company and its geographical whereabouts. The study concludes by outlining the political significance of the strikes and the struggles endured by workers in relation to the struggle against the system of domination of capitalism. The findings are considered in their geographical and historical context throughout the study.

Although this study also takes a realist approach to ethnographic inquiry in that the author is absent from the account, there is mention in the text itself of Beynon's status at the time as a research student at Liverpool

University, and the impact of this fact about his personal life on responses from his interviewees. In an extract from an interview Beynon (1973) carried out with one of the workers in the study, it is apparent although not analysed further that the difference between his background and that of the workers did affect the relationship between him and those he was studying. The fact that Beynon (1973) when graduated will have career options he can take and so has a choice as to what he will do next made him very different from the workers. An occasion for Beynon (1973) when this becomes apparent, is when he is asked during an interview with one of the workers what he will do after his studies; and he answers that 'he doesn't know'. There is then a pause from the worker before he says 'it must be great that – not knowing' (Beynon, 1973, p.121). Although Beynon (1973) believes that he is able to empathise with the workers problems at Ford, the workers are aware of the fact that in the end the issues are not things that Beynon himself needs to worry about, and that he has choices in life, whereas they have few of these choices.

In the study according to Beynon (1973), although many of the workers aspire to leave Ford before the age of 40, when asked what they would actually be doing in 10 years time they would become hesitant. The issue however of this difference between himself and those he is studying during the research is not discussed further.

This type of story telling is in line with the convention outlined by Van Maanen (1988) as ‘the confessional tale’. As opposed to the more common convention in ethnography of the realist tale, in which the author is removed and there is an assumed ‘doctrine of immaculate perception’ (Van Maanen, 1988, p.74), the confessional tale accepts the human qualities of the researcher and shows them in the finished work. Biases, character flaws and bad-habits are discussed in order to show the difficulties and disorder present in at times of fieldwork.

Another ethnographic study by Delbridge (1998) conducts research at two manufacturing facilities: The first one named by the researcher as ‘Valleyco’ (a pseudonym) which lasted three months, the second one again a pseudonym ‘Nippon CTV’, lasted one month. The focus was on the implementation and subsequent impact of new ‘Japanese’ manufacturing techniques on the experiences of workers, and on workplace relations.

In this study by Delbridge (1998), there is a move away from a completely realist approach to ethnography, towards more of a reflexive approach including a discussion of some of the changes that were made by the researcher in order to fit in with the research setting. The final study begins with some sections addressing the issues of ‘bias in ethnography’ and ‘building relationships’. Within these sections, Delbridge (1998)

discusses how he behaved in the research setting, how people seemed to respond to him and the changes he began to make in order to get access to his research data. According to Delbridge (1998):

'Each time I was introduced to someone and spent any length of time in their company, the conversation would naturally turn to who I was, where I lived, how long I had worked for the company, and so on...there is only so much one can expect to achieve through baldly stating these sentiments and the communication skills of the researcher are immensely important' (Delbridge, 1998, p.17-18)

This extract from the section on 'bias in ethnography' highlights some of the difficulties and worries running through the researcher's mind whilst participating in the field. The section goes on to talk about aspects of the job that may have limited the ability of the researcher to communicate effectively, for example the body being obscured by the nature of the job being carried out in the case of maintaining eye contact during conversations, and body language being key in communication between people. Delbridge (1998) goes on in this section to talk about the ways in which he sought to minimize the effect of his presence on the field 'in seeking to minimise the effect of my presence I was often required to act and behave naively or like a chameleon and adopt different views and values at different times' (Delbridge, 1998, p.18).

There is here again a move towards a more 'confessional tale' approach to ethnography, with the recognition by Delbridge that 'since the researcher is part of the social world that is being studied and has intrinsic

values and beliefs from which they cannot wholly detach themselves, absolute neutrality or true objectivity is impossible to achieve' (Delbridge, 1998. p.18). There is therefore an attempt in this study to consider these aspects of the research process, not just in an appendix as a supplement to the already told tale, but as part of the main body of the study.

Taking this non-realist approach further, Delbridge (1998) begins in parts of the study to tell and 'impressionist tale' of his fieldwork. This is defined by Van Maanen (1998) as 'a dramatic and vibrant recall of events during fieldwork'. Delbridge (1998) uses this style of story telling in his account of his first period of research. He describes his journey into work, things he saw on the way, the weather, the light, his feelings of anxiety and stress, his fears, and the affect of these things on his ability to carry his research. According to Van Maanen (1998), this type of story is a 'representational means of cracking open the culture and the fieldworkers way of knowing it so that both can be jointly examined. Impressionist writing keeps both subject and object in constant view. The epistemological aim is then to braid the knower with the known' (Van Maanen, 1998, p.102). This type of approach enables an understanding of how the researcher may have interpreted the data collected, and also constructs a window into the process of obtaining the data.

The study outlines one of its themes as the 'significance of communication' within organisations. In one of the organisations studied, Nippon CTV, certain messages and behaviours are stressed through the emphasis of certain points through both internally consistent procedures and symbolic actions. From this, the study ends critically in that it concludes that, the import of 'Japanese' management systems is a way of advancing the movement of capitalism. That Britain has appealed to Japanese firms as a low cost location for the shifting of low-complexity, labour intensive operations entailing routine, non-innovative work to the UK from Japan. The effect of this is that the jobs of previously skilled, middle managers in the UK are quickly reduced to the level of their workforce. Delbridge (1998) could have taken this further into theories regarding the affect of this on society and individuals themselves. The lack of opportunity for innovation and creativity created by the implementation of these new Japanese manufacturing systems may result in a distancing of the individual from the job in hand and in turn an alienation from the product.

A study by Watson (1994) entitled 'In search of management' looking at an organisation called ZTC Ryland, begins by questioning who will actually read his final study. Watson (1994) was asked this question more than once by the people he was researching, and he always struggled to give an answer. It is a question however that needed to be addressed. Watson (1994) writes in this study about the questions going around his

head before embarking on his fieldwork. Watson (1994) makes no claim to be a neutral reporter and allows the readers to judge for themselves something of the way he influences the events he writes about. According to Watson (1994), culture is defined as 'the system of meanings which are shared by members of a human grouping and which define what is good and bad, right and wrong and what are the appropriate ways for members of that group to think and behave' (Watson, 1994, p.21). Watson (1998) argues that management culture provides meaning for those who work for organisations, very much like religion, fables and pop culture. It is for this reason that stories, myths and legends appear to be so popular in business organisations (Peters and Waterman, 1982, p.75 cited in Watson, 1998, p.22). It is therefore made possible through the use of organisational culture to make order out of chaos.

The study by Watson (1998) makes mention of the author at any stage, and after a particularly honest and descriptive start, goes on to make frequent mention of himself, his feelings and the process he went through to collecting his data throughout the rest of the study. The study itself concludes that there are good and bad managers and ways of managing, and that managers themselves are humans who have their own worries and concerns about their jobs. An emphasis is put throughout the study on discourse and language as a tool for management to utilise and these components are considered throughout the study.

Casey (1995) in her study of the fictionally named 'Hephaestus Corporation' set out to study the effects of post-industrial changes in the institution of work on the self. The organisation selected by Casey (1995) is 'a world leader in the development and manufacture of advanced technological machines and systems' (Casey, 1995, p.90). The study is described by Casey (1995) as an extensive field study of a large multi-national corporation in the 1991-1992 academic year. Questions about the self-society relationship are posed. During this time, and after a few months of observation, in-depth interviews with 60 employees were carried out.

The study begins by summarising theory about work and the self. There is an in-depth introduction covering various movements in social theory and philosophy, thus locating the study in a particular social and historical context. There are then chapters called 'discourses of production' and 'designer employees'. Throughout these chapters, work is considered as a discursive and symbolic practice. It is argued further by Casey (1995) that we are in a post-occupational phase of work accompanied by post-industrial solidarity. Various forms of new work organisation, such as the idea of the 'team' and 'family' are discussed by Casey (1995), these being ways in which hierarchy is eliminated and employees are supposedly empowered. However, many contradictions are found in the study that

mean these ways of working are not carried through from discourse to real experiences.

The study although very interesting, seems to lack any reflexivity on the part of the author and is very much a realist study (Van Maanen, 1998).

The study was undertaken by Casey (1995) over a year and the results are reported in a matter of fact, objective way. There is little mention of her own anxieties as a researcher, her position in any of the hierarchies she is investigating, or the fact that she is a woman in the male dominated industry of manufacturing.

Martin (1992) argues that it is important to see culture from multiple perspectives, in order to include the views of 'lower ranking' employees, such as women and ethnic minority groups. It is argued here by Martin (1992) that once the voices of these people are heard, the idea of a single organisational culture understood in the same way by all of its members seems to be an overly simple one. The interests therefore of white people and of men have been over emphasised in research. In order to do this, Martin (1992) uses the integration, differentiation and fragmentation perspectives to analyse the same organisation, one she calls OZCO.

These three different perspectives are used to show how the same set of data can be used to show three different perspectives. The integration

perspective argues that there is one understood culture and that this is shared by all those within the organisation. The differentiation perspective argues that there are differences between how certain groups within the organisation perceive the culture, and the fragmentation perspective argues that there are ambiguities present within both of the former perspectives and that this means that there isn't any consistency present.

This approach to ethnography challenges the assumptions behind realist approaches to ethnography that assumes the researcher's or author's interpretation of the data and culture is the same as everybody else's. This is different to the reflexive approaches taken by researchers in which various possibilities are considered, for example Martin (1992).

A study by Roy (1959) involves him as the researcher becoming part of a small group of manual workers. The study is carried out over a two month period of participant observation during which time Roy endures the 'monotony' of the job in hand in order to carry out his research. During this time, Roy (1959) discovers that the group he was a part of had a game which involved 'planned' interruptions to the work schedule for periods known to those in the group as 'banana time', 'cake time', 'coffee time', 'fish time' and 'peach time'. It was found by Roy (1959) in this study that the shared monotony of the job was eased through this game whereby various members of the group played tricks on each other. It was

therefore through the use of humour in this group that they were able to carry on with their jobs.

The study talks about Roy (1959)'s feeling throughout what seemed to be an ordeal for him. There were occasions when he felt like leaving due to the pain of the job, however the discovery of what was first of all his own game, and then the realisation that others in the group were also playing a game meant a renewed spirit and the discovery of a way of getting through the pain. Roy (1959) says at the end of this study that he is sad to leave his job in the group and to return to his job as a research fellow.

There is a tendency throughout this study for Roy (1959) to be self-reflexive about his involvement in the group, and about his feelings for the job. The feeling of wanting to quit a job that is for research is one that is a difficult decision to make, and in this case especially interesting as it is through his findings that Roy (1959) manages to keep going. It is the games that the real workers play in their group that keeps Roy (1959) going in his participant role long enough to understand the culture in this small group. The games keep his moral up as much as the morale of the workers.

In reviewing these ethnographic studies of organisations, it can be seen that more traditional ethnographic studies of organisations do have a

tendency to take a more realist approach to ethnographic research, in a tradition of anthropological discovery of an unknown 'reality'. Changes in ethnographic writing theory and assumptions are becoming more apparent and the next section will outline these in more detail.

3.5 Culture and organisations

According to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), the term most commonly used for organisational culture is 'corporate culture'. This is defined by Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) as 'a culture devised by management and transmitted, marketed, sold or imposed on the rest of the organisation, including action and belief, the rites, rituals, stories and values which are offered to organisational members as part of the seductive process of achieving membership and gaining commitment' (Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992, p.333). The idea however of an 'organisational' culture is seen by Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) as different to that of a 'corporate' culture. An organisational culture is seen as something that can be created by organisational members, perhaps resisting or taking an ironic view of a dominant culture. There is implied in this idea of 'organisational' culture, the existence of fragmentation and so the possibility of 'subcultures'. It is argued therefore that culture in organisations has a diverse and plural nature (Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), Linstead (1993)); that it is only when organisational culture is thought to be anything other than diverse, plural and fragmented, that a

dominant ideology or ‘corporate’ culture must be employed in order to make the construction of a corporate identity seem natural.

According to Pink (2004), critical ethnographic approaches to understanding this corporate or organisational culture, do not measure their success and level of understanding in terms of immersion in the subject and wholeness of the account. There is in this case, recognition of ‘an inescapable partiality and partisanship’ (Pink, 2004, p.510). Martin (1992) puts forward a fragmentation perspective of culture. The fragmentation view focuses on ambiguity as the essence of culture. Confusion and uncertainty about a company’s commitment to egalitarianism, innovation and concern for employee wellbeing is considered. Formal and informal practices, as well as cultural forms, are interpreted and often re-interpreted in a variety of ways. Employees in turn are unsure about which interpretations are correct and which are not. The fragmentation perspective therefore brings ambiguity to the foreground, rather than excluding it outside a realm of cultural or sub-cultural clarity. It is an exploration of the complexity of relationships between one cultural manifestation and another. There is a recognition here of the demographic and international sources of diversity in organisations such as ethnic, religious, racial, social and age differences. A fragmentation study therefore employs an analysis of difference to explore multiple meanings, paying special attention to absence as well as presence. This is a mode of

thinking that is particularly useful for understanding variation within groups and revealing the ways in which context influences interpretation, context in this case refers to the influence of the researcher and also just as importantly, to the recipients of the research. There is an emphasis here on context and the specific moments in organisational life. It is when such group variation and fragmentation is considered, that contextual determinants of behaviour and absences are seen as important sources of understanding and silenced voices of demographic minorities are more likely to be heard.

This research follows such an approach, and the perspective that the investigation of a seemingly ordinary and stable culture, in the form of rituals and symbols within organisations, needs to be aware of the fact that the rules and interpretations offered by organisations are only partial. These ‘representations’ of culture are just that; representations, and there are many possibilities of these, depending on who you are. They are in effect socially constructed, by organisations, members of these organisations and also by the researcher themselves (Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992)). According to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), it is through the concept of organisational culture that management is able to render the human and emotional aspects of the management process rational. This critical approach to corporate or organisational culture assumes that culture initiatives that co-opt or lay claim to symbols without

considering their historical and political significance and asymmetries need to be exposed. There is a signal here therefore of a movement in the study of culture and in anthropology from the dominant approach to organisational culture, which seeks to produce a reading of the culture, to a post-modern view which seeks to appreciate the organisation as an interweaving of a variety of texts and textual features. There has been however, according to Pink (2004), a sociological neglect of the meanings of visual signs and signals within society and also a neglect of the possibilities in using the visual to communicate to the reader. According to Pink (2006) during the early twentieth century, the more sensory and subjective nature of the visual was rejected by the field of academic anthropology. During the mid twentieth century however there emerged a marginalised presence and photography and film were not totally absent from the field of anthropology. Photographs from this period were often used as illustration, which is now seen as being part of the positivist pursuit of objectivity. There was however importantly during this time, a shift towards an interdisciplinary approach to anthropology. According to Pink (2006), a key factor in the realisation during the late 1980s for the need for anthropologists to re-consider their epistemological assumptions of their representations was the work by James Clifford and George E Marcus (1986). This period was marked as a one that experienced a 'crisis of representation'. According to Clifford and Marcus (1986), the previously dominant ideology of writing up as a method of keeping good

field notes, making accurate maps and then ‘writing up results’ has given way to a view of culture as being composed of a seriously contested collection of codes and representations. Clifford and Marcus (1986) argue that ethnography is in fact an interdisciplinary phenomenon spreading into many fields, such as organisation studies, where there is a desire to understand culture. In addition to this, they argue that ethnographic truth is always inherently partial, as ethnographic study cannot avoid excluding parts of the culture being investigated through aspects of the process such as translation of experience and the selection of ‘appropriate’ data. The argument here and of this study is that any ethnography is just one representation of a culture, and that this is not an inherent weakness in the method, but a strength, in that the researcher is self-conscious and reflexive in his or her ability to represent truth. Although poly-vocality was once avoided in traditional approaches to ethnography, more recently the approach of monophonic authority is being questioned, and strategies to avoid this, are being implemented. The inclusion in a presented study for example, of fragments of data, influences, fieldnotes and other texts enable a glimpse into the making of a study. Following then this ‘crisis of representation’ experienced during the late 1980s, the 1990s saw anthropologists seeking out new ways of writing and ‘also ways in which to represent sensory embodied, and visual aspects of culture, knowledge and experience’ (Pink, 2006, p.14). This new interest in more experimental forms of writing also extended to inspire the use of new

modes and media in representation. These included film, photography, performance anthropology and a move towards the recognition of the potential of multi-media in anthropology.

3.6 New Media and ethnography

Alongside realisations about the epistemological foundations of ethnography, developments in the use of multi-media and digital technologies have also been influenced by changes in technology and the availability of these technologies. According to Harper (2000), developments in science and the instruments that have been used to record the modern world, including the camera which became popular around 1839, have determined to a certain degree how research has been represented. According to Harper (2000), the revolution in seeing towards the end of the nineteenth century re-defined the relationship between seeing and knowing. Instruments were considered to reveal reality more accurately than the human eye. This he argues led to a trust in the ability of instrument-based perception to represent visual reality as the privileged sense of science. The authority of the image, however, did not last due to a series of changes in technology, which helped to redefine the social role of image making. These new technologies altered our perceptions of meanings and their relationship to context, for example through the ability to record moving, in addition to still images. However, despite its potential to record 'real life' the development of moving image

technology seemed to actually support the hegemonic systems that the science of sociology aimed to critique by privileging the researcher. Early documentary making entailed the separate recording of images and sound. This meant the researcher recorded a narrative over the top of the moving image thus leaving little space for any alternative interpretation apart from the views of the author. By the 1930s it was possible to add sound to film, however, this was usually done in the style of a voice-over or commentary. The introduction of portable cameras in the early 1960s enabled the simultaneous recording of sound and image and provided a way of reducing the hegemony of the author's voice in visual research. These technological developments meant that there was potential to gradually move away from modernist preconceptions regarding the subject of photographs and film, towards a more equal power relationship between researcher and research subject. However, the methods described above were not adopted as a common research technique due to their expense. It was not until further advances were made in video technology during the early 1980s which meant the cost of recording synchronized audio and video was reduced, that they became more widespread.

Contemporary technologies now present the researcher with exciting ways of presenting visual research (Harper, 2000; Pink 2001a, 2006). The commonplace use of technologies such as the internet and interactive CD

and DVD mean that the viewer, rather than the author, can control the dissemination of the data. For example, CD-ROM technology allows a viewer to watch a film in any of the possible ways, whether forward, backward, in slow motion, in relation to specific concepts defined by the researcher, alongside accompanying text about context, or just as a sequence of still images. The dissemination of image in the form of a book, for example, with an accompanying CD has been considered to meet the criteria to be called ‘a post-modern argument against the hegemony of its own form’ (Harper, 2005, p.748). It supports and encourages multiple disseminations of the same data and in-turn multiple interpretations. Because the technology can be interactive, control is handed over to the reader. The dissemination of the data becomes personal and experiential. This has an effect of helping to deconstruct the authority of the ‘scientist’ by making the reader the author of their version of the research as much of his or her learning experience as is possible in that situation. According to Schwartz (1989), in order to benefit social research, the use of visual data, photographs especially, must be grounded in the interactive construction of meaning they are a part of. The viewing and subsequent interpretation of visual photographs is shaped by social context, cultural understandings and prevailing group norms. Schwartz (1989) goes onto argue that these multiple-meanings and interpretations that the viewers introduce can be used positively for the richness of the data they produce.

According to Bell and Bryman (2003), the proliferation of online and internet communication since the 1990s has had implications for business research methods. Students are increasingly drawing on the internet as an environment within which to conduct business research. In addition to this, according to Pink (2006), visual and digital media are becoming more easily accessible and user friendly. The potential is therefore there for new forms of visual representation that can engage with social theory, encouraging new and innovative ways of representing anthropological fieldwork. Depending on the target audience of the research, ethnographic studies can be framed in a way as to communicate and best represent the data online. In addition to the potential for representation using hyper and new media for the representation of ethnographic studies, there is also the argument that web sites and web pages can be rich sources of data in their own right. According to Pink (2006), ‘the use of hypermedia in ethnography can combine written, theoretical, descriptive, pedagogical and applied anthropological narratives with reflexive audiovisual and photographic representations of knowledge and experience that can only be communicated (audio)visually’ (Pink, 2006, p.106). Pink (2006) argues that, the use of hypermedia has the ability, depending on the author, to reflect, imitate and deconstruct aspects of anthropological film and writing. This is in line with the desire for a post-modern, deconstructive approach (outlined in a previous section by Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992)), to

consider the absent as well as the present in relation to representations of culture. There is an opportunity in using hypermedia and multimedia technology, to carry out a critical ethnographic analysis of data from various locations, both online and elsewhere. The advantage of using such an approach is that a post-structural or non-linear approach enables the consideration of multiple interpretations and voices that have been contextualized, which is in line with a Critical ethnographic methodology.

An example of how these technologies have been used in ethnography is a study by Ruby (<http://astro.ocis.temple.edu/~ruby/opp/>) entitled 'Oak Park Stories'. In this forty year ethnographic study of Oak Park, a Chicago suburb where Ruby attended school, Ruby describes his work on his website as a series of experimental, reflexive and digital ethnographies. It is experimental in the sense that Ruby has not published his work in a traditional book format but has instead made an interactive, non-linear work that contains photographs, video and text. There is no defined beginning, middle or end. Readers are free to begin anywhere they please and ignore anything that doesn't interest them. According to Harper (2005), it is precisely that a variety of communication modes - text, still and moving images - can be integrated in this study that makes this mode of dissemination so attractive and effective.

The epistemological assumptions here are that there is not one truth that can be assumed to exist but that there are multiple representations and interpretations depending on the context of the research and its dissemination. The difference between reflection and interpretation is considered here when analysing culture.

There has been a predominantly positivist and realist approach to ethnographic exploration. According to Pink (2004), the difference between academic anthropology and documentary cinema in the post war twentieth century was two very distinct two different ‘ways of seeing’. Whereas anthropology saw the world as an object to be scientifically investigated, cinema concentrated on more critical notions of reality, and developing new notions about the world. The field of written anthropology has however recently distanced itself from these truth claims, towards a project that favours reflexivity, subjectivity and the questioning of claims to truth (Linstead 1993, Pink 2001a, Pink 2004).

According to Van Maanen (1988), in the realist tale of ethnography, ‘A single author typically narrates the realist tale in a dispassionate, third person voice’ (Van Maanen, 1988, p.45). There is an assumption in the realist tale of an authenticity of the cultural representations conveyed by the text. Van Maanen (1988) goes on to outline four characteristics of a study, which constitute the realist tale. The first is the almost complete

absence of the author from the finished text. Second, there is a focus on the minute and mundane details of everyday life among the people studied. Third, there is a belief that the native's point of view has been accurately recorded and presented in the final text. And finally, a firm belief that the account presented is correct and that the culture has been fully understood and accurately represented. It is argued by Van Maanen (1988), that no ethnography is written in a social and historical vacuum, and that there are always factors outside of the direct fieldwork experience that determine the information obtained.

According to Linstead (1993), positivist ethnography depends on its ability to give an accurate account of the 'native'. Some may see the inevitable failure of this to be a symptom of bad technique or, that the 'existence of multiple realities makes the unity of this 'other world' illusory' (Linstead, 1993, p.103). According to Linstead (1993), the interest in multiple voices in ethnography is in part epistemological and linked to the question of representation, and is in part ethical, linked to the question of representation. Self-reflexivity is also an important part of this process of re-presentation, representation and presentation of these fragmented social realities. The process is therefore a creative one, with this creativity extending to the recipients of the research. The idea above of paying attention to absence as well as to presence can be linked to the theory of deconstructive ethnography (Linstead 1993). It is through this method of

considering the contradictions in the ‘text’ and showing the reliance on the ‘present’ that these studies embrace, that any move towards reflexivity can be attempted. Linstead (1993) argues that one problem of an approach of post-modern ethnography is how to represent the research in the light of the need for such reflexivity.

One-way of opening up an ethnographic study to such a deconstructed possibility is through the use of hypermedia technologies. According to Pink (2001a), hypermedia texts are a combination of video, still photography, written words, CD-ROM, DVD and the Internet. The texts are a move towards reflexivity, as they can be designed and experimented with multi-linearity. Hypermedia provides researchers with scope both to acknowledge and represent different written, visual, academic, and informant narratives and voices, without necessarily privileging any of them. This will be achieved through critically analysing the data collected and revealing the underlying political and social influences behind the texts by combining various pieces of data in the form of image and text in order to deconstruct the data. The methodology of CDA combined with ethnographic data will inform this analysis.

This approach also presents academics with the opportunity to engage in written theoretical debates that use written words in a way that only words can be used, and also use video clips and photographic stills to

communicate the types of knowledge that they too best can communicate. Hypermedia ethnographies are multi linear, multimedia, interactive and reflexive. This interactive component can empower viewers with new ways of learning using text and images, allowing them to follow their own, admittedly guided, but often unpredictable and new paths. According to Pink (2001a), although different media communicate in different ways, the media used does not necessarily determine how the information is received. It is according to Pink (2001), important to bear in mind that viewers and audiences of ethnographic images are also interpreters of the text. This is the argument for reflexivity in that it is not just the context that the research is carried out in that needs to be acknowledged for a better understanding of a culture, but also the fact that the representation of a culture is understood differently by different viewers. The use of hypermedia technology enables therefore through the possibility of different representations directed partly by the researcher in selecting the data to be presented in the first place and then subsequently by the viewer in constructing their own understanding and interpretation of the research. This is a critique in some ways of the ethnographic convention of 'going into the field', 'getting the data', 'going home to analyse' and then finally 'writing it up'. It is a critique of the failure in some ways of this linear representation of ethnographic data to recognize the multiple and simultaneous realities that can exist, and of the 'inter-subjectivity between ethnographers and the 'subjects' of their research and the different voices,

perspectives and temporal and spatial locations that ethnography involves' (Pink, 2001a, p.117). The argument here is therefore for academic, local and individual narratives to co-exist, reducing the hierarchical relationships contained within the representations, both in the discourses represented or within the mediums used. It is a move therefore towards a more democratic model (Pink, 2001a).

The emphasis here for the interpretation of culture is shifting from the author to the recipient, the recipient being considered as being part of a creative process of the interpretation of the text (Linstead 1993; Pink 2001a). With ethnographic hypermedia, users participate in interpreting ethnographic representations. According to Pink (2001a), ultimately ethnographic knowledge is produced through the personal experiences of the researcher, and also through the experiences and identities of users of hypermedia, multiple narratives can be constructed. Users of hypermedia can therefore make sense of the different types of information available to them, and also produce their own linear narratives from it. This is one solution to the problem of the need for reflexivity in post-modern ethnography. According to Pink (2001a), readers, users and viewers of the texts have often been neglected and representation has focused largely on ethnographers, informants, texts and their associated construction. Through the use of hypermedia, various data from all stages of the research process can be made available to the viewer. For

example, finished documents may be contextualised by part finished notes that contributed to the finished work, photographs may be contextualised by other photographs taken on the same day, but not necessarily taken of the research subject. The hypermedia representation can also be seen as ‘unfinished’, with a view being maintained so that interpretations can always be re-interpreted, and so that representations can be re-represented. According to Pink (2001a), ‘it has been argued that conventional linear ethnographic texts do not appropriately represent the complexity and diversity of contemporary culture, society and experience’ (Pink, 2001a, p.166).

3.7 A cultural montage

‘We communicate in a variety of different ways. For example, we represent our world visually: through artefacts, still pictures, television, video and via the typescript and layout of verbal text itself. Furthermore, visual representation is acknowledged to be increasingly influential in shaping our views of the world; it thus concerns sociologists both as a topic of social analysis, and in terms of its communicative potential’ (Chaplin, 1994, p.1).

The argument here is that in order to consider the various ‘texts’ that contribute to a culture, it is important to consider as many of the influences as possible in the analysis. According to Gagliardi (1992) for

example, when we speak of organisational culture literature, there is often little said about corporate artifacts. According to Gagliardi (1992), the interpretation of artefacts is often left to a shared common sense. According to Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), symbolic forms of culture are a powerful means of apparently transmitting meaning without explication. Chaplin (1994) also argues that we communicate in a variety of different ways. That we represent our world visually: through artefacts, still pictures, television, video and via the typescript and layout of verbal text itself. According to this argument, visual representation, including colour, design, and style should concern sociologists both as a topic of social analysis and also for its potential for communication; that there is a link between organisational studies and the aesthetics of expression (Gagliardi, 1992).

With regard to the way in which we present our data, visual components of social research text can be considered in order to communicate ideas (Chaplin, 1994; Gagliardi (1992); Pink (2004)). Pink (2004), shows through the use of hypermedia texts for her project *women's worlds*, that unlike on-line journal articles that follow a conventional linear style, through the use of different strategies in conjunction with hypermedia text, such as video, written text, colour, layout and linkages, various anthropological and ethnographic ideas can be communicated. Pink (2004) shows how hypermedia representations offer academics new

opportunities to use colour to, for example, create 'an ironic and critical metaphor to support the academic argument framing the project' (Pink, 2004, p.176). In her work on gender themes in the home, Pink (2004) chose to use the colour pink ironically by giving all the pages of her project *women's worlds*' a salmon pink navigation bar. This worked to give her argument that 'the home is not always a feminine space', a continuous presence on pages where it maybe was not expressed in words.

According to Pink (2004):

'Through this use of colour, I intended to embed my argument about plural gender and individual resistance to housewifely identities through the visual design of the project. Indeed the two women who feature in the case studies have very different ideal colour schemes involving purple, green and futuristic chrome designs. In addition I have used colour to represent the different types of text in the CD. Anthropological writing and my own commentaries are in black print on a white background, corresponding to the presentation of the discourses they seek to engage with. Interview transcripts continue to play on the theme of the gendered home, using black on a pink background' (Pink, 2004, p.177)

According to Sassoon (1990), the relationship between colour and social matters is a theme that seems to have been neglected in sociological literature. He goes on to argue that this is surprising, as there is no doubt that the impact of colour in social life is significant and considerable; that they transcend across our experiences and often reflect symbolic discrimination. Sassoon (1990) argues that:

The colors that identify the various social organisations, or certain artifacts, are often very revealing about implicit categories of values. The anchoring of a social organisation or of an artifact to a single colour is a

strong clue as to the presence of an ideology. Changes in the tonality or the saturation of a colour translate into interesting changes in the ideological vectors and the social significance of the artifacts (Sassoon, 1990, p.169).

This highlights the importance of not neglecting the visual component of organisational communication, as it is in this visual component that many ideas about the social and organisational life of the organisation are contained. One example of this is that according to Sassoon (1990), the colour green merits special attention as it is closely linked to a political movement. The protection of nature and closeness to nature is associated with the colour green, as is the desire for a greater spiritual tranquility and harmony with one's own existence, and in relation with other forms of life. There are also ideas related here to a passive, traditional, healthy and natural way of life.

This study will aim not to privilege written data over visual data, but to use both types of data to inform each other taking therefore the view that both types of data can yield valuable research findings. Typography, colour, style and design used in the construction of the organisational culture will all be considered alongside written text. The consideration of artifacts, the aesthetics and art surrounding the organisation will be central to the analysis, in line with the already outlined approach of discursive analysis.

According to Chaplin (1994), education in our society is mainly concerned

with literacy, with the result that few people involved in the dissemination of academic knowledge think easily or confidently in visual terms. Outside the formal field of visual arts, because of the privileged status accorded to verbal statements and verbal understanding, very few social science texts contain visual depictions. It is argued however by Chaplin (1994), that every social science text in fact makes a visual contribution through their layout, and typescript. Many academic conventions used come from the positivist conception of science. This includes a distancing of the author from the audience, and the use of photographs in some cases as an objective 'window' into the world being studied. According to Chaplin (1994), however, a group of sociologists called 'sociologists of scientific knowledge' (SSK) have challenged the prevailing academic convention that the positivist view of social science should continue to influence the way in which social analysis is presented. Members of SSK argue that the structure of a text should reflect the epistemological assumption of the study.

This opens up new opportunities for experimentation with new literary forms, a desire to critique positivism and a desire to liberate authors from academic constraints. According to Chaplin (1994), aspects of a sociological study, like the space of the page can be used in order to reflect epistemological assumption made during a study. This can work to uncover visual assumptions and discrimination even when dealing with

words. For, it is possible that working with typeface, layout and colour can, for example, expose unequal relationships between organisations, people and ideas. This can be achieved by, for example, using upper or lower case letters, or through reassembling the photograph/frame/caption/text package to give them a different meaning; all this works to reinforce the socially constructed nature of the representation. It is therefore argued by Chaplin (1994) in her chapter entitled 'visual representation and new literary forms', that when typescript and the way in which content is laid out takes an unconventional form, the overall effect on the research is that the essentially interactive relationship between structure and content is enhanced. It is further argued by Chaplin (1994), that our dominant form of communication is either just verbal, or verbal with illustration, and is by men. The idea here therefore is that an unconventional text that uses verbal and visual analysis offers women a chance to see how different uses typography, layout and depictions can be used to structure their work in a more equal way.

Meyer (1991) argues that visual research has the potential to enable a more sophisticated understanding of organisational systems. Because visual and verbal forms of information are encoded and processed differently visual inputs are synthesized by the brain into images thus taking into account the multi-dimensionality and interrelationships of various components within the data. Verbal information on the other hand

is processed and encoded into hierarchical, linear categories making it a more reductionist undertaking. Further, according to Meyer (1991), visual data also has the potential to enhance organisational analysis by enabling a more detailed understanding of organisations as complex, evolving networks of interrelationships. It can therefore be used to gain greater insight into organisational processes and to gain a more holistic and contextual understanding of organisations

Cohen et al (2006), in their discussion of art photography and organisational abjection, argue that visual art has often proved to be a valuable cultural resource for those who have sought to study the underlying, often obscured ways in which human societies are ordered. Cohen et al (2006) argue here that certain forms of art offer the possibility of a rare insight into the forms of organizing that we often take for granted, which may often elude more traditional forms of social research and representation; that the key to this is in the relationship between representation and meaning. There is a capacity the authors argue in art-photography; to re-present the otherwise often excluded aspects of organisational life. They go on to argue that art photography opens up the possibility of triggering thoughts about what lies at the periphery of the ordered, the identical and the conceptual.

3.8 Art and the abject

This idea of highlighting what is often sidelined to the periphery, as in the case of the previously mentioned use of art photography and a focus on what lies outside of the ‘ordered’ can be related back to Martin (1992)’s three perspectives on culture, and in particular, her discussion of what she sees as a ‘differentiation’ perspective. From this perspective, interpretations of content themes, practices, and forms are often found to be inconsistent. Second, there is an assumption that there is no organisation wide consensus. Thirdly, and importantly, within sub-cultural boundaries, clarity reigns while ambiguity is relegated to the periphery. This perspective therefore takes the approach that although there are different interpretations and experiences within specific groups, within these sub-groups, there is more or less a consensus and that any ‘sub-group’ ambiguity is reduced to cultural manifestations that either are, or are not, inconsistent with each other. This study therefore sees the idea, emerging from the literature review, of the ‘counter-culture’, as a sub group formed as a reaction to more corporate and capitalist ideas. It is through this differentiation from the ‘mainstream’ or ‘norm’, that the risk of any organisational and individual conflict can be minimized.

With Martin’s (1992) differentiation perspective, even when conflict is present, the situation is clear enough so that cultural members know they disagree on particular issues or interpretations. In this way, sub-cultural

differentiation is controlled through acknowledging some ambiguity and difference. Any ‘uncontrolled’ difference is therefore pushed aside. Martin (1994)’s ‘fragmentation’ perspective, however, considers the presence of ambiguity as the essence of culture. It celebrates this ambiguity as opposed to obscuring it; it is what is outside of the realm of the ordered that is considered as culture. It is through this concept that the idea of the ‘otherness’ of organisation or as Cohen et al (2006) refer to it, the abject, can be considered. It is through therefore the consideration of the material culture of organisations that sits between the accepted and the abject, that we can begin a critique of the apparent logic and unified nature of culture in contemporary organisations.

Symbolically, abjection is the underside of what our sign systems actively try to disguise and contain. According to Cohen et al (2006), art, by its very ability to represent organisational processes in its very own terms, does not fear the abject. Through an analysis of art photographs, Cohen et al (2006) show that through a discussion of various photographs, who and what becomes the abject in any case is very much a contextual issue. According to Cohen et al (2006), art photography brings to the foreground what is often ‘rendered invisible within the conceptually ordered episteme of organisational identity’ (Cohen et al, p.122, 2006).

Despite all of these reasons to both analyse and utilise the potential of the

visual components of organisational research, according to Gagliardi (1990), little attention has been given to the analysis of artefacts for example in organisations. Artifacts act as elements in the social structure, defining the properties and contours within which actors move. This is at once symbolic as it is physical. These elements can be embodied by institutional arrangements, routine, cognitive frames and imageries as an expression of the deep seated structure that influences the behaviour of the actors. According to Gagliardi (1990), physical settings can for example influence behaviour, as they create physical bounds that allow us to do some things, but not others. Various stimuli such as visual, aural, and tactile can ensure that work is carried out, and experienced, in a certain way.

Rose (2001) argues, that culture can be thought of as the range of meaningful social practices within which visual images are embedded. Crucially however for Rose (2001), an image will depend for its effects on a particular way of seeing. This highlights therefore the importance of allowing reflexivity and multiple interpretations of the representations of culture, for example in the discussion of hyper media technology above. The seeing of an image is a process affected by the social context it takes place in.

According to Berger (1972), we only see what we look at. We are never then looking at just one thing, but at the relation between things and ourselves. 'Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are' (Berger, 1972, p.9). An image according to Berger (1972) is something that has been reproduced by the person that made it. Photographs, according to Berger (1972), are not a mechanical record. When we look at a photograph we are looking at a selected image, produced by a person with their own historical, contextual and political tendencies. Crucially however and in relation to ideas presented about interactive modes of presentation of data, although every image does embody a way of seeing, the way we as viewers and recipients of these images see them also depends on our own ways of seeing (Berger, 1972). According to Berger (1972), when people look at an image, it is affected by peoples learnt assumptions about art. These assumptions include preconceived notions regarding beauty, truth, genius, civilization, form, status and taste. It is argued however that these assumptions are out of date, and that the world as we see it is more than just objective fact, it includes a consciousness of those who represent and interpret it.

3.9 Visual material cultures

Buchanan (2001) puts forward the idea that the high quality still and moving images that we are surrounded by are a taken-for-granted aspect

of our every day lives. Enhanced realism is the conventional argument supporting the use of participant and non-participant visual observation methods, including the use of photographs, film and video as objects of research. There is an assumption here that photography and video can record complex occurrences as they happen. Some continue to think of the camera as merely a data-gathering device, there is a lingering positivism here that the gathering of facts and their interpretation can be separated somehow (Buchanan 2001; Strangleman 2004).

It is argued that the roots of visual ethnography lie in the 'realist tale' (Harper, 1994). Anthropology came into being during the late 19th century and was originally thought of as being closely related to science, which is in itself a science of classification. It was within this context that photography, as a research tool, was used to provide visual information for the classification of races and explanations for social evolution (Harper, 1994). Collier and Collier (1986) argue, for example, that one of the advantages of visual research over other research methods stems from the means by which data is preserved. In comparing photography with the practice of writing fieldnotes, they argue that although photography is an abstracting process of observation, it is different from writing fieldnotes or carrying out interviews, where information is preserved in literate code. There is again an assumption here that photographs can record and illustrate events as they occur. According to

Becker (1974), from the beginning, photography has been used as a tool with which to explore society. According to Becker, a photograph must be 'read' so that every little piece of information contained in the image can be accessed. An image makes statements to do with 'mood, moral evaluation and causal connections' (Becker, 1974, p.9). This argument is however rooted in the positivist epistemology of the pre-existence of a 'truth' or a 'reality'.

According to Banks (1998), there was in the late 1990s an apparent shift in the field of anthropology, away from the study of these abstract systems towards more of a focus on the body, emotion and the senses. According to Henley (2004), there has been a renewed interest in ethnography in recent years coupled with an enhanced concern with specific aspects of phenomenological experience, such as embodiment, performance place and so on. There has also alongside this, been developing interest in visual representations of these aspects of social and cultural life. Reflecting therefore their rapidly increasing importance in society generally, there has been an outburst of anthropological interest in visual media. This has therefore meant a shift in anthropology away from the theoretical positions of functionalism and structuralism, towards more of a focus on phenomenological approaches and how the lives of others are represented. This means that although they run the risk of being accused of depoliticizing anthropology and of an extreme cultural relativism in

which anything goes, new ethnographic approaches have shown themselves to be historically and politically aware (Banks (1998); Da Silva and Pink (2004); Pink (2001a, 2004);).

Harper (1998) goes onto argue that, the value of an image should be assessed not in relation to whether or not the ethnographer has reported accurately what they have or have not seen, but on how much we know about how the photograph came into existence. It is only through this process that we can judge its validity. This calls for a more reflexive approach to visual research and to the treatment of photographs. Pink (2001b) argues that there is a need for a reflexive approach to visual sociology, but that it is not the case that, for example, a queer methodology ensures this. Pink (2001b) calls for an acknowledgement of the inevitable fictions involved in ethnographic research, and also for more collaboration with other disciplines. According to Chaplin (1994), in considering the fact that photographs are socially constructed, whilst acknowledging that they can also provide detailed information about a culture of which they may previously have known little or nothing about, argues that it is possible for social scientists to still take advantage of this dual situation.

However, the potential of visual research in organisation studies has to date been overlooked (Buchanan (2001); Henley (2004); Strangleman

(2004)). Many reasons have been suggested for this, one being that many of the visual images we are faced with in society are trivial and ephemeral, and that this may discourage the treatment of photography as a serious research tool. One reason for this might stem from a reluctance to be 'caught on camera'. As Harper (2000) comments,

'The video revolution has not worked hand in hand with experimental ethnography to redefine the social science. Indeed, the social effects have been trivialized into "funniest home videos" television programmes (now worldwide), in which the extraordinary power of the camera is used to present the lowest common denominator of public life' (Harper, 2000, p.719).

It is possible that the preoccupation with 'catching people out' in photographs has influenced perceptions of visual technologies in general, making people suspicious of the intentions of those holding a camera. This can affect the researcher's chances of gaining access to organisations for visual research. According to Buchanan (2001), the treatment of images as scenes that are set up, posed, lit, angled, framed and subsequently exposed by a photographer who has a selected camera and lens, a choice of conventional and digital, a picture format, and film type of colour, black, white, print, transparency, 35mm, medium and large format, and a choice of mode of presentation and display can influence the way in which the resultant image is viewed and understood. There are also, in line with the idea that images are socially constructed, the influence of past experience and conceptual and interpretive frameworks

on the viewer if the image over which the photographer has no control.

3.10 Critical visual ethnographic methodology

According to Rose (2001), a critical visual methodology considers images as central to the analysis of social life, and not just an illustration or a reflection of written social texts. This is an important point as visual data is often used to illustrate or reflect what is considered as real. It is necessary therefore to be able to reflect in some way on how you or I see images and interpret them in relation to organisational research.

According to Emmison and Smith (2000), we live in a hugely visual society, and social life is visual in many ways. The domain however of visual inquiry, according to Emmison and Smith (2000), is largely overlooked; that the study of the visual dimension of life is not the study of the ‘image’, but that of ‘the seen and the observable’ (Emmison and Smith, 2000, p.ix). This definition extends therefore to buildings, objects and to people, as well as of course to the study of images. It is hard to see how academic use of the camera has progressed, with photographs often still being used as pure illustration or documentation (Chaplin 1994; Emmison and Smith 2000; Pink 2006, Rose 2001). This study takes the perspective, along with Emmison and Smith (2000) that visual research, as it is referred to, should not be confined to analysing images. In moving beyond image in general, and the photograph, it is possible to address

issues related to space and the material world in more general, which this study agrees provide interesting and important data for the study of organisations.

Emmison and Smith (2000) go on to discuss four types of visual data. The first is 2D visual data such as images, signs and representations. Relating this to this study, photographs taken by the researcher, photographs found produced by the organisation about itself and also images presented by the organisation both in advertising, on the internet, in the media and on products will be considered. There are ethical limitations to be considered in relation to using 'homemade' photographs as visual research can be considered as being more intrusive than other types of research such as interviewing and questionnaires. A study by Bell and Bryman (2007) analyses nine ethics codes produced in the UK and the US. As a result of this analysis, eleven categories of ethical principles were discovered. Harm to participants, dignity, privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, deception, affiliation, honesty and transparency, reciprocity and misrepresentation. According to Bell and Bryman however, there is a need for caution in how far certain aspects of research ethics are implemented, for example, in the case of managers, who are often senior and hold power, there is a chance that research boundaries can be tightly fixed and therefore access to certain situations is not possible. In order to meet ethical requirements, people's names will be anonymized. However,

according to Bell and Bryman (2007) ‘sometimes the meaning of a case cannot be adequately conveyed without reference to its identifying features, including geographical location, corporate history and brand image’ (Bell and Bryman, 2007). It is in the case of this study that due to the visual and contextual nature of the approach, some details about the organisation will need to be revealed in order to analyse the culture. However, because of the nature of the approach being interpretive and presenting itself as not one truth, but a version of it, the risk of harm to participants is reduced as it is a process of discourse analysis, which aims to present an alternative.

Next there is a discussion of 3D visual data such as settings, objects and traces. An advantage of 3D data, unlike the predominantly ‘homemade’ 2D data, is that the collection of data is relatively unobtrusive and because the data is often already visible, allows us to explore social life covertly. It is argued here by Emmison and Smith (2000) that because respondents are not always necessary for this kind of inquiry, the inquiry itself is relatively unobtrusive in nature. Another argument for the use of 3D data is that compared to 2D, it can be seen to be more ‘democratic’, as what is produced as 2D data is often the work of academics or other professionals like journalists, photographers and those working in advertising. These people can be seen as the elite, and their representations seen as compounding the inequalities present in our organisations. Social objects

can therefore be studied and culture, knowledge, belief and ideology (Emmison and Smith (2000) encoded into these objects can be investigated (Emmison and Smith (2000), Gagliardi (1990)). Again, relating this type of data to the data collected for this study, includes work place interiors, company vehicle design and product design.

The third type of data considered by Emmison and Smith (2000) is that of 'lived visual data', which is defined by the authors as 'the built environment and its uses'. There is an emphasis here on locations as places where our lives are conducted. There is also an interest here in decoding places, such as museums, houses, shopping malls, offices, parks, streets and gardens. There is an assumption here that these places are not just functional structures. A study for example of shopping malls looks at the space as a 'post-modern' environment. That the design of such a space during late capitalism encompasses various characteristics such as non-linear shapes, various activities unrelated to shopping and entertainers such as singers and jugglers. In relation to this study, head office location and its implications, location and layout of associated events, environmental context of such events. The fourth type of visual data discussed by Emmison and Smith (2000) is that of 'living forms of visual data: Bodies, identities and interaction'. One issue discussed here is that of the presentation of the self. The body is an increasingly central theme in visual research. (Emmison and Smith

(2000); Coffey (1999)). This study will investigate the body as a vehicle for culture in terms of clothing, appearance and interaction with other bodies. Photographs taken by the researcher and existing images will be used to support this. It is through the modification of the body that individuals can signal individual characteristics such as political or religious beliefs, conformity or subgroup membership. Some modifications such as piercings or a hairstyle can be thought of as rebellion against the anonymity and conformity of modernity (Emmison and Smith, 2000). Coffey (1999) argues for example that fieldnotes and observations are often scattered with references to the body and she therefore calls for more attention to be given to the body in ethnographic research and its symbolic significance in the event of social interaction. According to Coffey (1999), aspects of self-identity that are central to reflexive research are concerned with self-appearance and social relations. The construction of self-identity in the field is concerned with the acquisition and presentation of local and esoteric knowledge. According to Emmison and Smith (2000), clothing can be used in a variety of ways to assert personal and group status. Clothing is seen by Emmison and Smith (2000) as a network of signs. According to Coffey (1999), much of the work of fieldwork is about locating ourselves as bodies within the context of our research. There is also the issue of the interpretation of the data and how this is affected by any assumptions that may exist. Many researchers are a part of the active production of an acceptable bodily image they feel fits

with the research setting. Clothing can establish an acceptable (and unacceptable) bodily image. Props such as jewellery and artefacts are used to decorate and often legitimize the body during fieldwork (Coffey, 1999). According to Alvesson and Skjolberg (2002), researchers carry with them conscious and unconscious thoughts, emotions and attitude to the outside world.

In discussing the use of photography and video in social research, it has been argued that no image has an essential meaning or label assigned to it (Banks (1998); Becker (1998); Da Silva and Pink (2004); Pink (2001a)). According to Pink (2001a), when ethnographers take photographs, they do so in light of a specific theory or social context. In fact, anyone that takes or views a photograph, will most likely be referring, although often unconsciously, to some idea or theory. Reflexivity in ethnographic photography can therefore be achieved through researchers being aware of the theories that inform their photographic practice, and also through being aware of the theories that inform their relationships with their subjects. According to Pink (2001a), it is useful to pay attention to the subjectivities and intentions of individual photographers, alongside the inevitable social discourses, relationships and also the broader historical, political and economic discourses within which they sit. It is therefore argued by Pink (2001a) that with for example archival research into vintage photography, it is not only the content of the images that need to

be investigated, but also the intentions of photographers and the institutions with which they are associated.

According to Da Silva and Pink (2004), photographs are not automatically anthropological. This is similar to the fact that pictures taken by anthropologists may not be considered as being of good quality in terms of good photography. According to Harper (1994), the first visual sociologists were in fact inspired documentary photographers working on some of the issues that sociologists felt should to be on their agenda. Developments in fields seemingly outside academia, such as documentary photography and photojournalism, have thus influenced the development of visual research within the social sciences but the final evaluation of what constitutes visual research depends on how the images are interpreted. Harper (1998) demonstrates these ideas practically. He proceeds by taking pictures intended for one use and reading them from a different perspective. A photograph by Robert Frank (1959) intended for documentary purposes made by the photographer as part of his work *The Americans* is read from the perspective of visual sociology and photojournalism (see Harper, 1998, p.89-91). Harper (1998) demonstrates by carrying out this unintended reading of the picture that an image can be read in a variety of ways depending on the training and the perspective of the reader. Hence it is not the case that when dealing with images leaving the context implicit makes a photograph art, while

presenting in context makes it documentary, social science or photojournalism. Becker (1974) identifies a problem in that the photographic exploration of society tends to be intellectually thin, and poses the question; what can be done to make the photographic work intellectually denser? The answer according to Becker (1974) lies in the understanding the role that theory plays in the making of photographs of social processes.

In discussing issues of representation and visual media, Banks (1995) divides the concerns of researchers into two perspectives. The first, are concerns with the content of any visual representation. What is the meaning of a particular design motif or an object of art? Who is the person in the photograph? The second are concerns about context. Who produced the art object? For whom was it intended? Why was the photograph taken of this particular person? (Banks, 1995, p.2). These are concerns to do with iconography and iconology, theories that try to explain how and why certain imagery is selected in terms of the broader cultural background of the image. The idea is to explain why we can see these images as 'Symptomatic or characteristic of a particular culture' (Panofsky cited in D'alleva, 2005, p.23) It is argued by Banks (1995) that when looking at visual representations that have been created by others, these dual strands of content and context are often well investigated. When, however, the visual representations are made by the researcher

themselves, there is often a danger of the content taking priority over the context. Or in other words, the conditions during the picture making are often overlooked.

Examples of socially conscious documentary photography include Robert Frank's (1959/1969) photographic portrait of an alienated, materialistic American culture in the 1950s. Also, Lewis Hines's early twentieth century works on social problems that were considered both Art and documentary photography at the same time. According to Banks (1998), visual anthropology is becoming the study of visible cultural forms, regardless of how and why they were produced. This in one way opens the field of social research up to those who study film, photography, cinema and television. Banks (1998) warns however that there are constraints in that the study of cultural forms is only visual anthropology if it is informed by current theory in the field of anthropology. In other words, not all image use can be considered as visual anthropology even if images are presented in some as indicative of a particular culture.

3.11 Visual research

Examples of visual organisational research include Buchanan (2001) who in a study of the introduction of business process re-engineering in a UK hospital took over 150 photographs. He argues that using photographs in conjunction with other methods of data collection helps the organisational

researcher to develop a richer understanding of organisational processes, enables the capture of data not disclosed in interview, reveals to employees aspects of work in other sections of the organisation with which they have little or no regular contact, provides a novel means of achieving respondent validation of data and involves staff in debate concerning the implications of research findings (Buchanan 2001, p.151). Bolton, Pole and Mizen's (2001) research into the meaning of child employment in Britain involved giving the young people a disposable camera with which to take photographs of their workplace. The photographic aspect of the study was part of a wider year long research project that included interviews, written diaries and focus groups. The researchers argue in this case that their primary purpose was to generate data through visual techniques and sources, rather than to collect visual material to represent, illuminate or document known processes, events or meanings. Hence, in addition to confirming written and spoken accounts of the content of the jobs and the nature of workplaces, the photographs portrayed areas normally unseen by customers or researchers, such as stockrooms, rubbish skips and toilets.

Another example involving the use of visual methods in this way is a study by Warren (2002) exploring the aesthetic dimension of organisations. Warren (2002) argues that visual methods are particularly useful in enabling analysis of experiences that are non-rational and ineffable.

Informants were given cameras and asked to take photographs to show how they felt about their workplace. The photographs were then used in a photo-elicitation exercise involving discussion of the images with informants in the form of a semi-structured interview where respondents gave a verbal account of the experiences they had chosen to communicate via their pictures. Another example of a study of an organisation using visual data Dougherty and Kunda's (1990) study of organisational beliefs about customers. This study uses company annual reports as a source of existing visual data produced by the organisation themselves. The researchers in this case analyze photographs of customers contained in the publication in order to investigate aspects of the organisation's culture.

Hardy and Phillips (1999) also use newspaper cartoons to investigate the broader societal discourse around immigration. In this study, cartoon images are suggested to be a useful data source because they are relatively easy and inexpensive to gather and also because they can function as self-contained texts illustrating an alternative discursive position. Through their analyzing of visual data, the authors show how images are used in this case to turn institutional assumptions on their head and to bring a fresh perspective to an existing situation. Another example is provided by Nelson and Brown (1993) who take a 'structural-

'symbolic' (Nelson and Brown, 1993, p.3) view of culture in studying meaningful actions, objects and expressions in relation to context.

A study by Bell (2005) that focuses on the life and death of a car manufacturing company in Coventry, used images from public service advertisements in order to analyze them in relation to the organisation that produced them. This study analyzed images taken from a study of a car manufacturing organisation where fieldwork traced the changing visual representations of the 'Jaguar wild cat' that represents the brand, showing how this was used by members in the symbolic construction of organisational identity. One image studied comprises a cartoon picture of Uncle Sam holding the Jaguar cat, a bloody knife in one hand and the cat's bleeding heart in the other. Uncle Sam has a Ford logo on his hat. The cat has a tear drop falling from its eye. Around the picture are the words 'Jaguar workers fighting for a future'. The written text that encircles the image indicates its lesser significance relative to the image in the centre. 'The pictorial image conveys a much harsher and more powerful sentiment than the written text that accompanies it but the message relies on image and text in combination to convey its meaning' (Kunter and Bell, 2007, p.7).

The work of visual artist Carey Young (2002) uses visual displays to expose the ways in which business organisations organize their

employees and customers. Young (2002) uses multi-media installations such as video, sculpture and photography to show organisational assumptions and interpretations of these 'realities'. A final example of the use of visual presentation of ideas about work is provided in an exhibition that was called 'The office' at the photographer's gallery in London in 2003. According to the article by Cohen and Tyler (2004), photographs taken by 11 contemporary art photographers, including two video artists, were exhibited, as well as some pre-existing historical photographs. Various organisational themes were presented by the images through the use of lighting and by using different ways of presenting the photographs. Photographs were used to illustrate various themes within the workplace such as 'the office as a space for self expression' (Cohen and Tyler, 2004, p.622), 'bodily discipline and pantopticism' (Cohen and Tyler, 2004, p.623), 'childishness, adventure and play at work' (Cohen and Tyler, 2004, p.624), 'controlled de-controlled' (Cohen and Tyler, 2004, p.624) and 'the tension between autonomy and control, between the managed and the unmanaged organisation' (Cohen and Tyler, 2004, p.624).

What's interesting for the field of Organisation studies is the potential for change a visual approach presents us with. Burgin (1986) follows the ideas of Althusser about the state; which say that the state, in order to maintain the status-quo has two arms: one violent and one ideological.

Given the instrumentality and efficacy of the ideological arm, it becomes necessary to intervene within the ideological state apparatus, of which Burgin (1986) argues 'art' is one. The use of image and text juxtaposed in order to communicate a specific message encompasses some of the most useful contributions to the post-modern critique of documentary photography. In taking images from popular culture, and juxtaposing these images, or parts of the images, to other parts of the culture such as words, phrases from mass culture or other sources, Burgin's collages were seen by some as an affective deconstruction of predominantly held ideas and in turn of society.

3.11 Conclusion

This section has outlined that the subject of wellbeing at work will be analysed using the methodology of critical ethnography. Written and visual data will be analysed through the consideration of the dimension of culture. The study will consider culture as socially and contextually embedded and constructed, which is in turn interpreted by individuals. This approach will consider critical ethnographic research as something that is constituted not just by language, but also through various other media where ideas regarding culture and branding are communicated.

Culture in the case of this study will therefore be considered as a montage, or as a collection of ideas and influences from various media that give each other meaning through juxtaposition and contextualisation.

The method used to gather and analyse the data is ethnographic, by

which written and visual data collected over a specific period of time will be analysed. The approach to this will be a multimedia approach, so that the idea of culture as a montage can be realized and data from various places can be analysed in order to contextualise and give meaning.

In discussing this approach to organisation studies, Fournier and Grey (2000) argue that the iconic status of management and bureaucracy was heightened during the 1990s by the new right. It was through the process of legitimization that managers were slowly seen as 'bearers of the real world', 'holders of expert knowledge' and 'being equated with greater justice, public accountability, democracy and quality in public services' (Fournier and Grey, 2000, p.11). Further to this, according to Fournier and Grey, there has been prior to this period a 'linguistic turn' through which at the very least, recognition of the socially constructed nature of organisations became possible. In their discussion of critical management studies (CMS), a school of thought with which I align myself having studied at Warwick business school through the MA in Organisation studies, it is argued that aspects defining CMS are those issues related to performativity, denaturalization and reflexivity. CMS also involves perpetual critique (Deetz and Mumby 1990 cited in Fournier and Grey (2000) including of itself by an emphasis on reflexivity. Politically, it is outlined by Fournier and Grey (2000), that CMS is a project that tries to

uncover power relations impacting on our social and organisational lives in way that moves us towards the notion of emancipation.

The aims of the critical ethnographic approach described in chapter 4 are in line with the aims of CMS as through a reflexive and interpretive approach to organisations, it is hoped that such an approach can be seen that such an approach is critical of itself as well as of the subject of study.

4.1 Background to choice of case study organisation and gaining access

This thesis analyses an organisation called Innocent Drinks. Initially it was to be analysed along side two other similar organisations, called Howies and Green and Blacks, however the nature of the access obtained meant that this organisation was to be the main focus of the research. Innocent caught my attention just before I started my PhD in September 2004 whilst socialising with a friend who was working for them at the time and a few of the other people that worked there. During this particular evening, I found myself talking to the HR manager for the organisation about my area of research interest, wellbeing and work. She started telling me about some of their policies and approaches to this concept, and my friend who worked there has already mentioned a few things to me that had made me think that Innocent were including the idea of wellbeing in the realm of the workplace.

I began therefore to build this organisation into my research plan and started doing some preliminary research into Innocent drinks and other similar organisations, seemingly politically and socially aware enough to

build this into their business plan. I began to look at website, notice products, read articles and listen to interviews. I was sceptical of this on the surface seemingly happy combination of ‘wellbeing and work’. What did it all mean? Why did they care? Did they really care?

Aspects of the organisation that made me think of it in terms of wellbeing at work, were firstly the illustrations. The fonts are very childlike, fun and carefree. Native people and natural scenes were often shown on the website and in other advertising. Innocent drinks align themselves with nature. Working at Innocent was presented on bottles and on the website as being fun, like being in a family and very stress free. The ‘Innocent foundation’ that works predominantly with overseas charities gets 10% of Innocent’s profits and works predominantly with farmers from which the fruit is sourced. The actual product is however neither organic or fairtrade. This got my attention and I wanted to understand this further. What were the intentions of the founders? Images were carefree, casual and fun. Were innocent drinks a fun company to work for? Did it really make the world a better place?

I began six months later to try to negotiate access with the HR director of Innocent drinks I had met that day, and also through my contact at the organisation. I explained my interests and the approach I planned to use. I planned to take photographs of their workplace (everyone is welcome to

walk around and take photographs), I planned to use existing images already in the public domain and to take photographs of the surrounding area and related company events. A position as a summer helper at Innocent arose and I applied for it. I got the job and therefore decided that there was an opportunity to carry out an ethnographic study of the workplace itself and take photographs too. The position started on Thursday 27th June 2005 and ended on Friday 9th September 2005 (10 weeks) and I would work as a helper in the office, rotating between various teams and roles. It seemed like a great way to carry out the study.

The study presented in the following chapter takes a critical ethnographic approach to analysis. Written, visual, internet, video, audio, published, self-made and documentary data are all analysed on order to investigate the research questions. Due to the nature of the thesis, some examples are located in appendix B and reference will be made in the chapter as the issues arise. The approach of critical ethnography considers organisational culture as made up of a variety of texts and textual features and that this can be made of data from various media that come together to create a particular discourse. The data will be considered as a montage, context and history coming together in a way that enables an analysis of a particular discourse. The approach of critical ethnography also requires the consideration of data in a way that is open to interpretation not just from the researcher themselves but from the reader.

Again, due to the restrictions on how a thesis can be presented in this case, this has not been possible to any large extent, however chapter 6 deals with my self-made photographs for this kind of interpretation. The reader is welcome to look at the photographs without too much guidance from me, and to come to their own conclusions regarding what they see and understand of the organisation before my own analysis is presented in chapter 7. The total number of photographs taken for the research project is 230. In addition to this 70 days were spent at the case study organisation during which time field notes were taken for everyday of the fieldwork. Various other documents and existing images were collected, and the website was analysed over a period of 3 years including the weekly Innocent drinks weekly newsletter. Events related to Innocent drinks that were photographed were the Fuitstock music festival in 2005 and the 'wellbeing show' held in London in 2005.

Innocent drinks are an organisation that makes fruit drinks. Founded in 1999 by three university friends, according to the observer business and media section in less than eight years the business grew to have an annual turnover of one hundred million pounds. Innocent Drinks has made a profit every year since its launch and has no business debt. Innocent drinks have offices in the UK and also in Ireland, Netherlands, France, Denmark and Germany and this is growing. Innocent currently have a 71% share of a £169m UK market selling 2 million smoothies per week. In 2007 they were ranked 40th in the Sunday times fast track 100 fastest

growing private companies list. In each of the last four years innocent have more-than doubled their revenues. Their products consist of smoothies, which is their primary product. A drink made with fresh fruit and then pasteurised. Thickies are another product made my Innocent drinks which are yogurt based drinks. Superfood smoothies are a special range that contains what is thought to be higher quantities of nutrients. There is also a smoothie for kids, which is smoother than the adult version and in slightly smaller packets. There are also drinks called ‘this water’ but they are branded under a different logo and label.

The company’s head office is based in Shepherds bush in West London and is nick named ‘Fruit towers’. In 2008 there were one hundred and eighty two staff. The Sunday best small companies to work for supplement 2008 found it to be at number ninety six on their rankings list.

Section 4.1 has outlined the nature and background of the organisation innocent drinks. There is however an organisational narrative that accompanies Innocent Drinks; a mission and an ethical standpoint to be considered here and the following analysis will try to take into account variations in the representation of the organisation. Chapter 4 will now present a critical ethnography of the Innocent drinks. The research question will be addressed and a critical analysis will be carried out. Themes will be identified and analysed in line with the literature review out at the beginning of this thesis on the area of ‘wellbeing and work’.

4.2 Notes from the field

Getting started

“Doing good things”;

It is these words that run alongside my regular thoughts as I embark on another ambiguous day as a summer helper at Fruit towers; head office for the fruit drinks producing organisation Innocent drinks. This ambiguity stemmed from the fact that I rarely knew from one day in the job to the next who I would be working with or where I would be working. There was, however, some consistency. Much of the work of the summer helper took place either at a computer in the office, outside the office in the car park or whilst driving one of the company vans. My work days would begin with an alarm that went off at around 7am; it would often be a hot and sunny morning during this summer. It was alongside the sound of my alarm as I started my day that I would hear these words resonate throughout my mind;

“Doing good things”;

These words, that seemed to resonate throughout Innocent drinks as an organisation for example, a visit to their webpage <http://www.innocentdrinks.co.uk/> and a look in the ‘us’ section and then

'ethics' takes you to the section on 'doing good things'. This section details some of the ways in which Innocent drinks try to 'do good things'

'We believe there are some small but good things we can do on a day to day basis at Fruit Towers to help those around us. Here is a couple;

[Drinks for the homeless](#) - getting our excess stock to those who need it.

[Supergran](#) - how knitting hats for our drinks raises money for good causes.

Charitable support

We give 10% of our profits away each year to support community based projects through the [innocent foundation](#). (www.innocentdrinks.co.uk, 11/09/06)

This really did seem to bother me. The words had bothered me from the outset but I really didn't understand why. Why did this seemingly appropriate idea make me feel so uncomfortable? After all, the organisation did produce their orange juice made with "lovely fresh hand-selected oranges and nothing else at all" or fruit smoothies made from "a blend of crushed fruit, pure and fresh juices and nothing else".

I also knew at this point of being about to embark on my study of Innocent drinks that the organisation seemed to focus on important social and

environmental issues. For example, social issues such as homelessness and the elderly seemed to be on their agenda. This impression is achieved by frequently contributing to selected charities as a part of their 'Innocent foundation', Innocent drinks' charitable initiative. Examples of such projects are; raising money through organizing a music festival last year for a charity for country holidays for inner city children called 'CHICKS' and this year for the charity 'well child', a charity that helps sick children get better. Innocent drinks also donate their proceeds every year from their sales of their drinks over the Christmas period to elderly people in return for them knitting hats to go over the lids of their smoothie bottles.

Innocent drinks also seemed to show an interest in international social issues. They achieve this by using their literature and images of native people from the countries their fruit is sourced from in their advertising, looking happy and working hard.

These images and words are used in order to highlight the importance to Innocent drinks as an organisation of ensuring suppliers in developing countries receive fair payment for their produce. I was also very much aware that frequent mention was made by Innocent drinks of environmental issues and of the earth's sustainability. This is achieved by focusing their literature and their images on issues such as carbon emissions, recycling and materials development for their packaging. Innocent drinks also achieve this by associating themselves with various

environmental organisations that work towards minimizing the impact of our activities on the environment so we can then in turn minimize the damage being done to the planet and ourselves. An example of this is the 'innocent foundation' which is a grant giving charity that works in partnership with community based projects and NGOs (mainly in other countries). We are told on the website by Innocent drinks that through this charity 'they build relationships that enable local communities to develop long-term solutions to their needs. What excites us are innovative projects that make best use of natural resources to create a better future' (www.innocentfoundation.org, 11/09/06).

These issues Innocent drinks focuses on therefore are for me some of the most important issues we as individuals and organisations are faced with today: The issues of fair trade, environmental sustainability and equality and diversity. If the above issues are so dear to my heart as a potential employee at Innocent drinks and as a researcher, then surely I should be happy and excited about joining an organisation, which so visibly and actively champions these causes? Surely, as an organisation, they were living up to this frequently used slogan "Doing good things", weren't they? They were doing good things, weren't they? Then why was I so sceptical and uncomfortable about this possibility?

My background is one factor in my feelings towards this seemingly ethical and correct discourse. I come from a critical management studies background in the sense that I am critical of the more mainstream assumptions of businesses and management theory. This meant that I found it hard not to believe that it was above all else making money, and lots of it, that was the priority for Adam Balon, Jon Wright and Richard Reed, the co-founders and managing directors of Innocent drinks. It was exactly this sense of discomfort that motivated to apply for the job of summer helper for the summer of 2005 in the first place.

I wanted to try to find out for myself what it meant to “do good things”, or maybe just to confirm my worst fears, that Innocent drinks were using these ideas of making the world better, in order to make more money for themselves. According to Lau (2000), it is a disturbing new-age trend towards self-absorption that enables people to think that the discourses, which constitute this sphere through consumption, constitute political action. Believing this to be so is a dangerous misconception. It is this argument that is made by Zizek (2006), as he argues that for ‘liberal communists’ as he calls the owners of organisations like Innocent drinks, the ruthless pursuit of profit is counteracted by charity. That charity functions as a humanitarian mask hiding the underlying economic exploitation.

My initial introduction to life at Innocent drinks was mainly through having friends at the company and so going along to company drinks, observing the organisation through the internet and on one occasion visiting the office for the day. After my initial conversation with the HR manager at the time, I decided to write her an email explaining the objectives of my PhD, and what I wanted to research about Innocent Drinks. I received no reply to my email, and so wasn't granted access in that way. I then decided to apply for a summer helper position that came up at the organisation, working across the departments as an assistant. I discussed my PhD and my research plans with my interviewer at the time, and so she and the Hr manager at the time were both fully aware of my research topic and area.

My interview was scheduled and it was with an HR officer called Sarah (alias). Sarah is a people person (or in more familiar business language 'Human resources officer') at Innocent drinks. The role I was being interviewed for was that of a "summer helper". Sarah made a part of me wish that she really did actually resent me as much as I thought she did during my interview. This is because I realised that day, that the transition from just being present in the office environment as a visitor or observer, to that of being a potential and possibly temporary employee, was going to be a difficult one. The thought therefore of working at Innocent drinks all summer was a frightening one for me; this was compounded further by what followed in the interview with Sarah.

Getting in

Sarah (my interviewer) is only one year older than I am and we grew up in the same area of London. Although we didn't go to the same school, I went to the local mixed comprehensive, Drayton Manor high school, whereas she went to the local all girl private school, Notting Hill girls school. We did nonetheless know some of the same people through other activities. For example, I did ballet with a girl in Sarah's class at school for fifteen years. Nonetheless, the fact that we'd both grown up in the same London borough alone gave us some familiar things to talk about, and a basis possibly for some friendly conversation. It didn't however happen in this way.

There seemed to consist in the interview a duality of two approaches: that of being extremely impersonal and also very personal. Sarah did not engage with me for most of the interview and so she did not obtain much of an understanding of who I really was. Despite my attempts to explain the research I had hoped to be carrying out whilst at Innocent drinks, Sarah failed to grasp any of the concepts or show much interest at all in my work. I understood therefore that as much as I explained my research aims to her, all she was really going to be interested in was filling this position with the right person. I therefore held back on my attempts to make her understand the aims of my research, and allowed the interview

to proceed in the direction Sarah seemed to prefer. It was here therefore that the contrast between the official image of Innocent drinks and what really goes on behind closed doors started to become apparent. The interview was extremely formal and Sarah remained uninterested in me throughout the whole time. This made this part of the experience very impersonal and formal. As a contrast to this however, I was also during the interview asked many personal and seemingly inappropriate questions. These included:

“How much rent do you pay for your flat?”

“Who do you live with?”

“What are your flatmates like?”

“What do your flatmates do for a living?”

“How much do you get paid for any teaching you do at your university?”

I did not feel that these were questions an HR professional should be asking a potential employee for a job as a summer helper, or any job for that matter. The questioning made me very uncomfortable but it did give me a glimpse of the contradictions present within the organisation; those present between what is said and what is done. If I am honest then, at this stage, I hoped for the sake of my own sanity that I wouldn't get the job of summer helper; however Clarissa called me four days after this interview

offering me the job. The interview had been on the Monday and they wanted me to start on the following Thursday. Surprised and total astonishment that they had actually offered me this job I accepted it. It was at this point that a good eight months of reading and preparation for my PhD needed to be put into action. The investigation into the idea of “Doing good things” was to continue.

I made the journey from Bethnal Green in East London to Shepherds bush in West London, where fruit towers was located, daily. I travelled via the underground all of the way, and then walked either side to and from either my flat or place of work. The time of my job at Innocent drinks was during the months of July, August and September, and so the heat most days on the underground was often unbearable. The journey was a direct one, fourteen stops on the central line, around forty-five minutes to one hour door to door and always during the rush hours in the morning and in the evening.

The walk from my flat to tube station took all of two minutes; I lived practically next door. I usually left my house for the tube station at around 8am; roughly an hour after my alarm had gone off. My thoughts during this hour, whilst getting ready for the day, would be mixed and often very confused.

“Why was I doing this?” “Who was I now?” “How should I behave today?” “Can I remember how I normally act in front of people?”

I had taken a job I would not have even considered taking under normal circumstances. This presented me with a challenge in terms of my own identity.

**“How did I fit in at Innocent drinks?” “Why did I look so different?”
“Why did I feel so different to the others at Innocent drinks?”**

These questions became more difficult to answer as time went on. This was because I watched myself become more like the people I was working with; in terms of the language I used, the way I dressed and the mannerisms I displayed. I could see aspects of the role I was playing in my job slowly permeating into my life beginning to affect my own identity. This is not an uncommon situation to be in during ethnographic work. In a study by Delbridge (1998) of two manufacturing plants introducing a Japanese model of production, Delbridge (1998) clearly states that in seeking to minimise the effect of his presence he was often required to act and behave natively or like a chameleon and to adopt different views and values at different times. He also describes how he was nervous that he stood out and that this was a difficulty for him throughout his study. I can relate to these concerns and my feelings of possibly ‘going native’ were

serious ones in that there is a danger that the critical perspective can be diminished.

The reality of it all however was that in order to last the summer at Innocent drinks, I needed to do a certain amount of acting; I had to display some of the traits the other employees did, the traits of the organisation. Goffman (1959) argues that when an individual appears before others he will have various reasons for trying to control the impression received in the situation. That when an individual 'plays a part' in any given situation they can find themselves at either of two extremes. One is to be taken in entirely by the act, and one is to act out a role cynically. Goffman (1959) goes onto argue that the cynical acting is not necessarily ineffective. It may be that this is a means to another end, for example to gain information to help a local community. This is where I would locate my 'acting' as it was with a means to an end in mine, that of my research.

It was becoming apparent to me however that as time went by it was becoming less of a performance and more natural for me to behave in this way. I began to feel stamped, marked out as an employee not just by what I did in my job or where I worked, but also by how I was expected to live my life. This worried me not only because I actually felt quite disturbed by some of the ways in which this organisation behaved, but also because I was worried that I would stop seeing things. I was worried about my

research, as my perspective was all I had during this time to separate me from being just another employee. I tried to combat this dissolving effect of myself into the field, or as it has said in the ethnography literature, ‘going native’, by constantly trying to remind myself of why I was at Innocent drinks in the first place.

Remembering me

One way in which I did this was by the clothes I wore. I knew that the way I looked was different to the way others looked within the organisation. I looked and felt different, as everyone else looked pretty much the same. This helped me wherever I was and whatever I was doing whilst working for Innocent drinks to remember who I was, where I was coming from and that I was there to do my research. This was important at Innocent drinks as the visibility of the culture is a mechanism through which ideas and discipline is passed on. The themes of family, the home and motivational messages are transmitted visually at Innocent drinks offices through the space in which employees are expected to work.

Another example of this is that when you join the Innocent drinks, you are given an Innocent drinks T-shirt. You are expected to wear this T-shirt one day a week when you come into work. The T-shirt that you are given has the word innocent across the front in large white letters (the colour of the actual T-shirt varies), and the Innocent drinks logo of the face with the

halo on the back. I was given a pink one but never actually wore it. I just couldn't bring myself to put it on at work. Interestingly I have worn it since leaving but only in situations where I was sure that nobody would see me. The idea behind keeping my own dress style was about keeping in touch with who I was before I joined Innocent drinks, whilst working in the visibly prominent culture the co-founders have introduced into their workplace. The symbolism of my own clothing helped to counteract any risk of going completely native. The risk of 'going native' was however all around me and I was aware of it, but this awareness didn't mean that I could control all the ways in which it could manifest itself in my life.

The use of certain language in employment contracts, websites and product packaging served to transmit ideas of how people worked and behaved at Innocent drinks. Our monthly pay slips had the words 'thank you' printed over them in large, transparent letters. This formed a kind of social contract, but one that bizarrely for me, functioned with the organisation thanking you for being there, telling you they love you, telling you that you are cool, even before you had had a chance to earn it. You are told as an employee and consumer thank you so many times by Innocent drinks, that even if you haven't done anything for them yet, you feel that maybe you should, do things for them in return, like pay £2.00 one of their drinks for example. This is because at Innocent drinks, you are rewarded for working towards reward. You are rewarded therefore for

wanting a reward for yourself. An example of this is if you are offered a job, the first paragraph of your employment contract begins with:

"The more we see you the more we like you, and we liked you a lot to begin with, so we'd like to offer you the opportunity to spend the summer with us here at innocent as our summer helper"

In addition to this when you arrive on your first day you have a bunch of flowers on your desk to welcome you.

The usual order is switched, and so you are constantly reaching for the reward, the thank you comes before the deed; it is the carrot on the stick. It felt strange to me, but for most people it seemed that they thought that this was normal and enjoyable. It could have been likened to a spoilt child wanting more and more material reward from their parents, and their parents see nothing wrong in giving this to them, just to get them to do things. In terms of a moral and social obligation in society this is wrong. It breeds individualism and materialism. It ignores what is right in a situation as it makes people feel obliged to do things. I found this 'game' as I saw it difficult to play and it was noticeable. It felt alien to me and to my own cultural beliefs. I thought at some points of my time at Innocent drinks about how this would work if Innocent drinks were to be more diverse as an organisation and if this could work at all. This culture of reward before

the job is done seemed very specific to me and I struggled to see how a diverse workforce, which Innocent drinks does not have, would cope with this kind of culture.

According to Willmott (1992), the management of the irrational and unpredictable is accomplished by designing appropriate corporate cultures. It is designed in fact to align people's sense of purpose and identity so tightly to the core values of the organisation that they behave as committed and self-disciplining individuals. Alvesson and Willmott (2004) argue further that the regulation of identity is accomplished through specific means, targets and media. It is argued that there is need for something 'in between' the broader categories analysed in studies already such as concepts like cultural, ideological, bureaucratic, clan or concertive control to show the more specific ways in which identity regulation is enacted.

The use of language and customs by Innocent drinks and its visibility functions as a form of normative control over its employees. It is not left to chance whether or not people behave in a way most conducive to the overall productivity and profit making ability of Innocent drinks; they are quite aggressively invited to do this, and if they do not conform? Then they are let go. This is not dissimilar to the expectations our parents may have of us, a tight knit friendship group, or even a religious cult. The

Innocent drinks brand therefore extends beyond the lettering on its bottles or the images on its drink cartons. It extends to the way in which people communicate with each other in the workplace and to the ways in which they greet and respond to each other. The novelty of this approach in Innocent drinks and a small number of similar organisations, is that this is achieved through the appropriation of counter-cultural ideas of 'nature' and 'environmental' sustainability'. According to the 'ethics' section of their website:

'We sure aren't perfect, but we're trying to do the right thing.'

It all sounds a bit Miss World, but we want to leave things a little bit better than we find them. Our strategy for doing so is simple - firstly, only ever make 100% natural products that are 100% good for people. Secondly, procure our ingredients ethically. Thirdly, use ecologically sound packaging materials. Fourthly, reduce and offset our carbon emissions across our entire business system. Fifthly, lead by example at Fruit Towers by doing good things. And finally, give 10% of our profits each year to charities in the countries where our fruit comes from
[\(http://www.innocentdrinks.co.uk/us/our_ethics/\)](http://www.innocentdrinks.co.uk/us/our_ethics/), 11/09/06)

There is no mention however of the fact that the main objective of the company is that they want to make money.

It is with these thoughts that I move to prepare myself for a day at Innocent drinks. Although I do differentiate myself through my

appearance, or in other words, I don't change the way I dress whilst working at Innocent drinks even though I quite visibly do not fit in with the others, I do make some small changes. Looking back at my field notes from my interview with Clari that Monday in late June, I can see that I removed some red nail varnish that I was wearing in preparation for the interview. This had less to do with the fact that it was red, and more to do with the fact that it was slightly cracked and old, something I would normally wear and not think twice about doing. I felt however that this would be inappropriate for an interview at Innocent drinks, and so I removed it. I resented this and felt that I should never need to change anything about myself to be successful in an interview or job. I did however keep my clothes and make up the same, and walking into Fruit Towers on the day of the interview for the second ever time (the first time being back in March when I had taken some initial photographs of the offices), I felt a little uneasy. My field notes from that day read as follows:

"All that I can think of is the 'good' image of innocent. What will they think of me? I don't feel as if I'll fit into this image they got going. I think I am just used to being me, managing my own day, my surroundings, my identity and I love it. Now I feel like I need to adopt this image of being an 'employable' person. Will I fit in with their idea of what that actually is? I really doubt it at this stage. Really, it is so much harder than I thought it would be. I think I will

just look at it as an exercise in acting. If I pull it off I will be very surprised”

At this stage I had no idea that I had got the job. I still cannot understand why I was offered it, mainly in light of the research I was proposing to do. This insecurity of not-knowing whether or not I would be offered the job is reflected in this excerpt. My feelings after being offered the job are more secure as my ability to place myself within the organisation improved through some sense of having been accepted. Through forming relationships with people I could somehow relate to at Innocent drinks, I was able to begin to locate myself within the culture.

One such occasion when this occurred was on the fourth day of my job at Innocent drinks. I had previously that week been emailed about a couple of lunch dates I was to attend other members of staff. I found out later on that some existing members of staff invite all new starters to lunch. The idea behind this is to help you to make friends, and to meet people in the company. My first lunch date was with S (an alias), who was twenty-five at the time (I was twenty six) and had been working in the trade marketing team at Innocent drinks for four weeks. Trade marketing at Innocent drinks is used to describe the process of communicating with other organisations that sell the drinks Innocent drinks produce, in order to ensure that they are happy and have all the up to date information they

need. It is a kind of customer service role but to trade customers or retailers, not individuals.

S and I therefore went to lunch together this day and as it turned out, S had recently completed an MA in Industrial relations at the London School of Economics. This made talking to her about my research relatively easy. Meera's parents are from India but she grew up in London. S was at this time, out of the seventy people at Innocent drinks, one of only two non-white members of staff. S spoke to me at length and quite critically about her organisation. This was in response to me talking about my ideas, and it was no way a planned interview by me in order to elicit some insider information. Some of S's words were as follows, quoted from my field notes:

"Our consumers are buying into a brand and with this a way of life, even down to the packaging. They can even identify with the paper on the bottle, its texture and look of being natural. Innocent drinks appeals to a very particular demographic. There are two groups of people for Innocent drinks, one made up of those who buy their drinks (those in their twenties, of middle class status, have some disposable income, are relatively well informed), and then the other group who are not the target market for Innocent drinks, made

up of every one else (e.g. working class people and ethnic minority groups)”

“I feel a little out of place here. I grew up on a council estate. I didn’t expect it to be like this here. There has only been one other person here I have been able to relate to she has now left. The culture of going snowboarding and free drinks after work reminds me of those things associated with coming from a more privileged background than mine. I can’t really relate to them. I want to try things like snowboarding though as I’ve never been before.

Talking that day to S and listening to how she felt about Innocent drinks helped me to locate myself within the organisation. I had only worked there for four days at this stage and so I hadn’t experienced all the things S was talking about, however it was a critical account of the otherwise quite uncritically accepted ways of doing things I was to face with for the next six weeks. This therefore showed me that there wasn’t a completely homogenous, visible culture at Innocent drinks. There was some diversion from this and that individuals feelings weren’t always in line with those of the organisation at large. Although my lunch with S served pretty much as a re-injection of energy and focus and enabled me to feel that I wasn’t totally alone at Innocent drinks, my concerns regarding fitting in were by no means eliminated. These concerns accompanied me throughout my

time at Innocent drinks and actually worked as an aid in not allowing me to become too much of a ‘native’, and to possibly lose some of my perspective.

The idea of cool

I found that throughout my time at Innocent drinks, the brand was very much part of a story. Whether aspects of the story are true or not, the strings from ‘the beginning’, the organisation’s conception, are pulled through Innocent drinks to the present day. I found for example that those who work and consume the product in the form of an image of ‘cool’ that resonates throughout the organisation embody much of the culture at Innocent drinks. An embodiment of ‘cool’ meant for those at Innocent drinks the embracement of activities and lifestyles that are considered ‘cool’ by those in charge of the organisation. These were normally counter-cultural ideas like snowboarding which according to Howe (1998) is one of the most obvious indicators of alternative youth culture. Other indicators according to Howe (1998) are rave, roots, skate, grunge, hip-hop, punk and skateboarding. This activity features in the story of the how Innocent drinks started in an interview on radio 4 with Richard Reed one of the co-founders of Innocent drinks said when asked how Innocent drinks all started said ‘my self and my two closest friends got the idea at a snowboarding weekend’ (Radio 4 interview, the bottom line, 27/07/06). This attaches the idea of rebellion and the counter-culture to the brand

through the association with snowboarding, which although is more mainstream now, started off as a counter-cultural sport.

The rest of the story communicated through the company website and also in interviews with the directors, goes that the three mates decided to spend £500 on fruit and squeeze some smoothies at a music festival. The story, which is well documented on the Innocent drinks website and told in many an interview by predominantly Richard Reed, the ex-advertising executive who has become a minor celebrity in his own right (Radio 4 interview, the bottom line, 27/7/06) and is very much the face and name if Innocent drinks, goes as follows:

According to the BBC news business section, in an interview with Laura Cummings:

'Launched 5 years ago by three Cambridge graduates, the smoothies were a relatively new concept. Perishable, with a very short shelf life, and at almost £2.00 a bottle, the odds seemed stacked against them. Innocent were also determined to run a very different type of company – one where "the image and the product are the same," insists Richard, with the aspirations of spending company money profits on sponsoring cycle lanes rather than on high art. The resume of how it all started appears just as simple. Richard, Adam and Jon left university and

went into obligatory milk round professions – one into advertising, two into management consultancy. Four years later they were still talking about their business idea, although they still had no product. In 1998, after 6 months of trying out recipes on friends, they spent £500 on fruit, turned it into smoothies, and sold them at a small music festival in London. Their much re-counted scenario goes like this: “We put up a big sign saying, ‘Do you think we should give up our jobs to make these smoothies?’ and a bin saying ‘yes’ and a bin saying ‘no’ and asked people to put the empty bottle in the right bin. “At the end of the weekend the ‘yes’ bin was so full we went in the next day and resigned.”

Utopian sounding aims are echoed in Richard. “There’s a touch of hippy in us,” He tells me. Yet these are very shrewd hippies. It is a quote recounted in interviews elsewhere and the seemingly effortless success feels and extricable part of the brand itself. ’
([Http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3014477.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3014477.stm), 7/6/05)

On the Innocent drinks website, there is more mention of the roots of their organisation:

‘Work hard, play hard. Sure. These days it’s more like work hard, go home and eat potato salad. We’ve always found that there’s something about modern living that makes it hard to be healthy. That’s why we gave up our

jobs over five years ago and started making innocent smoothies. The idea was to make it easy for people to do themselves some good' (http://www.innocentdrinks.co.uk/us/our_story/, 11/09/06).

The directors quite clearly position themselves as counter to the modern world. This draws on counter-cultural and new age ideas about the ills of modernity and suggests wellbeing as being located outside of these. According to Lau (2000), a way of life becomes another commodity to consume and sell. It is through the public nature of this statement (on the Innocent drinks website) that Innocent drinks attach counter-cultural values to their products. Truth or not, this is the story that defines the business of Innocent drinks and its three co-founders.

It defines how people see the conception of the idea behind the business and the 'innocent' brand. This myth or story is also embodied physically within the organisation. 'Jazz on the green', the small music festival they tested their products at, T-shirts are actually worn by the directors and some of the people that work there alongside the Innocent drinks T-shirts handed out to employees when they join. The snowboarding holiday, the music festival, leaving their so-called 'good' (presumably well paid, graduate) jobs in order to make natural fruit juice against their mother's wills? This is the use of what is considered 'cool' to define a brand. It is the use however not of an isolated moment of 'cool', as in the story told by

Richard Reed and his two friends, but of a lifestyle; an ongoing way of life designed by the co-founders and passed onto their employees.

An example of how this is achieved is that every year on the first weekend in August, Innocent drinks throw a free music festival called Fruitstock in Regent's park to say 'thank to everyone. This festival lasts for two days and alongside the music, there is a farmers market, organic food stands, and fair-trade coffee and last year there was a Greenpeace stand and free yoga classes. Last year a total of 110,000 people attended over the two days. The association of the word Fruitstock to the Woodstock festival in the US in New York in 1969 is present here. It links Innocent drinks to the countercultural political ideas of the Woodstock festival and to those of the 1960s. These associations with the alternative and countercultural are carried through for all to see in the types of organisations Innocent drinks associate themselves with at the festival. This act of throwing the Fruitstock festival is an attempt extend the story of Innocent drink's conception so frequently told by the founders into the present day, simultaneously drawing on historical references to the counterculture and reviving an aging idea of cool by bringing it's ideas directly to the twenty six year olds of today; in the form of the bands they know, the activities they associate with freedom such as a 'free' music festival 'outdoors' and products that try to make our lives and the lives of others better such as organic pizza and fair trade coffee.

In addition to the bands, free drink samples and open space, there was however a fenced off area to the right of the main stage, called the Very nice people (VNP) area. From here you couldn't even see the bands on the stage; it was an area for 'getting to know people' or in more common corporate language, networking. All employees could enter this area and so could invite guests. This area contained outdoor seating, a large buffet, nice toilets and free alcohol, oh and smoothies of course. We were asked before hand at fruit towers to be extra nice to any guest wearing an apple on their badge, as they were journalists.

This for me is where any similarities to countercultural ideas, similar to those held by those at the Woodstock festival in 1969 seem to quite promptly fade away. In 1969 in Bethel, New York, a music and art festival called Woodstock took place. This for many exemplified the best of hippie counterculture. 500,000 attended, music was provided by Janis Joplin, the grateful dead and The Who, among others. Values associated with this even were of Peace, love, compassion and human fellowship. The existence of the VNP (or more commonly known as the VIP) area works to privilege some who may be worth 'more' to Innocent drinks than others. It confirms the aims of the festival as that of an exercise in marketing and communication of the story; the story of Innocent drinks being cool, the countercultural alternative, a music festival, as long as the journalists and

suppliers are kept happy that is. Looking at the corporate history of starting out at a music festival and then throwing a free music festival each year, the organisation of the free music festival Fruitstock can be seen as an attempt to situate the brand and the organisation firmly in the remit of what is considered cool by some, the effort going into its preparation being huge.

Another way in which Innocent drinks position themselves in a particular 'cool' way of life is by organizing a free annual nature weekend, often in the form of a snowboarding trip, for all their employees. According to the innocent handbook (which all new starters are given on their first day), 'the annual nature weekend has, in previous years, featured snowboarding and has taken place in exotic locations such as Switzerland, Austria, France and Italy. There are no hard and fast rules for this trip – so we don't know what it will be next year – other than it will be all of us, being one with nature somewhere, and feeling the love'

(Innocent handbook)

Again this can be linked back to the initial conception of the idea of starting the organisation on a snowboarding trip. Snowboarding is widely considered to be a countercultural activity in relation to skiing, which is much more established and mainstream. It is still to a certain extent in fact considered the rebellious younger sibling to skiing. The associations with

snowboarding are therefore of going against the mainstream, making a space of your own, rebellion and an alternative choice. These values are therefore consumed by those who work at Innocent drinks in participating in the free activity, as well as by those who buy the products. There are also references here to nature and the natural. According to Lau (2000), implicit in conceptualisations of social ‘alternatives’ is a celebration of nature and the natural; The romanticised ‘lost past’ from which such practices have been removed is itself a place of natural splendour and growth. Free from the scars of modernity.

Such associations with so-called counter-cultural activities were everywhere to be seen. In my role however as summer helper I felt excluded from these activities as because of the nature of my role as summer helper, I was rarely in the building and if I was then I was being closely monitored for how quickly I was working. My work was timed and I was regularly told that I wasn’t working fast enough. This put pressure on me especially considering my dual role of employee and researcher and I felt after that especially watched. It therefore made it difficult for me to relax enough to take part in any of the activities.

I actually love music festivals and had been to Fruitstock the previous year with my friends and enjoyed it. I was also going snowboarding at the artificial snow dome at Milton Keynes at least once a week during my time

at Innocent drinks. I however found it very difficult to tell anyone at Innocent drinks about these things as although they were the same activities advocated at Innocent drinks; I was doing them independently of the organisation. My participation in these activities did not mean that I helped locate the brand in a particular market, or that I felt any increased gratitude towards the organisation. They were genuine interests of mine with no ties to Innocent drinks. I felt that this was not welcomed and that I should have doing this with work, not in my own way. I was not taking part in these activities as part of Innocent drinks, I was doing them independently. This drew my attention to what was considered 'cool' and why. Was it the values attached to these activities they were genuinely interested in? Or how and why the values could be used for the brand? These questions stayed with me throughout my time at Innocent drinks.

I was astonished on my first day at Innocent drinks how many times I heard the word 'cool' mentioned. I wish I could have counted it, but I had work to do and a lot of it. But what was it that was cool? Was it the same cool that I new or that the kid I passed on Goldhawk road on their way to school was accustomed to or that the people in the next unit working for another organisation were used to? What those at Innocent drinks considered cool was certainly not cool to me. I could still hear this word 'cool' however all around me, more times a day than I'd probably said the word hello. It had the opposite effect on me than it had on others, just by

the number of audible exclamations I was a witness too, as it meant that I NEVER ever uttered the word whilst I was at work; Never ever. I do normally use this word but because of the context it was now being used in, it became un-cool. Cool for me had acquired the connotations of business and corporations; and of making money; this just was not cool for me.

Making my way

After getting ready in my very non-innocent T-shirt and having my breakfast, I would embark on my journey to fruit towers in Shepherds bush in West London. The streets at 8am would already be busy, the traffic almost still and the sun would be beginning to feel strong. I would head to Bethnal Green tube station along Bethnal Green road. It would often feel a bit like taking one step forward and one step back. I did want to go, I didn't want to go. Part of me would wish I could just go to university and read some more, but the other part of me knew that this was what I needed to do right now. I would clutch my bag as I walk down the stairs. In would be my purse, my keys, my music player, an academic paper, my notebook, a pen, my camera and a digital voice-recording machine. These were the essentials for any day for me at Innocent drinks. I would squeeze myself into the already overcrowded train and take my standing position for around forty-five minutes in the heat all the way to Shepherds Bush tube station. Maybe I had planned to read over my

previous day's notes, or have a read of the paper I had in my bag. If so, this would be impossible and I would have to make do with music instead. It would be frustrating that the journey wasn't a little more pleasant so that I could have prepared myself in this way for the day, but that was just how it turned out.

I would be relieved to arrive at my destination station, often running up the stairs to get some fresh air. Emerging however at 8.45 outside Shepherds Bush central line tube station would be a bit like a second alarm going off, an extra loud one that was impossible to ignore. The noise from the people and the traffic would be almost deafening. There would always however be a real sense of community as I made my way daily down Goldhawk road towards Brackenbury road and eventually towards the Goldhawk estate, which is where I worked. The community is one of the most vibrant, exciting and diverse in London. People from all around the world live in Shepherds Bush. according to
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shepherd's_Bush#Demographics;

'significant communities of travellers from [Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#) exist in Shepherd's Bush. Road names in the area also suggest links to [South Africa](#). There is a [Polish](#) community, with a community centre in nearby [Hammersmith](#). Somali, East African, West Indian and [Irish](#) communities have a strong association with the area'

The area is similar to Bethnal Green in East London, where I was living at the time. The streets are always littered, the tramps are always sitting on the wall and the air is always thick with exhaust fumes; but it is life in front you and as it happens. I truly fell in love with this area. One of the things I enjoyed most about Shepherds Bush was its market. Open daily; it sold most things from fresh fish, falafel and fruit to CDs and DVDs to Haberdashery items. There wasn't much you couldn't find at this market, including a friendly face after you have visited a few times. I was always disappointed that it wasn't yet open on my way into work, but I tried to get down to it in my lunch break. I would however, during my walk down the Goldhawk road, pass many Indian, African and Turkish shops with lots to offer. I always saw something new on my way to Fruit towers, and seemed to have a smile on my face.

Arriving at the entrance to the Brackenbury estate however always made me nervous. Thoughts about my role and my research would come into my mind:

“Was I late?

“What would I be doing today?”

“Would I do any research?”

“Had I collected what I needed yet?”

“Would they let me take some photographs of inside the building?”

My first contact of the day with anything Innocent drinks related, aside from my constant thoughts, would be with David (alias), the company's handy man, or official job title; Royal male. The use of humorous 'non-business' names for employees existed throughout the organisation. Thinking up the name would often be a joint effort with the best name selected in the end. For example, Mandy (an alias), head of product development was called 'Chief squeezer' and one of her product developers was called 'Cherry picker'. These names are on the business cards they hand out to potential clients and customers. This is one way in which Innocent drinks steers away from overly corporate language. Going back to David, you can guess from his job title that David was responsible for deliveries and any company vehicles.

My walk would often then take me past Conor onto maybe Ermintrude. Ermintrude however is not another Innocent drinks employee; Ermintrude is one of the company vehicles. She is a cow van. Innocent drink's company vehicles consist of cow vans, of which Ermintrude is one, and

grassy vans. Cow vans are used as everyday vehicles for transporting drinks and people. They have a refrigerator as the boot. They are painted and shaped like cows. They also moo (if you press the moo button). Grassy vans are ice cream vans covered in grass and daisies. The Innocent drinks logo covers the bonnet of the grassy vans, the shape made by using lots of artificial daisies. This fleet of company cars is always parked outside fruit towers. There is no ambiguity therefore as to which industrial unit at the Brackenbury estate is Fruit Towers; the associations between their vehicles and with the ideas of nature and being natural are there for all to see. The contradiction however between a petrol car painted as a cow or covered in grass always jumped out at me. The idea is to be natural and environmentally friendly, but this couldn't be further from a car. The effect however is that these vehicles attract an immense amount of attention: they act like beacons for the Innocent Drinks brand.

An example of this is anytime I drove one of the cow vans around London, which was actually quite often, everybody would smile as they saw me go past. I felt like a magician, with the power to make people instantaneously happy. Children would grab their parents in excitement as they saw the cow van cross the traffic lights, or in the next lane of the motorway. Families in cars would wave, and jump up and down. In fact I am pretty sure I was re-uniting family as I drove. Everyone would know I was there,

or that an Innocent drinks vehicle was there. The vans quite clearly say 'Innocent' in big letters on the side, and 'fresh yoghurt thickies' underneath that, and so the link to the product far from ambiguous. This was very much an embodiment of the ideas and values of Innocent drinks; in the form of an employee driving a van. A structure, that as a part of everyday life communicates such a strong message about the organisation and the drinks that it made strangers in the street smile. Innocent drink's values, some of which seemed to be represented by the vehicles, are outlined clearly in their company handbook:

"If we had to sum up innocent on one side of A4, we'd probably say something like this:

- **natural**
- **fresh**
- **honest**
- **engaging**
- **premium**
- **love"** (Innocent drinks handbook)

The values are clearly outlined here, and represented through the use of cow vans and grassy vehicles. Another effect of these vehicles, and of the use of the innocent T-shirts, was that of surveillance. As an innocent employee, because of the huge amount of attention you receive whilst in

the company vehicles, there is no way that you can deviate in any way from the rules of the organisation. All eyes are on you and how you behave. It has a panopticon like disciplining effect, and an overall effect of control on those in the vehicles.

The grass between my toes

Walking past Ermintrude and the other vehicles (including the co-founder's Mercedes cars), I would proceed to walk over a patch of grass, under some trees, past some picnic tables where people would be having their breakfast sitting under parasols. It would now be 9am. You could be forgiven for thinking that there was a park on my way to work, but you would be wrong. I would have in actual fact already have entered the office environment Innocent drinks employees work in.

The natural theme is continued inside the building. My shoes skim artificial grass covered floor as I walk past the bottles of Innocent drink's competitors lined up across the wall; a constant, visible reminder of the competition and of where Innocent drinks is as a business in relation to other businesses. Other employees sit happily? Eating their breakfast, some at the picnic tables and some at their desks as they work. The company provides breakfast free all day, everyday. I however did not eat breakfast at work. The idea seemed very strange to me, as it also felt odd

to eat breakfast at work. I was much happier to stay at home for an extra ten minutes and eat it there. I have noted in a previous section in my account of preparing for the day, that I would eat breakfast at home. This seemingly normal and taken for granted activity at Innocent drinks has been extracted from the home environment and transferred to the workplace. Most other people at Innocent drinks did however choose to eat their breakfast at work. According to the innocent handbook:

"At fruit towers, we believe in the powers of cereal, and we were always told that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Therefore, there's always bread, cereal and milk available to everyone who fancy a bit of food in the morning. We really love cereal.

Leave your bowl out, you'll go without"

This seemed almost childlike to me, like living at home with your parents again. In addition to this, everyone has a cereal bowl with their name on it in which to have their cereal. This sense of belonging to a family and being at home runs throughout the language and images at Innocent drinks fruit towers. Framed, baby photos of employees line one wall of the office; birthdays are celebrated with homemade (according to a ROTA) cake, candles and singing. Everyone at the organisation signs birthday,

wedding and leaving cards on demand. In addition to these aspects of the work environment, the theme of the child and the home is present on the company website. Going to the list of contacts on the Innocent drinks website takes you to a page of thumbnails of pictures of the staff; placing the cursor over the image results in the same baby photo that is framed and hung at fruit towers flashing up. Also on the website, joining the mailing list for the weekly newsletter is called ‘joining the family’ and if you want to unsubscribe from this mailing list, then you need to send an email to the address imleavinghome@innocentdrinks.co.uk.

Walking past these and other scenes, I would pass the palm trees by the picnic tables people were sitting at and the sun parasols over people’s desks. The layout of the fruit towers is open plan and spread over three units with raised mezzanine areas. A large glass walled work kitchen sits in the centre of the central unit; this is where the drinks are developed. A clouded glass window of a meeting room reads ‘From small acorns...’

There are representations of an idea of business visibility, transparency and open communication everywhere you look. Employees do not sit in departments or teams, but dispersed throughout the organisation. According to Richard Reed, one of the co-founders, in his monthly column he writes for the money section of the Guardian newspaper:

“Indeed we encourage open communication and the sharing of ideas on a daily basis. An easy way of encouraging this is that nobody at innocent has an office, and people sit next to people they don’t work with, so there’s no departmental divide. For example, I sit next to Bouchra who works in our products team. Bouchra sits next to Claire, our grapevine, who sorts out all things PR. And Claire sits next to Geoff who works in trade marketing. This means that we can make sure that we don’t become too insular within our departments and our opinions and ideas”

“Keeping an eye on the way that you communicate in a business is very important. I feel that you should be able to ask anyone anything at any time and expect an answer”.

At first glance at the layout and images all around those at fruit towers, you could easily be forgiven for thinking how relaxed and laid back the office environment is. It is an ideology of a relaxed, hippy way of life. Not getting too stressed out; chilling out all day with the grass between your toes. In fact it was the norm to take your shoes off at work. Most people do actually work with the grass between their toes. One Innocent drinks produced paper bag distributed to university sandwich shops tells people to, in the Innocent drinks font and with a large picture of a smoothie bottle on one side of the bag, to ‘Phone your mum it’s on the company’,

'afternoons are for wimps and to go home early' and to 'fall asleep under your desk no one will notice'. No business dress is worn. Shorts and flip flops are a common sight in the office, in fact it is normal to take your flip flops off and walk around bare foot all day. This again is something I felt uncomfortable about doing as I felt that it was the work place and that this would make me feel like I was on holiday or at home. Bearing in mind however all these representations of being laid back about work, my field notes from my first day at Fruit towers tell a very different story. From my field notes from my first day at Fruit towers, I seem a little shocked and surprised:

"Today was a lesson in marketing. I watched the three directors work their asses off. They were on the case from nine until six. Everywhere I looked one of them was there. This pace is phenomenal. I've never worked in such an innovative place before. So focused"

The official line at Innocent drinks is that there is no theory, it's not about being a business, it's just a natural thing that a few nice, intelligent people get together and do everyday at fruit towers. In addition to the three co-founders and directors, there is another guy who has been there since the company began; Dan Germain. He is head of creative and has been in charge of all things design related since day one. He is also very

good friends with the directors. Dan (as he is called at work, only first names are used at Innocent drinks) gave an introductory talk to me and another summer helper starting at the same time, Bob. Dan reinforced this message of a 'natural' workplace:

"Innocent drinks is just a collection of sixty to seventy nice people who are intelligent. There is no theory behind Innocent, just nice people doing nice jobs. We don't use business language here; we just talk to each other normally"

The word 'normal' is used here as opposed to business as 'abnormal'. Innocent drinks is however a business and so the language is one of business language not just people talking in a pub. Dan spoke mainly in terms of 'who we are', an identity assumed by everyone in the organisation. There was much mention of intelligence and how important it was for them to hire intelligent people. Dan's talk felt at the time to me very much like a sales pitch for why we were so great and had been taken on. It was also designed to take our attention away from any business theory or corporate strategy; to thinking that everyone at Innocent drinks was just nice, happy and natural. This informality and organic approach runs through much of the images of Innocent drinks. For example, upper case fonts are rarely used and lower case letters are used even against

convention. Writing font is fun and childlike. Everyone at Innocent drinks is on first name basis, even the directors. Clothes are casual, but smart.

The irony of the situation however of being in the glass walled library with Dan and Bob however for that one hour meeting in the middle of the afternoon, was that on the shelves of the library were countless books about branding, small business and advertising. I struggled to see one about social awareness, the environment, fair trade or even snowboarding. One book there was the history of the Ben and Jerry's organisation. This organisation shares many of the same values as innocent. Values about the counterculture, non-business approach, just two mates making nice ice cream and a hippy like mentality (they say that they are dedicated Hippies). Of course Unilever now owns Ben and Jerry's and Ben and Jerry are rich, having made 45M and 19M respectively. Another book on the Innocent drinks library shelf was a book called lovemarks. According to a critical analysis by Sayers and Monin (2005), which analyses the text written by Kevin Roberts, CEO (Global) of Saatchi and Saatchi, argue that Roberts' thesis argues that some products are loved, and that organisations need to capitalise on this love for the product. Sayers and Monin (2005) argue however that this move towards 'symbolic economies' as they call it and the commoditization of love itself needs some critical attention. They therefore go on to apply a 3 stage scriptive reading method in order to carry out this analysis. Sayers

and Monin (2005) argue here that in contemporary postsocial cultures 'objects are sources of the self and of social integration, and can even have erotic properties' (Sayers and Monin, 2005. p.16). Sayers and Monin (2005) go on to argue that in line with Marx and his ideas about commodities and alienation from the labour that has gone into producing them, that there is a difference between the 'representation' of a product symbolically and the product itself. The overall summary of the argument here is that 'the commodity obscures and communicates...it obscures what made it a sign' (Sayers and Monin, 2005, p.20).

One of the moments that brought home to me as an individual how serious Innocent were as a organisation, was when I received on the 28th July 2005 an email from the director of HR, about my 'performance' at the company. I was an email saying that if I couldn't make my work there my priority, over my research, then I should be released from my contract, and they would give me access to carry out my research on them instead. I thought about this option, and at the time it seemed very attractive, as I wasn't enjoying the predominantly data entry job I was doing for them.

I thought about this and decided, that the whole point of this study was to carry out a situated and contextualised critical ethnography of the organisation, and that I would need to be member of the workforce there in order to do this. Also, in order to carry out a critical ethnographic study,

it was necessary to experience and interpret the organisation as an individual, and not just analyse existing data.

Further to this, I was also struck by some of the family and childlike associations buzzing around me. Although Dan's words were saying one thing about the process being natural, these books, the books being read by those at fruit towers, were saying something else. They were talking some of most aggressive corporate language around.

Helping to make smoothies

Making my way therefore past all of these images and representations of work being natural, fun, in-formal and like being at home, I would arrive at my desk. This was in the first unit, directly underneath the people and environment (or Human Resources) department who sat on the mezzanine level above me. It was here that Clari sat alongside Bronte, 'People Person' or in more common business terms, HR manager. I did not feel any of these nice things at my desk. Because of where it was positioned, it would be very obvious what time I came in and what I did all day. Although I had a computer with Internet access, the possibility of checking or receiving private emails was very limited if not impossible. This made my time at Innocent drinks extra stressful and I often needed to email my supervisor for encouragement or some guidance, something I was not in the end often able to do. Sitting in this prominent position to HR

manager especially, made me nervous. The accumulation of items such as postcards and flyers was especially difficult here, and I would often hide things under my clothes or under papers on my desk until it was time to go home, when I would quickly brush the items into my bag and calmly leave.

My workday would therefore often start with a trip up to the people and environment office to find out what I would be doing for the day. It could be anything. My jobs over the six week period varied from: Driving a cow van to Devon and back, decorating one of the grassy vans with artificial daisies, entering outlet data into a spread sheet, cleaning a fish tank, distributing toilet paper to the toilets, shopping at Harvey Nichols for picnic blankets, developing photographs and answering the banana phone.

One of my favourite jobs was in fact answering the banana phone. This is actually just the phone at reception at fruit towers, although there is a plastic banana shaped phone in the office, which does also ring. On each drinks bottle Innocent drinks distribute, it says something like for example:

"Feeling out of shape? Call the banana phone on 02086003030, go to www.innocentdrinks.co.uk or visit innocent, Fruit towers, 3 Goldhawk estate, London, W6 0BA"

Consumers could call this number at anytime and talk about anything they liked. I spent probably sixty percent of my time at Innocent drinks answering the banana phone. Calls varied from children singing down the phone at me, old people complaining about the weather, people asking for jobs, people telling us how lovely our drinks were and also some very serious and useful calls. One example of a potential good use for this phone was when a local teacher called the banana phone to ask if either one of the directors or the marketing manager could give a talk to her pupils about entrepreneurship. This was an opportunity for us to make a difference on a plate, made possible by this public number, for Innocent drinks to contribute to their local area in some way. However, once the message was passed on to the head of marketing, Nadam (short for new Adam as one of the directors is called Adam), even though I offered to put together the slides for him and help him run it, there was no interest shown.

I felt at this point that with all the talk about helping people and giving back to the community, it was just about doing things that were considered 'cool'. Fair-trade for their suppliers, urban kids in London, knitted hats by old people. When a 'not so cool', but important and local opportunity came up it was just ignored. This made me feel very sad and it still does. Innocent drink's head office Fruit towers is situated in a relatively poor and run down area of West London. For many of the members of the

community there, English is not their first language. There are many asylum seekers, many of whom are kids. This school being in shepherds bush would have been in need of a little inspiration for the kids and a one-hour talk by the co-founders or anyone, even me, could have achieved this. These kids however aren't the target market for Innocent drinks and their parents probably do not buy the smoothies. This is probably not because they don't like them but because they can't afford them. At around £2.00 per bottle it is probably out of the reach of most kids living in Shepherds Bush.

Considering the area more widely around fruit towers, the culture within the fruit towers exists pretty much in complete isolation from the surrounding area. The workforce at fruit towers is unrepresentative of the local area. It is difficult therefore to see how anybody from the local community benefits from the organisation or the culture. This works to maintain inequality between groups in society, privileging those that are already privileged. I was curious throughout my time at innocent drinks what the workers at the factories that actually made the innocent's drinks were like. My curiosity was heightened when I found out that they don't actually make their own drinks and that the drinks are actually made by an organisation called 'The serious juice company' formally known as 'Sunjuice'

An example of this privileged and uncritical view of equality can be found in Innocent drink's T-shirts. The T-shirts are made by Howies, an organisation based in Wales that makes organic clothing. The label in my T-shirt I was given at Innocent drinks says:

"Made in a nice factory in Turkey"

The similarities between Innocent drinks and Howies are clear here. They work together to position themselves as countercultural, natural, 'nice' organisations, however this label alone shows a complete disregard to the problems of inequality in an increasingly aggressive marketplace. Aside from the fact that I am actually Turkish and find the T-shirt label quite insulting, the effect of this label has the same affect as the 'nice' culture at Innocent drinks has on the people that work there. It's OK to get earn subsistence levels of income for your work as a Turkish worker in a factory or to work twelve hour days five days a week in a office, as long as people think that you fit in with the culture of being 'nice'.

Most days at Innocent drinks would start therefore pretty much at 9.05am, as I would by then have been allocated my task for the day. There was however one day of the week that was different. This day was Monday. Every Monday morning the whole company, including those based in other parts of Europe via telephone, would sit down to talk about what

they had done over the past week. This was an exercise in communication and self-appreciation. People would congratulate each other on a job well done. In addition to this, Ailana the PR manager would read out any good press over the past week, of which there would always be lots. The meeting would then end with an activity. This would vary but often it would be a sporting activity or a game. Everyone would always join in as it was compulsory and this was I think for the point over the 6-week period where I felt the most stupid.

4.3 Conclusion

The above account details some of my experiences over the 10 week period that I was carrying out my fieldwork at Innocent drinks. This period taught me that becoming part of a group of people is difficult, regardless of how much research you've done in order to prepare yourself for the experience.

The fieldnotes presented in the above section show themes emerging within the data. The written data above is a thick description of my time at Innocent drinks, and coming through this description is a set of values and ideas related to the organisational structure. Chapter 5 presents the data in an organized way, with a view of analysing it further in chapter 7, through a discursive analysis. The data in this chapter is transcribed from

written and recorded field notes, taken only during the 10 week fieldwork period.

An initial analysis of the data shows a tendency of the organisation to use countercultural values within the workplace, and to use these as a justification for the work itself. The use of symbols and language from what is normally seen as anti-work and capitalism are used within an environment that supports the system these values aim to critique.

The fieldnotes are a personal account of my experiences at Innocent drinks, and are of course heavily influenced by my outlook and perspective on work. There are however advantages in acknowledging these aspects of the research process, and analysing the data accordingly. The approach this study takes is an interpretive, ethnographic approach to a construction of an analysis that is based on experience. There are therefore cultural and contextual factors at every stage of this research process, and my fieldnotes aims to capture this and use it to its fullest advantage. Chapter 6 will now carry out a visual analysis of the data collected during this time.

5

Visual analysis

5.1 Introduction to visual data

During my PhD I collected visual data regarding innocent drinks as an organisation. In this chapter, I present some of my own photographs collected during the time of my PhD as data about the organisation and its use of visual communication about wellbeing and work. I have arranged the photographs into themes in order to move towards understanding the ways in which these ideas are communicated, and in which contexts. Themes identified are those of Home and Family, Play and Humour, Nature, the environment and society, Non-business/non bureaucratic and Love. These themes are then carried into chapter 6, alongside my notes from the field in chapter 4, in order to carry out a discursive analysis of the data with consideration for the written and visual data collected.

5.2 Home and family



This was taken in Convent Garden in August 2005. On this day I was working for Innocent Drinks when I was asked to hand out free smoothies for children to sample. I had driven there from Shepherds bush in the 'grassy van' seen in the picture. The drinks had been in the back of my van.

For me, this picture shows the image of a grassy van surrounded by a family. The family looks quite comfortable standing around the van drinking their smoothies. The image is therefore a natural theme; natural fruit smoothies and a natural car.



Again here is the same van on the same day in Covent Garden. I had moved the van in order to hand out the drinks as part of the children's summer festival that was taking place in the square.

What is interesting to me in this picture is that although there is what seem to be a mother and her children in the foreground of the picture, none of them are consuming a smoothie. However, if you look to the centre right of the picture, a small child who is alone is drinking one of the smoothies I had just handed out. For me the child on the right stands out in this picture.



This picture was taken in March 2005 during a short visit to Innocent drinks' offices. This is the kitchen area for employees where breakfast is provided free of charge every day. In the picture are two people who work at the offices.

This picture represents a family and home theme for me as breakfast is normally eaten in the home before work, if at all. In this environment however, breakfast is eaten at work making the office environment more like home.



This is an image of the central fruit table in the kitchen at Fruit Towers.

The fruit here represents again the idea of the home at work, where fruit is laid out for employees to eat. For me this is a representation of not actually being at work but being at home. Being part of a family.



This is a breakfast bowl that everything receives when they start at Innocent Drinks. Each person has one with his or her name on it.

For me this is a visual representation of a family like environment in the workplace.



This is a wall in the offices at Fruit Towers. Each employee when they start is asked to bring in a baby photograph of themselves to display on this wall.

This is for me a representation of the family and the home themes in the workplace. The idea of having baby pictured on a wall is family orientated and seemingly out of place in a formal place of work.

5.3 Play and humour



This is a signpost from the Fruitstock festival held in August 2005. The location of the sign was Regent's park in central London.

During the festival the idea of a 'nice person' was used throughout the advertising and general festival language. This included a VNP area (Very Nice Person) area as opposed to a VIP area. It functioned however in exactly the same way.



This was a sign at the Fruitstock festival. The small print at the bottom says 'and definitely no selling glass BBQs'.

The seriousness of this sign is offset by humour at the end. For me, this shows that as much as Innocent drinks portray a laid back 'Free' attitude, they still impose rules and regulations on attendees to their festival.



This is a photograph taken of the company vehicles parked outside Fruit towers in March 2005.

Here for me is another use of humour in the form of cars and vans. These vehicles were used to transport drinks but also performed a function of representing a culture through visual representations of animals and greenery.



In this picture one of the employees of Innocent drinks is holding the company's 'banana phone' in her hand. The phone in the office for customers to call is called the banana phone.

For me there is the use of humour here in order to represent 'nature' in the form of a phone for customer complaints and comments.



This is a photograph of one of the meeting rooms in the offices.

There are representations here of a traditional children's classroom with a blackboard, wooden table and childlike drawings on the blackboard in white chalk. Humour is used here in order to make the atmosphere less formal and business like.



This is a picture taken of the central area in the offices at Fruit towers.

There is the use of humour and fun here as the football table sits clearly in the middle of the office environment. For me this is an attempt at making the environment less formal and more playful.



This is a photograph of the central meeting area in the offices at Fruit Towers

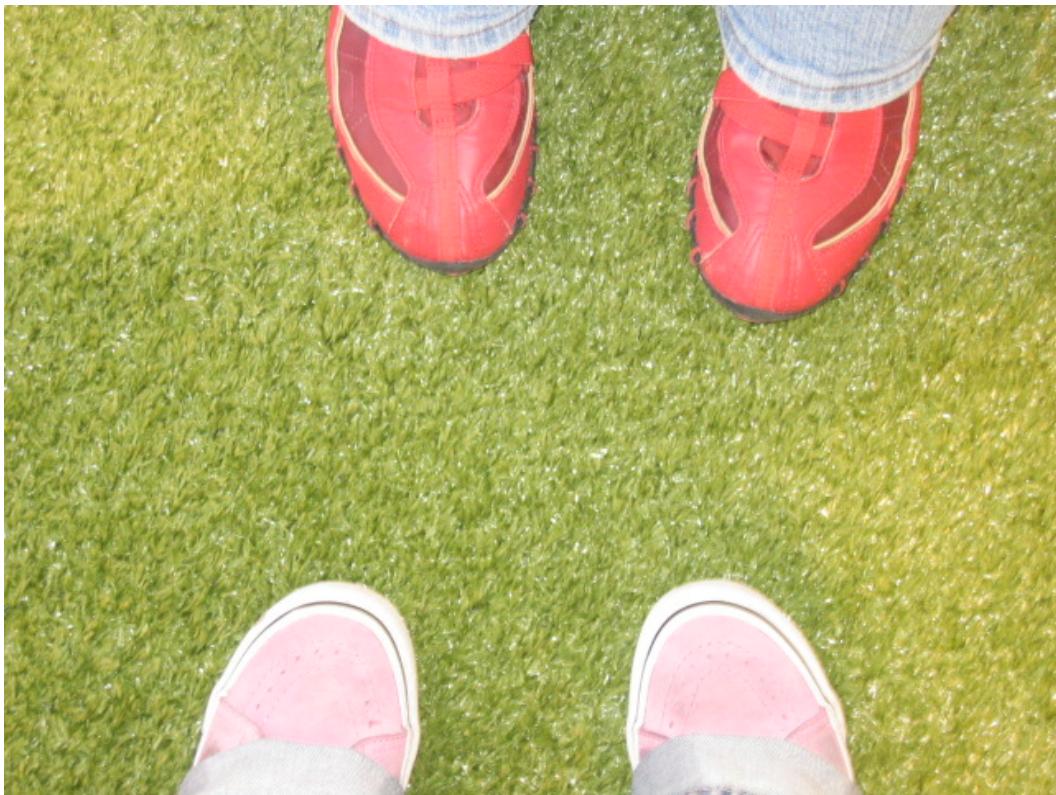
There are humorous representations here of picnic tables and beanbags which give an informal feeling to the work environment.

5.4 Nature, the environment and society



This picture was taken on a day when I was asked to deliver some drinks to Top Shop on Oxford Street in central London.

For me there are representations here of nature through the creation of a cow from a van. Something that is very unnatural and harmful to nature (a van) is turned into the representation of a cow. This creates the idea of nature.



This is a picture of the office floor of Fruit Towers. The floor is made of Astroturf. The shoes belong to me and to one of the employees at fruit Towers.

My interpretation of this image is of the outdoors being brought indoors; the outside coming inside.



Here is a photograph of a sign above the recycling bins in the kitchen at Fruit Towers.

For me this is ironic because Innocent drinks manufacture drinks in plastic bottles themselves.



This is a photograph of the recycling bins in the kitchen at Fruit Towers.

This is for me a representation of looking after the environment and of a natural way of doing business.



Here is the photograph of the vehicles outside of Fruit Towers again.

In this case the theme of nature is evident through the design of the outsides of the vehicles. Again they are cars but they are also cows.

Gone fishing. Back at 12.

We're sorry we missed you. We'll be sampling our smoothies here between 12pm and 4pm from 30th July to 7th August so please pick up a Fruitstock leaflet and come back later.

love from innocent

www.fruitstock.co.uk



This is a photograph of a flyer used at the sampling that took place in Topshop on Oxford street in August 2005. I was asked to deliver this along with a load of drinks in one of the cow vans.

The idea that an employee of Innocent drinks may have gone fishing during work hours is again a representation of being at one with nature and very informal and non-business like.



This is a photograph of a tree in the middle of the office at Fruit Towers

This is again a representation of the outside coming in, with the workplace being a reconstruction of a natural, outdoor space.



This is a photograph of an employee's desk in the offices at Fruit Towers.

In this picture there is a parasol over the desk, which again connotes the idea of being outside when you are actually inside and at work.



This picture was taken at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005. It is a picture of the main music stage and the crowd that were around it that day.

For me the idea of a festival called "Fruitstock" (a play on words from Woodstock) evokes ideas about nature and being outdoors. The caption 'hello everyone' on the main stand also communicates an idea of everyone being welcome and their being no rules or regulations. The text is written in lower case letters, which is informal un-business like. This is also attractive to the younger generation who use such ways of writing in text messages and on online social networking sites.



This is a picture of the crowd taken in Regent's park in August 2005 during the Fruitstock festival.

This reason for this crowd being there was to attend the Fruitstock music festival. There is therefore an association with being close to nature and actually being outdoors this time.



This is a photograph of one of the coffee stands at the Fruitstock festival in Regent's park. Café direct sells coffee. According to the café direct website

'At Cafédirect, 100% of our excellent range of coffees, teas and drinking chocolate is Fairtrade. We work in partnership with small-scale growers across the developing world and always pay them a fair price' (Café Direct website, our business section, 14/02/08).

This association therefore with an organisation like café direct symbolizes an ethical approach to consumption and production. This was strange for me however as Innocent drinks themselves don't use fair trade fruit in their drinks.



This picture was taken at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005. The people in the picture are my friends.

For me this picture is interesting as although I was at the festival as first an employee of innocent drinks, and second, a bit skeptical of the whole event, the festival managed to get me and my friends out doors and to spend time with one and other. My friends were aware of what I was researching when this photograph was taken.



This is a photograph of one of the food stands at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005. It sold burgers and sausages. It sold only organic meat and had one organic food awards for 2001, 2002 and 2004.

This was interesting for me as Innocent drinks seems to align themselves with organisations like this one that sells organic meat, even though Innocent drinks themselves don't use organic ingredients in their products.



This picture is from the side of another food stand that sells pizza. The stand was also at the Fruitstock festival.

The caption 'respect nature...man' evokes ideas from the 1960s and links to the Fruitstock festival's relationship to 'Woodstock'. The Woodstock festival in the 1960s was a festival that celebrated hippy culture.



This is a picture of a food stand at the Fruitstock festival. It was a stand that sold sausages made from organically farmed meat.

Again this is interesting for me as Innocent drinks align themselves with 'ethical' organisations like this in order to create a 'field' of an impression about the product in question ('Innocent smoothies'). There wouldn't for example be a McDonalds stand at the Fruitstock festival, even though Innocent drinks put their smoothies in kid's happy meals at McDonalds.



This is a picture taken by my friend Chintal of me talking to a representative of the charity organisation Greenpeace.

Greenpeace were another one of the organisations at the Fruitstock festival Innocent drinks liked to associate themselves with. There is therefore an association with environmentalism and nature here at the festival.



This is a close up of the 'Well hung meat company' stand at the Fruitstock festival.

Attention is drawn here to the visual representation of the organic food awards for 3 years running. This symbolic representation of the awards adds to the image at the festival even though its not Innocent drinks that have one the awards.



This is a picture of a motivational message on one of the meeting room windows at Fruit towers offices.

There is a direct link to a 'natural' development of business and that it is nature's way of living.



This is a picture of the Greenpeace stand at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005. The people in the picture are members and representatives of the charity.

This was again interesting for me as Greenpeace align themselves to relatively radical environmental practices and policies, similar to some which Innocent drinks align themselves to but in actual fact Innocent drinks do many of the things Greenpeace disagree with such as make drinks in plastic bottles and ship fruit over by air.



This is a picture of the inside of the offices at Fruit towers. The mezzanine level overlooks the ground floor where most people sit.

There is here almost a garden like feel to the office and the use of astroturf and that many green plants makes the inside feel very close to nature and almost outside.



This image was taken of the greenpeace stand and in it is a 4x4 vehicle which greenpeace are campaigning to ban from use in London.

Again the association with such campaigns means an image that is aligned with environmentalism and climate change protests.



This is a picture of a sign at the recycling point at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005.

The sign is very much in the innocent drinks style of font and language. The mention of 'good people' is in line with the brand and in line with the ethos of the festival itself which is branded as a 'festival for nice people'.



This is a picture of one of the innocent drinks vehicles. The van was parked in convent garden on a day when I had been asked to sample some kids drinks.

The van here is covered in Astroturf in order to create a natural feel to the vehicle. There is also a sign on the side of the van, which says 'Innocent drinks – fresh as a daisy'; again this is an association to nature and naturalness.



This is a picture of the same car on the same day.

Here it is possible to see the innocent drinks motif on the bonnet of the car (which I did as part of my job). The logo commonly seen on packaging and other promotional material is illustrated here using artificial daisies. There is therefore again a relation to nature and a natural way of life even though it is a car.



This is a picture of a sign for the sale of innocent smoothies at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005.

This is interesting to me as water is being sold for £1 in order to raise money for people in the developing world. There is a social motivation here to raise money for others in need.

5.5 Non-business / non-bureaucratic



This is a picture of one of the work areas within the Fruitstock offices. It is the HR area on the upper mezzanine level.

For me I took this picture as it symbolised a very non-hierarchical approach to seating as the chair second from the left belongs to the head of HR, but you can see that her desk is surrounded by other desks. There is also an aesthetic appeal from the use of colours and personalization of

the wall immediately by the desks. For the atmosphere was informal and relaxed, almost as if the HR director was like everybody else. The reality of her approach was very different.



This is a picture of a sign I was asked to deliver to Topshop on Oxford street alongside a sampling session for Innocent smoothies.

The reference here to fishing instead of work is interesting as there is a implication here that its OK to go fishing during work hours. This is again part of an anti-work theme.



This picture is of the central meeting area in the innocent offices at fruit towers. The man the red jumper wearing glasses at the back of the picture is one of the founders and directors of Innocent drinks.

This area is where many meetings take place. There is a very relaxed feeling in this area due to the use of picnic tables and bean bags. It is also

important to note here that people can hear and see other people's meetings including those involving the directors.



This is a picture of a window of a meeting room at the Fruit towers offices.
The words read 'From small acorns....'

This got my attention as the words provided a view into the meeting room which gave a sense of visibility and autonomy.



This is a picture of the view for the raised mezzanine level of the offices out into the front cap park area.

For me this is another example of a visible office space and one, which tries to eliminate bureaucracy.



This is a picture of the wall of the reception area of Fruit towers offices.

The bottles on the wall are from other organisations.

For me this is interesting as opposed to hiding from competitors and seeing them as the enemy, they are displayed at the entrance to the offices for everyone to see. They are made visible and visual.

5.6 Love



This is a picture of the side of a food stand at the Fruitstock festival in August 2005.

The reference here to love is apparent and links the product (pizza) to love. This ties in with innocent drinks' branding as the idea of love is tied closely to the product.



This is a picture of a sign I was asked to place in the store Topshop on Oxford Street in central London.

The language used to sign off at the end uses the idea of love. This is interesting for me as innocent drinks use the word love in much of its branding and literature.

5.7 Conclusion

Chapter 5 arranges visual data collected both during the time spent at Innocent drinks as an employee, and also during my time researching for my PhD. The data consists of self-made photographs, existing images and text. The data has been analysed and organized into themes, similar

to those derived from the written notes in chapter 6. The themes identified are home and family, play and humour, nature environment and society, non-business/bureaucratic, and Love. These five themes work to construct a further understanding of the written data, and form an analysis in their own right. The symbols and visual communication in the images have been analysed in chapter 5 in order to understand the culture in a way that adds to an understanding of innocent drinks and its use of various images.

Chapter 6 will now combine data from chapters 4 and 5 in the form of an discursive analysis. This analysis will complete the analysis for this thesis, however there are many interpretations of this data and mine is one that is specific to my circumstances and assumptions as an individual.

5.8 The wellbeing show

In November 2005, a show dedicated to wellbeing took place in London. I went to take some photographs and found that innocent were there too. The photographs show the context of the innocent stand and help us to understand how consumers might perceive them on the day. The photographs also show how Innocent drinks located themselves in a field of 'alternative health'. Money was spent by Innocent drinks on hiring people to give massages by the company vehicles, alongside eastern philosophy health retailers and alternative health practices. The images tell a story of what I saw when I went to the Wellbeing show in London that day. For me there was a display at the show of how Innocent drinks visually communicate ideas about themselves and their position in the market, and in relation to price, almost as a justification for the way in which they carry out work, and also for the price of the product. There is a further analysis of these images in chapter 6 of this thesis.

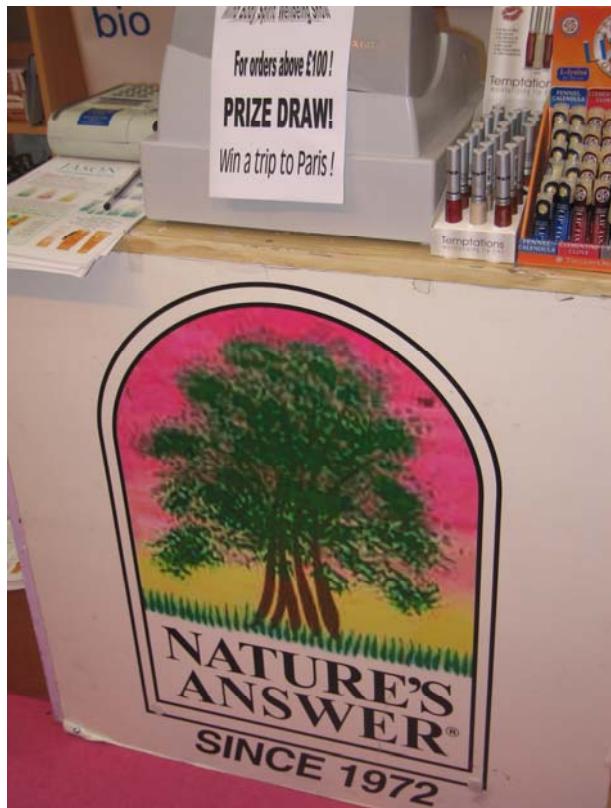


















6

Critical ethnographic analysis

6.1 Introduction

The account presented in chapter 4 is a personal account of my experiences at innocent. The images presented in chapter 5 are photographs taken of my experiences. The themes in relation to the workplace identified through these experiences are those of home and family, play and humour, nature the environment and society, non-business /bureaucratic and love. These themes have in the case of Innocent Drinks been appropriated into the work environment.

6.2 Home and Family

The existing wellbeing and work literature mentions in places the transformation of the workplace in to the ‘home’. Artifacts, pictures, The way in which wellbeing is communicated and represented is discussed in the literature. Discourses of organisational wellness are considered in the literature as encompassing both language and practices (the said and the seen), which work to institutionalize wellbeing in organisational settings (McGillivray, 2005). According to Sointu (2005), articles dealing with the workplace offer advice on how to make the working environment more homely through the incorporation of things such as family photographs,

plants and other markers of personal identity. There is however nothing in the literature that extends the notion of making work like home past work-spaces and personal belongings. At innocent it can be seen through the appropriation of the home in into work various spaces and ideas are incorporated in to what would be a formal work environment. The ethnographic account above describes breakfast time allocated in the morning, plates with each employee's name on, baby pictures hung on the walls, birthday cake and singing happy birthday on your birthday, the word 'family' is used when you join innocent; you become 'part of the family' when you join the weekly newsletter. The 'home' is brought into the 'workplace'. Private merges into public. The notion of family in the case if innocent even extends to their consumers through the website and labels on bottles. The inside of a CD sleeve given away with the festival CD from the Fruitstock 2005 festival reads 'Join our family get a present'; this means 'join our mailing list '. Everyone can be part of the innocent family. This space that was once separate from work, a space for personal thought, rest, spending time with loved ones, has been made public. I didn't want to eat breakfast at work and I didn't want to give them a picture of me as a baby for the wall. These were personal things for me. There however in terms of discourse analysis another side to this discourse of 'family and home' at work, that of the appropriation of personal space in a public arena.

According to Sointu (2005), these kinds of homemaking activities seek to 'soften' the working environment and by doing this work to blur distinctions between public and private spheres. It is through the production of home at work that employees can see work as a place of belonging and ownership, and through performing wellbeing in everyday life in this way people become subjects to the discourse of wellbeing. There is a dual role played here by making work homelike, in that workers are made to assert their identity as employees as well as demand in this more personal environment recognition as more than this, as people beyond their status as employees. Discourses of wellbeing perform a dual role in enforcing norms of docility and effectiveness at work (Sointu, 2005, p.268).

This critique by Sointu (2005) stands only with the assumption, as outlined in the literature that according to Rose (1999), the responsibility for our own wellbeing resides with us as individuals, and that is how we become to relate to ourselves. The discourse of this 'self-mastery' and responsibility is evident in the discourse of innocent drinks, the opportunity to make yourself at home, to make it your own space.

6.3 Play and Humour

The third theme to arise from the ethnography is the idea of play and humour in the workplace. This theme sets out to create an environment of fun and not being work. I found however that during my time at Innocent people worked hard, long hours and were quite stressed. The visual dimension of innocent that communicated humour and play was the office design of picnic tables, grass carpeting, parasols, table football in the office, games every Friday morning, the company logo is a childlike design of a face, fonts used are informal and fun. Capital letters are often replaced with small letters and jokes are commonly found on packaging and on the website. Wellbeing in terms of play and humour is therefore brought into the workplace. The newsletter is humorous but very clever in the way it promotes innocent's activities in a very direct and focused way, getting our attention along the way with humour and a seemingly fun and laid back approach, which works to obscure a very serious and targeted marketing policy. In appendix B, item 1 is an example of a paper bag made by innocent drinks for their drinks which tells customers that if they're bored one afternoon, they should 'while away the hours with an origami – afternoon – decision – maker. The bag can be folded into a decision maker similar to the ones we used to play with as children, and options include phone your mum (its on the company), skive, and snooze. All these options are non-work related and relatively fun. Illustrations are

very simple and fonts used are casual, bubbly and all in small letters.

According to Frank (1997) it is through the use of simple visual communication such as simple photographs, minimal layout and large clever headlines that the ideas of non-consumerism can actually be used to fuel the consumerism of the future. The critique of the more 'traditional' aesthetic of consuming is appropriated into the new consuming machine.

There is the impression in this case that innocent 'support' skiving off work, using the phone to ring mum and other activities that are usually frowned upon in the work environment. The reality of the workplace was found to be quite different, in that mobile phones were not allowed to be used, personal calls could not be made from work phones and skiving was definitely not thought of as cool, in fact there was an iron fist mentality from the managers if anyone suggested taking unnecessary time off. Consumers are therefore encouraged to think in a way that is laid back and fun about work, however the reality of the production of the product itself is quite different in its approach.

6.4 Nature, the environment and society

The third theme emerging from the data is that of nature, the environment and society. The 'outdoor' feel of the inside of the workspace, the 'natural' appearance of the company vehicles as cows and also covered in artificial grass, the use of the colour green, grass shots in much of the advertising,

a ‘natural product’, trees in the office, grass covered walls, picnic tables as meeting tables, references to ‘alternative’ activities that are ‘natural’, outdoor activities incorporated into the organisation’s events and marketing plan. There is also an emphasis by Innocent on the alternative and countercultural. The annual music festival was named Fruitstock, the joining of natural and hippy in a name. At this festival music is predominantly world music, but at the time of my working at innocent there were 2 non-white people working at the company out of 70 employees. This is pretty poor especially for a company based in an area as cosmopolitan as Shepherds Bush. The festival itself attracts a diverse crowd of people in terms of age and ethnic background, unlike the organisation itself. Appendix B item 2 shows a visual comparison between the ethnic make up of employees and people in the area surrounding the organisation. The festival is free however the drinks are priced between £1.70 and £2.30 depending on where you buy them. This means that a lot of society are excluded from buying the drinks, so they only do good to certain individuals. It was shown in chapter 2, that according to Lau (2000), statements about nature and being close to it are associated with eastern, alternative and new age philosophies. Ideas about environmentalism and nature have moved from the realm of public politics to the realm of the individual.

The ethnography shows the presence of Yoga at the ‘fruitstock festival’ and also the presence of predominantly organic and fairtrade stands selling their products at the park. Innocent drinks are neither organic or Fairtrade. There is also the presence of the environmental charity Greenpeace and various recycling and charity initiatives. Innocent also featured at the wellbeing show at the royal horticultural halls in London. This show was a collection of stands promoting ‘alternative’ health and wellbeing, and Innocent were positioned among them. The stand consisted of a cow van, 2 fridges filled with innocent smoothies (very environmentally friendly), fake grass on the ground, a sign pointing to parklife and some free drinks samples (being given out in small plastic cups). The people on the stand were also offering free massages to people walking by. Situated around the innocent stand were various alternative health stands such as ‘The inner potential centre’, ‘yoga magazine mind body and spirit’, ‘Buddha magic’, ‘realise your inner potential’, ‘Jason – pure, natural and organic products’, ‘my online trainer.co.uk’ ‘japanese spiritual healing’ and ‘nature’s energy’. There is a juxtaposition here of innocent a pretty mainstream commercial organisation among stands offering eastern philosophies, alternative healing and organic, natural products. This positioning is similar to that described at the Fruitstock festival, whereby Innocent positions themselves within a field of alternative and natural organisations, without being one themselves. There is in the case of innocent a combining of

ideas about the environment, nature and wellbeing and the consumption of their product; the smoothie. Interestingly here the smoothie was being sampled in plastic cups, and there were 2 fridges and a car on show. These are not environmentally friendly or natural items. The product itself is not organic or fairtrade. It is made of fruit yes but also sold in plastic bottles. The only thing that fitted with the wellbeing show were the free massages being offered as a side show to the actual product. The stand was visually 'natural' however the product itself is a drink.

In addition to the environmental and natural aspect of this theme, there is also a social awareness of the organisation. The Innocent foundation (see appendix B item 3) gets 10% of all Innocent's profits but most of this goes to overseas projects. There were however occasions whilst I was working at Innocent when opportunities to help children in a school in the local area arose and this was not taken. It is apparent to me that there is social awareness in so far as it benefits the brand and fits with the brand image and aims. Helping local children in Shepherds Bush doesn't count and so it's not done. Helping South America is cool, helping Shepherds bush is not.

7.5 Non-business/bureaucratic

The fourth theme is that of a non-business/bureaucratic approach. The visual design of the workplace is open plan with transparent walls into

most meeting areas. Seating is arranged into mixed desk clusters with people from different departments sitting together. The directors (Adam, Richard and Jon) do not have their own offices they sit with everyone else. Meetings are casual and everyone can hear what is said in other people's meetings. Dress code is informal with shoes not even worn in the office. The culture is actually that if you do wear your shoes in the summer around the office it is frowned upon and it seems that you are not completely part of the team. It was found however that whilst working in the office environment there was a definite hierarchy and although directors and senior managers sat with the rest of the team, they did not seem to interact with or mix with anyone but each other. Meetings were held in the transparent meeting rooms however there was one secluded room at the back of the office where most meetings were held. Senior managers often met here and it was a very standard, corporate room with no grass/parasols or picnic tables: Just tables and chairs.

The image of innocent as a non-business like non bureaucratic environment runs through innocent's advertising, marketing and workplace, however the reality of the workplace is quite different. The main objective is to make money, to get as much out of the employees as possible and to spend as little as possible whilst doing it. It is not about having a relaxed and laid back workplace where people hang out and have fun. According to Frank (1997), the idea of the corporate protest is

when an organisation goes against the mainstream and creates a new reason to consume; in this case the anti-corporation. The idea of errors and contamination is important here. In the literature according to Kaulingfreck and Bos (2005), modern conceptions of organisations are that chaos and disorder are kept out, in favour of order and accuracy. According to Frank (1997), the introduction of errors is a protest against the accuracy of modernity. This can be seen in the approach of innocent drinks in for example their ingredients list on their drinks bottles with the deliberate addition of an extra ingredient that isn't actually in their drinks e.g. a small church. The grainy images, scribbled fonts and rough illustrations including the innocent logo itself are an example of a visual critique of accurate modern imagery associated with a more corporate approach. This however forms the new consumerism, one of descent and differentiation.

7.6 Love

The fifth and final theme emerging from the ethnographic data is that of Love. The idea of love is all over innocent drinks. Love is often associated with a person, not an organisation. Innocent often however sign off with the word love, and say they love their employees and customers. The literature in chapter 2 talks about the idea of love when associated with a product and how this is often an extension of a product beyond its function, which works to obscure the historical and contextual nature of

the product. According to Frank (1997) the slogan 'lovepower' was coined in 1967 to describe a process of conceiving the consumer with affection with the idea that 'if you get them to like you, you'll get them to like the product' (Frank, 1997, p.128). There is however in the case of innocent drinks, an extension of this idea from just being for the consumers, to also being used on the employees. For example, when you join Innocent drinks the first line of your letter reads 'The more we see you the more we like you, and we liked you a lot to begin with'. It is written in the Innocent font and contains the humour you would expect. The day you start you are given a bunch of flowers before you've even begun. You are made to feel very welcome and given as many free smoothies as you can drink. In case of Innocent drinks, the employees get the same treatment as the consumers. According to Frank (1997), 'love' was a strategy that transformed cynicism into consumer responsiveness.

The idea of Fruitstock for example is based on the legendary Woodstock festival, which was based on anti-consumerist values of the time. Innocent's version, Fruitstock, positions itself among organisations that promote such things through their own product design and advertising, but the festival itself is to promote the drinks and the company, not peace and love for the world. The idea of the music festival itself is emancipatory in its ethos, music being associated according to Frank (1997) with creativity and being cool. The arena therefore for experiencing the product and

organisation is set, however the product itself is not about love it is about making money.

Conclusion

This chapter will conclude the thesis and clearly outline its contribution to existing research. It has been found that there is a new type of organisation, exemplified by the Organisation studied here, called Innocent drinks. It has been found that within this type of organisation, there has been a shift in the mechanisms of control of productive labour, towards an intellectual, immaterial and communicative production of order, and in turn production of hierarchy. In order to maintain its power, the capitalist system organises itself through subjectivities that rely only on its own self-validation. The mainstream wellbeing literature in the field of organisation studies shows that the idea of ‘wellbeing’ is actually a manifestation of middle-class values and concerns, and that in order to be well, you need to internalise these values, and be able to relate to them as an individual.

A critique of an approach to wellbeing at work by Innocent drinks according to this thesis is that ‘difference’ is ignored by the wellbeing discourse found in organisations. Difference such as cultural, historical, ethnic and class factors which can affect the way in which the wellbeing discourse is actually interpreted and understood.

This thesis has also found that individuals are being encouraged to realise wellbeing through consumption, both within organisations and as consumers. The working self is encouraged to envy the consuming self. We are encouraged as employees and as consumers to find wellbeing through consumption. In this new type of organisation, production and consumption are no longer separate activities. Workers are encouraged to consume the very product they produce. In addition to this, they are encouraged to consume the brand and its associated values and hierarchies embedded in the images, language and objects associated with the product and its advertising.

According to Baudrillard (1996), the presented discourse by an object, artefact, image or word, often conceals another, indirect discourse. Long lost traditional values often appear as signs, but these are taken out of context, and in doing so change their meaning. This can be seen to be the case with Innocent drinks, as in appropriating signs and objects into an organisational context, meanings once associated with these values are altered. According to Baudrillard (1996), ‘Hypocrisy in its modern version consists not in concealing the obscenity of nature but rather, in being satisfied (or attempting to be satisfied) by the inoffensive naturalness of signs’ (Baudrillard 1996, p.61). This thesis has found that in incorporating a precious critique of modernity and capitalism into the workplace and

mainstream culture, at Innocent Drinks, these ‘signs’, in the form of images and artifacts, are made part of the ‘official’ discourse presented about the products. There is in this way a meaning presented for work and consumption through the values and subjectivities associated with such discourse.

It has been found by this thesis, that in this new type of organisation, there is ‘intellectual, immaterial and communicative labour power’ (Hardt and Negri, 2000). This has found to be a theme for Innocent drinks, as it is through the use of material and symbolic discourse that a ‘scene is set’ for the production and consumption of their products. Stories are told, and environments are designed in order to convey a particular message about the organisation. It is argued however by this thesis that the desire to ‘help’ individuals achieve wellbeing is in fact helping to maintain the symbolic order of the hegemonic powers already in play. Innocent drinks and companies like them, argue that through increased consumption, individuals and society can be helped. Within this however is the power for the production of order. It is argued by this thesis that that there is no longer a ‘specific site of labour’ and that through the appropriation symbols and in turn discourse, a specific order is re-produced. Work is home, home is work: Public is private, private is public.

It is argued that in this new type of organisation, exemplified by Innocent drinks, ‘communication not only expresses but also organizes the movement of globalization. There is in this a form of legitimization, in the discourse around an organisation such as Innocent drinks that rests on nothing outside itself and develops its own languages of validation.

7.1 Implications for key literature in the field

This study has taken many of the above concerns and arguments, and investigated them in a context where it is believed that counter-cultural and new age values are being appropriated in to the workplace by an organisation. Taking aspects of the literature into account and the gaps found through the review in Chapter 2, this study has considered some of the points in the key literature and taken the opportunity to uncover some of the hidden aspects of the discourse. The research carries in this thesis is a product of my experiences, but its aims to show that what is formally presented as a way of wellbeing is not always the way in which is can be interpreted. The following implications can be outlined for the key literature in the field:

- 1) That although counter-cultural and new age values are incorporated into an organisational setting, it does not mean that the product itself or the production of that object or service will match the values appropriated. It was found that at Innocent drinks, counter-cultural

and new age values were very much a part of the marketing and sales objectives of the organisation, however the product itself was simply a standard juice drink in a plastic bottle.

2) The material and visual aspects of innocent drinks play a key role in the construction of the discourse around the idea of wellbeing at work. The symbols, colours and shapes used indicate to consumers a particular way of life. The literature on wellbeing and work touches briefly on aspects of visual and material culture, but this study has found that a lot can be gained from considering this as a part of the discourse and as a 'text'.

7.2 Original contribution of the thesis

The original contribution of this thesis is primarily ideological and secondarily methodological.

This thesis is a single case study that does not aim to generalise about any other organisation, although there are similar organisations doing similar things to Innocent drinks. This thesis takes the wellbeing at work literature one step further than has been discussed in the literature, as it looks at a particular case study in context and depth, and tried to understand further how the appropriation of counter-cultural and new age values can give meaning to work.

This thesis has found that in line with Hardt and Negri (2000), the transformations of production and labour have become increasingly immaterial. There has been a shift towards increasingly intellectual, immaterial and communicative labour power. This can be seen as a theme in the study of Innocent drinks and through the use of material and symbolic discourse in order to set a scene for the production and consumption of their products. Innocent drinks, through their positioning in society and the world as those who can ‘help’ to ‘make the world a better place’, are in fact helping to maintain the symbolic order of the hegemonic powers in play. There is a hierarchical structuring of the world within Innocent drinks. Visual images portray developing societies as needing help, and it is through consumption that these societies can be helped. It is however the structuring of these relations in what is meant to help improve the world that works to maintain the system that’s creates this inequality in the first place.

It has been found through this research that material and visual aspects of a system contain a symbolic order that works to give power to produce the order that controls production. Hardt and Negri (2000) argue that communication such as workplace design, product design, choice of colour and music are all subjectivities that not only communicate but also organize the movement of globalization.

Innocent drinks appropriate values and ideas by taking them out of their original context. It has been found that this 'mix and match' method changes the meaning of the value or idea and associates it with a product. It becomes something to be consumed. Ideas surrounding Innocent drinks such as helping the elderly, farmers in South America, inner city children, become 'a form of legitimisation that rests on nothing outside itself and is re-proposed ceaselessly by developing its own languages of self-validation' (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p.33). In the case of Innocent drinks, causes and areas that needed help were almost created to fit an image. There was however very little context and real understanding of the issues, just that certain people needed help or that some things are fun.

By appropriating these political and social ideas in to the workplace, space that was once available for the critique of work has been appropriated into the work environment. The idea of resistance is therefore absorbed and so there is a perception that there is a resistance to the 'corporation' for example in the way that Innocent say that they only use non-business language, but because this has in fact been appropriated by the organisation itself, it is no longer a form of resistance as it works to further the system it once aimed to critique. The incorporation of fun and humour into Innocent drinks does the same.

The legitimating of colonial rule (i.e. the hegemony of the west) is dependent on the popular production of alterity. There is therefore a co-optation of arguments against a particular system by the system itself. The appropriation of the counter-culture, new age practices and interest in social and political issues is seen by this thesis as a way of removing the opportunity for the critique that may have been applied to the organisation and the workplace. The incorporation of the home and family into the workplace does this by bringing the outside in. There is no specific site of labour. The workplace is the home, the home is the workplace. There is in turn a decline of public space and of space that is not taken up by work. It is harder to identify what is ours.

7.3 Looking back

Looking back at this research and at what could have been done differently, I would have liked in line with the discussion of visual ethnography to have used more visual analysis in the form of video. I feel that visual interaction is also a discourse, showing us how people interact with a certain environment and how that environment may construct and particular scene.

I would also have liked to have constructed a website. A multi-media research presentation of images, words, music and moving image in which the viewer can select the order in which they view the data and

input their own interpretation of what they see and hear. I would hope that this would work to enable readers to construct their own interpretations of the data apart from mine, the one that is presented in this thesis.

I would also have liked to have taken more photographs of my time at Innocent drinks. Although I had my camera on me for most of the time I was working there, due to the pressure on me to get my job done, I was given no time to take photographs during the day. I would on another occasion like to gain full access and to be able to take photographs of more events rather than just objects.

7.4 Future research

This thesis has introduced a critical angle to the wellbeing at work literature, and also an approach that considers the material and visual aspects of the discourse.

Any future research would build on these two main contributions this thesis has made to the literature. One way in which this could be done is through the exploration of cultural and historical influences on the interpretation of wellbeing at work. The method outlined in section 8.5 of a multimedia presentation of the research could be used to do this in that it would give people from various backgrounds and expectations the opportunity to interpret the discourse. Another way of doing this would be

to carry out interviews or focus groups with employees in order to find out how they felt about an organisation.

7.5 Final comments

This thesis has taken a critical ethnographic approach to studying the literature on wellbeing and work, and has considered the material and visual aspects of the concept within a single case study in order to understand how the appropriation of counter-cultural and new age values by organisations can give meaning to the work process.

It has been found that counter-cultural and New age capitalist values and ideas are in fact appropriated by organisations in order to create an environment that seems to have a concern for wellbeing at work. This thesis has found however that because these ideas are co-opted in this way, the ability of workers and consumers to critique such practices is removed, resulting in the existence of a system that has adapted to its environment, in order to maintain the middle class and hegemonic values already prevalent in our society, eradicating the possibility for resistance and hence for social change.

THE END

Appendix A

Photographs of my route to work whist working at Innocent drinks

These images have been included as a reference and for additional analysis by the reader. The photographs were taken in and around the Shepherds bush area during my time working at Innocent drinks.



















Appendix B

Images

1



2





3

sharing the profits

Doing good things

the innocent foundation

Last but definitely not least, we seek to redistribute some of the wealth the business creates to those people that need it. We do this by donating 10% of our profits each year to charity, primarily to the innocent foundation,

which funds rural development projects in the countries where our fruit comes from. Set up by innocent three years ago, the foundation's vision is to work with local communities to create a sustainable future for people and their environment. We aim to support innovative projects that make best use of natural resources to create a better future.

innocent foundation logo

Some of the other projects that we work on include:

Drinks for the homeless - getting our excess stock to those who need it.

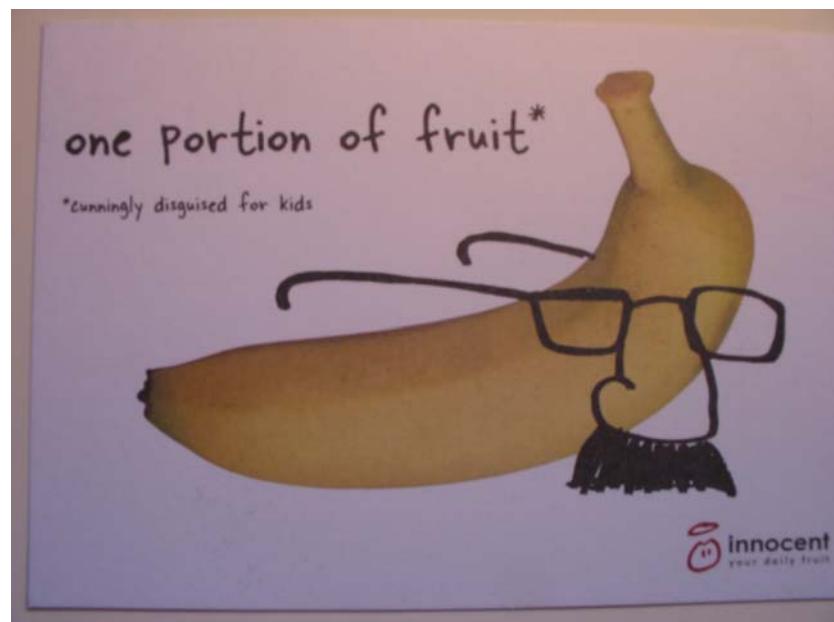
The Big Knit - how knitting 400,720 little bobble hats for our drinks raises £200,360 for a good cause in 2007.

Buy One Get One Tree - a catchy name and a project to plant more than 165,000 trees to aid rural communities in India and Africa.

The innocent village fete - we raised a handsome £150,000 for our three chosen charities in 2007; Samaritans, Friends of the Earth and Well Child.



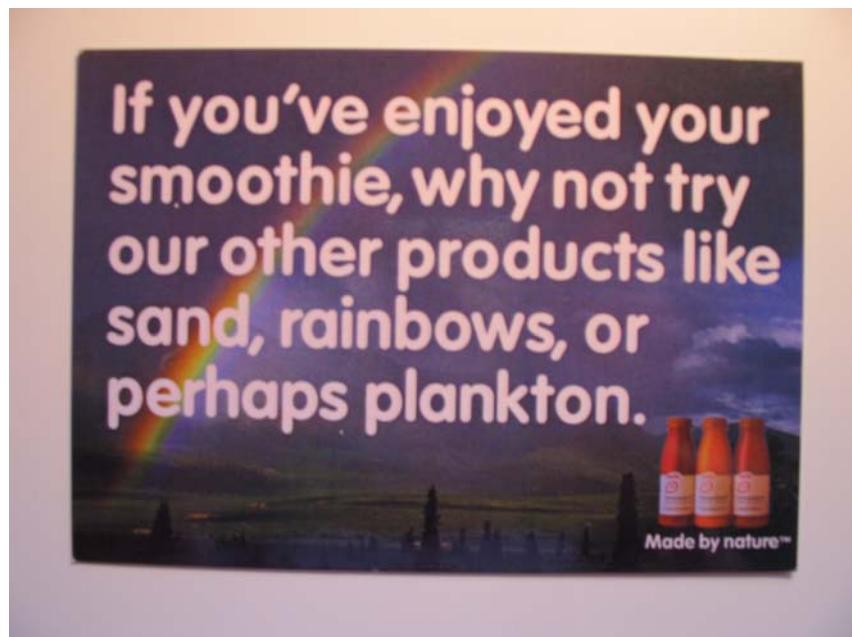
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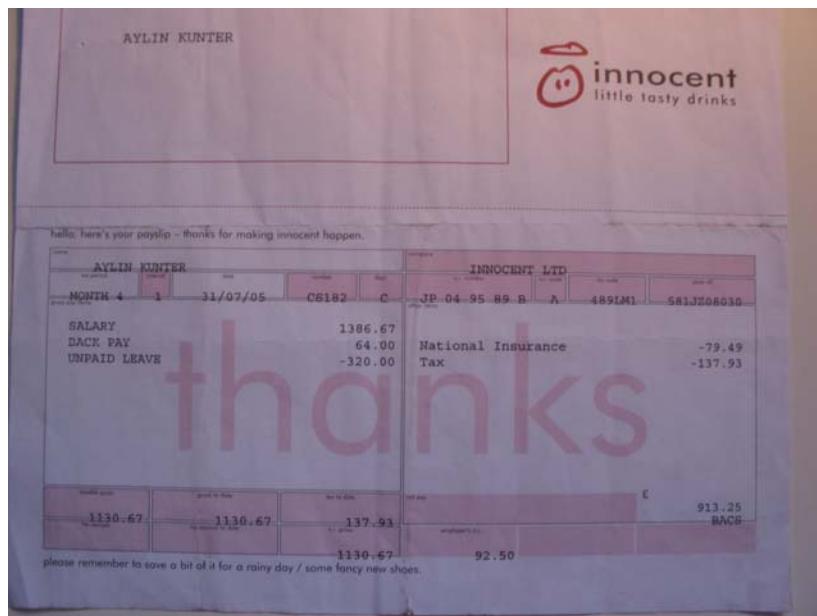
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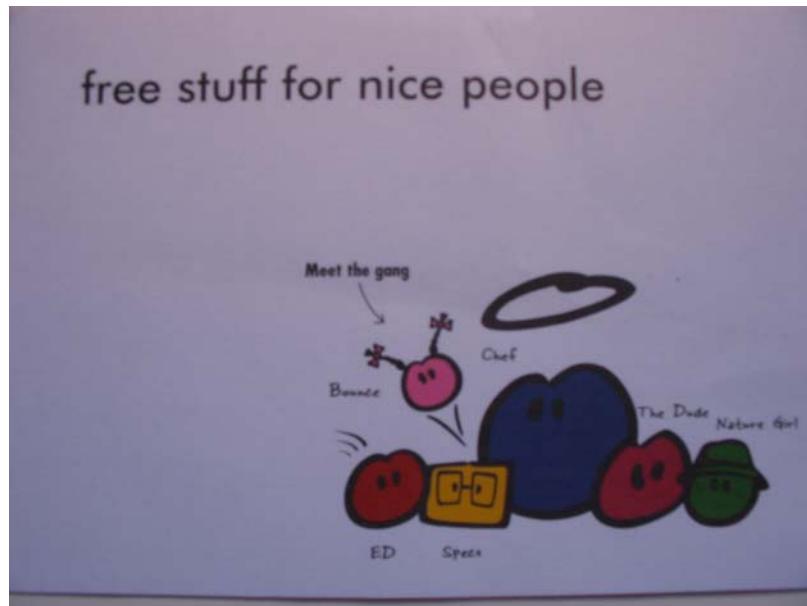
7



8



9



10

please say hello to our very special guest



a chance for us to showcase innovative new recipes and extra special ingredients



12





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