The impact of an M&A on a target firm: a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity Perspective

Julie Bayle Cordier

ENSAM
Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Métiers

IAE PARIS
PANTHÉON-SORBONNE

HEC
PARIS

ECOLE DES HAUTES ETUDES COMMERCIALES DE PARIS

Ecole Doctorale « Sciences du Management/GODI »
Gestion – Organisation – Décision - Information
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Julie BAYLE CORDIER

JURY

Président du Jury :   **Monsieur Olivier FAVEREAU**
Professeur des Universités
Université Paris X - Nanterre

Directeur de recherche :   **Monsieur Bertrand MOINGEON**
Professeur
Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales

Rapporteurs :   **Madame Sandra WADDOCK**
Professeur
Boston College, USA

Monsieur Philip MIRVIS
Professeur Affilié – Senior Research Fellow
Boston College, USA

Suffragants :   **Madame Géraldine SCHMIDT**
Professeur des Universités
Institut d'Administration des Entreprises de Paris,
Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne

Monsieur Bernard RAMANANTSOA
Professeur
Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales

Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales

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RESUME EN FRANÇAIS

"L'impact d'une fusion-acquisition sur une entreprise cible : étude de l'évolution d'une identité organisationnelle socialement responsable."

De plus en plus d'entreprises de taille moyenne qui ont été créées par des entrepreneurs et qui possèdent ce que nous appelons une « Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable » ont été récemment acquises par de grandes multinationales. Ce phénomène est illustré par des acquisitions telles que « The Body Shop » par L'Oréal, « Tom's of Maine » par Colgate-Palmolive, « Stonyfield Farm » par le Groupe Danone, le confiseur « Green & Black's » par Cadbury Schweppes ou encore Ben & Jerry's par Unilever (voir le tableau 1 pour une liste plus complète).

L'objectif de ces acquisitions est de trouver des débouchés dans des marchés à forte croissance. En effet, ces petites entreprises ont fait preuve d'anticipation stratégique dans la conception de leur modèle économique. Elles ont su capitaliser, chacune de diverses manières, sur l'intérêt croissant des consommateurs pour les ingrédients naturels, les 'éco-produits' ou encore pour le marketing éthique. Cela se reflète dans des tendances aussi variées que le succès des aliments biologiques ou des vêtements naturels (un marché en croissance de 20% par an), pour le café et le chocolat issus du commerce équitable (plus de 70% de croissance par an) et pour les produits agricoles d'origine durable. Il y a également un intérêt croissant des consommateurs pour les produits « éthiques » comme en témoignent l'augmentation des produits marketing à dimension sociale, ainsi que l'intérêt pour les liens entre la marque d'un produit et la responsabilité sociale (Kleanthous & Peck, 2006).

Il existe un débat important au sujet de l'écart entre les préférences exprimées par les consommateurs et leur comportement d'achat réel et de la question de savoir si les consommateurs sont prêts à payer une prime pour ces biens et services (Vogel, 2005). Cela étant dit, il existe une littérature abondante montrant que les attributs sociaux d'une entreprise peuvent l'aider à différencier ses marques, que les consommateurs sont capables de changer de marque pour des motifs de responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise (RSE) et que la reconnaissance de la bonne foi d'une entreprise dans ce domaine est un facteur clé dans leurs

décisions d'achat. En effet, l'alignement du contenu social d'un produit avec les préférences personnelles des consommateurs peut être décisif dans la construction de la fidélité à la marque (Bhattacharya et Sen, 2004).

Des études récentes estiment que la taille du marché LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) passera de 200 milliards de dollars de ventes à travers le monde d'aujourd'hui à 420 milliards de dollars d'ici trois ans et à 845 milliards de dollars en 2015. Pour bénéficier de ce marché à forte croissance, des sociétés comme L'Oréal, Colgate ou Unilever peuvent certes élaborer des nouvelles propositions marketing, mais il semble moins risqué et moins coûteux à long terme d'acheter des parts de marché par l'intermédiaire d'acquisitions d'entreprise. Et, à tout le moins sur ce marché des produits « sociaux », on peut émettre l'hypothèse que l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) des entreprises cibles est devenu un atout stratégique clé et une des sources les plus prometteuses de création de valeur.

Tableau 1: Le phénomène empirique des entreprises cibles à identité organisationnelle socialement responsable

Entreprise acheteuse	Entreprise cible	Date d'acquisition
ESTEE LAUDER	AVEDA	1997
GENERAL MILLS	CASCADIAN FARMS	1999
	SMALL PLANET FOODS	1999
UNILEVER	BEN & JERRY's	2000
DANONE	STONYFIELD FARMS	2001
COCA COLA	SAMANTHA	2000
COCA COLA	ODWALLA	2001
L'OREAL	THE BODY SHOP	2006
COLGATE PALMOLIVE	TOM's OF MAINE	2006
KRAFT	BOCA BURGER	2000
	BACK TO NATURE	2004
DEAN FOODS CO	HORIZON ORGANIC	2003
KELLOGG's	WORTHINGTON FOODS INC (includes MORNINGSTAR FARMS)	1999
	KASHI CEREAL	2000
HAIN CELESTIAL GROUP	CELESTIAL SEASONINGS	2000
	JASON NATURAL PRODUCTS	2004
	ETHNIC GOURMET	2004
	ZIA COSMETICS	2005
	COLLEGE HILL POULTRY	2005
	LINDA McCARTNEY BRAND	2006

HEINZ	EARTH's BEST ARROWHEAD MILLS TERRA CHIPS WESTSOY	1996
PROCTER & GAMBLE	MILLSTONE ORGANIC COFFEE	
TYSON FOODS	NATURE's FARM CHICKEN	
CADBURY-SCHWEPPES	NANTUCKET NECTARS GREEN & BLACK	2002 2005

Pourtant, il est généralement admis que, lors d'une acquisition, la société acquéreuse tend à imposer sa façon de faire sur l'entreprise cible, et ce d'autant plus lors de rachats « horizontaux » où l'acquéreur dispose d'une expérience dans le secteur de la cible (Schweiger & Goulet, 2005; Berry, 1980). En outre, le sentiment de supériorité de l'entreprise acheteuse se traduit dans des présupposés que ses capacités et ses systèmes de gestion sont supérieurs à ceux de l'entreprise achetée (Mirvis & Marks, 2003, p. 97).

Cependant, en partant de la théorie de la ressource de la firme, on peut postuler qu'une Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) est une ressource précieuse, rare et tacite (Barney, 1986 et 1991). Nous faisons l'hypothèse qu'une entreprise possédant une Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable possède une valeur intangible que les entreprises multinationales souhaitent saisir par le biais d'une fusion-acquisition. Cette assertion peut paraître à première vue paradoxale dans la mesure où l'entreprise acquéreuse a généralement tendance à imposer sa façon de faire à l'entreprise qu'elle acquiert et qu'ainsi elle peut potentiellement détruire l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) de l'entreprise cible, qui constitue l'objet même de sa motivation pour l'acquisition.

Il existe une abondante littérature sur la bonne association des cultures d'entreprise ('fit' en anglais) lors de fusions-acquisitions et sur la question de savoir comment les différents degrés d'intégration à une société mère peuvent affecter la culture des entreprises acquises (cf., Buono et al., 1985; Stahl & Voigt 2008). Nahavandi et Malekzadeh (1988). Cette littérature trouve, par exemple, que les firmes acquises cherchent généralement, lors de l'intégration, à préserver leur propre culture plutôt qu'à s'adapter à la culture de l'acquéreur ; de leurs côtés, les acquéreurs ont pour objet de préoccupation les degrés de multiculturalisme au sein de leur propre organisation et la connexité des deux entreprises. Ces attentes différentes sont susceptibles de conduire à des «stress d'acculturation ». Les employés-clés peuvent quitter l'entreprise, une résistance active à l'intégration peut se produire et le conflit

est susceptible d'émerger. Sales et Mirvis (1984) présentent une telle étude de cas d'attentes différentes entre société mère et entreprise acquise où la première a imposé sa façon de faire à l'entreprise acquise de telle façon que la culture de l'entreprise cible en fut presque annihilée.

Ces études fondées sur une approche « culturelle » des fusions-acquisitions peuvent être complétées par une approche complémentaire fondée sur l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable. Une étude (Austin & Leonard, 2008) sur plusieurs fusions-acquisitions motivées par des problématiques de RSE souligne à quel point les acquisitions telles que The Body Shop, Tom's of Maine, et Green & Black ont été mises en œuvres sur un mode de préservation. Ces entreprises acquises opèrent plus ou moins comme des unités d'affaires indépendantes soumises par les nouveaux propriétaires à un contrôle, plus ou moins étendu, à la fois financier et stratégique. A l'inverse, Unilever a pleinement intégré Ben & Jerry's au sein des divisions de la société mère et a influencé des aspects clés de sa culture "fun et funky" et citoyenne (Mirvis, 2008).

Cette thèse vise à rapprocher la littérature de l'identité organisationnelle et celle de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises dans l'objectif de créer un cadre conceptuel pour explorer les transformations potentielles d'une identité organisationnelle socialement responsable (IOSR) lors d'une intégration à grande échelle.

Cadrage de l'étude

Le but de cette étude est triple. Premièrement, cette étude explore le concept de « responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise » du point de vue de la théorie de l'identité organisationnelle. Cette étude tente de faire une contribution théorique et empirique à la fois aux champs de l'identité organisationnelle et à ceux de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises. Bien que l'impact d'une fusion-acquisition sur les pratiques des parties prenantes à la fois des entreprises cibles et des entreprises acquéreuses ait été étudié (Waddock & Graves, 2006), il n'y a pas eu jusqu'ici d'étude sur ce phénomène du point de vue de l'identité organisationnelle, et plus particulièrement d'une perspective de l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable. Le principal apport de cette étude est de réunir les deux champs théoriques de la recherche, celui de l'identité organisationnelle et celui de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises, dans le cadre d'une crise et d'un changement organisationnel majeur

(fusion-acquisition), afin de définir et d'explorer la nature de l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable ainsi que les facteurs qui contribuent à sa résilience.

Deuxièmement, l'accent mis sur une entreprise pionnière dans le domaine de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises et dont la réputation est précisément d'avoir une identité organisationnelle socialement responsable "authentique" est pertinente dans le contexte actuel marqué par de nombreuses auto-proclamations d'entreprises qui se déclarent «socialement responsables». La notion de l'authenticité est importante pour mieux comprendre la nature de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises. L'authenticité a été définie comme l'alignement des actes et des comportements sur les valeurs et les croyances intériorisées (Harvey et al., 2006). L'observation d'une entreprise dont l'identité organisationnelle a été fortement associée à la responsabilité sociale dès sa création permettra une meilleure compréhension de ce qu'est une identité socialement responsable "authentique" car «les identités authentiques sont plus susceptibles d'être adoptées au début de l'histoire d'une entreprise» (Harvey & al., 2006). Cette étude vise à expliquer la nature et les forces motrices d'une identité organisationnelle socialement responsable (IOSR). Cette étude apporte des éléments nouveaux par rapport aux études existantes en matière de RSE car elle a choisi d'analyser une firme pionnière et authentique en matière de RSE à travers la grille théorique de l'identité organisationnelle, ce qui, à notre connaissance, n'a jamais été examiné.

Le troisième et dernier objectif de cette étude est d'ordre méthodologique : il s'agit d'utiliser une méthodologie intégratrice, réunissant à la fois des données objectives et subjectives, afin d'acquérir une meilleure compréhension de la nature et des forces qui peuvent favoriser ou entraver une identité organisationnelle socialement responsable. Nous contribuons à l'approche narrative des fusions-acquisitions (Vaara, 2002; 2005; Riad, 2005), en explorant le point de vue des employés quant à l'impact d'une fusion-acquisition sur une entreprise cible socialement responsable, tout en complétant cette approche par une méthode plus objective, reposant sur des données observables provenant de rapports annuels et de sources medias.

Définition des termes

Nous définissons l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) de la façon suivante: *«L'articulation cohérente et conforme de l'expression managériale d'une entreprise de sa <u>mission</u> en matière de responsabilité sociale (Identité Projetée) avec, d'une part, les <u>actions et manifestations visibles</u> de l'entreprise en matière de responsabilité sociale (Identité Manifestée) et, d'autre part, les <u>perceptions</u> de la responsabilité sociale d'une entreprise par ses parties prenantes internes (Identité Vécue). La communication et les actions de responsabilité sociale doivent être fondées sur la <u>motivation</u> éthique <u>des dirigeants/décideurs de l'entreprise. »</u>*

Notre définition s'inspire de la littérature sur la responsabilité sociale des entreprises en utilisant le modèle de la performance sociale des entreprises de Wood (1991), qui articule les notions de principes, processus et résultats. Notre modèle est également influencé par Swanson (1995) qui fait appel à une motivation éthique des dirigeants d'entreprise dans la conduite des actions de responsabilité sociale. Notre modèle IOSR s'inspire également de la littérature sur l'identité organisationnelle, en revisitant le modèle intégrateur de Moingeon et Soenen (2002) qui appréhende l'identité organisationnelle de cinq points de vue différents : l'identité professée, projetée, manifestée, expérimentée et attribuée. Notre modèle se construit en utilisant trois de ces cinq facettes : l'identité «projetée», « manifestée », et « vécue ». Ce modèle de l'IOSR est illustré par le tableau 2 :

Tableau 2: Le modèle de l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable
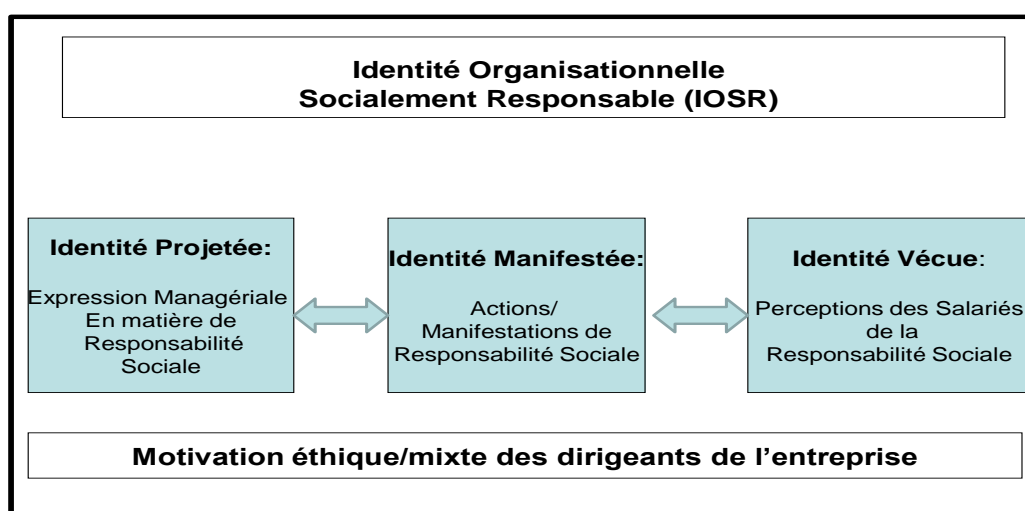
Méthodologie

Waddock & Graves (2006) ont adopté une approche quantitative pour étudier l'impact des fusions-acquisitions sur les pratiques, pré et post acquisition, des parties prenantes, des entreprises acquéreuses et des entreprises cibles. Ils ont trouvé que les entreprises cibles ont tendance à avoir plus de problèmes post-acquisition. D'autres chercheurs ont étudié le phénomène des fusions-acquisitions du point de vue de la perspective discursive et constructiviste (Vaara, 2002, 2005; Riad, 2005), en accordant une attention particulière au rôle des récits pour comprendre la construction sociale des phénomènes organisationnels (Czarniawska, 1999 ; Vaara, 2002).

Notre méthodologie de recherche est qualitative et fondée sur l'étude d'un cas. Elle est appropriée pour étudier un domaine de recherche inexploré et naissant qui est la notion d'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable (IOSR) et son évolution dans le contexte d'un bouleversement organisationnel majeur : une fusion-acquisition au sein d'une organisation beaucoup plus vaste. La recherche sur les théories émergentes tente de « comprendre et développer des intuitions sur des phénomènes nouveaux ou inhabituels» (Edmondson & McManus, p.1162, 2007), ce qui nécessite souvent une approche inductive car « les chercheurs ne savent pas quelles questions peuvent émerger des données et ainsi évitent la formulation d'hypothèses spécifiques entre les variables » (Edmondson & McManus, p. 1162, 2007). Nous avons choisi de nous intéresser à l'acquisition de Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream par la Société Unilever parce que Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream a la réputation d'être à la fois un pionnier en matière de RSE et aussi d'être une firme à l'identité socialement responsable «authentique».

Afin d'avoir une compréhension complète de l'impact de l'acquisition par Unilever de Ben & Jerry's sur l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable de Ben & Jerry's, nous avons élaboré un modèle IOSR qui est à la jonction de la littérature sur l'identité organisationnelle (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002) et celle de la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise (Wood, 1991; Swanson, 1995).

Notre modèle fait appel à l'articulation des trois dimensions suivantes : premièrement, l'expression managériale de la mission socialement responsable ; deuxièmement, les actions de responsabilité sociale d'une entreprise ; et enfin, les perceptions des employés de la responsabilité sociale de leur firme. Nous tirons l'expression managériale de la mission de

l'analyse du contenu des lettres annuelles du président-directeur général (PDG) et des fondateurs au sein des rapports annuels de responsabilité sociale de 1989 à nos jours (2007). Il est important de noter que l'expression managériale de la mission de responsabilité sociale va au-delà de la simple articulation de la mission de l'entreprise. Notre analyse longitudinale des lettres du PDG et des fondateurs a révélé que, même si la déclaration de mission de l'entreprise était un élément central du discours managérial, d'autres sujets sont apparus tels que la marque, les restructurations ou encore la dynamique de pouvoir entre les fondateurs et les managers professionnels. La déclaration de mission officielle de l'entreprise Ben & Jerry's est cependant un pilier central de son Identité Organisationnel Socialement Responsable (voir le tableau 3).

Tableau 3: Déclaration de la mission officielle tripartite de Ben & Jerry

Mission produit: fabriquer, distribuer et vendre les meilleures crèmes glacées, fabriquées avec des produits laitiers et des ingrédients naturels de la meilleure qualité, dans un grand choix de parfums innovants et dans un esprit d'engagement continu de l'intégration d'ingrédients naturels et sains ainsi que la promotion de pratiques commerciales qui respectent la Terre et l'Environnement.

Mission économique: diriger l'entreprise sur une base financière saine, pour augmenter la valeur pour nos parties prenantes et créer des conditions d'épanouissement et d'opportunités de développement pour nos employés.

Mission sociale: diriger l'entreprise d'une manière qui reconnaît activement le rôle central joué par celle-ci dans la société, en concevant de nouveaux moyens d'améliorer la qualité de la vie des gens aux niveaux local, national et international.

Deuxièmement, nous analysons les actions et les manifestations de responsabilité sociale de Ben & Jerry's à travers une étude de l'évolution d'artefacts organisationnels provenant du site Web de l'organisation et d'une revue de presse ainsi que par le biais d'entretiens réalisés avec des salariés de Ben & Jerry's. Les artefacts organisationnels choisis pour l'analyse sont d'ordre un peu arbitraire : nous avons tenté de prendre des artefacts qui illustrent au mieux l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable de Ben & Jerry's et qui ressortaient à plusieurs reprises dans les coupures de journaux ou sur le site web de Ben & Jerry's. Nous avons également veillé à ce que ces artefacts représentent les différents parties prenantes de l'entreprise (employés, consommateur/produit, communauté, questions environnementales, fournisseurs) et aussi cherché un équilibre entre la période pré et post

acquisition. Au cours de nos entretiens avec les salariés Ben & Jerry's, nous avons vérifié la pertinence de nos objets sélectionnés par les réponses spontanées des salariés lorsque que nous leur demandions de «donner un exemple de manifestation tangible et visible de ce que représente Ben & Jerry's pour eux."

La liste complète des artefacts comprend le ratio salarial, la « Joy Gang », la Fondation Ben & Jerry's, 'free cone day' (journée du cône gratuit), les visites guidées de l'usine, les campagnes d'ordre politique, les concerts, l'emballage écologique, les parfums issus du commerce équitable, les œufs provenant de poules élevées en liberté, les 'ratés' de l'usine (factory seconds), le lait sans hormone de croissance et la boulangérie 'Greyston'.

Enfin, pour rendre opérationnelle notre troisième dimension (la perception des salariés de la responsabilité sociale au sein de leur entreprise), nous avons puisé dans les expériences de l'acquisition du point de vue des employés de Ben & Jerry's en effectuant plus de cinquante entretiens semi-structurés avec des salariés provenant de différents niveaux hiérarchiques ayant exercé des fonctions diverses à différents périodes (pré versus post acquisition) et appartenant à plusieurs localisations géographiques (siège de Ben & Jerry's et usine de Waterbury dans l'Etat du Vermont aux Etats-Unis). Ces entretiens ont eu lieu en trois vagues, sur une période d'un an et demi (août 2007, janvier 2008 et novembre 2008). Nous avons également interrogé plusieurs anciens PDG et managers de Ben & Jerry's afin de diminuer le 'biais du survivant'.

Résultats

Cette étude a tenté de comprendre l'impact d'une fusion-acquisition sur une entreprise cible du point de vue de l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable. Pour ce faire, nous avons pris trois angles d'analyse différents : premièrement, la vision managériale sur la mission et l'identité de l'organisation ; deuxièmement, l'impact de cette vision sur les artefacts organisationnels ; et, enfin, les interprétations, par les salariés, de la mission et des artefacts de l'organisation ainsi que des thèmes identitaires dans le contexte de l'acquisition. Ces trois perspectives nous ont fourni une connaissance approfondie de la façon dont une organisation à identité socialement responsable évolue au fil du temps et, en particulier, dans le contexte d'une acquisition majeure.

Nous faisons les quatre conclusions suivantes basées sur notre étude.

La cohérence entre les trois facettes identitaires

Premièrement, sur la base de notre définition de la IOSR qui implique une articulation cohérente entre le discours managérial, les actions de l'entreprise et les perceptions des employés, nous constatons que l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's maintient sa cohérence post acquisition. Il y a en effet une cohérence entre les trois facettes identitaires. Il n'y a pas d'écarts importants entre ce que les discours de la direction projettent et ce que les artefacts organisationnels et les salariés nous racontent. Les discours managériaux officiels sont souvent critiqués comme étant la projection d'une identité idéale qui ne reflèterait pas nécessairement la véritable identité d'une entreprise. Les hauts dirigeants projetteraient une image future désirée et utilisée comme un moyen de changer l'identité organisationnelle actuelle (Gioia et Thomas, 1996, p.394). Les dirigeants d'entreprise sont des « gestionnaires de sens de l'organisation » car c'est bien là que se trouve le pouvoir (Reitter & Ramanantsoa, 1985). Ceux-ci sont donc activement engagés dans la gestion de l'identité (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996). Une telle gestion de l'identité peut entraîner, le cas échéant, les tops managers à faire preuve d'une certaine hypocrisie, au pire, ou à être velléitaires, au mieux. Nos résultats révèlent que, si nous trouvons certainement des éléments d'identité souhaitée plutôt que d'identité réelle (Balmer & Greyser, 2002), dans l'ensemble nous avons une identité projetée qui reflète l'évolution de la mission tripartite de Ben & Jerry's et qui est en cohérence avec nos résultats provenant des facettes de l'identité manifestée et expérimentée.

La mission en trois volets, qui constitue une pièce centrale de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's, a changé après l'acquisition. De manière intéressante, ce n'est pas la mission sociale qui a le plus changé, mais plutôt la mission produit. Les trois facettes identitaires confirment ce constat. La mission sociale aujourd'hui se porte bien, la mission économique se porte mieux que dans la période de la pré-acquisition. La mission produit est, quant à elle, moins à l'honneur, pratiquement absente du discours des dirigeants post-acquisition et considérée comme moins au centre des préoccupations managériales par les 'anciens' salariés (arrivés pré-acquisition dans l'entreprise). Les employés expriment cependant un certain optimisme que cette situation est en cours d'évolution, particulièrement depuis que la nouvelle chaîne hiérarchique entre Ben & Jerry's et Unilever se déplace de la Division North American Ice Cream (NAIC) vers une relation direct avec Unilever corporation.

Nature de l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable: une essence en constante évolution

Notre deuxième constat concerne la nature de l'identité organisationnelle socialement responsable. L'IOSR est composée d'attributs essentiels, mais cette essence est en constante évolution. L'énergie des employés est au cœur de cette essence, car elle alimente l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's. Sans cette énergie des salariés, qui est à son tour alimentée par des actions d'ordre social, l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's aurait très probablement perdu sa puissance et sa valeur. Cependant, cette essence n'est pas statique car elle est constamment réappropriée et remise en vigueur par les dirigeants de l'organisation ainsi que ses membres. Nous avons trouvé que ce processus de réappropriation est particulièrement puissant chez les nouveaux salariés (arrivés après l'acquisition dans l'entreprise) qui se considèrent comme des véhicules pour animer et faire vivre la mission de Ben & Jerry's. Ces nouveaux venus sont très positifs et enthousiastes à propos de la mission sociale de Ben & Jerry's et démontrent une foi inébranlable sur le fait que l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's prenne vie grâce à leur travail tous les jours. Nous avons également constaté que ces salariés puisent une 'énergie identitaire' très forte grâce aux artefacts organisationnels de l'époque de la pré-acquisition.

Les résultats provenant de l'Identité Projetée et de l'Identité Vécue nous ont confirmé que les employés trouvent la source de leur motivation pour leur travail chez Ben & Jerry's dans le bien social qu'ils créent dans les communautés environnantes et dans la société, et ce, grâce à la mise en œuvre de la mission sociale dans leur travail quotidien. Nous avons également constaté que les artefacts organisationnels jouent un rôle essentiel dans la perpétuation de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's et ce même longtemps après que les fondateurs ont quitté l'organisation. Les salariés arrivés dans l'entreprise après l'acquisition semblent tirer le plus d'énergie des artefacts organisationnels alors que les salariés avec plus d'ancienneté (arrivés pendant la période pré-acquisition) sont généralement moins positifs quant à l'évolution de Ben & Jerry's depuis l'acquisition par Unilever. Les salariés issus de la période pré-acquisition déclarent cependant qu'il y a eu des changements positifs depuis que Ben & Jerry's n'est plus rattaché à la Division North American Ice Cream (NAIC). La vision plus négative des 'salariés vétérans' (old timers) de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's semble provenir d'une compréhension purement essentialiste de l'identité organisationnelle. Pour ces 'old timers' l'IOSR ne sera plus jamais la même parce que les fondateurs et de nombreux 'old timers' ont quitté l'organisation. Les nouveaux salariés (arrivés post acquisition) ont une appréhension plus positive de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's parce qu'ils y voient davantage un processus

dynamique dont ils sont intégralement partie prenante. Ils estiment ainsi qu'ils peuvent influencer et façonner l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable de Ben & Jerry's, identité qui est en mouvement perpétuel.

La fusion-acquisition n'est pas le seul facteur qui impact l'IOSR: la croissance de l'entreprise est elle aussi critique.

Notre troisième constat est que même si l'acquisition de Ben & Jerry's par Unilever a contribué en grande partie à l'évolution de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's, il existe d'autres facteurs tels que la croissance de l'entreprise qui ont également joué un rôle très important dans cette évolution. Nos résultats démontrent que lorsque la gestion de l'entreprise est entrée entre les mains de managers professionnels (dans la période pré-acquisition), l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's a commencé à bouger de manière significative. En effet, pendant cette période, la mission économique a pris le dessus, parfois au détriment de la mission sociale. Cette constatation vise à mettre en perspective les études existantes sur les fusions-acquisitions qui ont tendance à attribuer les changements d'identité organisationnelle uniquement au phénomène de fusion-acquisition. Dans le cas de Ben & Jerry's, des changements spectaculaires ont commencé bien avant l'acquisition par Unilever.

L'identité hybride est maintenue, mais exprimées différemment post-acquisition: l'identité normative maintenant imbriquée dans une logique instrumentale («double logique»).

Notre dernier constat concerne le caractère normatif et instrumental de l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) de Ben & Jerry's. Nous sommes d'avis que, pour avoir une IOSR, la communication et les actions d'une entreprise doivent être fondées sur la motivation éthique des dirigeants d'entreprise. Nos résultats révèlent que l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's continue à être fondée sur la motivation éthique de ses dirigeants d'entreprise. Nous avons été étonnés par la vocation et le sens de la mission présents à la fois chez les cadres et l'équipe de direction du siège de Ben & Jerry's dans le Vermont. Ben & Jerry's a toujours été une organisation hybride, à la fois normative et utilitariste (Albert & Whetten, 1985) et cela est vrai à la fois pour la période pré et post acquisition. La mission à trois volets au cœur de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's continue à nourrir cette identité hybride. Ce qui a changé depuis l'acquisition est qu'aujourd'hui Ben & Jerry's fonctionne désormais comme une entité au sein d'une grande multinationale dominée par une logique instrumentale.

Ben & Jerry's maintient une logique normative et éthique, mais cette logique est imbriquée dans la logique instrumentale d'Unilever, responsable devant les actionnaires. Cette nouvelle situation fait apparaître une nouvelle forme d'organisation que nous appelons une « double logique ». Cette forme organisationnelle pourrait se répandre dans l'avenir avec l'accélération de la mondialisation et des fusions-acquisitions. (Voir le tableau 4 ci-dessous).

Tableau 4: Evolution de l'identité hybride de Ben & Jerry's pré et post acquisition telle qu'elle est exprimée dans l'Identité Projetée (discours des PDG)
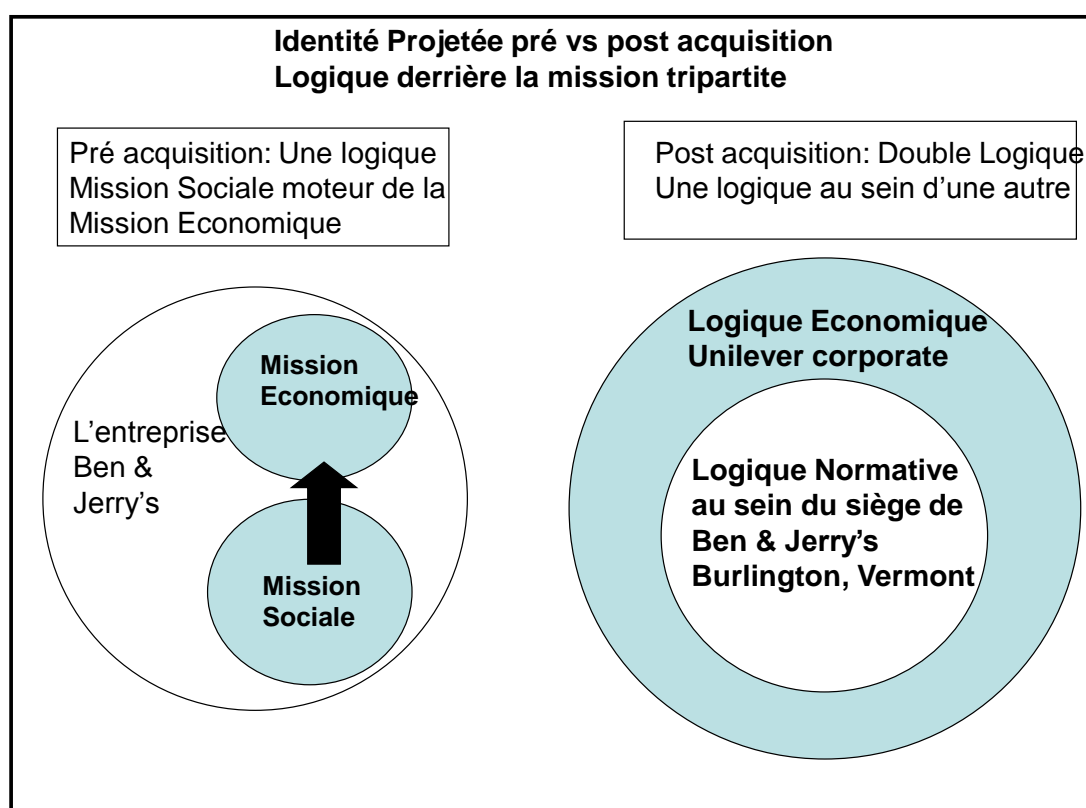
Conclusions et futures pistes de recherche

L'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) de Ben & Jerry's a été conservée malgré l'acquisition par Unilever. Nous expliquons ce constat par un certain nombre de facteurs. Les moteurs de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's viennent du top management de Ben & Jerry's (Yves Couette immédiatement après l'acquisition et aujourd'hui Walt Freese depuis 2004) et des salariés de Ben & Jerry's eux-mêmes. Lors du rachat de Ben & Jerry's en 2000, Unilever n'avait probablement pas pleinement conscience de la valeur de l'Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) de Ben & Jerry's. Aujourd'hui, ils sont

pleinement convaincus que c'est l'IOSR même qui a propulsé la marque Ben & Jerry's pour devenir l'une des plus performantes parmi toutes les marques Unilever d'Amérique du Nord. Cette prise de conscience s'est traduite par un soutien de la part d'Unilever pour le PDG actuel de Ben & Jerry's et de son engagement sincère à s'assurer que l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's soit véritablement authentique.

Deuxièmement, nos résultats montrent que les employés de Ben & Jerry's jouent également un rôle clé dans la résilience de l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's. Étonnamment, les employés arrivés après l'acquisition sont les plus enthousiastes pour que Ben & Jerry's soit fidèle à ses racines identitaires socialement responsable. Ceci est peut être dû au fait que le PDG actuel de Ben & Jerry's mène une politique d'embauche pour recruter des personnes qui sont «du matériel Ben & Jerry's» (selon les termes d'un nouveau venu), c'est-à-dire des personnes qui sont engagées et motivées pour faire vivre l'héritage de la mission tripartite de Ben & Jerry's.

Nos résultats montrent cependant que l'acquisition de Ben & Jerry's par Unilever est un modèle mixte où le marketing Ben & Jerry's a gardé une certaine autonomie, mais où la finance, les services informatiques, de communications et de fabrication ont été "absorbés" (Mirvis, 2008). L'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's a donc été préservée, mais uniquement dans un périmètre très étroitement défini. Aujourd'hui, les usines ne sont plus à l'intérieur du périmètre IOSR. Ben & Jerry's et Unilever sont à la croisée des chemins et il sera intéressant de suivre ce qu'il va arriver au périmètre IOSR de Ben & Jerry's dans le futur. Ce périmètre va-t-il être amené à se développer et à s'étendre jusqu'à la chaîne d'approvisionnement ou même vers d'autres parties de l'organisation d'Unilever ? Ou, au contraire, Ben & Jerry's restera-t-elle une marque authentique et isolée, imbriquée au sein d'une multinationale instrumentale conventionnelle qui a du mal à remettre en question son modèle économique ?

Nos recherches futures nous conduiront à explorer comment l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's évolue dans d'autres parties de l'activité de Ben & Jerry's : dans les usines nouvellement créées (Nevada), et aussi dans de nouvelles filiales en Europe et en Asie, où l'entreprise continue à s'internationaliser. Nous chercherons aussi à comparer le cas de Ben & Jerry's et Unilever à d'autres cas de fusion-acquisition comme celui de Danone et Stonyfield ou L'Oréal et The Body Shop pour essayer de créer une typologie de dyades d'entreprises acquéreuses et entreprises cibles à Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable. Ces recherches permettront de comprendre quels types de stratégies d'intégration post-fusion (préservatrice,

d'absorption, modèle mixte) sont les plus fécondes pour préserver les « pépites d'or » que sont les Identité Organisationnelles Socialement Responsables.

1.   The PROBLEM: PRESERVING THE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY OF A TARGET FIRM POST ACQUISITION

This first section will introduce the context for my study and the setting chosen to explore in depth the phenomenon of the acquisition of target firms with a socially responsible organizational identity by large multinationals. I will then introduce the problem and paradox of acquiring socially responsible target firms and reveal the purpose of our study, questions to be answered and finally my definition of key terms and constructs.

1.1.   Introduction

Relatively small, entrepreneurial sized firms with what I label a "Socially Responsible Organizational Identity" are being acquired by large multinationals at a growing pace. Recent deals include the purchase of the Body Shop by L'Oreal, Tom's of Maine by Colgate-Palmolive, Stonyfield Farm by Groupe Danone, confectioner Green & Black's by Cadbury Schweppes, and Ben & Jerry's by Unilever, among others (see Table 1 for a fuller roster).

What's it all about? The simplest answer: Finding opportunities in growing markets. These small companies had strategic foresight in establishing their business models. They capitalized, variously, on growing interest in all-natural ingredients, eco-friendly products, and cause-related consuming. This is reflected in trends as varied as preferences for organic foods and clothing (a market growing 20% annually), for fair trade coffee and chocolate (over 70% annually), and for sustainably sourced agricultural produce. There is also interest in "ethical" consumerism as evidenced by an increase in cause-related products and marketing, as well as growing interest in a brand's connection to social responsibility (Kleanthous & Peck, 2006).

There is considerable debate about the gap between people's expressed interest and actual buying behavior in these regards, and certainly as to whether consumers will pay a premium for such goods and services (Vogel, 2005). That said, it is well documented that a firm's social credentials can help differentiate its brands, that consumers will switch brands due to CSR issues, and that when they know about a firm's bona fides in this area, it is a factor in purchasing decisions. Indeed, evidence is that when a product's social content aligns with their consumers' personal interests; it can be decisive in building brand loyalty (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004).

Studies estimate that the size of the LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) market will grow from $200 billion worldwide in sales today to $420 billion in three years to $845 billion by 2015. To reach this growth market, companies like L'Oreal, Colgate, Unilever and others could develop new brand propositions but, as is so often the case, it seems less risky and cheaper in the long run to buy market share through acquisitions. And, in this market at least, a case can be made that the SROI of acquirees is a key strategic asset and a prime source of continued value creation.

Table 1: Empirical Phenomenon of Socially Responsible Target Firms Being Acquired by Multinationals

Acquiring firm	Target	Date of acquisition
ESTEE LAUDER	AVEDA	1997
GENERAL MILLS	CASCADIAN FARMS	1999
	SMALL PLANET FOODS	1999
UNILEVER	BEN & JERRY's	2000
DANONE	STONYFIELD FARMS	2001
COCA COLA	SAMANTHA	2000
COCA COLA	ODWALLA	2001
L'OREAL	THE BODY SHOP	2006
COLGATE PALMOLIVE	TOM's OF MAINE	2006
KRAFT	BOCA BURGER	2000
	BACK TO NATURE	2004
DEAN FOODS CO (largest dairy co in USA)	HORIZON ORGANIC	2003
KELLOGG's	WORTHINGTON FOODS INC (includes MORNINGSTAR FARMS)	1999
	KASHI CEREAL	2000
HAIN CELESTIAL GROUP (leading organic food and personal care group)	CELESTIAL SEASONINGS	2000
	JASON NATURAL PRODUCTS	2004
	ETHNIC GOURMET	2004
	ZIA COSMETICS	2005
	COLLEGE HILL POULTRY	2005
	LINDA McCARTNEY BRAND	2006
SMUCKERS	KNUDSEN (fruit juices)	
	AFTER THE FALL	
HEINZ (only bought 18% stake)	EARTH's BEST (baby food products)	1996
	ARROWHEAD MILLS	
	TERRA CHIPS	
	WESTSOY	
PROCTER & GAMBLE	MILLSTONE ORGANIC COFFEE	
TYSON FOODS	NATURE's FARM CHICKEN	
CADBURY-SCHWEPPES	NANTUCKET NECTARS	2002
	GREEN & BLACK	2005

Still, it is well known that during a typical acquisition the parent company tends to impose its way of doing things on the target firm it is acquiring, and more particularly in horizontal combinations where the acquirer has experience in the industry in which the target operates (Schweiger & Goulet, 2005; Berry, 1980). Furthermore, the acquiring firm's sense of superiority translates into assumptions that its capabilities and systems are superior to those of the purchased firm (Mirvis & Marks, 2003, p. 97). However, based on the resource based theory of the firm, one may postulate that a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity is a valuable, rare and tacit resource (Barney, 1986; 1991). I hypothesize that a firm with a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity possesses non tangible value which multinationals want to capture through M&A. This can create a paradox where a large acquirer will tend to impose its way of doing things on the firm it is acquiring, but in so doing potentially destroy the target's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity—which was part of its motivation for acquisition in the first place!

There is a long literature on cultural "fit" in combinations and how different degrees of integration with a parent company can affect the legacy culture of acquired firms (c.f., Buono et al., 1985; Stahl & Voigt 2008). Nahavandi and Malekzadeh (1988) find, for example, that acquired parties typically approach integration based on the extent to which they want to preserve their own culture versus how willing they are to adapt to the acquirer's culture; by comparison, acquirers approach it based on the degrees of multiculturalism in their own organization and the relatedness of the two firms. Mismatched expectations are likely to lead to "acculturative stress." Key employees may leave, active resistance to integration may occur, and conflict is apt to erupt. Sales and Mirvis (1984) present such a case study of mismatched expectations where a parent company imposed its corporate regimens on an acquiree to the extent that it nearly killed the target's culture.

These kinds of culture studies leave room for a complementary perspective on the phenomenon of the acquisition of target firms with a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. An anecdotal study (Austin & Leonard, 2008) of several of the CSR-driven deals highlights how the Body Shop, Tom's of Maine, and Green & Black were configured as "preservative" acquisitions. The acquired firms operate as more or less stand-alone business units with new owners exercising financial oversight and exerting some strategic control. By contrast, Unilever integrated Ben & Jerry's more fully into parent company divisions and influenced key aspects of its "fun and funky" and community-oriented culture (Mirvis, 2008). This dissertation brings together the organizational identity and corporate social responsibility

literatures to create a framework to explore what happens to SROI after a full-scale integration.

1.2. Setting: Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream

The Ben and Jerry story is the story of a friendship between two seventh grade boys who grew up in the sixties and then started an ice-cream business as a way to do something together. Jerry had been rejected from numerous medical schools and Ben had dropped out of college to try to become a potter in New York City. Not knowing what to do with their lives and after hesitating between opening up a bagel store and an ice cream store, they finally decide for the latter. On May 5th, 1978, after completing a $5 correspondence course in making ice cream and with a $12,000 investment, Ben & Jerry open their first ice cream scoop shop in a renovated gas station in the college town of Burlington, Vermont. By 1982 Ben is convinced by Maurice Purpora that if he doesn't like the way business is run, he has the power to change that by the way he decides to run his business. Ben talks to his staff for the first time of business as "a vehicle for social change." (Cohen & Greenfield, 1997, p.24)

In 1984, Ben & Jerry's set a precedent by establishing the first ever Vermont-only public stock offering to raise money for a new manufacturing facility. Things accelerate and in 1985, the company begins to be publicly traded on NASDAQ, the Ben & Jerry Foundation is created (it receives 7.5% of annual pre-tax profits), and the five to one salary ratio is instituted (the highest paid person in the firm cannot make more than five times the lowest paid worker). In 1985, company sales are just over $9 million (+143% versus 1984).

In 1988, the three part mission statement is formalized for the first time. The company is a pioneer in the Corporate Social Responsibility field and seeks to establish a triple bottom line whereby success is measured not only in terms of economic profitability but also in terms of social and product mission goals. These three objectives: product, social and economic mission are interrelated parts to achieve linked prosperity. Company sales reach just over $47 million (+49% vs. 1987). That same year, Ben & Jerry's is named U.S Small Business Persons of the Year by President Reagan in a White House Rose Garden ceremony.

1993 is a critical turning point for the company—after ten years of double digit growth, the company stalls with only +6% growth ($140 million in sales) and the stock price of the company plunges as investors begin to question if the Ben & Jerry's success story has come to an end.

In 1994, Ben & Jerry acknowledge they need to hire professional management to take the company forward and begin a CEO search by advertising a CEO Contest asking contestants to write an essay. The first prize winner gets to become CEO of the company while second prize is a life time supply of ice cream. Ben & Jerry jokingly advertise that winning second prize is the better deal of the two.

In 1998, Ben & Jerry's introduce the Eco-Pint Packaging—the industry's first non bleached and chlorine free environmentally friendly packaging.

In 1999, of the Top 30 Most Reputable US companies, Ben & Jerry's ranks #5 overall, also earning a #1 ranking in the "Social Responsibility" category in New Harris "Reputation Quotient" Poll (an assessment tool developed at NYU that measures a company's reputation in key areas such as social responsibility, emotional appeal, and innovation.)

On December 2nd, 1999, Ben & Jerry's announces it has received indications of interest to acquire the Company. Company sales are $237 million. Finally, on April 12th 2000, Anglo-Dutch Unilever Corporation acquires the Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Company for $326 million.

Ben & Jerry's is a classic entrepreneurial story—it consists of founders with their personal psychological histories, the environmental context which nurtured and influenced them (the sixties) and finally an element of chance (Bouchikhi, 1993). And like any successful entrepreneurial story, this story is also the story of growth— from a little ice cream shop in a garage to a multi-million dollar global business today. What makes Ben & Jerry's different from most businesses is that its founders did not separate their moral, political and spiritual values from their business—their business was a reflection of their inner selves and of their social and political ideals. The Ben & Jerry's story doesn't end with the acquisition. In fact this is where things begin to get very interesting. What happens to the socially responsible business once integrated into such a large multinational organization? Will it be 'chewed' up and discarded or will the socially responsible organizational identity demonstrate resilience and shine through? This is what this dissertation will attempt to answer.

1.3. Problem Statement

It is well known in the strategy literature that during a merger or acquisition, the larger acquiring firm tends to impose its way of doing things on the target firm it is acquiring, and more particularly in horizontal combinations where the acquirer has experience in the industry in which the target operates (Schweiger & Goulet, 2005; Berry, 1980). Furthermore, the

acquiring firm's sense of superiority translates into assumptions that their company procedures and systems are superior to those of the purchased firm (Mirvis & Marks, 2003, p. 97).

However, based on the theoretical framework of the resource based view of the firm, one may postulate that a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity is a valuable, rare and tacit resource (Barney, 1986; 1991). I hypothesize that firms with a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity are firms which possess non tangible value which multinationals want to grasp through the process of an M&A.

There is therefore a paradoxical situation where a larger acquiring firm will tend to impose its organizational identity on the firm it is acquiring, thus potentially destroying the target's organizational identity when the motivation for acquisition in the first place was to capture and capitalize upon this socially responsible organizational identity resource.

If Socially Responsible Organizational Identity is a valuable resource, it is not in the best interest of the acquiring firm to destroy or erode this valuable organizational identity. Waddock & Graves (2006) have explored the impact of M&A on stakeholder practices of both acquiring and target firms pre and post merger and have found that target firms tend to have significantly more problems with their stakeholder practices post acquisition. This is problematic if acquiring firms are trying to access a valuable, non tangible socially responsible organizational identity resource (stakeholder practices for Waddock & Graves, 2006) through the process of an M&A. These authors have explored the phenomenon which interests us from a quantitative perspective, and have treated the concept of corporate social responsibility as a variable which may be observed through the operationalization of stakeholder practices as given by a firm such as KLD.[1]

Others have studied the phenomenon of mergers and acquisitions from a discursive and constructivist perspective (Vaara, 2002, 2005; Riad, 2005), paying attention to the important role of narratives to understand the social construction of organizational phenomena (Czarniawska, 1999; Vaara, 2002). Constructivist perspectives question the essentialist and managerialist position of scholars, arguing for instance that constructs taken as "truths" such as "organizational culture" need to be questioned as they are socially constructed phenomena

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[1] KLD Research & Analytics, Inc. is an independent investment research firm providing management tools to professionals integrating environmental, social and governance factors (ESG) into their investment decisions. Since 1988, institutional investors, managers, trustees, consultants and advisors have depended on the expertise of KLD. Today, 31 of the top 50 institutional money managers worldwide use KLD's research to integrate environmental, social and governance factors into their investment decisions. Featuring one of the largest independent corporate research staffs in the world, KLD provides performance benchmarks, corporate accountability research and consulting services analogous to those provided by financial research service firms.

which serve a socially legitimizing role (Riad, 2005). Furthermore, such scholars call for researchers' introspection and radical uncertainty, and an acknowledgment of our own participation in the creation of discourse (Riad, 2005, p.1550).

These authors criticize the dominant managerialist orientation of most M&A research, both from strategy scholars (Lindgren, 1982; Larsson, 1990; Haspeslagh & Jemison, 1991) or human resource oriented scholars (Buono & Bowditch, 1985; 1989; Sales & Mirvis, 1984; Mirvis & Marks, 2003). Such a managerialist orientation "has meant that little attention has been paid to the processes through which these phenomena [mergers and acquisitions] are socially constructed" (Vaara, 2002, p.212). By exploring the narratives which emerge from different managers implicated in various mergers and acquisitions, the complexity and ambiguity of discourses and perceptions towards the merger process can emerge (Vaara, 2002). This is a radical shift from more classic, functionalist studies which assume a certain "ideal and unified management, with little attention paid to the internal divisions among people" (Vaara, 2002, p.214).

Constructivist perspectives have explored managerial narratives towards M&A's and call for further work investigating the narratives emerging from stakeholders who are not necessarily decision makers (Vaara, 2002). This leaves room for a complementary exploration of the phenomenon of the M&A's of socially responsible target firms from a more qualitative and interpretative employee perspective.

1.4. Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is three fold. First of all, this study explores the corporate social responsibility concept from an organizational identity perspective. This study attempts to make both a theoretical and empirical contribution to the fields of organizational identity and corporate social responsibility. There is no work in the literature analyzing the impact of mergers and acquisitions (M&A) on a target firm from a socially responsible organizational identity perspective. While the impact of an M&A on stakeholder practices of both target and acquiring firms has been researched (Waddock & Graves, 2006), there have not been any studies on the phenomenon from an organizational identity perspective, and more particularly from a socially responsible organizational identity perspective. The main contribution of this study is to bring together two theoretical fields of research: organizational identity and corporate social responsibility in the context of major organizational crisis and change

(merger and acquisition) so as to define and explore the nature of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity and the factors which contribute to its resilience.

Secondly, the deliberate focus on a pioneer company in the field of corporate social responsibility with an "authentic" socially responsible organizational identity is pertinent given the contemporary context fraught with numerous corporate claims of being "socially responsible." The notion of authenticity is important to shed light on the nature of corporate social responsibility. Authenticity has been defined as the alignment of one's actions and behaviours with internalized values and beliefs (Harvey & al., 2006). It has also been characterized as being internally driven and as "a response to internal desires to behave with integrity, not to societal pressures to conform to certain standards" (Erickson, 1995, cited in Harvey & al., 2006, p.2). Authenticity has also been described as a developmental process that promotes self awareness (Avolio et al., 2004 cited in Harvey & al., 2006, p.2). Some authors have gone even further, taking a post modern, psychoanalytic approach and arguing that a corporation is authentic or "post egoic" when it is not primarily economics driven but instead fosters multiple, even dissenting voices, is fluid, engaged in dialogue, and a place of reflection and learning (Driver, 2006).

Finally, the authenticity concept may be socially constructed by a number of different actors (Peterson, 2005) for strategic and economic purposes (Beverland, 2005). In a study of the wine industry, one author argues that to attain and retain price premiums, wineries needed to protect their prestige status and that one of the means to do this was through a strategy to enhance perceptions of brand authenticity (Beverland, 2005).

The notion of authenticity can take both an ethical/ normative orientation (alignment of actions and values; internal desire to behave with integrity; "post-egoic" conception of organizational self) and also a more instrumental one (construction of authenticity to maintain price premium). While I conceive that ultimately both ethical and instrumental elements may contribute to Ben & Jerry's authentic identity, my starting point for choosing and labelling a firm such as Ben & Jerry's as a "CSR authentic" is its normative and ethical orientation. Such normative authentic orientation is revealed in the alignment of a firm's actions with its values and also by the mere fact of being a pioneer in the CSR field. I posit that Ben & Jerry's developed CSR behaviours and values because of an internal, ethical motivation and not as the result of societal pressures. Finally, my selection criteria for labelling my sample firm as a firm with "CSR authenticity" is that prior to being acquired through an M&A, it was a "post egoic" organizations (Driver, 2005): having the characteristics of a fluid

organizational identity, interdependent stakeholder relationships, and a culture of reflection, learning and dissent.

Observing a firm whose organizational identity has been strongly associated with a socially responsible identity over a long time period, and from the beginning of its creation, will hopefully enable a better understanding of what an "authentic" socially responsible organizational identity is as, "authentic identities are most likely to be adopted early in the history of an enterprise."[2] I hope to better understand how consistent this socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) is and which factors drives its content and explains its evolution. In this sense, this study is original and different from existing CSR studies as I deliberately focus on a pioneer and authentic CSR firm, which to my knowledge, has never been examined through the organizational identity theoretical grid.

There is therefore a historical component to this study as the focus is not simply on the evolution of the socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) of any firm, but of a specifically "authentic" pioneer CSR firm. The distinction between this pioneer and other firms is important because while most multinational firms today are adopting a CSR discourse, CSR programs, etc, they have not had this socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) for a long time and are pursuing (more or less consciously) isomorphism to gain legitimacy (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In other words, to be legitimate in today's business environment, large multinationals have almost unanimously developed a discourse and programs about sustainable development, social responsibility issues and stakeholder issues. On the other hand, the "authentic" firm with a socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) which is the object of this study was a very isolated phenomenon thirty years ago. When Ben & Jerry's was founded in 1978, it stood out from its industry peers and it is precisely this difference which made it a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) pioneer and SROI "authentic" (Baron, 2004 cited in Whetten, 2006, p.225).

One could argue that it may be interesting to study the macro forces which have shaped the growth and expansion of such SROI "authentic" firms to contaminate other firms (non-"authentic" ones), but this is not the focus of this study. Idol not wish to focus on macro forces as I am interested in approaching corporate social responsibility from an organizational identity perspective at an individual level of analysis and not at a firm level.

The final and third objective of this study is more methodological in nature: I aim to bring together both objective and subjective data to gain a better understanding of both the nature and the forces which may foster or hinder a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. I seek to contribute to the narrative approach to mergers and acquisitions (Vaara, 2002; 2005; Riad, 2005) as one section of this study will focus on employee perspectives regarding the impact of an M&A on a socially responsible target firm, a phenomenon which has been explored only from a quantitative perspective (Waddock & Graves, 2006).

My research approach is integrative as I believe it is possible to integrate a subjective and narrative perspective with a more objective one. While I seek to make use of employee perspectives, thus analyzing narrative and interpretative viewpoints, my approach is not a purely discursive and narrative one as I also make use of more 'objective' and observable data from media sources and company annual reports.

This study distinguishes itself somewhat from the organizational identity literature because of its methodology. Organizational identity scholars tend to adopt either a functionalist approach which "treats organizational identity as a feature or property that resides in, and is attached to, the focal organization" (Corley et al., 2006, p. 90) or a more interpretative approach which is concerned with how organizational members construct an understanding of "who are we?" (Bouchikhi & al., 1998, p.35)

Overall, my understanding of organizational identity is that it can be understood from a multiple perspective standpoint. I posit that knowledge may be accessed through both objective and more subjective means. In other words, there is not one best way to understand a phenomenon. My understanding of organizational identity has a functionalist orientation in the sense that I seek to answer a pragmatic question (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), in order to comprehend which forces contribute to build or hinder a socially responsible organizational identity (SROI). This study seeks to find a rational explanation to a societal phenomenon (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) to provide insight regarding the adoption of SROI—for instance, can multinationals which acquire SROI targets, develop a more SROI? My ontological and epistemological assumptions are that the social world exists "out there" and is accessible through hard and tangible structures (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) and I thus treat "organizational identity as a feature or property that resides in, and is attached to, the focal organization" (Corley et al., 2006, p. 90). An organization's identity is of a very complex nature, however, and cannot be easily grasped like a tangible and hard object. So while my epistemology and ontology is functionalist and realist, my methodological approach may be qualified as integrative as I combine both functionalist and more interpretative data gathering methods.

This study aims to provide a deeper analysis of corporate social responsibility as an object of study by focusing on multiple perspectives and notably, on employee interpretations. Today, accepted standard for measuring corporate social responsibility and stakeholder practices comes from social rating agencies. However, such data has limitations, notably the fact that the sources of this data come from an analysis of publicly available reports and corporate self assessments usually done by a single informant (such as the person in charge of community affairs or corporate social responsibility).[3] Clearly, employee viewpoints and interpretations are understudied in the corporate social responsibility literature.

While I don't take the extreme constructivist position that narratives are the main source of knowledge in organizations (Czarniawska, 1997c), I take the position that employees' perspectives are important and must be taken seriously as they play an key role in the creation and elaboration of an organization's identity.

Finally, I am interested in contrasting official discourse (what I label as 'Projected Identity') with more tangible actions/processes ('Manifested Identity' or organizational artefacts) and finally with employee perceptions. I believe that comparing these three stories will provide a rich source of information about the phenomenon to be studied.

1.5   Questions to be answered

The main questions which this study will attempt to answer are the following:

1. *What is the impact of an M&A on the organizational identity of target firms (in terms of the projected, manifested and experienced organizational identity)?*

2. *What are the driving forces responsible for creating, developing or hindering a strong and coherent Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI)?   What is the nature of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity?*

This study will attempt to answer these questions by taking an integrative methodological approach, focusing on both observable and objective data and more subjective data from employees' interpretations of the impact of an M&A on the socially responsible organizational identity of their target firm.

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[3] As explained to us by a KLD researcher through an email, November 2007.

Furthermore, in order to answer these research questions, the following will need to be explored:

<u>Definition of SROI</u>: What is the definition of a socially responsible organizational identity? How has the M&A changed this identity? What aspects of this identity have endured? Was there just "one" socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) pre-acquisition? Is SROI an essence or a process?

<u>Birth/construction</u> of a socially responsible organizational identity: when does a firm become an organization with a "SROI"? What's the process of socially responsible organizational identity construction like?

<u>Triggers of change:</u> What are <u>other</u> triggers of SROI change? (Other than M&A)

1.6   Definition of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI)

Because this study is investigating a new phenomenon (acquisition of socially responsible companies), from a new theoretical perspective (organizational identity), bringing together both the fields of corporate social responsibility and organizational identity, several key concepts need to be defined. Furthermore, one of the main objectives and specificity of this study is to define and understand both the nature and drivers of a "socially responsible organizational identity" (SROI) and how such identity is impacted by major organizational change (M&A). Based on a review of both the corporate social responsibility and organizational identity literature, I arrive at the following definition of **Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI)**:

> *The coherent and consistent articulation of a firm's managerial expression of <u>mission regarding social responsibility</u> (projected identity); with a firm's <u>visible actions & manifestations</u> of social responsibility (manifested identity) and with the <u>perceptions</u> of a firm's SR by its internal stakeholders (experienced identity). The communication and actions of SR must be grounded in the ethical <u>motivation of corporate leaders/decision makers</u>.*

Below I articulate graphically my definition of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI):

Figure 1
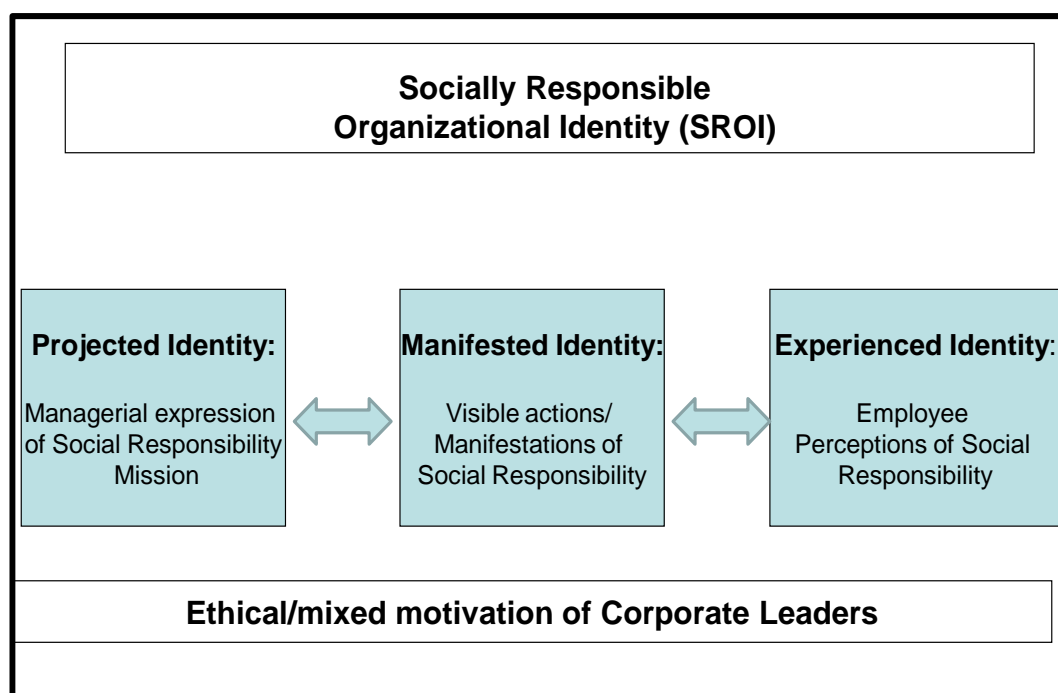
The following section will explore how I came up with my definition of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI). I will begin with an overview of the origins of and driving forces for CSR and proceed to synthesize the CSR literature in the context of mergers and acquisitions. I will then analyze the organizational identity literature and its links with CSR and the context of M&A's. Next, I will explore the links and differences between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Organizational identity. The theoretical background section will end with an explanation of how I build my theoretical SROI model, based on the CSR and Organizational Identity literatures. After my findings section, I will revisit my model and explain how it has evolved once confronted to the reality of the fieldwork and data collection.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1　Corporate Social Responsibility

2.1.1　Role of Business in Society: the Classical View

Milton Friedman is paradoxically one of the founding fathers of corporate social responsibility. When he declared that "the doctrine of social responsibility is fundamentally subversive" and that, "few trends could so thoroughly undermine the very foundations of our free society as the acceptance by corporate officials of a social responsibility other than to make as much money for their stockholders as possible," (Friedman, 1962, p.133 quoted in Carroll, 1979, p.497), Friedman triggered a wave of debate regarding the role of business in society and the notion of corporate social responsibility was born.

For Friedman, the only "social responsibility" of business is to generate profit for stockholders. His argument is that stockholders rule supreme over the corporation both because they are the owners of the corporation and because of their contractual agreement with various stakeholders of the firm such as employees, managers, suppliers, etc. Contracts bind stockholders with other stakeholders and the notion of "corporate social responsibility" is therefore illegitimate if it takes managers away from profit maximization.

Friedman does recognize that social responsibility initiatives may be pursued if they are compatible with stock maximization. Implicit in Friedman's argument is that while "social goals" may be pursued by business people, such goals to be legitimate must serve the higher goal of profitability. Friedman and the Chicago school of neoclassical economics see a cleavage between profits and social good whereby wealth maximization and ethical, moral concerns such as social responsibility are two very separate notions that cannot be reconciled.

While today it has become increasingly accepted that business play a role in society, this has not always been the case. The debates of the early 1970's about corporate social responsibility focused on the legitimacy of business getting involved in the social sphere. Davis (1973) wrote an article giving the pro's and con's of business's assumption of social responsibilities and the reasons he put forward against it were: the cost of social involvement, the lack of social skills of businessmen, the dilution of business's primary purpose, the fact that business already has enough social power and the lack of accountability. While some of these reasons seem dated ("lack of social skills of businessmen"), other issues such as, "lack of accountability" remain very salient issues today.

2.1.2 Origins of Corporate Social Responsibility

The term "corporate social responsibility" is not new. Some argue that the concept emerged in the late nineteenth century, "with the advent of the large publicly-held corporation" (Manley & Shrode, 1990; Katz & al., 2001). With the increasing size and impact of business in the United States, a public debate emerged regarding the behaviour of corporations. For others, Andrew Carnegie, founder of U.S Steel, is at the origin of the corporate social responsibility concept as he believed charity was a means to safeguard capitalism (Freeman & Liedtka, 1991).

In the 1930's, under the New Deal administration of Roosevelt, major laws were passed regarding labour protection, banking reform and public utility regulation. Public expectations regarding social responsibility of business continued to grow (Katz & al., 2001).

The social upheavals of the 1960's in the United States brought once more the issue of corporate social responsibility to the forefront, and for the first time, academics became interested in the notion. As explained earlier, Milton Friedman was one of the instigators of the debate with his provocative comments.

Another important instigator of the corporate social responsibility debate came directly from the American government through the Committee for Economic Development (CED) in 1971. This Committee initiated one of the first attempts to reconcile economic and non-economic concerns in defining social responsibility through a "three concentric circles" approach. The inner circle "includes the clear-cut basic responsibilities for the efficient execution of the economic function-products, jobs, and economic growth." The intermediate circle "encompasses a responsibility to exercise this economic function with a sensitive awareness of changing social values and priorities": for example, with respect to the environmental conservation, hiring, and relations with employees…The outer circle "outlines newly emerging and still amorphous responsibilities that business should assume to become more broadly involved in actively improving the social environment" (Carroll, 1979, p.498 citing the CED).

2.1.3 Driving Forces for Corporate Social Responsibility

While the notion of corporate social responsibility has existed since the 19th century in the United States, the term has taken momentum in the past few years, due to several factors. The factors are in no way exhaustive but are some of the important driving forces of corporate social responsibility today.

The first driving force of corporate social responsibility is the ideological vacuum left by the collapse of the communist economic ideology in 1989, combined with the western ideal of democracy embodied in our global world economy. The two global superpowers with contrasting ideologies are no longer a reality since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Today, capitalism remains as the dominant economic ideology in the world. Such a dominant monolithic ideology cannot remain unquestioned in a democracy for very long. In a democratic society, a monolithic ideology is a frightening notion reminiscent of undemocratic regimes where political or ideological pluralism is not tolerated.

The notion of corporate social responsibility (which stems from the idea that capitalism can take multiple forms) emerges as the very embodiment of a democratic ideal which values pluralism and does not accept the notion of one single "truth." Thus, corporate social responsibility expresses capitalism as an evolving "story" that must be invented and re-negotiated every day.

At a more micro level (and at a less philosophical level), a second important driving force for corporate social responsibility is the increasing role of institutional investors (such as mutual funds) as key financiers of multinationals. These institutional investors pay close attention to rating agencies on matters of "ethical" behaviour of multinationals and are therefore a major driving force behind the corporate social responsibility movement.

The third driving force of corporate social responsibility has been coined by some authors as, "the breakup of normative structures" (Aggeri, Pezet, Abrassart & Acquier, 2004). According to these authors, in recent years, national regulatory mechanisms have loosened and traditional institutional partners such as the state have weakened. This has left a void to be filled by private rating systems and norms such as ISO 14000 or the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). This would explain why institutional investors are increasingly paying attention to a growing pool of rating agencies specialized in assessing "social" behaviour of corporations.

A fourth driving force for corporate social responsibility is the globalization of corporations. With the increasing need to establish "global" brands, corporations have

realized that notions of organizational "values" are actually helpful in legitimizing and strengthening their brands at a global level. Corporations are increasingly adopting discourses on what their organizational values are and taking a stand on environmental and human rights issues, something unheard of several decades ago. The very fact that corporations are increasingly global actors, present on many continents has pushed firms in the direction of justifying their activities "abroad", away from their host country. The increasing use of suppliers in third world countries to avoid more expensive wages has driven corporations to justify to consumers and various stakeholders how they are treating suppliers abroad in terms of human rights for instance.

A fifth driving force for corporate social responsibility is the consolidation of corporations (this is linked of course to globalization). In recent years, many companies have increasingly merged, sometimes being held together by large umbrella companies. When an umbrella company such as Unilever has hundreds of brands, CSR can serve as a vehicle to bind brands together, making them whole where they have lost meaning or become too abstract for consumers or even employees! Such CSR programs can serve as organizational "glue" in times of mergers or acquisitions when firm identity has been significantly weakened (Aggeri, Pezet, Abrassart & Acquier, 2004).

Finally, the transparency of information in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world is an important factor to note as a driving force of corporate social responsibility. The accessibility of information regarding corporate behaviour on the internet is a major source of power for a number of stakeholders impacted by corporations. As a result of these various driving forces, pressure on corporations to adopt greater social responsibility has been emanating from various stakeholders (Waddock & Bodwell & Graves, 2002).

2.1.4 Corporate Social Responsibility and Mergers and Acquisitions

While corporate social responsibility is a concept that has been vastly explored in the strategic and organizational literature (over 127 empirical studies as of 2003 according to Margolis & Walsh, 2003), the study of the impact of a merger and acquisition on corporate social responsibility has only been explored in two academic studies. The first is an empirical study which looks at the effects of corporate restructurings on corporate philanthropy (Griffin, 2004) and thus which takes a narrow definitional approach to corporate social responsibility and the other which looks at the impact of mergers and acquisitions on corporate stakeholder practices, using an empirical methodology (Waddock & Graves, 2006).

The study on the impact of mergers and acquisitions on corporate stakeholder practices uses the KLD data base to investigate the impact of mergers and acquisitions on corporate stakeholder practices. Waddock & Graves (2006, p.94) make two major hypotheses in their study: first that pre-acquisition, "acquiring firms will exhibit fewer strengths and more concerns with respect to specific stakeholders than target firms" and secondly that post acquisition, "merged firms will exhibit fewer stakeholder related strengths and more concerns than pre-merger (acquirer and target) firms in stakeholder arenas."

The results of the Waddock & Graves (2006) study are conflicted and its hypotheses are only partially supported. The first hypothesis that acquiring firms have less strengths in stakeholder practices than target firms is not supported and from this finding the authors conclude that the motivation for the M&A is therefore not to acquire a valuable stakeholder practices resources: "stakeholder practices do not seem to generally play into acquisition and merger decisions" as there do not seem to be significant differences in stakeholder practices between target and acquiring firms in the pre-acquisition phase (Waddock & Graves, 2006, p. 105). This logic assumes that a merger and acquisition is motivated by the idea of gaining access to complementary assets or capabilities. However mergers and acquisitions may also be motivated by "economies of sameness" or synergies achieved from accumulating similar operations and not just "economies of fitness" which are the combination of different but complementary operations (Larsson & Finkelstein, 1999, p. 6). From such a standpoint, one could assume that acquiring firms could seek to acquire target firms with similar stakeholder practices with the idea of combining their stakeholder practices to arrive at a critical mass which could generate synergies. Yet similarity in stakeholder practices between a target and acquirer does not necessarily invalidate the hypothesis that an acquisition may be indeed motivated by the desire to tap into a target's valuable "stakeholder practices" resource.

Furthermore, while the Waddock & Graves (2006) study is well designed to measure the impact of M&A on stakeholder practices of target and acquiring firms and merged firms, it cannot necessarily draw conclusions on the motivations behind the M&A decision making process, as this would probably require a study which would investigate decision maker's explanations of the rationale behind the M&A.

Secondly, the selection criteria and methodology chosen by Waddock & Graves (2006) may explain the lack of significant differences in stakeholder practices of target and acquiring firms. Since the criteria for firm selection was to be listed in the Standard & Poor's 500 companies and/or the Domini Social Index, absence of significant differences between targets and acquiring firms pre-acquisition might have been due to the absence of significant size differences between firms. In other words, past a certain critical size, companies may not exhibit extremely different behaviours in terms of stakeholder practices.

To conclude on the second and third hypotheses of the study that merged firms will display more concerns and less strengths in terms of stakeholder practices compared to pre merger target and acquiring firms, again the results are mixed. While no difference was found in strengths between merged and acquiring firms for community, employee, product and corporate governance, merged firms showed more strengths in diversity and environment than pre merger targets or acquirers, thus not supporting the authors' hypotheses fully. Where the authors found some support for their hypotheses was in the area of concerns whereby merged firms showed greater concerns than pre acquisition acquirers in the area of diversity and the environment. The authors hypothesize that perhaps company size plays an important role in diversity strategies (Waddock & Graves, 2006, p.101). What is interesting is that overall merged firms displayed both more strengths and more concerns in the areas of diversity and the environment.

The authors' hypotheses concerning stakeholder practices strengths of pre merger target firms versus merged firms was not supported because there were no significant differences in strengths in the areas of community, employee, product and corporate governance. Furthermore, merged firms showed greater strengths again in the area of diversity and the environment compared to pre merger target firms.

The hypothesis that target firms had less concerns than merged firms was supported however: "Targets had, overall, fewer concerns than the resultant merged firms. For target companies' stakeholders there appear to be losses related to the M&A process; things get worse rather than better for those stakeholders"(Waddock & Graves, 2006, p.105). The finding here is that out of the six stakeholder practices categories which are analyzed by the study (community

relations, diversity, employees, environment, product and corporate governance), targets lose out with respect to diversity, employee policies, environment and product areas.

The authors conclude their study pointing out that the impact of mergers and acquisitions on both acquiring and target firms is not very positive in terms of the impact on stakeholder practices: "Perhaps it is not surprising that the acquiring firm's practices dominate in the merged firm, but the increase in concerns is troubling for companies that hope to improve their competitive performance—including their relationships with stakeholder-via the M&A process" (Waddock & Graves, 2006, p.106).

To conclude on the literature on corporate social responsibility and mergers and acquisitions, there is to date very little that exists to inform our field of study. This is both difficult and exciting as the terrain is vastly unexplored. While Waddock & Graves (2006) are the first to explore this area of study, their findings are not conclusive. . My study seeks to build upon and complement Waddock & Graves (2006) by taking an exploratory and qualitative perspective.

Like Waddock & Graves (2006), I am interested in understanding what the impact of an M&A is on stakeholder practices, however, I am also interested in looking at how a target with innovative stakeholder practices has built up its socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) valuable resource over time and how such a resource has been constructed both internally and externally. In this sense while my field of interest is close to Waddock & Graves (2006), my focus is fundamentally different as I am not solely interested in looking at the impact of an M&A on the stakeholder practices of target firms or what I label the "SROI" of target firms but also at the broader factors that shape, promote and hinder a "Socially Responsible Organizational Identity." My perspective is that an M&A is a very important crisis point in the life of a target firm and a very appropriate business context to explore the dynamics of organizational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985), and that it requires substantial in-depth probing into the communications, actions and perceptions of the actors involved. Adopting a more longitudinal view and qualitative methodological approach, I also seek to explore if the mergers & acquisition is the only key event to impact a company's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity or if other significant events also play a key role.

My second departure point from Waddock & Graves (2006) is that instead of taking a more content approach to the subject by conducting an empirical examination of the impact of M&A's on stakeholder practices, I take a more process approach by focusing on the notion of socially responsible organizational identity itself. While Waddock & Graves (2006) do not focus on the construction of stakeholder practices but rather take the construct as a given, I

consider "Socially Responsible Organizational Identity" (SROI) to be a locus of interest in and of itself.

To explore the complexities of the SROI valuable resource and how it is constructed and evolves over time, I use the theoretical grid of the organizational identity literature. This takes us to the next section about organizational identity and its links with the field of corporate social responsibility and stakeholder theory.

2.2 Organizational Identity

2.2.1 Organizational Identity & CSR (includes stakeholder theory and business ethics)

While the literature on organizational identity is extensive and the literature on corporate social responsibility even more prolific, research linking both fields of research is extremely limited. It is unclear why both literatures have not been explicitly linked, although one author attempts the following explanation: "The literature on corporate social performance suggests that organizational identity is integral to social responsibility, but it does not directly build on the organizational identity literature (Randel, 2002, p. 68).

For the purposes of my study, I have found several authors who have written at the intersection of both the organizational identity and corporate social responsibility field. Some authors focus on organizational identity and stakeholder theory (Scott & Lane, 2000; Brickson, 2005, 2007; Illia & Lurati, 2006) while others focus specifically on socially responsible practice and organizational identity (Randel, 2002) and finally, the most recent work focuses on the intersection of organizational identity and business ethics (Verbos et al., 2007).

Most of the work bridging CSR and organizational identity is theoretical where authors are attempting to build a model (Scott & Lane, 2000; Illia & Lurati, 2006; Randel, 2002; Verbos et al., 2007) or simply categorize various stakeholder approaches within the organizational identity field (Illia & Lurati, 2006). Only the work of Brickson (2005) is both theoretical and empirical.

Scott & Lane (2000) are pioneers in the organizational identity field because they are the first to extend the definition of organizational identity from an insiders' perspective to include organizational stakeholders beyond the confines of the firm. Their model expresses the important role which a firm's stakeholders have in participating in the construction of organizational identity. By taking a stakeholder approach to organizational identity, Scott &

Lane (2000) stretch the limits of who is legitimate to define and build organizational identity, going beyond the traditional organizational behaviour approach to organizational identity which defines organizational identity as emanating only from internal members' perspectives (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Dutton & al., 1994; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Brickson, 2005; 2007; Corley & al., 2006).

Scott & Lane (2000) define organizational identity as something which is "contested and negotiated through iterative interactions between managers and stakeholders" (Scott & Lane, 2000, p.44) and also, "the set of beliefs shared between top managers and stakeholders about the central, enduring, and distinctive characteristics of an organization."(Scott & Lane, 2000, p.44)   In a sense their definition of organizational identity as something which is constructed by many different voices, players, etc is similar to Moingeon & Soenen (2002) who also take a multi stakeholder (and pluri-disciplinary) approach to organizational identity..

This multiple stakeholder approach is pertinent because organizations do not exist in a vacuum and a sense of "who we are" as an organization can stretch to external stakeholders such that suppliers, the media can also be relevant actors in the formulation of an organization's organizational identity.   The danger of not paying sufficient attention to external stakeholders' assessment of an organization's identity can lead to an organizational narcissism, or self-absorption (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).   Of course paying too much attention to external stakeholders' assessment of organizational identity can also lead to the dysfunction of "hyper-adaptation" and loss of culture (Hatch & Schultz, 2002) and to image taking over the organization's substance/culture (Alvesson, 1990 cited in Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

A second author who also makes the bridge between organizational identity and stakeholder theory is Brickson (2005; 2007).   Although Brickson (2005) acknowledges the important role of stakeholders in an organization's identities, her definition of organizational identity is more restrictive, however, as she focuses on insiders' interpretations and unlike Scott & Lane (2000) does not take a broad view to organizational identity (Corley et al., 2006).   Brickson (2005; 2007) introduces the concept of organizational identity orientation which she defines as three different self views of the organization: the individualistic orientation, which is "associated with concern for one's own welfare"; the relational orientation, which is "associated with an emphasis on the well being of particular relationship partners and on maintaining relationships" and finally, the collectivist orientation which is "associated with concerns for the welfare of the greater group as a whole" (Brickson, 2005, p. 579).

Brickson (2005) tests her model in a qualitative and quantitative study and she concludes that firms have one of three identity orientations and that if their identity is relational and nurturing, for instance, this relationship will tend to be consistent across all stakeholders that the firm interacts with: "…the suggestion is that organizations that nurture customers also nurture employees, and vice versa, because it is inherent in their identity" (Brickson, 2005, p. 602).

While Hatch & Schultz (2002) suggest that organizations can be incoherent in their organizational identity when the link between image (external stakeholders perceptions) and substance (internal culture) is broken, Brickson (2005; 2007) seems to suggest that organizations tend to be consistent in their identity orientation: "…organizations' orientation toward external stakeholders (e.g., "we are the best," "we are nurturing to clients," "we advance the community's welfare") tends to parallel that toward their own members (e.g., "expects excellence," "cares for us as individuals," and "promotes teamwork," respectively)"(Brickson, 2005, p.598). Although Brickson (2005) does nuance her assertions when she writes that "...though pure types are common, organizations often simultaneously maintain more than one identity orientation" (Brickson, 2005, p.599).

After taking a brief look at the work linking stakeholder theory and organizational identity, I now turn to the work linking corporate social responsibility and organizational identity (Randel, 2002). Randel's (2002) model is a useful starting point because she also makes use of Wood (1991) in constructing her own model.

Randel (2002) attempts to understand which factors will foster the maintenance of socially responsible practice—She focuses deliberately on the notion of maintenance because she argues that it is through maintenance that one can determine if a company's actions are of real substance or just ephemeral and one shot (just for PR purposes). Citing Weick, Randel writes that "practices are processes that must be continually re-enacted" (Randel, 2002, p. 64)

Randel (2002) makes the link between corporate social responsibility and organizational identity by extending Wood's (1991) corporate social performance model to include organizational identity. Randel replaces the organizational level of analysis which Wood had coined "public responsibility" by "organizational identity": "Organizational identity extends the organizational level of Wood's (1991) framework by suggesting that maintaining a socially responsible practice involves consideration of the relation of social problems to 'who we are' as an organization"(Randel, 2002, p.68). Randel also replaces Wood's (1991) notion of "managerial discretion" by "champion's tactics" as she is interested in predicting whether it is organizational identity or champion's tactics which are most

effective in supporting a firm's socially responsible practice. Randel defines organizational identity as an organizational level construct while she construes champions' tactics to be at the individual level of analysis.

My critique of Randel's conceptualization of organizational identity is that she does not address how organizational identity is constructed or who might be responsible for its construction. Randel decouples the notion of champion's tactics from the notion of organizational identity as if both constructs were on different conceptual planes and had nothing to do with one another. This translates into her propositions that depending upon the institutional environment surrounding a firm, organizational identity or champions' tactics will prove more effective in maintaining a socially responsible practice. Randel (2002) defines organizational identity as "What is core, distinctive, and enduring about the character of an organization" (Randel, 2002, p.68; Albert & Whetten, 1985) and also as "a reference point used in the course of sense making about issues pertaining to an organization." (Randel, 2002, p.69; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Gioia & Thomas, 1996) Randel defines champions as, "individuals affiliated with an organization who incorporate vision, persistence, skills and experience, persuasion and vigilance toward an issue of importance to them." (Randel, 2002, p. 69)

To conclude, Randel fails to address how organizational identity is constructed and also how corporate leaders ('champions') may shape organizational identity. I postulate that champions and organizational leaders play a vital role in defining organizational identity as they help often shape and manage the organizational identity of a firm (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Reitter & Ramanantsoa, 1985; Verbos et al., 2007).

Another model which brings together the notion of CSR and organizational identity is the "ethical organizational identity" model by Verbos et al. (2007) which articulates three items: leadership, processes and ethical organizational culture: "Our model proposes that when a living code of ethics is a central, distinctive and enduring characteristic of the organization, an ethical organization identity emerges." (Verbos et al., 2007, p.20). In this model, authentic leadership is characterized by leaders with a highly developed moral reasoning capacity, use of transparent decision making, participative management and humility (Verbos et al., 2007; Trevino et al., 2003). Organizational processes are defined by the authors as a series of reward systems and the capacity of leaders for organizational learning and specifically for double loop learning (Verbos et al., 2007; Argyris & Schon, 1978). Finally, Verbos & al.'s (2007) definition of organizational culture is taken from Schein's (1985) landmark definition as: "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was

learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems."(Schein, 2004, p.17)

I take away two key points from Verbos & al. (2007). Firstly that organizational identity is socially constructed and emerges from members' agreement (Verbos et al., 2007; Ashforth & Mael, 1996). As Ashforth & Mael (1996) argue, organizational identity is a claim of organizational members and it is not self evident:

"Organizational identity is an inter-subjective construct: that is, it cannot exist unless people agree that it exists…thus the character of an organization is never self evident: it must be socially constructed. This means that any statement of organizational identity is essentially a claim: it is one view of what the organization represents."(Ashforth and Mael, 1996, p.28)

The second point I take away is that organizational identity emerges from an interaction of several elements, notably top management discourse (what I label "projected identity" or "principles of social responsibility") and organizational culture ("manifested identity").

What is missing in Verbos et al.'s (2007) 'ethical organizational identity' model is the presence of employee perceptions and interpretations. By focusing only on leaders' values and internal elements of processes (defined as culture embedding mechanisms such as rewards, criteria for recruitment, etc), their model misses an important driver of organizational identity—organizational members themselves.

2.2.2 Organizational Identity and Mergers and Acquisitions

Organizational identity becomes extremely salient during major discontinuity or when an organization's status is changed (Ashforth & Mael, 1996, p. 29) and a good example of such a crisis is a merger or acquisition (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Studying the organizational identity of a target firm in the context of a crisis such as an M&A should prove useful to shed light on the nature and determinants of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI).

The literature on M&A's and organizational identity is not extensive. This literature focuses primarily on the importance of corporate identity, which involves "the way in which a company's identity is expressed through behaviour, communications and symbolism, both to

its internal and external audiences" (Melewar & Harrold, 2000, p.20) and its role in establishing good communication with stakeholders in order to achieve successful merger integration (Melewar & Harrold, 2000; Balmer & Dinnie, 1999).

The literature on organizational culture and mergers and acquisitions is however, quite prolific. Most of this literature focuses on the impact of cultural difference between acquiring and target firms on the M&A process, including both pre-merger, combination and post merger stages (Badrtalei & Bates, 2007).

Furthermore, a large part of this literature has a strong managerial orientation, giving practical advice to managers on how to manage more effectively cultural differences so as to ensure the success of the M&A process (Terranova, 2007; Riad, 2007). Ensuring M&A success can involve acknowledging the importance of leadership and communication (Appelbaum et al., 2007; Wood, 2005); strategic and psychological preparation (Marks & Mirvis, 2001); or even cultural learning interventions to develop constructive employee perceptions post acquisition (Schweiger & Goulet, 2005).

Interestingly almost all of the literature exploring culture and mergers and acquisitions treats organizational culture as an independent variable and the M&A process as the dependent variable. In other words, what is of interest to researchers is the impact of cultural differences (or similarities) on the success of M&A integration or combination. The ultimate object of study is not culture but rather the M&A process itself.

This is an important point of departure from where I situate my study as my independent variable is the M&A (the crisis, the shock effect) and my dependent variable is organizational identity. In other words, I am interested in observing the phenomena of an M&A and its effect on the organizational identity of a target firm, more particularly how organizational members perceive the evolution of their firm's socially responsible organizational identity (SROI). So while I consider that members' interpretations of organizational identity change will provide clues as to whether or not an M&A is a success or failure—the focus of this dissertation is not so much on evaluating the success or failure of the M&A process but rather on exploring interpretations of organizational identity change as it relates to corporate social responsibility in the context of an M&A. In this sense, part of my work follows in the footsteps of recent interpretative work exploring employees' perceptions of organizational identity and acquisition integration (Chreim, 2007).

A second point of departure from most of the organizational culture and M&A literature and my dissertation is that most of the literature focuses on mergers of equals— which explains the focus of the literature on acculturation (changes in both organizations that

occur as a result of contact between the two cultural groups) (Seo & Hill, 2005, p.428 citing Berry, 1980) and how two groups can create a third organizational culture.

The empirical context under study concerns the acquisition of significantly smaller firms by large multinationals. The question which interests me is thus not whether or not two firms are well integrated but rather to what extent is the smaller target firm integrated and more particularly, how do employee perceptions of the level of integration impact their sense of collective identity. In other words, this dissertation focuses on the impact of an M&A on the target firm's organizational identity and not on the acquiring firm's organizational identity. Future research could however also focus on the impact of an M&A on the acquiring firm's organizational identity and potentially demonstrate how acquiring a smaller, more creative entrepreneurial organization can revitalize an acquiring firm (Vermeulen, 2005) and perhaps even provoke organizational learning through organizational wisdom (Brown & Starkey, 2000).[4]

2.3 Corporate Social Responsibility, Stakeholder Theory and Organizational Identity: links and differences

In the scholarly literature on corporate social responsibility, the notion today is not unanimously agreed upon. While some scholars speak of corporate social responsibility (Aggeri, 2004), others speak of corporate citizenship (Matten & Crane, 2003), or corporate business citizenship (Logsdon & Wood, 2002). Some scholars differentiate the notion of corporate responsibility from corporate social responsibility (Waddock, 2004). Finally, an important research off shoot of the corporate social responsibility literature is the stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984).

These diverse approaches and terminologies have some commonalities. First of all, most studies of business and society have been instrumental (Margolis & Walsh, 2003), trying to prove that to attend to matters above and beyond minimal legal requirements and to

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[4]Wisdom is defined by Brown & Starkey (2000, p.113) as, "a composite of curiosity, a willingness to learn, and an openness to learn new things about one's environment that challenges assumptions that we know all that we need to know and all that could possibly be relevant to our present situation."

stakeholders (rather than simply to stockholders) will over time be beneficial in terms of profitability to the firm.

Secondly, these approaches to the business and society relationship have for the most part been managerial (Donaldson & Preston, 1995) in the sense that these theories have been intended to help the manager shape and manage more efficiently the corporation. Overwhelmingly the CSR and stakeholder literature have put the manager as the locus of attention.

Finally, the CSR and stakeholder literatures have predominantly had an action orientation with a focus on managerial action, social responsiveness (Carroll, 1979), corporate processes and outcomes (Wood, 1991). Most studies of the business and society link who are trying to make the link with performance measure corporate actions towards stakeholders. This is evident in the way that many studies operationalize the concept of CSR or stakeholder relationships, using for instance rating agency methodology (i.e. such as the KLD methodology where what is measured is the strengths and weaknesses of various corporate actions towards a multitude of stakeholders--community, corporate governance, diversity, employee relations, environment and product).

Organizational identity as a concept shares some similarities with the CSR and stakeholder concepts. Firstly, organizational identity has also been apprehended in instrumental terms by many organizational identity scholars. From this point of view, organizational identity when managed properly contributes to firm competitiveness and strategic advantage. This instrumental orientation is pervasive in most of the functionalist studies and approaches to organizational identity (Gioia, 1998).

Secondly, organizational identity has also been apprehended by scholars as something which can be managed and controlled, ultimately to increase employee organizational identification and cooperative behaviours (Dutton & al., 1994), firm reputation (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990) and ultimately firm performance and competitiveness.

Taking a closer look at the organizational identity concept and its construction, there are two important points of divergence with the CSR and stakeholder concept which are important to highlight. The first major difference concerns the role of the actors involved in the firm and the second major difference concerns the role of action versus interpretation.

Paradoxically, while stakeholder theory seems to advocate a democratic approach to the firm (the stakeholder theory which advocates taking into account multiple views and not simply the stockholder view), the process by which it advocates stakeholder assessment is not necessarily very "democratic," as it is still rooted in the classical, "top-down" and managerial

approach rather than a grounded approach to decision making. The underlying assumption in stakeholder theory is that managers are the ones who are in control of their firm and the ones who can choose how the interact with various stakeholders, giving more importance to stakeholders with more power or to issues brought about by stakeholders which seem more urgent than others (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997). While stakeholder theory is a revolutionary approach to apprehending the firm because it addresses the question of accountability to actors other than owners, it does not question the central role of managers.

Organizational identity, like stakeholder relationships, may also be an object to manage and control (Reitter & Ramanantsoa, 1985: "The role of the manager is to create meaning, to create an imagery, to master the symbolic"). However, many scholars have apprehended organizational identity as a construction emanating from multiple points: members' interpretations and beliefs (Dutton & al., 1994), top managers' visions and strategic decision making, a combination of emergent and managed phenomenon where organizational identity emerges from members' perceptions but where ambiguity is resolved and stabilized by top management (Corley & Gioia, 2004), and finally a process of interaction between internal stakeholders (employees and top managers) or between internal and external stakeholders (Scott & Lane, 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

If organizational identity partly originates in the minds of employees, it may escape managerial control or even defy managerial control altogether. Organizational identity apprehended as the sense of who we are as an organization from an employee perspective may elude managerial control. In this sense, organizational identity contrasts with the concept of stakeholder theory which always places the manager at the locus of control (to control and manage other stakeholders and stakeholder relationships).

And as noted above, while organizational identity may originate in members' minds, managers may also have a role in shaping organizational identity. Critical theorists argue that employees may even have a false sense of identity or consciousness and may be manipulated by top managers (Bouchikhi & al., 1998). Other scholars have focused on the idea that organizational identity is really a story about many organizational identities and that there are often conflicting voices and identities within a single organization: identities of organizations are "constituted by the multiple, changing, occasionally consonant, sometimes overlapping, but often competing narratives centred on them, authored by those who participate in them" (Brown & al., 2005, p.314). These authors have also argued that managers (or those who are hierarchically privileged) will tend to "impose their own monological and unitary perceptions

of truth" (Brown & al., 2005, p. 314) on organizational members in order to create "the active consent of dominated groups" (Brown & al., 2005, p. 315, citing Clegg, 1989).

I hypothesize that while top management discourse has a major impact on employee perceptions, employees are not devoid of individual freedom and thus one should find dissenting voices between various employees and managers (Corley, 2004). This is coherent with Wood's (1991) concept of managerial discretion whereby managers/employees have the capacity at an individual level to exercise moral autonomy and thus enact their own conception of their firm's principles of social responsibility.

The second major difference between the CSR/stakeholder concept and the organizational identity concept concerns the notion of action. While the CSR/stakeholder concept has been treated in the literature through an overwhelming action orientation, most organizational identity studies have focused on the notion of interpretation.

The corporate social responsibility literature, with its managerial orientation, focuses overwhelmingly on corporate action. This has translated into a focus on the articulation between corporate principles, processes and outcomes (Wood, 1991) or on the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility behaviour (Margolis & Walsh, 2003). Most studies of organizational identity emerging from the organizational behaviour tradition, however, are not anchored in a functionalist or an action oriented perspective, and focus instead on actors' interpretations or cognitive structures (Dutton & al., 1994; Larçon & Reitter, 1984; Moingeon & Ramanantsoa, 1997; Gioia & al., 2000; Peteraf & Shanley, 1997; Scott & Lane, 2000; Brickson, 2005; 2007).

My study aims to bring together both the notion of action and interpretation, corporate social responsibility and organizational identity in order to explore the object: "socially responsible organizational identity". This entails exploring the notion of corporate social responsibility from an integrated organizational identity perspective. The following sections will explore the CSR and organizational identity literature to explain how I arrived at my definition of socially responsible organizational identity (SROI).

2.4   Conceptualization of SROI Model

2.4.1 Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility

- ■ *Why I build upon the CSR terminology*

The first component of my Socially Responsible Organizational Identity definition concerns the terms, 'Social Responsibility.'   Although the term "corporate social responsibility" is dated (it is one of the first to appear to define the field of business and society), it is also one of the most resilient terms, particularly in the business world.   One might argue to counter this argument that the term of "corporate business citizenship" is popular as well, so why not use the "latest" terminology adopted by American and British scholars in the business and society field?   I postulate that to omit the terms, "social" and "responsibility" is problematic as it removes the normative and moral dimensions of the role of business in society.   I follow in the footsteps of authors who argue that the concept of corporate citizenship has not embraced a normative orientation and that therefore the concept of CSR remains superior to the concept of CC (Valor, 2005, p. 203).

While there is somewhat of a normative notion of duties and rights in the term, "citizenship", it is not as strong and all encompassing as the terms of "social responsibility". One can be a citizen and yet not be socially responsible.   Citizenship implies belonging to a group, a society, a nation but one is not necessarily a "good" citizen, committed to one's country, responsibilities and moral duties towards that country, etc.   Webster's first definition of a citizen is, "an inhabitant of a city or town, one entitled to the rights and privileges of a freeman."   The key word here is, "rights".   If we speak of corporations as primarily having rights, we will not necessarily address their duties of social responsibility towards society.   It is only in Webster's second definition of citizen that appears the moral notion of duties: "a native or naturalized person who owes allegiance to a government and is entitled to protection from it."[5]   But while the notion of allegiance, if applied to a corporation's relationship to society, may indicate some sort of commitment going perhaps as far as duties, that commitment, or "allegiance" is not necessarily social in nature.   The allegiance of a corporation to society could be purely economic in the purest tradition of Milton Friedman and the notion of social obligation such as going beyond a narrow economic obligation to shareholders may not be addressed at all.

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[5] Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, copyright 1988.

I argue that it is a bit troubling to assimilate the firm to the notion of citizenship because it blurs the boundaries between bodies which are elected or have voting privileges (citizens, governments) and bodies which are not democratically constituted and have no political voting power. Windsor (2001, p.241) has argued against the use of the term "corporate citizenship" because while the term actually sounds more positive than CSR, it is actually more minimalist, "with natural liberty and freedom of contract overtones that conceptually limit externally imposed responsibilities." Furthermore, equating the corporation to an individual citizen may actually be more favourable to corporations in the case of criminal or civil cases against them: "The American Law Institute (1994) recommendations on corporate governance propose, in effect, that a corporate citizen be subject to the same, but not any greater, duties relative to the individual citizen" (Windsor, 2001, p. 241).

In terms of the choice between the 'CSR' and 'stakeholder' terminology, I favour using the term, "corporate social responsibility" and not the term "stakeholder theory" (Freeman, 1984) or "stakeholder practices" (Waddock & Graves, 2006) because I consider that the stakeholder concept is a qualifier and subunit of the CSR concept, and thus that the CSR concept is more all encompassing. I agree with Carroll (1999) who writes:

"…Arguing that the term "social" in CSR has been seen by some as vague and lacking in specificity as to whom the corporation is responsible, I suggested that the stakeholder concept, popularized by R. Edward Freeman (1984), personalizes social or societal responsibilities by delineating the specific groups or persons business should consider in its CSR orientation and activities. Thus the stakeholder nomenclature puts "names and faces" on the societal members or groups who are most important to business and to whom it must be responsive." (Carroll, 1999, p.290)

■ *How I Conceptualize Corporate Social Responsibility*

My conceptualization of Corporate Social Responsibility draws from Wood's (1991) definition of Corporate Social Performance (CSP) which is as follows:

"A business organization's configuration of principles of social responsibility, processes of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships" (Wood, 1991, p. 693).

Wood's principles of social responsibility are not based on absolute normative criteria but rather are time and culture-bound, mirroring societal expectations. Wood sums this up well when she writes:

"The principles of CSR should not be thought of as absolute standards, but as analytical forms to be filled with the content of explicit value preferences that exist within a given cultural or organizational context" (Wood, 1991, p.700).

Wood articulates social responsibilities at three levels: the institutional level, the organizational level and the individual level. At the institutional level, corporations are deemed legitimate if they do not abuse their power. Here Wood (1991, p.697) uses stakeholder theory to back up her argument: "...Stakeholder analysis provides a starting point for scholars to think about how society grants and takes away corporate legitimacy." The actors who have an important role to play in giving or taking away the legitimacy of business are members of society (stakeholders) such as customers, shareholders, employees, governments, environmental advocates. If a firm does not answer properly to these constituents, it will lose its institutional legitimacy.

The second principle of responsibility, at the organizational level, translates into the notion of public responsibility. This means that, "businesses are responsible for outcomes related to their primary and secondary areas of involvement with society" (Wood, 1991, p.697).

The third and final principle of responsibility is at the managerial level and Wood calls this, "managerial discretion." This aspect of corporate responsibility concerns individual managers and makes the assumption that managers are moral actors capable of making individual choices, independently of the corporate framework of rules, procedures, etc.

After articulating what a firm's social responsibilities are, Wood's model focuses on the "processes of social responsiveness." The notion of process is in direct continuation of Carroll's (1979) model where corporate social performance is assessed not only according to principles but also according to the organizational mechanisms or procedures which are set up to respond to social issues/pressures. Processes of social responsiveness are part of the action dimension of the corporate social performance model. After answering the question, "what are the principles which business must abide by to be deemed responsible by society?" this second phase of the CSP model asks, "what are the processes to put in place to make the principles become a reality?" Examples of such processes are: environmental assessment, stakeholder management and issues management. These precise mechanisms allow one to better observe how a corporation concretely assesses its environment (context), how it manages its relationships with various groups (actors) and finally which issues it identifies as relevant.

The final stage of Wood's model is the "outcomes of corporate behaviour." These outcomes are operationalized as the social impacts, social programs and social policies implemented by corporations. This is the most visible aspect of the corporate social performance model as it is the only part of the model which is observable and open to

assessment from an external point of view (external to the firm). To conclude, to assess a corporation's CSP, one would look for coherence between the principles of responsibility espoused by a firm, its processes of responsiveness and finally, the outcomes of its behaviour in terms of social impacts on society and social programs in place.

While Wood's model has been criticized for not sufficiently taking into account stakeholder management issues (Waddock, 2004) or for not sufficiently integrating a moral dimension into its processes of corporate responsiveness dimension (Swanson, 1995), it remains a very powerful model because it combines elements of managerial action (processes and outcomes are "actions") with a more normative element of "principles of social responsibility." My interpretation of Wood's model is that when combined with an organizational identity lens, it enables the measurement of the 'talk' vs. the 'walk' of firms. In an era of extensive corporate "green washing" where it is difficult to decipher real actions from corporate propaganda this approach can reveal to be particularly pertinent.

Wood's model has been criticized however for lacking an ethical content orientation (Swanson, 1995). I agree with Swanson (1995) that Wood's (1991) model does not integrate enough sense of moral responsibility and that the various actors in her model are compelled to act in socially responsible ways simply because they are coerced by society to do so, in other words, on the "threat of social control" (Swanson, 1995, p 48) and not for intrinsic, moral reasons. Swanson (1995) attempts to fill this gap by introducing the concepts of economizing, power aggrandizing and ecologizing[6].

Swanson's point that Wood's principles lack an ethical dimension is valid in the sense that Wood (1991) did not mean for her principles to be absolute moral constructs but rather to be "analytical forms to be filled with the content of explicit value preferences that exist within a given cultural or organizational context..."(Wood, 1991, p. 700). This entails that if a given societal context is permeated by unethical values, a firm evolving in such a context could be deemed a great corporate social performer if it answers societal demands adequately!

As I shall explain below, my SROI model differs from Wood's (1991) CSP model in that I articulate the importance of some level of ethical motivation of corporate leaders and argue that if such motivation is absent, a firm cannot qualify as having a Socially Responsible

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[6] Swanson, 1995 is citing new concepts originating with Frederick which are defined as follows.
Economizing: Refers to the ability of organizations efficiently to convert inputs to outputs through competitive behaviour. This process provides the goods and services for exchange in markets.
Power aggrandizing: Refers to status enforced, self-centred behaviour in organizations that seeks to acquire and use coercive power through hierarchical arrangements.
Ecologizing: Refers to symbiotic, integrative linkages between organizations and their environments that function adaptively to sustain life. These linkages are based on cooperative, collaborative behaviour.

Organizational Identity (SROI). Unlike Wood (1991), I am not so much concerned with the societal context and the legitimacy it can bring to firms but am rather interested in corporate leaders and the ethical motivations of these leaders in undertaking socially responsible actions.

Where I do converge with Wood (1991) is that I do not give a laundry list of socially responsible/ethical dimensions but rather propose a dynamic model made up of several interacting dimensions which articulate what it means for a firm to have a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI). Much like Wood, what I find pertinent is whether or not there is some degree of coherence between each of the components of the model.

Before going into more explanation about my Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) model, I shall give a brief overview of the concept of organizational identity.

2.4.2 Definition of Organizational Identity

The second component of the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) definition involves the concept of organizational identity. Organizational identity is such a complex concept that it is useful to begin by discussing its multiple epistemological roots. I agree with Corley & al. (2006) that it is important if the field of organizational identity is to progress to clearly delineate and formulate from which epistemology and set of assumptions one is coming from as a researcher.

Multiple paradigms exist to understand identity (Gioia, 1998). First, the functionalist paradigm for which identity exists and is stable over time (Albert & Whetten, 1985). This corresponds to most of organizational research but it is criticized for overemphasizing managerial interests over employee interests (Gioia, 1998). The second approach to the study of organizational identity is the interpretive approach which focuses on a more subjectivist perspective where the underlying assumption is that identity is socially and symbolically constructed. Such a perspective focuses on the view of insiders' meaning systems (Dutton & al. 1994; Corley & Gioia, 2004). The third approach to understanding organizational identity is the post modern perspective which claims that identity is an illusion and a myth (Baudrillard, 83). For this perspective, identity is a fiction perpetrated by dominant parties and it is also the least used in organizational research (Gioia, 1998).

Organizational identity has also been studied by various academic disciplines: notably marketing and communications (Margulies, 1977; Garbett, 1988; Ind, 1997; Wilson, 1997; Melewar, 2000), and organizational behaviour (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991).

While marketing and communications scholars have focused on how organizational identity is revealed through visual communications, organizational behaviour scholars have focused typically on internal members' perceptions and cognition of their organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Dutton & al., 1994).

Within the organizational behaviour literature, organizational identity generally involves self referential meaning (Corley & al., 2006). I adopt this self referential view of organizational identity but take the position that organizational identity emerges from a dynamic between internal and external forces (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002; Hatch & Schultz, 2002) and is also a multi-dimensional construct made up of both observable communications and manifestations and the set of beliefs about what is central, enduring, and distinctive about an organization (Albert & Whetten, 1985) among organizational members (Dutton & Durkerich, 1991; Albert & Whetten, 1985; Moingeon & Soenen, 2002).

2.4.3 Five Facet Organizational Identity Model

I take the position that there are multiple roads to arrive at the understanding of organizational identity and thus adopt a multi-disciplinary approach, drawing from Moingeon & Soenen's (2002) organizational identity model. Moingeon & Soenen's (2002) model draws from the marketing, organizational behaviour, organizational culture and image/reputation literatures and makes the assumption that organizational identity is the product of multiple stakeholders' interpretations (much like Scott & Lane, 2000), managerial discourse, and finally organizational actions and artefacts (what some would describe as "organizational culture"—see Schein, 1985 or Hatch and Schultz, 1997; 2000; 2002).

The model consists of five different facets which interact in a dynamic manner. Firstly, the "professed identity" is what an organization professes about itself (statements that members use to define their collective identity). This facet is the claim of central distinctiveness present in Albert & Whetten's original definition of organizational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985).

The second facet is the "projected identity" which refers to elements an organization uses to present itself to specific audiences (i.e. reports, communications, behaviours,

symbols). This identity facet is mediated (≠ from professed identity where there is no mediation). Most people writing from a marketing background adopt a conceptualization of identity that falls in this category.

The third facet is the "experienced identity" and refers to what an organizations' members experience—it is the collective representation held by members. This interpretative conceptualization of identity is most frequently adopted by organization theorists (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Dutton & al., 1994; Corley & Gioia, 2004).

The fourth facet is the "manifested identity" and it refers to elements that characterize an organization over time (the "historical" identity). This is the definition of identity adopted by Larçon and Reitter (1979, p.43): "a set of interdependent characteristics of the organization that give it its specificity, stability and coherence." This facet refers to the temporal dimension of Albert & Whetten's 1985 definition of identity: "that which is central, distinctive & has temporal continuity" (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Such a facet can incorporate elements of culture, artefacts or the "projected" identity facet.

Finally, the last facet is the "attributed identity." This refers to attributes that are ascribed to the organization by its various audiences. This facet refers to external stakeholders' perceptions of the organization. This last facet has been referred to by some authors as corporate reputation (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997) or as corporate image (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

2.4.4 Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI)—Three Facet Model

My SROI model draws from both Wood's (1991) CSP model and Moingeon & Soenen's (2002) organizational identity model. My SROI model has three components: Firstly, the firm's managerial expression of the social responsibility mission; secondly, the firm's visible actions/manifestations of social responsibility and thirdly, the perceptions of the firm's social responsibility by internal stakeholders. I give equal weight to each of the three elements. This approach is very much in line with Wood's (1991) model which also seeks a balance between three elements.

The ethical grounding and normative and descriptive orientation of my model is influenced by Swanson (1995), Donaldson & Preston (1995) and Brickson (2007).

- ### *Facet 1: Firm's Managerial Expression of Social Responsibility Mission*

In the first facet of my SROI model, I build upon Wood's (1991) notion of principles of social responsibility but with a focus on the principles of social responsibility which are claimed and expressed only by an organization's top managers or founders through projected discourse. I am not so interested in the legitimacy given by society or even in the principles of public responsibility as Wood defines them, but rather in the principles formulated by a firm's official discourse which is projected or communicated to the outside world. My definition of a firm's principles of social responsibility also builds upon Moingeon & Soenen's (2002) organizational identity model and more particularly upon their "projected identity" facet which "refers to the elements an organization uses in more or less controlled ways to present itself to specific audiences. It notably consists of communications…" (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002, p.17). My model differs from Moingeon & Soenen (2002) in that I do not include behaviours in this first dimension. I specifically separate 'talk' or discourse from action in my model, much like Wood(1991) has done in differentiating 'principles' from 'processes'.

The first facet of my SROI model is therefore about a corporation's "talk" and what a firm will communicate officially about its vision and mission regarding corporate social responsibility. This first dimension is in the realm of discourse about the CSR mission, and not in the realm of action. I am therefore not interested in exploring the nuances between managers' mediated and non-mediated claims present in Moingeon & Soenen's (2002) model and have chosen to ignore the 'professed' identity facet (which 'refers to what a group or organization professes about itself in an-mediated way).

■ *Motivation for Social Responsibility*

I consider that for a firm to have a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI), the communicated and projected principles of social responsibility must be grounded in the ethical motivation of leaders and decision makers. However, given the economic and competitive market place pressures on firms, it is unrealistic to consider that corporate managers' motivation be solely altruistic and grounded only in ethics. Firms can therefore also qualify as having a 'SROI' if their motivations are a mixture of both ethical and economic ones. I define ethical motivation as acting for intrinsic motivation, because it is the "right thing to do". I define economic motivation as action driven by the desire to bring added competitiveness and strategic advantage to the firm. 'Mixed' motivation can be a mix of both ethical and economic motivation.

Authors exploring organizations and the natural environment have identified three main motivations for engaging in ecological responsiveness: competitiveness (economics), ecological responsibility (ethics) and legitimation or the desire to be recognized as legitimate by society (Bansal & Roth, 2000). These authors have also empirically demonstrated that firms may have mixed motives for engagement in ecological responsiveness (both economic and ethical). While I don't limit my definition of social responsibility to environmental issues, such observation that firms have both normative and instrumental motivations for engaging in socially responsible behaviour is useful for building my definition of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI). Finally, I exclude from "Socially Responsible Organizational Identity" (SROI) definition, firms who engage in socially responsible behaviour only for economic and legitimizing reasons because engaging solely for these reasons implies a purely instrumental vision of the firm and a lack of ethics and social responsibility.

Such a perspective will perhaps be difficult to test empirically for how does one ever know the real motivations behind any action? Margolis & Walsh (2003) made a very cogent argument against such a search into the ethical motivations of concerned actors, arguing instead that what matters are the outcomes of CSR strategies for creating social good. Yet I maintain that asking such questions, even if they are difficult to answer are essential in the quest for understanding what a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) is because it is in the questions that we ask that we are reminded of our humanity and values.

■ *Facet 2: Firm's Actions & Manifestations of Social Responsibility*

The second dimension of my SROI model is concerned with a firm's visible actions and manifestations of social responsibility--the focus is on the "walk" or the actions of a corporation. I take Webster's definition of action as: "an act of will. A thing done: deed. The accomplishment of a thing over a period of time, in stages, or with the possibility of repetition-the product and expression of exerted force, behaviour, conduct."[7]

To arrive at this second dimension, I collapse Wood's (1991) second and third categories: processes of social responsiveness and "observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships" into one category which expresses the actions undertaken by a firm and accessible through its visible manifestations or artefacts. I view the processes of social responsiveness and the "outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships" as similar phenomena because they are both elements of corporate action. I categorize "outcomes" as actions because Wood herself defined this third category as involving corporate actions and behaviour: "social impacts of corporate behaviour, programs companies use to implement responsibility…and the policies developed by companies to handle social issues and stakeholder interest."(Wood, 1991, p.708)

Collapsing processes and outcomes into elements of action, I argue that one can access tangible corporate actions or manifestations of culture through visible objects such as artefacts. I adopt the top level of Schein's (1985) conceptualization of culture which focuses on visible organizational structures and processes:

"The most visible level of the culture is its artefacts and creations—its constructed physical and social environment. At this level one can look at physical space, the technological output of the group, its written and spoken language, artistic productions, and the overt behaviour of its members"(Schein, 1985, p. 14).

Studying a firm's artefacts will provide insight into a firm's culture and actions. As culture is not visible per say but because cultural artefacts are, one can gain access to an organization's culture or 'manifested identity' (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002) by observing manifestations of culture: "Though culture is ultimately manifested in overt behaviour patterns, it should not be confused with overt behaviour patterns. Culture is not visible; only its manifestations are" (Schein, 1985, p. 312).

To conclude on the second dimension of my Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) definition, I define processes and actions of social responsiveness as elements

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[7] Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, p.54.

of an organization's socially responsible culture which are manifested through an organization's artefacts.

Facet 3: Perceptions of a Firm's Social Responsibility

After highlighting the importance of articulating notions of principles and actions, the last facet to complete the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) model are stakeholder perceptions. This part of our model, as a complement to the first two facets fills a clear gap in the CSR literature which has overly focused on measuring CSR through corporate actions, neglecting the importance of stakeholder perception and interpretation. Wood's (1991) original Corporate Social Performance definition articulates elements of principles and actions but does not include the notion of stakeholder perceptions and interpretations. I argue that my tri-partite model which builds upon both Moingeon & Soenen's (2002) integrative organizational identity framework and Wood's (1991) CSP model, articulates elements of corporate discourse, corporate action (accessible through organizational cultural artefacts/culture) and stakeholder interpretation will enable a more comprehensive understanding of socially responsible organizational identity. Furthermore, building upon Swanson's (1995) critique that Wood's (1991) model lacks an ethical dimension, I also add corporate leaders' ethical motivation as important criteria in the definition of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. I argue that leaders' embrace of social responsibility must be genuine and motivated by personal values, sense of ethics and belief that the role of business goes beyond profit making (and attention to stockholders) to also include a sense of fairness and justice and attention to the impact of business decisions on stakeholders: local communities, more distant communities, the environment, suppliers and employees. My perspective is Kantian here as I focus on the importance of motivation and not simply on tangible results/outcomes. I argue that although leaders may have mixed motives for engaging in socially responsible behaviour, they must not be only economic.

2.4.5 Socially Responsible Organizational Identity is Descriptive & Normative

I situate my definition of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity in the descriptive tradition of CSR and stakeholder theory. I agree with Margolis & Walsh (2003) who call for more descriptive research to explore the concept of corporate social responsibility and also follow in Brickson's (2007) footsteps in adopting a descriptive framework to better grasp the notion of a corporate social responsibility organizational identity:

> "Descriptive stakeholder theory is meant to outline participants' view of what the business organization actually is vis a vis stakeholders, as well as the mechanisms through which different views come into being" (Brickson, 2007, p. 865).

Brickson (2007) postulates that adopting a descriptive perspective on stakeholder theory will help reach a more balanced view of the firm. Brickson's (2007) focus on stakeholders' perspectives has addressed the lack of attention given to actors' interpretations in the CSR and stakeholder theory literature. Clearly, the empirical CSR literature has had an overwhelming action orientation. My perspective goes a step further by acknowledging the need for stakeholder perceptions but also drawing from observable elements usually present in the more functionalist literature.

While I adopt a broader perspective of organizational identity than Brickson (2007), I agree with her that employee perspectives are critical and that such an interpretative lens has been critically missing from the corporate social responsibility literature. A significant section of my study focuses on organizational members' interpretations and understandings of what it means for a firm to have a socially responsible organizational identity and how such an identity is impacted by a major crisis moment such as an M&A.

Finally, beyond a descriptive understanding of what a socially responsible organizational identity is, my conception of a socially responsible organizational identity is also normative (Donaldson & Preston, 1995) because I argue that to have a "SROI" (socially responsible organizational identity), a firm's leaders and decision makers who engage in socially responsible behaviour must believe in the intrinsic value of different stakeholders' interests and be guided by ethical motivations and belief that they are "doing the right thing." Clearly, leaders have a crucial role in the elaboration and creation of a SROI and I argue that SROI is closely interconnected with founders' values. I also postulate that SROI is a process of consciousness which comes as a business matures and as leaders gain confidence and experience. SROI can go through cycles where social mission dominates and then where

economic mission dominates—the important thing is that there is a back and forth---if economic motivation is the driver for too long, SROI will erode.

To remain ethical and to qualify as "SROI", founders' or leaders' communication (projected identity) about social responsibility must translate into concrete actions or manifestations (artefacts). If leaders simply express their socially responsible values for their firm but do not translate this "projected identity" into concrete actions or "manifested identity", the organizational identity of a firm no longer qualifies as socially responsible.

Employees must also experience this SROI—a SROI encompasses employees who experience their firm as being socially responsible; employees who believe in the good will and intentions of its leaders. If employees lose trust in their leaders' embrace of SROI, there is a gap created and the SROI of an organization is not coherent.

2.4.6 Role of Image in shaping SROI

Finally, while this aspect will not be explored in this dissertation, I acknowledge that the perception of external stakeholders of a firm can also play an important role in the construction of the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) of a firm. I agree with Hatch & Schultz (2002) that organizational identity is a relational construct where there is an ongoing conversation between organizational culture (the insides of the firm) and organizational image (outside perceptions). Moingeon & Soenen (2002) go even further when they argue that external stakeholder perceptions are actually an integral part of an organization's identity ('attributed identity' facet). My point of view is that while external stakeholders play a key role in shaping the dynamics of organizational identity, they are not in and of themselves actually part of an organization's identity.

It is also important to point out that the initial decision to select Ben & Jerry's as a case study choice was itself based on my own perception as an external stakeholder that Ben & Jerry's was a socially responsible organization, at least prior to its acquisition by Unilever. This perception of mine was really an 'image' I had about Ben & Jerry's—and this came from knowledge based on information I had acquired from external sources (media mostly). It is this image which leads me to investigate further, beginning this research work and conducting interviews with firm insiders.

3.   INTEGRATIVE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.1   Description of Research Methodology

My research methodology is qualitative and case based as I am investigating an unexplored research area which is the notion of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (which we label, "SROI") and its evolution in the context of a major organizational upheaval: a merger and acquisition by a much larger organization. Nascent theory research looks into 'developing insight about a novel or unusual phenomenon" (Edmondson & McManus, p.1162, 2007) and often calls for a grounded theory approach as "researchers do not know what issues may emerge from the data and so avoid hypothesizing specific relationships between variables" (Edmondson & McManus, p. 1162, 2007). I chose to focus on the acquisition of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream by the Unilever Corporation because Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream has the reputation of being a CSR pioneer and a CSR "authentic."

My starting point is to take a deep dive and in depth approach to understand a phenomenon which has been studied from a quantitative perspective in the CSR literature (Waddock & Graves, 2006) but which has not been examined from an organizational identity perspective. The organizational identity perspective I have chosen offers a complementary and comprehensive apprehension of the subject as it triangulates several layers of data: top management discourse, organizational artefacts as evidence of a social reality and finally employees' experience. While managerial discourse has been the object of study from an organizational identity perspective (Chreim, 2000), the subject of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity has never before been addressed from the comprehensive identity perspective in this dissertation. Existing research on the impact of a merger & acquisition on socially responsible target firms can be complemented by a "thick" approach to uncover more insights regarding the nature and drivers of a socially responsible organizational identity.

My research methodology is dual as it focuses on accessing both "objective" elements of organizational identity through the analysis of company annual reports and news media but also on more "subjective" and interpretative elements through the analysis of managers' and employees' perceptions of the impact of an M&A on their sense of collective identity.

The first part of my dissertation takes a more 'objective' approach by focusing on a content analysis of the evolution of managerial discourse ("projected identity") and organizational cultural elements ("manifested identity") to observe how socially responsible organizational identity is impacted by an M&A. The second part of my study takes a more subjective turn by taking an "interpretative" lens to assess members' perceptions or

"experienced identity" (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002). In this section the different employee narratives which emerge are explored through an analysis of employees' reactions to the evolution of the company mission, to organizational artefacts and finally to four identity themes which emerged during the course of my study at Ben & Jerry's.

This study seeks to contrast official top managerial discourse about social responsibility and mission (mediated claims—such as the CEO Letters in the annual Social & Environmental reports) with visible manifestations of this social responsibility (social responsibility artefacts) along with employee perceptions of social responsibility mission and artefacts. I am interested in finding the coherence between these three elements given the prevalence of 'green washing' among corporations today.

Finally, unlike previous M&A research which has used culture as an independent variable, and M&A integration as a dependent variable, I place organizational identity at the locus of attention in the context of an M&A. Furthermore, scrutinizing organizational identity from an interpretative perspective contributes to addressing issues of "how" and "why" organizational identity is affected during a crisis such as an M&A and also justifies taking a case approach to the study (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p.26).

To conclude, my research methodology is integrative as my data collection draws from both from objective (annual CSR reports) and more subjective sources (members' interpretations) to arrive a more complete picture of what socially responsible organizational identity. This research approach may elicit criticism by epistemological purists who argue that one's assumptions must be either grounded in positivist or in subjectivist ontology (Corley et al., 2006). I believe one can gain insights by combining methodologies and epistemologies (or points of views), which are not necessarily irreconcilable but rather complementary. I hope to contribute to the progress of the organizational identity and corporate social responsibility literature by being transparent and explicitly stating my ontological and epistemological assumptions (Corley et al., 2006).

3.2   Selection of Subjects/Objects

I consider the subjects to be studied both at the firm level and at the individual level. At the firm level, I have chosen to undertake a case study of the acquisition of Ben & Jerry's by Unilever as Ben & Jerry's is widely recognized as being a pioneer in the field of CSR, and as having an "authentic" organizational identity pre-acquisition. As I am interested in developing theory, theoretical sampling is appropriate: "Theoretical sampling means that

cases are selected because they are particularly suitable for illuminating and extending relationships and logic among constructs" (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p.27).

To access the 'Experienced Identity' of Ben & Jerry's, I selected individuals to be interviewed from three different groups of employees: employees who were present in the target firm prior to the M&A, employees who arrived post M&A and finally, employees who have left the target firm. This last point is important to avoid survivorship bias (Weber & Camerer, 2003).

Within the three employee groups, in order to avoid "retrospective sense making by image conscious informants" (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p.28) I interviewed informants from different hierarchical levels, from different functional areas (both marketing and manufacturing backgrounds) and finally employees with different times of entry into the organization (employees who arrived pre-acquisition versus employees who arrived post acquisition).

To access the 'Projected Identity' of Ben & Jerry's, my unit of analysis was no longer at the level of 'subject' (people) but rather at the level of object: CEO Letters and Founders' Letters found in the annual CSR report were my main 'objects' of study.

Finally, to access the 'Manifested Identity' of Ben & Jerry's, my unit of analysis was again in the realm of 'object': product packaging and various organizational artefacts were analyzed.

3.3 Instrumentation

The instrumentation used to assess the evolution of Ben & Jerry's socially responsible organizational identity is my Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) model. I constructed my semi-structured interview guide (see appendix 6.3 for first interview guides) based on my model. I further refined my interview guide for the third phase of my data collection where I added several major themes which had come up in the second wave of interviews (see appendix n.6.4)

The interview guides were constructed to operationalize the third facet of my SROI model and gather data on employee perceptions of a firm's social responsibility principles and actions. The interview guides were also meant to provide complementary information on the first two facets of my model: (1) managerial expression of mission and (2) the firm's visible actions or manifestations of social responsibility. While the first part of my SROI model primarily drew information from a longitudinal content analysis of the CEO and Founders'

Letters in annual CSR reports, asking employees questions about the evolution of Ben & Jerry's mission statement and principles since the acquisition helped me contextualize official managerial discourse from the annual CSR reports.

Similarly, while the second part of my SROI model measures a firm's visible actions or manifestations of social responsibility primarily through an analysis of product packaging, web site and media clippings, employee interviews completed my understanding of how Ben & Jerry's actions and manifestations have evolved since the acquisition. The section in my interview guide on 'actions/artefacts' which asked employees open ended questions such as, "Could you list for me what you consider to be actions or tangible, visible manifestations which best express what Ben & Jerry's is all about?" or more closed ended questions which asked employees to react to a series of different artefacts were meant to provide a more detailed understanding from an employee perspective of how Ben & Jerry's has evolved since the acquisition in terms of its social responsibility actions.

Another important part of my model states that motivations and actions of social responsibility must be grounded in the ethical motivation of leaders. This was measured when I asked employees in the Wave 3 Interview Guide: "What do you think is the motivation for the social mission today vs. pre-acquisition?"

Finally, employees were asked questions about how they perceive Ben & Jerry's public image and how they think this has evolved since the acquisition as image has been attributed by scholars to play a key role in shaping an organization's identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

3.4   Data Collection

To access top management's discourse or the "projected identity" (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002) of the socially responsible organizational identity (SROI), I operationalized managerial expression of mission by conducting a content analysis of CEO letters found in Ben & Jerry's annual Social and Environmental Reports from 1989 to 2007. Important to note is that managerial expression of SR Mission goes beyond a simple articulation of the company's mission statement. My longitudinal analysis of CEO Letters uncovered that while the company's mission statement was a central element of top managerial discourse, other topics emerged such as brand issues, restructurings, power dynamics between founders and professional managers, etc. Ben & Jerry's Mission statement is however a central pillar of the company's projected identity (see Table 2).

Additionally, as explained in the previous section, employee interviews provided additional insight/context to my longitudinal content analysis of the annual CEO/Founders' Letters found in the annual Ben & Jerry's CSR reports.

Table 2: Ben & Jerry's Official Three Part Mission Statement
(Source: Ben & Jerry's website)

Product Mission: To make, distribute and sell the finest quality all natural ice cream and euphoric concoctions with a continued commitment to incorporating wholesome, natural ingredients and promoting business practices that respect the Earth and the Environment.

Economic Mission: To operate the Company on a sustainable financial basis of profitable growth, increasing value for our stakeholders and expanding opportunities for development and career growth for our employees.

Social Mission: To operate the company in a way that actively recognizes the central role that business plays in society by initiating innovative ways to improve the quality of life locally, nationally and internationally.

To access the manifestations of Ben & Jerry's organizational culture (its "manifested identity"), I analyzed annual reports, media clippings, the Ben & Jerry's website and conducted interviews with employees. During the interviews, I began with open ended questions and proceeded with more closed ended questions where I probed employees on their reactions to objective data involving company artefacts. The organizational artefacts selected for analysis are somewhat arbitrary—I attempted to take artefacts which I found to best illustrate Ben & Jerry's organizational identity and which came up repeatedly either in media clippings and/or the Ben & Jerry's web site. I also made sure that these artefacts represented the various stakeholders of the firm (employee relations, product, community, environmental issues, suppliers)—and also sought a balance of relevant artefacts from both the pre and post acquisition time period. During my interviews with Ben & Jerry's employees, I confirmed the relevance of the selected artefacts by the spontaneous answers employees gave me when asked to 'give an example of a tangible, visible manifestation of what Ben & Jerry's is all about.'

The complete list of artefacts analyzed include: Employee relations artefacts (salary ratio, Joy Gang); Community artefacts (Ben & Jerry Foundation, free cone day, factory tours,

political campaigns, concerts & festivals, Vermont only public stock offering); Environment artefacts (eco-pint); Product artefacts (fair trade flavours, cage free eggs, factory seconds, rbgh free milk, and Greyston Bakery).

To access the more subjective aspects of organizational identity, I conducted in depth semi-structured interviews with different groups of employees to access the various employee narratives (Vaara, 2002). Interviews took place over the time span of one year and a half and in three different waves. The first wave took place in the summer of 2007, the second wave in January 2008 and the third and final wave in November 2008. During the first wave of interviews, top managers were interviewed and a focus group was undertaken with a select group of employees. During the second and third wave of interviews, a semi-structured interview guide was used (interview guide n.1 and n.2—see appendix 6.3 and 6.4 respectively). Overall fifty one interviews with forty two people (key people were interviewed several times) were conducted. Most interviews lasted approximately one hour while several interviews with ex top managers lasted as long as two or three hours. I made sure to have a good balance between both "old" and "new" timers (people who entered the organization pre-acquisition versus post-acquisition) so altogether I interviewed 25 "old timers" and 17 "new timers". I unfortunately did not control much for survivorship bias as I had originally intended given both time constraints and access. I did conduct three very in-depth interviews with ex-top managers and CEOs of Ben & Jerry's which provided me with complementary and useful insights. I also controlled for hierarchical position within the firm and made sure once again to have a good mix between employees and managers—my overall data sets includes twenty manager interviews and twenty two employee interviews.

Finally, beyond my unlimited access to the Ben & Jerry's corporate headquarters in Burlington, Vermont, I was fortunate enough to also gain access to one of the two manufacturing sites in Vermont. It is important to note that I did not know until late in 2008 that I would be granted access to the manufacturing site. Shifting reporting relationships between Ben & Jerry's and Unilever probably eased my entry into the site. While only ten interviews were conducted at the factory site—their insights prove extremely useful to gain a fuller picture of the changing landscape of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity.

All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim—overall over five hundred pages of interview transcripts were generated.

3.5   Data Analysis

My data analysis was three fold and quite time consuming as I analyzed data from three different sources in order to 'activate' my SROI Model: Projected Identity data analysis; Manifested Identity data analysis and finally Experienced Identity data analysis.

To analyse the data from the 'Projected Identity' facet of my SROI Model, I used an inductive methodology, conducting a longitudinal content analysis year by year of each CEO/Founders' letter. As my analysis progressed I would begin to compare various letters to each other, in order to find overarching umbrella themes.   Over time this how my classification into four main eras emerged: (1) Founders Era; (2) Professional Managers' Era; (3) Yves Couette Era: Social Mission at the core again; (4) Walt Freese Era: from 3 part mission integration to globalization. Within each main Era, I found the company's mission (economic versus social) to be a central recurring theme over the years. This theme took different orientations depending on the Era. Under the Founders' Era, the three part mission was clearly articulated while the economic mission began to predominate during the Professional Managers' Era. After the acquisition, the Social Mission took centre change.

Within each Era, subtle differences in the approach to the three part mission occurred. For instance, during the Professional Managers' Era, the economic part of the mission did not immediately begin to dominate. During the Bob Holland years (the first professional manager hired as CEO after the Founders), the organization was clearly undergoing a period of turmoil and identity crisis—at this time the main theme which came up in the CEO Letters was the theme of 'family', leaving the three part mission theme as secondary.

As my analysis progressed, I began to uncover that while the three part mission was an important leitmotiv throughout the years, other themes emerged quite clearly under each CEO: 'family' (Bob Holland years); 'Employee voice' (Yves Couette); 'Brand spirit' (Walt Freese).   For thoroughness, after having found these various themes, I analyzed the CEO letters a second time to find evidence of any of these themes for other time periods.

To analyze the data from the 'Manifested Identity' facet of my SROI Model, I used both a deductive and an inductive approach. The selection process to determine the artefacts to be studied had a clear deductive orientation as my starting point was theoretically based. The selection was based on a review of the CSR literature and identification of what constitutes a pertinent 'CSR' artefact. I made sure that I had artefacts representative of the different stakeholders of the firm: community relations, employee relations, environment, and consumers (product). My analysis of Ben & Jerry's pint packaging took a more inductive

turn, however. Much in the same way as I analyzed the annual CEO Letters, I conducted a content analysis of the pint packaging to discover emerging patterns and themes.

To analyze the data from the 'Experienced Identity' facet of my SROI Model, I used an abductive approach—something of a middle way between inductive and deductive analysis. I drew from both the Grounded Theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) of going back and forth between emerging data themes and theory when analyzing the identity themes. A content analysis of the second wave of interviews revealed four identity themes which came up repeatedly for many employees. These four identity themes of 'employee empowerment', 'leadership', 'manufacturing culture' and 'innovation' were therefore added to my interview guide for the third wave of interviews.

I didn't use however a completely "pure" grounded theory approach in the sense that I did have a framework of analysis (my SROI model and interview guide) which guided me in collecting data. I knew going in to the interviews that I wanted to collect employees' perceptions of the impact of the Unilever acquisition on Ben & Jerry's mission and actions of social responsibility. I had made a list of organizational artefacts which I found to be relevant based on a media and website analysis. I coded my data based on both my interview grid and based on the emerging themes which appeared. I used the NVIVO 8 software to code and sort my data in a more systematic manner.

Finally, to avoid death by data asphyxiation (Pettigrew, 1990) and given that the interview data was quite voluminous (over five hundred pages of interviews were generated), in the 'Experienced Identity' section, I reported quotations that were most representative of a significant theme and placed additional quotes in the appendix section (see appendix 6.5 and 6.6).

My research methodology, selection of subjects, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis can be summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Research Methodology

	Projected Identity	**Manifested Identity**	**Experienced Identity**
Research methodology	Objective approach Positivist ontology	Objective approach Positivist ontology	Subjective approach Subjectivist ontology
Selection of subjects/objects	Objects: CEO or Founders' Letters in annual Ben & Jerry's CSR reports	Objects: product packaging and organizational artefacts	Subjects: different employee groups. Total of 51 interviews with 42 people split up by: -Functional area (29 central headquarters vs. 10 factory -Hierarchy (20 manager vs. 22 employee) -Time of entry (25 old timers vs. 17 new timers) -Current (39) vs. ex employees (3)
Instrumentation	Interview guide based on SROI Model (used as complement only)	Interview guide based on SROI Model (used as complement only)	Interview guide based on SROI Model (only source of information to access Experienced Identity)
Data collection	Longitudinal content analysis of CEO/Founders' Letters from Ben & Jerry's annual Social and Environmental Reports from 1989 to 2007	Longitudinal analysis of annual reports, media clippings and the Ben & Jerry's website Complementary information from interviews with employees	Three interview waves conducted over almost 2 years: Wave 1: Summer 2007 (open ended interviews with top management group and focus group with selected employees) Wave 2: January 2008 (semi-structured interview guide n.1) Wave 3: November 2008 (semi-structured interview guide n.2)
Data analysis	Inductive data analysis	Deductive (artefacts analysis)and inductive (pint packaging analysis)	Abductive data analysis Use of NVIVO 8 software

4. FINDINGS

This section is organized into three sub-sections which relate three different 'stories' of the Ben & Jerry's acquisition. The first section seeks to analyze the official story of Ben & Jerry's social responsibility identity as it has been expressed by top managers in their annual Social & Environmental reports—it is what I label the "Projected Identity." The second section explores Ben & Jerry's visible manifestations and artefacts of social responsibility—I label this the "Manifested Identity." Finally, the third section takes a more interpretative lens and focuses on insiders' experience of the acquisition by Unilever and how they think the acquisition has impacted Ben & Jerry's social responsibility identity. I label this last story the "Experienced Identity."

4.1 Projected Identity: The Official Story

The "Projected identity" is the first part of a three part story to understand the impact of an acquisition on the organizational identity of a socially responsible firm—and more generally to understand in great depth how a socially responsible organizational identity evolves over time. Projected identity has also been labelled as 'corporate identity' in the literature on identity and in this case refers to the official discourse of the company as expressed and embodied by its top management.

This top management evolved over the years, beginning with the founders themselves, followed by professional managers which took on the role of CEO both pre and post acquisition.

To access the "Projected identity", I conducted a longitudinal content analysis of the Founders/CEO Letters present in the annual Social and Environmental reports from 1989 to the present. I found that most themes that emerged in the content analysis, fit under the umbrella theme of the three part mission statement elaborated and formalized by the founders in 1988 and which consists of a product, social and economic mission. This confirms Ashforth and Mael's (1996) findings that an organization's identity is generally anchored to its mission.

One additional theme that I found not to fit clearly into the company's mission statement is the theme I label, the "human factor" and which includes both employees and management and their significant role in shaping the organization's identity. The Ben & Jerry's written mission statement is ambiguous as to how employees as a stakeholder group fit into the overall mission. On the one hand it is stated that underlying the mission statement is

a belief in "holding a deep respect for the individuals, inside and outside the company…" while on the other, employees are not mentioned under the social mission but rather under the economic mission as being entitled to career opportunities and financial rewards. In the official three part mission statement, employees are not considered central drivers of the mission. In conducting a longitudinal analysis of the CEO/Founders' Letters in the annual Ben & Jerry's social and environmental reports, we found that employees as a stakeholder group actually did (and continue to) play a very significant role as drivers of the Ben & Jerry's mission. According to the Projected Identity as expressed in top management and Founders' visions, employees began to play an important part, particularly once professional managers took over after Ben relinquished his role as CEO.

Pre-acquisition

Upon conducting our longitudinal analysis, we found that the identity themes evolved not in a binary fashion—pre and post acquisition but rather in four distinct phases which we label: the Founders Era (1978-1993), the Professional Managers Era (1994-1999), the Yves Couette years (2000-2004) and finally the Walt Freese years (2005-present). When trying to understand the impact of a merger on the organizational identity of a firm such as Ben & Jerry's, we came to realize as our empirical analysis progressed, that the merger is one moment among other significant moments in the company's history. Pre-acquisition, a very significant moment is the shift away from Founders leadership and involvement towards professional managers (starting in 1994 with the well publicized CEO search). The Projected Organizational identity post acquisition is also not monolithic as there was another clear shift from Yves Couette's period to the current management period under Walt Freese.

In the following section we will analyze the Projected Identity's evolution by looking at the three part mission and of the theme we label "the human factor" under the four critical periods we identified.

4.1.1 Phase 1: Founders Era: 1978-1993

The Founders' Era corresponds to the time period when the Founders Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield were still very much involved with the company, either as Presidents or very active Chairpersons. It is worth noting that our analysis only begins in 1989 with the first published annual social and environmental report. Also important is the fact that the formal

three part mission statement was written only one year prior to the publication of the first annual report (in 1988).

From 1989 to 1992 there is great continuity in the way the three part mission is projected. What is noteworthy is that there are three main protagonists—the Founders, Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield and the President running the daily business operations (beginning in 1990)-Chuck Lacy. The roles are distributed as follows: Ben Cohen writes the Chairperson's Letter, Jerry Greenfield the Foundation Letter and Chuck Lacy the President's Letter. Ben Cohen projects the vision of the company with a heavy focus on the social mission while Chuck Lacy focuses on operational and business issues. Although Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield are not formally running daily operations in those years, because they are significantly involved in major decisions and because Chuck Lacy is a personal friend of Ben's, we do not place the Chuck Lacy years under the Professional Managers period. We consider that this first period is still dominated by the Founders' vision and identity.

Ben: Social mission is about Interconnectedness & Spirituality

The Social mission during this first phase is projected entirely by Ben himself. Ben represents the physical embodiment of the social mission—Chuck, the President has nothing to say on the topic.

The social mission is spoken about in almost religious or mystical terms. Ben's moral vision of the world directly influences his conception of economic behaviour or how business should be conducted—much like the link made between religion and capitalism by Max Weber whereby one's theological orientation has an impact on one's actions: "…Economic behaviour is the function of a general vision of the world and of the interest that each person has for a given activity which becomes inseparable from a values system or a total vision of existence" (Aron, 1967, p. 541). Ben speaks of the "spirituality of business" and of the "spiritual interconnectedness of humanity":

> "There is a spiritual dimension to business just as there is a spiritual dimension to the lives of individuals. Therefore, we believe that the activities of business itself, as distinct from the charitable activities of its senior executives, should reflect spiritual commitment to solving social problems. We have determined that the best and highest use of our business for meeting these human needs is to devote not money alone, but to integrate a concern for the community into as many of our normal day-to-day business activities as possible." (1989 Chairperson's Letter)

Ben also anthropomorphises business by stating that businesses are like individuals: they too have a heart and "the knowledge that the hearts, souls and spirits of all people are interconnected." (1990 Chairperson's Letter)

The theme of interconnectedness is important to Ben—he asserts: "It makes no sense to compartmentalize our lives—to be cutthroat in business and then volunteer some time or donate money to charity." (1990 Chairperson's Letter)

In the 1991 Chairperson's Letter, Ben makes the link between Ben & Jerry's well being and the well being of "those around us"—it is not clear if the well being mentioned here is economic or social or both—but by making a clear statement about the interconnected nature of business, Ben is situating himself in the CSR field as one who believes that business is clearly in society and not a separate entity that could function independently or outside of society. Ben cites Wavy Gravy: "We are all the same person trying to shake hands with ourselves." For Ben, there is inter-connectedness between people in the world and when we help others, we are helping ourselves—the boundary between self and other is not clear.

In the 1992 Chairperson's Letter, the theme of interconnectedness between self and community appears again—this time the term itself is not used—but instead the term, "linked prosperity": "We have shared our success with many beyond ourselves—this is what we mean by 'linked prosperity.' Spirituality as a theme also makes an appearance again. It seems that for Ben, life is about spirituality, struggle, learning, and making mistakes. Life is movement and Ben consistently speaks about learning: "...the more you know, the more you realize you have still to learn…"; "Again, as in life, we have as much to learn from others as we have to teach…"

Clearly, spirituality is a central recurrent theme for Ben. This is what makes Ben & Jerry's distinctive from other companies—it is its "spiritual side" and "willingness to break the rules to create new models of business/social partnerships." This willingness to break down rules, to question existing paradigms and to basically 'be' in an on-going process of learning and discovery seems to be a trademark of Ben. Ben has taken his company on a life journey and he is learning as he goes along.

Struggle is also an important facet of the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's—Ben explains how success doesn't always come but that Ben & Jerry's always persists "because that is the essence of the human spirit. This is how we work to keep the heart and soul in Ben & Jerry's. We seek-we struggle-to keep this spirit on equal partnership with our financial goals."

To conclude, from 1989 to 1993, the social mission is projected as a spiritual connection between individuals and business—this journey is not always a smooth ride but rather a constant struggle. For Ben, business is not a separate entity from the spiritual nature of human beings—instead business can be a vehicle for spirituality.

In 1990, Ben speaks of business as "the most powerful force in the world—"stronger even than nation states" and as something which "sets the tone for society." While Ben has grown up in the sixties, wary of big business: "For us, having grown up in the sixties, the idea of becoming real businesspeople running a real business had very negative connotations." (Cohen & Greenfield, 1997)—he has clearly overcome his "hippy" prejudices to embrace business as a force which can be used for the common good.

In 1992, Ben takes business to yet another level by equating business with "life itself": "I keep learning how much business is like life itself." What can be greater than life? This statement implies that business can be synonymous with life and thus with spirituality—the Projected Identity in this first phase can be summed up as a complete interconnectedness between the business and the social mission—there is no differentiation between either one— Ben & Jerry's is a business and business can be spiritual therefore Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity is one of a spiritual business.

Chuck: Economic mission is about growth; Product Mission top priority

The Projected Identity for this first phase doesn't stop at just being spiritual, however. While Ben's role is to project the social mission identity of the business, he is not the only actor projecting the organizational identity of Ben & Jerry's. In each annual social and environmental report there is the Chairperson's Letter but also the President's Letter, written by Chuck Lacy. Chuck's role as we will demonstrate is to project the operational aspect of the business and more particularly to focus on the economic and product mission.

The Projected Identity as expressed by Chuck from 1990 to 1992 is overwhelmingly about the astonishing growth of the company, with a heavy focus on the economic part of the mission and a repeated mention of the importance of the quality mission.

1990: Growth

The dominant theme in the 1990 President's Letter is clearly '*growth*'. The term itself is used seven times in the letter and the entire letter's content is devoted to acknowledging the accomplishments to date in terms of sales, market share, distribution, innovation (R&D, marketing), the ongoing projects to build a third plant and a distribution centre. The company

is in a phase of rapid expansion, its sales growing 32% in 1990 versus 23% the previous year. The President acknowledges that such growth "exceeded our expectations" (there's been 62% growth since 1988) and he explains that the leadership team has also focused on "creating an organization"—by writing a mission statement, recruiting key leadership, improving communication, planning and delivery. Chuck embodies the operational identity of the organization—Ben & Jerry's is growing and Chuck is demonstrating how he will accompany this growth by a series of organizational actions.

1991:

Expansion

While it is difficult to pinpoint major themes in this letter, what does emerge is that one third of the space is allocated to speaking about the expansion of the business through the building of a new manufacturing plant and a new distribution centre. One other third of the space is utilized to speak about product sales and new flavour and product launches.

Quality

"Quality" as a theme appears more than any other (term itself is used four times) and it is also mentioned using a different term, 'continuous improvement' in the President's top priority: "My top priority is to develop a tradition of continuous improvement in all things that mean the most to our customers." This is a direct continuation of what had been stated in the previous letter (1990) by the President and in 1989 by Ben Cohen. Again the link is made between quality and financial results—the President seems to think that by focusing on quality, the financial results will follow naturally: "We believe that if we focus on the quality of everything we do, the traditional business measures will fall into place."

1992: Growth

Much like the 1990 President's Letter, the 1992 President's Letter is overwhelmingly focused on the growth of the company. The word itself is used thirteen times in the President's Letter:

"Our business grew dramatically across the country..."

"Over the last few years we've grown from having a toehold in markets…to making great strides in market share."

"Our national market share grew from 26% in 1991 to 36% in 1992."

"We're a growth company in the midst of investing for the future."

Clearly, Ben & Jerry's 1992 sales increase of 36% and the phenomenal success of the new flavour Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough has taken the company's growth to new heights— Ben & Jerry's has now established itself as one of the two major national players on the super premium ice cream and frozen yogurt market. In order to meet this tremendous sales growth, it has built a new distribution centre and is in the process of building a new manufacturing site in St. Albans. The 1992 Letter ends with a concern regarding potential competitors who are in a situation to copy Ben & Jerry's-because Ben & Jerry's is "the fastest growing brand in the fastest growing part of a relatively mature industry."

Conclusion Phase I Projected Identity (1989-1992)

The Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity in this first phase is dual—it is the articulation of the social mission as spirituality and interconnectedness as expressed by Ben and of the economic and product mission as expressed by Chuck. The overall Projected Identity is one of lofty social vision articulated by Ben (spirituality and interconnectedness) and of down to earth operational issues articulated by Chuck. Ben incarnates the vision for the company while Chuck orchestrates the organizational operations which allow the vision to prosper. From 1989 to 1992, Ben & Jerry's grew from a $58 million dollar business with approximately one hundred and fifty employees to a $131 million business with 446 employees— In three years, company sales grew by 56% and two manufacturing plants were opened (Springfield in 1988 and St. Albans in 1992).

"Employee voice" absent

The "employee voice" theme which we have identified in our longitudinal analysis only makes an appearance at the end of this first phase under Ben's leadership—it is only in 1991 that Ben acknowledges that employees can have an impact on company strategy: "…more and more of our people from throughout the organization are making the decisions and charting the course of the company." According to Ben that same year, people are also learning how to work together in teams—therefore thanks to great leadership, teamwork and employee dedication emerging, Ben will be able to take some time off for a few months.

Overall however, the Projected Identity of this first phase does not acknowledge employees as a powerful force or as drivers of the social mission. The social mission is solely driven by Ben and is about interconnectedness between Ben's business as a whole and its surrounding communities in society. Ben & Jerry's as a company at this point is what

economists sometimes call a black box—the Projected Identity doesn't tell us much about the employees who make up the insides of the company—the Projected Identity at this point is about Ben's vision of connectedness between his business and communities and about the financial and growth issues dealt with by Chuck Lacy.

Visual representation of the Projected Identity for Phase I

Representing the Projected Identity for Phase I, we arrive at a discourse which overall presents an integrated three part mission—product, economic and social mission are spoken about as linked concepts by Ben. Ben also repeatedly expresses how focusing on the social and product mission will naturally reinforce the economic mission. Most of Ben's discourse however, focuses on the need to infuse spiritual values into business and of the interconnectedness between business and society. This spiritual vision is counterbalanced by Chuck Lacy's vision which focuses primarily on the economic mission and on daily operational issues. Both voices intersect on the terrain of the product mission as both mention its importance in driving the economic mission. The Projected Identity for Phase I is not monolith but dual and expressed by two voices (Ben and Chuck).

Figure 2

Projected Identity Phase I (pre-1993): Three part mission is integrated But has two voices-Ben is vision; Chuck is reason

Ben's voice: VISION

Chuck's voice: REASON

Social Mission

Spiritual Interconnectedness

Solving social problems in communities

Product Mission

Economic Mission

Growth
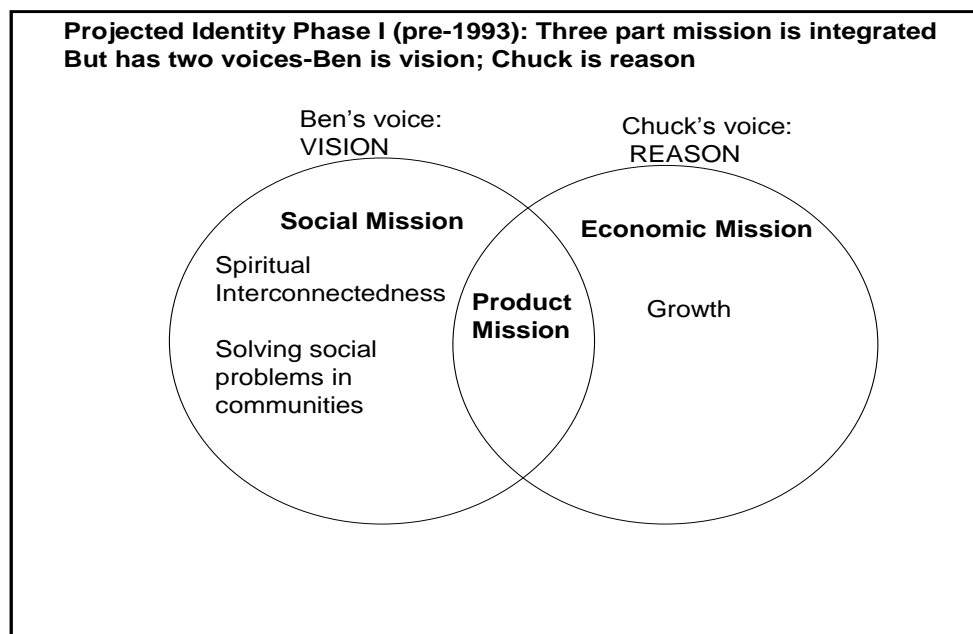
Stability of Projected Identity comes to an abrupt end

While the Projected Identity undergoes minor incremental shifts from year to year during this first phase—we conclude that the Projected Identity is fairly stable overall. The end of this phase, however, is marked with an abrupt change in the Projected Identity—this occurs in 1993 and is brought about by a business context of sluggish growth of sales (only +6% versus double digit growth for the ten years preceding) and a resulting sharp drop in the stock price of the company.

1993: The end of innocence

1993 marks a transition year between the Founders Era and the Professional Managers Phase. While we consider 1993 to still be under the Founders Era because our main protagonists are still Ben and Chuck (the professional managers have not entered the scene yet)—1993 marks a significant shift in the Projected Identity compared to the previous years. For the first time in fifteen years, the company is in a difficult economic situation and is sanctioned by the stock market. A negative signal from the external environmental surrounding the organization triggers change in the way the organization presents itself—the Projected Identity undergoes a dramatic change. This is consistent with Dutton & Dukerich's (1991) study of the Port Authority of New York and their findings that organizational members' evolving actions and issue interpretation are triggered by the changing image of their organization's identity. This also supports Hatch & Schultz's (2002) model of organizational identity whereby a company's image plays a central role in impacting organizational identity.

For the first time in its history, the market is sending a negative signal to Ben & Jerry's—organizational image is hurt and Projected Identity takes a major turn. Ben's Founders' Letter no longer projects lofty ideals for his vision of the company—instead the 1993 Chairperson's letter is more sobering and focused on operational business issues. Ben focuses on the importance of the product mission: "..new product development is critically important to our success and our sustainability…" and reiterates the importance of the double mission (economic & social): "The best way for us to be financially successful and be pioneers of a new role for business in the community is to hold fast to our commitment to this dual mission." Ben agrees that 1993 was a challenging year for both shareholders and "everyone who guides and guards the soul of the Company"—the growth slowdown is evidence of an "increasingly challenging marketplace." Ben thinks this can be remedied

through continued leadership in flavour and product development and through attention to "getting better at making our products more efficiently, with continued high quality."

The difficult financial situation of Ben & Jerry's forces Ben to open for the first time the "black box" of the organization and to turn inwards after having extensively focused on saving the world and bettering communities outside the firm:

"We have focused on the outside world, and we are really proud of what we have done to promote our goal of a world in which business is a key force for social change. Now we need to look more closely at our own backyard, to make sure that what we say we believe is a reality in our own workplace."

Conclusion 1993

The Projected Identity in 1993 has shifted from its prior duality. While the Projected Identity until 1992 was made up of both Ben's ideal vision and by Chuck's more down to earth operational discourse—the 1993 Projected Identity becomes more unified as both actors' discourse converge to project a single identity. The two incarnations of the Projected Identity have joined—this unified Projected Identity is triggered by a negative external image. The new Projected Identity is still about the three part mission but the overwhelming focus is on improving the organization internally. Also, the more lofty and visionary goals expressed prior to 1993 have now been hushed and taken a more moderate expression. Ben acknowledges that "our dreams are greater than our achievements"—highlighting that while his vision has been powerful, now it is perhaps time to hone in on organizational operations—Chuck also confirms that there is a need to turn inward: "We are finding where our real strengths lie, and we are humbled enough to know where we need to strengthen our organization."

Visual representation of the Projected Identity for 1993:

Representing the Projected Identity for 1993 which is a pivotal year for Ben & Jerry's—and the first year the market sends a negative signal to the organization—reveals a Projected Identity which is more unified—both Ben and Chuck project a unified discourse on the need to turn inward, make organizational improvements and focus on the double bottom line. Ben comes down from his lofty social mission pedestal and Chuck adopts more symbolic language for the first time, speaking of the need for the organization to "grow up."

Figure 3

Projected Identity 1993: One voice: Negative stock price sends signal
To look inward, focus on organizational improvements

Look inward
Organizational focus

Social Mission

Economic Mission

Product mission
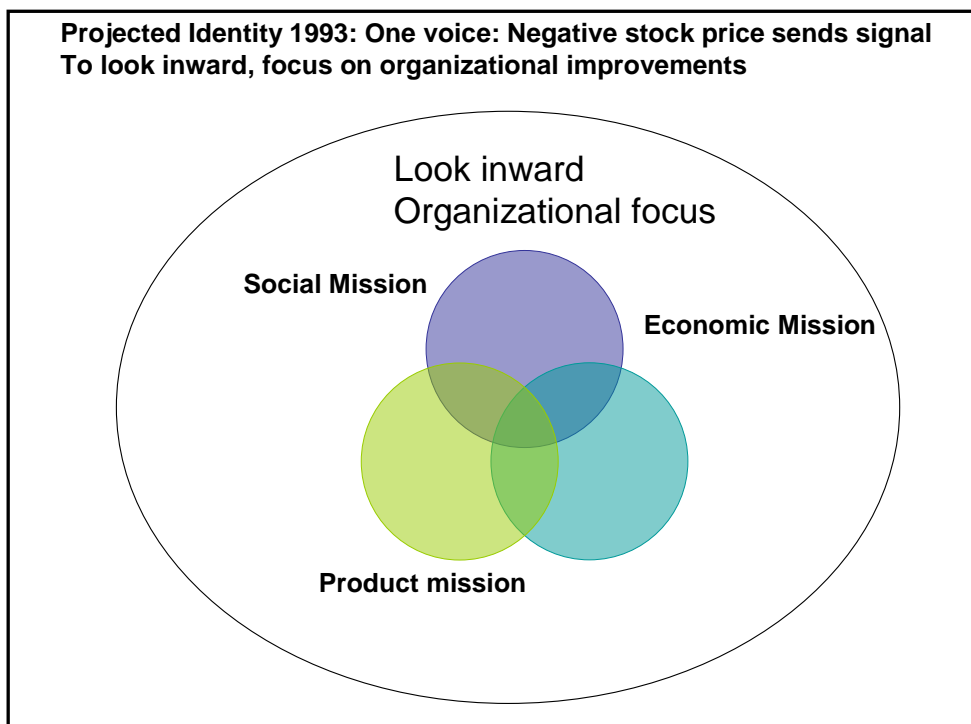
4.1.2 Phase II: Professional Managers (1994-1999)

"We are not giving up the baby," Jerry Greenfield told the Times. "But this is necessary. We have 600 employees. We manufacture ice cream on two shifts and three different sites, and the level of complexity is such that it requires organizational, operational and management expertise that goes beyond what Ben and I can offer. In terms of creating an evolving vision for the company, instilling values, pushing the boundaries of what our company can do, Ben and I have an incredible amount to offer. In terms of day-to-day management, we are LOST." (Vermont Business Magazine, May 1995)

"…"In the future," Ben Cohen said, "we'll have sales of $200 million or $300 million. I don't think I have the skills to lead our company in that direction."(Wall street Journal, June 14th, 1994)

In 1994, Ben & Jerry's reach a new phase in the growth of their business as the Founders realize they need to reach out and hire professional management. This change in management "signals a new, more businesslike era at the company, whose sales have slowed after explosive growth several years ago." (Wall Street Journal, June 14th, 1994)

Ben announces that he is stepping down as CEO in June 1994 and the company begins a CEO search through a very unconventional approach to recruiting—they run a contest, "Yo! I'm your CEO!" to find Ben's successor by placing ads in newspapers throughout the country. Applicants have to say in fewer than 100 words why they would make "a great CEO for Ben

& Jerry's". The firm points out that the second prize, membership of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream for Life Club, is "the better deal." (The Economist, June 18, 1994)

The Projected Identity for this Phase II is not monolith—the shifts in the Projected Identity during this period reflects two things—First, a shift in CEOs—from CEO Bob Holland to CEO Perry Odak and second, a shift away from the Founders' voice to a Projected Identity dominated by Professional Managers.

The Projected Identity under Bob is primarily about "family"—whereas under Perry, the Projected Identity will be overwhelmingly dominated by the economic mission. Also noteworthy, under Bob, the Projected Identity is still expressed by the Founders and by the CEO—whereas under Perry, the Founders' voice wanes to eventually completely disappear. In 1997, the Founders' Letter is now placed after the CEO Letter in the annual report—in 1998, Ben's signature disappears and finally in 1999, the Chairman's Letter disappears altogether, leaving the CEO Letter written by a professional manager as the only expression of the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's.

Robert Holland (1994-1996): Organization in Transition

Robert Holland Jr., a turnaround specialist and onetime McKinsey & Co. consultant arrives at Ben & Jerry's in 1994. He has the difficult role of being the first CEO to take over the leadership of the company after its very charismatic founders. Bob Holland is not actually found through the "YO! I'm Your CEO!" contest but through an executive search firm, but he does write a poem to back his candidacy for the job (see Appendix 6.7). Bob Holland is hired for his business skills and experience but also because he has a good track record in the social arena. After less than two years with the company, he resigns, "citing the need for more experienced consumer-products marketer to boost growth" and calls for an "accelerated succession" because of "marketplace challenges" and "the predictably tough demands associated with succeeding founders." (Pereira, Joseph. 1996. Ben & Jerry's chief executive resigns after disagreements with founders, *Wall Street Journal* (Eastern Edition), September 30, 1996, p. B14.)

Projected Identity: Company is morphing out of its founders' skin—new leadership and employees take over as drivers and vehicles of Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity

Between 1994 and 1996, Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity expresses a shift away from the Founders as sole incarnation of the organizational identity towards a new identity carried by new management and employees. Both the Founders Letter and the CEO Letter written by Bob Holland express this change. The Founders are confident in having hired a new CEO and explain that there is a "Founders mythology" which has attributed the success of their company to their individual ideas. While they assert that this is partly true, they also express how surprised they are at the "phenomenal success" of their company and acknowledge their limitations in managing such a growing business and the need for the company to turn to experienced leadership:

"...we, as the founders of Ben & Jerry's, learn what we can continue to offer and contribute to the success of this business, and what we want to leave in the hands of others who have skills that are not ours to offer."

The Founders praise Bob Holland, the new CEO, saying he is the right person for the job because of his great business experience and his "strong sense of community and family."

In his 1994 CEO Letter, Bob Holland mentions the business skills he will bring to the company—he also mentions how he intends to complement the employees skills already present in the company. He clearly does not want to appear as a threat to employees and his message seems directed to reassure employees that he will work with them and not against them: "…these are skilled, dedicated people whose talents and experience I can complement but not supplant." Mr. Holland expresses his admiration for the employees in the company— this will be further elaborated upon in the 1995 CEO Letter. In 1994, the CEO Letter is extremely short—Mr. Holland has just come aboard and it is the Founders' Letter which acts as CEO Letter, devoting a lengthy amount of time to economic issues, competition issues and finally (but not occupying centre stage) to the social mission.

Both the 1994 Founders Letter and the CEO letter mention the transition away from Founders leadership and towards something which will draw from both new CEO leadership and from employees themselves. Ben & Jerry's acknowledge how their company has become greater than them: "We welcome new leadership to this company that has become so much bigger than its founders."

Projected Identity takes on a stronger marketing orientation

A second key point that emerges in the 1994 Projected Identity as expressed by Bob Holland's CEO Letter is a more traditional business and marketing expression of the three part mission—while Ben Cohen had in the past made the link between the social and economic mission—he had never used traditional business and marketing terminology. Prior CEO Letters of Chuck Lacy had addressed operational business issues such as distribution and manufacturing but marketing and the relationship with consumers had never been expressed in the Projected Identity.

In 1994, for the first time, the Projected Identity expresses a more "marketing" and traditional business orientation with its focus on the terms of "consumer franchise." Robert Holland recognizes the superb consumer franchise which Ben & Jerry's have built over the years. This theme comes up four times in his one page CEO letter. He analyzes this consumer franchise as being the result of great products and innovation in the marketplace and the company's "vision of the critical role business must play in improving society." He mentions the CEO Contest which is itself a great example of the special relationship Ben & Jerry's has with its consumers.

'Employee Voice' theme makes first strong appearance under Robert Holland: Projected Identity is about Family (1995)

In 1995, Robert Holland's CEO Letter is overwhelmingly about "family"—the theme which he had touched upon in his brief 1994 Letter is now fully expressed. Mr. Holland is in awe of the company's people resources—what I have chosen to label "employee voice": The word "family" is actually used twenty times throughout the letter! The Projected Identity under Bob places at its core the great human qualities of the Ben & Jerry's employees:

> "I'd like to talk about the past year at Ben & Jerry's in the language of 'family'…."

> "Our administrative staff-those who have been here for many years and those new to the Company-is the most vivid evidence of both the strength and the complexity of the family of Ben & Jerry's."

> "We have asked a lot of our family over the years. More will be asked in the future."

> "The resilient strength of the Ben & Jerry's family, despite all the challenges it has faced and all the tasks not yet done, is the best reason for confidence in our future. I am grateful for this family…"

The focus is clearly on Ben & Jerry's employees and their quality, resilient strength, and spirit but Holland also highlights their difficulties in integrating between the new and old timers, and that years of "hard work and the pressure of great expectations" has left many people feeling that "this family was not as pretty on the inside as it looked to everyone on the outside."

Founders Letter (1995): Mission & Family

In their 1995 Letter, Ben & Jerry express how much the two part bottom line remains central to the company and that the Company's choice of new CEO Bob Holland is a confirmation of this as the new CEO has a "demonstrated commitment to social concerns as well as business expertise." The Company will continue to "integrate social components into our day-to-day business activities."

The 1995 Founders Letter also projects an identity where employees have a central role. The Founders acknowledge that: "Through all the changes, our employees continue to be the great strength of the Company. We have an incredibly talented and dedicated workforce. We are extremely thankful and appreciative."

Conclusions on Bob Holland years

The Projected Identity for the Bob Holland years is one of transition. The company is morphing away from an organizational identity defined by founders alone to an organizational identity driven and carried by employees and their new professional managers. Clearly, as the Founders' voice wanes, employees are projected as the new carriers of the company's organizational identity (at least in its Projected Identity form).

Secondly, the Projected Identity during this phase tells of a company that is looking inwards and attempting to resolve internal organizational issues (such as management, HR, leadership) which have resulted from tremendous growth in very little time and perhaps a lack of professional leadership to steer the company forward. This heavy focus on organizational issues places the three part mission in the back seat during this time period. When the social mission is mentioned, it is linked to the need for better internal discipline and management:

"We are convinced that our commitment to redefining the social responsibilities of business has been one of the keys to our success. As we have supported communities, communities have supported us. We are as committed to this vision as we have ever been. To be sure, we must bring greater business discipline to this task. But we have built a strong company on this vision. It is the

combination of this vision and better discipline that will keep us strong and growing." (Founders Letter, 1994)

Thirdly, the Projected Identity expresses a power struggle between Bob Holland and the Founders. Bob is clearly trying to carve a space for himself within the larger Ben & Jerry's organization—his use of the term, "family" to express the company's essence is quite powerful. The use of such terminology seems to imply that he is inviting himself into the organization by displaying his attachment to the firm and making the organization his own. Mr. Holland may be doing this because he needs to convey to organizational stakeholders that he is legitimate despite the internal power struggles going on between himself and the Founders. Furthermore, projecting a 'family' identity may not necessarily mean that this is what is actually going on inside the firm. In fact it may be quite the opposite as this media source reveals:

"Employees leave no doubt that the company today is more buttoned-down. Holland, they say, is a more distant, traditional CEO. ``It's less family-like,'' says B&J's sales manager Kendrick. Holland, adds one director, ``brought adults to the company.'' *(Judge, Paul. 1996. Is It Rainforest Crunch Time? Business Week*, July 15, 1996, Issue 3484, p. 70.)

This stark opposition of views between Mr. Holland's projection of what Ben & Jerry's identity is versus an insiders' perspective on the matter at the time brings attention to the necessary caution in interpreting a firm's Projected Identity. This media quote reveals that Projected Identity may actually project the opposite of what is actually going on in a company. Projected Identity may be hypocritical or the expression of wishful thinking from the CEO—in other words, Projected Identity may be the expression of a desired or ideal identity towards which the CEO is striving—and not in fact a reflection of the current/actual organizational identity.

Finally, the Projected Identity during this phase expresses ambivalence between an economic and a normative orientation. While Robert Holland's discourse is more economic and with a stronger marketing orientation than his predecessor—his heavy emphasis on "family" marks a more normative orientation. The Projected Identity under Mr. Holland does not confirm or rebuke Albert & Whetten's (1985) proposition that over time firms with a normative orientation become more businesslike while firms with a dominant economic orientation become more normative. Bob Holland's leadership has brought a mixed orientation to the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity—at least in the expression of the Projected Identity.

Perry Odak (1997-1999): Economic Mission Takes Centre Stage

"Instead of just building a brand, it's now more a Coke and Pepsi game, battling it out for shelf space -- you know, a share point here and a share point there," Mr. Cohen said. "That's the new skill we need to bring in.[8]"

The Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity under CEO Perry Odak takes a major turn. While the Projected Identity under Bob Holland had been somewhat confusing and lacking coherence—under Perry Odak, the Projected Identity becomes unquestionably about the economic mission of the company. The predominance of the economic mission will evolve over the two year period that marks Perry's leadership from a purely financial focus in 1997 to a more marketing and brand equity focus in 1998 and 1999. This marks an evolution in the strategy undertaken by Mr. Odak to undertake a first phase of "cleaning up" the firm of its operational inefficiencies and a second phase of marketing activity deployment.

In 1997, Ben & Jerry's hire Perry D. Odak--a senior manager at US Repeating Arms Co, the maker of Winchester rifles. Co-founder, chairman and major shareholder Ben Cohen explains that turning to an arms maker for a new leader represents no change of heart, but a need for marketing skills[9]. There is some paradox in having an arms maker come to Ben & Jerry's as CEO—given the vocal political stance Ben & Jerry's had made with their product "Peace Pops" and "1% for Peace" campaign begun in 1989 and devoted to raising consumer awareness of the level of US military spending. When asked about this paradox, the Founders explained they felt comfortable with Perry Odak because he was 'an avid hunter' and hadn't worked 'on any military things[10].'

Perry Odak tightens operational efficiencies and focuses on marketing and advertising efforts which helps regain the confidence of Wall Street. Financial analysts are positive about Mr.Odak's role and believe he has brought more of a corporate culture to the 21-year-old company. The new CEO is also praised by financial analysts for improving sales and profits

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[8] Pereira, Joseph. 1996. Ben & Jerry's chief executive resigns after disagreements with founders. *Wall Street Journal* (Eastern Edition), September 30, 1996, p. B14.

[9] Pereira, Joseph. 1997. Ben & Jerry's finds new CEO in gun industry. *Wall Street Journal*, Eastern Edition, January 3, 1997, p. B1.

[10] Rigby, Rhymer. 1998. Tutti-frutti capitalists. *Management Today*, February 1998, p. 54.

due to 'more effective advertising, new packaging, lower production costs and a host of new products'.[11]

1997: Economic mission has a purely financial orientation

Preoccupations with the economic mission clearly dominate the 1997 CEO Letter and reveal a purely financial orientation to the economic mission. CEO Perry Odak speaks of financial performance, sales growth, gross profit margins, cost of goods—and this takes up at least fifty percent of the 1997 CEO Letter:

> "We strengthened our economic mission through improved financial performance…"
> "I am pleased that we reversed that negative trend, ending the year with record-setting sales numbers."
> "The improved financial performance during the third and fourth quarters of the year…."
> "Our franchise scoop shops same store sales growth in 1997 was up 3%."

1998: Economic mission takes on a marketing orientation

The Projected Identity for 1998 marks a continued focus on the economic mission of the company but with a different orientation. While the 1997 CEO Letter focused extensively on economic performance and profit margin, 1998 marks a new phase for the Ben & Jerry's Company: the deployment of marketing activities and attention to media impressions and reputation. The terms of "brand equity" and "reputation" had never been mentioned in previous CEO Letters or Founders Letter ("brand awareness" was mentioned once in the 1997 CEO Letter but in an isolated fashion). By 1998 these terms become central attributes of the Projected Identity:

> "With aggressive new product development and an increased focus on brand equity, net sales for 1998 were $209,203,000- a 20.1% increase over 1997's net sales…"

Brand equity is a priority for the CEO in 1998 when he announces the redesign of the pint packaging:

> "Gains in our sales and market share growth can largely be attributed to the strategic reinvigoration of the Ben & Jerry's brand. Of significant impact was our package redesign, a fresh new look that has proven to be popular among Ben & Jerry's loyalists and new consumers alike."

In terms of space allocation, issues of brand equity (which also include brand awareness, packaging, marketing penetration and product development) and reputation take

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[11] Byrt, Frank. 1999. Investors Get a Craving for Ben & Jerry's—CEO Credited for Changes Leading to Sweet Times. *Wall Street Journal* (Eastern Edition), May 4, 1999, p. 1.

up over half of the 1998 CEO Letter. Even product mission is treated as a marketing and branding issue: "Another highlight of our 1998 introductions was Dilbert's World™-Totally Nuts ™, an original ice cream flavour that exemplified a successful co-branding effort."

A sub-theme which appears in the Projected Identity during this period is the theme of advertising—something deemed essential to reach more customers and leverage brand equity. It is the first time that so much space is devoted to the topic of media and advertising for the brand. The link is made between advertising, improved media impressions and the reputation of the brand, as expressed through a very good rating among American consumers:

> "All told, Ben & Jerry's enjoyed 450 million media impressions in 1998, a 50% increase over 1997. That may be one reason why a 1998 Harris Poll that asked adults to name "major companies that you think are really good companies" found Ben & Jerry's in the top 20."

1999

Reputation is confirmed centre piece of the economic mission

Mr. Odak notes how financially sound the company is and attributes this success to the power of the brand, company growth and an "exceptional management team": "In 1999 we celebrated a solid year of unparalleled results, not only meeting-but exceeding-our financial objectives." The treatment of the economic mission in 1999 is very similar to 1998—reputation continues to be a central element of the Projected Identity. This persistent focus on corporate reputation or "attributed identity" (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002), is reinforced by the increasingly positive external image of the company. Ben & Jerry's has placed 5th overall in the "Best Corporate Reputation in the US" of the Wall Street Journal and ranked number one for Social Responsibility—"ahead of such billion dollar companies as Xerox, Gateway and Disney." Consumer polls have now propelled Ben & Jerry's from 20th place (Golin Harris Poll) in 1998 to number one position for Social Responsibility in the Wall Street Journal poll of major U.S corporations in 1999.

Founders' voice melts away completely: Ben as incarnation of Projected Identity is completely gone

The second significant shift in the Projected Identity during the Perry Odak years is the gradual disappearance of the Founders' voice—in 1997 the Founders Letter now appears in second place, after the CEO Letter and in 1998 it is signed only by Jerry Greenfield—Ben Cohen's voice is no longer expressed and over half of the Chairman's Letter is devoted to speaking about Ben Cohen having been the driving force, shaping the organization throughout

the years. Jerry Greenfield seems a bit at a loss to write the Chairman Letter on his own, explaining that Ben was such a powerful force in the company that even the words written in the Chairman's Letter in the past were mostly Ben's words:

> "Prior to writing this I looked over the letters in the Annual Reports from the last few years. They were either from Ben as Chair or from both of us as Founders, but even then the words were mostly Ben's. It is no accident."

1998 marks the first and last letter that Jerry Greenfield will write on his own, for in 1999 the Chairman's Letter will disappear altogether. Jerry makes it quite explicit how central a role Ben has played in the Company, as a creative driving force both for the product mission and the social mission (note: he cites Ben's name six times in this Founders Letter):

> "From the very beginning Ben has been the creative driving force in the Company. It was Ben's tastes that led us first to invent incredibly rich, intensely-flavoured concoctions…His fanatical devotion to high quality took those concepts to products which are unparalleled. But Ben's real creation is the vision for a company which seeks to proactively integrate addressing social concerns into the day-to-day operations."

Social Mission no longer projected by Founders takes a more utilitarian turn

The third important evolution under Perry Odak's leadership is the disappearance of the social mission projected by the Founders. While in 1997, the Founders formalize for the first time a lengthy document explicitly articulating the company's values (this is explained in their Founders' Letter), it is the last time that so much of the Projected Identity is devoted to the social mission. By 1998, as stated above, Jerry's Chairman's Letter is mostly about how much he misses Ben and about the extent to which Ben was the organizational identity of the company (in terms of product and social mission).

Perry Odak's letter in 1998 treats the social mission from a purely utilitarian perspective. The social mission is framed in terms of how it contributes to the firm's reputation: "Essential to our reputation both at home and abroad is a renewed commitment to our social mission as an integral part of every Ben & Jerry's corporate decision." Social mission related issues such as the unbleached pint packaging and the rbgh-free milk are both treated in instrumental terms—they are useful measures in terms of consumer relationship management and for brand equity reasons:

> "We plan to further this initiative by converting a significant percentage of our product line to unbleached packaging in 1999. And by working in partnership with the non-profit organization Greenpeace, we plan to heighten consumer awareness about dioxins while enhancing Ben & Jerry's brand equity."

"Our 1997 legal victory cleared the way for our Company and other dairy processors nationwide to label products with an anti-rBGH message, giving consumers the right to make an informed choice about rBGH and the dairy products they buy. In 1999, we'll continue to bring greater consumer awareness to the rBGH issue."

Much like the 1997 CEO Letter, the social mission in 1998 is linked to a more traditional stakeholder group: consumers. The social mission is not about bettering communities but about providing consumer satisfaction and creating brand equity and reputation equity. Clearly the social mission for CEO Perry Odak is not independent from the economic mission but rather an integral sub-component of the economic mission itself. While the CEO ends his letter committing to the three part mission, the economic mission reigns supreme.

'Employee voice' disappears again

Given the heavy emphasis on the economic mission, it is not surprising that the "employee voice" theme is almost completely absent from the Projected Identity during the Odak years. This does not confirm my hypothesis that Projected Identity reflecting a focus on employees is a natural progression in the growth stage of a firm whereby the organizational identity torch is passed on from a Founders' driven to a post Founders' driven era. In other words, that as the Founders' voice melts away, this voice should be slowly replaced by employees' voices. The Odak years add some subtlety to this proposition as Perry Odak's single objective is to fix the economic mission of Ben & Jerry's, thus relegating the social mission and the role of employees in driving this social mission to the background—at least for a set amount of time.

By the end of the Perry years, the Projected Identity has indeed become exclusively economic in nature and this evolution confirms Albert & Whetten's (1985) proposition that a normative organization will become more utilitarian over time. However, the progression towards a more utilitarian Projected Identity is not linear but rather cyclical in nature. Looking closely at each leadership cycle, we find a series of phases which alternate between a more normative focus (social mission) and a more utilitarian focus (economic mission). The early Founders years are more normative in focus until 1993 where the economic mission takes centre stage after a negative feedback from the market. The professional managers' era thus far marks again a mixed (both normative and economic) phase under Bob Holland followed by a more utilitarian and economic driven phase followed by Perry Odak. These shifts in mission focus are impacted by organizational growth issues and by the position of the firm in its environmental context.

1999: The year of the Acquisition—Projected Identity takes another pivotal turn and social mission is central once again

In 1999, the social mission takes on a drastically different orientation once again. The instrumental focus fades away to give centre stage to a more normative orientation. Ben & Jerry's has just been sold and the issue is no longer to convince shareholders that the social mission will bring economic returns. The new issue at this point is to ensure that the social mission will prevail. The social mission is treated as something valuable for its own sake (and not linked to reputation or other instrumental items)—it is said that it will be preserved for its own sake and despite the merger—the social mission will even expand thanks to Unilever. The Projected Identity takes on the form of an ideal organizational identity—we are now in the CEO's projections of what he thinks the future Projected Identity will become. There is a clear attempt to reassure that the merger will not impact Ben & Jerry's socially responsible organizational identity (SROI) as the social mission will be "encouraged and well funded":

"For example, we will continue to commit 7.5% of our pre-tax profits to philanthropy. In addition, Unilever contributed $5 million to the Foundation, with a minimum ten-year commitment of $1.1 million per year for philanthropy. The merger agreement also included $5 million to be shared equally by all Ben & Jerry's staff, excluding senior management."

Ben Cohen's declaration to the press on the day of the merger on April 12th is also cited as his statement also brings added reassurance that the Ben & Jerry's identity as it is today (pre-merger) will prevail despite the potential changes which may be inflicted by the Unilever merger:

"As Ben stated on April 12th, the date of the merger announcement, 'Under this new arrangement, Ben & Jerry's will be independently operated, our values will continue and we hope our efforts to make positive change will even expand. Unilever has contractually agreed to increasing socially beneficial activities as a percentage of sales every year. Ben & Jerry's will be doing more good than it does today."

Conclusion on Phase II & Professional Managers

The conclusions regarding the Projected Identity during the Perry Odak years are very similar to the ones made of the Bob Holland years. Firstly, the Projected Identity progresses incrementally but surely from an identity which is shared between the Founders and professional managers towards an identity which is completely dominated by professional managers' discourse. The power struggle between the Founders and CEO which was still

apparent under Bob Holland disappears altogether under Perry as he ends up being the only voice to speak on behalf of the organization in 1999[12].

Secondly, the organizational identity attribute, "employee voice" or the importance of employees in driving and shaping the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity of Ben & Jerry's is expressed in the Projected Identity at the end of the Founders' era with the arrival of professional management. Bob Holland focuses extensively on the importance of Ben & Jerry's employees as drivers of the SROI. However this focus on 'employee voice' is not confirmed during the Odak years when the Projected Identity takes on such a strong economic orientation that 'employee voice' disappears altogether. At this point one may conclude that while employee voice does appear to fill an identity void left by the Founders, its importance will fluctuate depending on the CEO in charge and the phase the company is at.

Thirdly, while the three part mission maintains a central role in the Projected Identity—it is often linked or interrupted by a discourse focusing on organizational issues—be they leadership issues under Bob Holland or distribution and governance issues under Perry Odak (the acquisition event itself). The Projected Identity is constantly reflecting changing and evolving external and internal events which orient and shape CEO discourse.

Fourthly, Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity over time does take on a more marketing and economic orientation—thus confirming Albert & Whetten's (1985) proposition that over time organizations with a more normative orientation will become more utilitarian. However while the shift from the Founders era to the Professional Managers' era marks a clear evolution in this direction, if one takes a closer look within each professional managers' mandate, one finds alternating cycles of normative and economic focus.

Under Bob Holland, the Projected Identity has a mixed orientation—it has both a marketing orientation (focus on consumers), and a normative orientation (family). While the Projected Identity under Perry Odak is more instrumental and with a heavier economic focus than under Bob Holland, the Projected Identity under Perry takes on a more normative orientation towards the end of his mandate. Under each leader's mandate emerge mini cycles of alternating discourse taking on either an economic or normative orientation. These mini cycles reflect both internal and external evolving organizational events. In Bob Holland's

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[12] As a small aside, it is interesting that Ben's voice is quoted once again in 1999 to bring legitimacy to the acquisition deal—nonetheless while Ben is quoted, he is not officially projecting the organization's identity through his own Founders letter as he had in the past.

case—his mandate is dual—he is to take the company forward in terms of marketing activities but he also has the mission to fix internal leadership and management issues—thus a mixed Projected Identity emerges as a result (focus on "consumers" but also on the theme of "family.") Given the persisting difficult economic situation for Ben & Jerry's at the end of Bob Holland's mandate, Perry Odak's objective is to focus heavily on the economic mission and this is reflected in most of the Projected Identity under his mandate. However, at the end of Mr. Odak's mandate and once the company has been sold to Unilever, the Projected Identity takes on a more normative orientation once again (focus on the importance of the social mission)—perhaps attempting to re-establish an equilibrium after several years of focusing solely on the financial mission—perhaps also to ensure the longevity of the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) despite the change in ownership.

To conclude on the evolution of the Projected Identity under Professional Managers—while it does evolve incrementally towards a more economic orientation overall (if compared to the beginning of the Founders' era)—this overall evolution is punctuated by periods of more normative focus. These alternating periods between normative and economic focus reflect evolving organizational needs and stages in the growth of the firm—and an attempt on the part of top management to achieve or at least to project organizational equilibrium in terms of the three part mission.

4.1.3 Phase III: Post acquisition

Yves Couette (2000-2004): Social Mission at the Core Again

In 2001, Yves Couette, a seasoned and experienced Unilever executive is named CEO of Ben & Jerry's. Mr. Couette has the double mission of understanding Ben & Jerry's social mission so as to eventually export it to other Unilever businesses and secondly of improving the operating margins. Mr. Couette's mission is to focus on the economics and on the social aspect of the business[13] as Ben & Jerry's operating margins are much less profitable than other Unilever businesses. While the average Unilever business has operating margins of fifteen percent, Ben & Jerry's margins are only at four percent when Yves Couette arrives as CEO. To meet his economic mission goals, the new CEO takes on the difficult role of closing a factory and distribution centre in Vermont and laying off hundreds of employees. The layoffs are handled with great care and the company helps find new jobs for some of the laid off employees. To meet his social mission objectives, Yves Couette gives himself the title of 'Director of Social Mission' on top of his CEO position so as to integrate social mission objectives into day to day operational and financial objectives.

Social mission at the core of the Projected Identity

The social mission during the Yves Couette years appears once again at the core of the Projected Identity, as Mr. Couette attempts to define its essential attributes and its relationship with the economic mission. While the Projected Identity in 2000 and 2001 is mostly about how the CEO sees his role and involvement as important drivers of the social mission, the Projected Identity for 2002 and 2003 is very elaborate and explicit about the social mission, its drivers, its relationship with the economic mission and its identity attributes. Yves Couette attempts to define what the social mission is, and to grasp it so as to embed it in the organization's processes. The Projected Identity during this period expresses an economic and social mission dyad that is well integrated and coherent as the detailed explanation of the relationship between the two elements of the mission reveals.

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[13] This was revealed to us through an interview with Yves Couette in November 2008.

Definition of the Social mission: Employee spirit and progressive values

The Projected Identity for 2002 and 2003 places the social mission at its core. The social mission is projected and defined as an abstract entity which contains two central identity attributes: "employee spirit" and "progressive values." Such a conception reveals a fairly static view of organizational identity where identity is made up of fixed and tangible variables.

In his 2002 CEO Letter, Yves Couette seems to imply that what makes Ben & Jerry's different from other companies is the spirit of its employees:

"When I came to Ben & Jerry's in January of 2001, it was *a sense of family that impressed me…*"

"My first impression of this *dedicated team…*"
"I saw the *passion of the Ben & Jerry's team…*"

"I believe we've made solid progress, thanks to the *resilient spirit and plentiful strength of the Ben & Jerry's team.*"

"…I am thankful for all that has been accomplished over time *through talented teamwork at Ben & Jerry's.*"

"…the *persistent dedication of our staff…*"

The focus on employee spirit continues to dominate the Projected Identity of the 2003 CEO Letter. While Mr. Couette does recognize other important organizational stakeholders in 2003 as being "keepers of the flame" (he cites customers, franchisees and partners)—much like in 2002, the backbone of the Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity remains its employees and their spirit. Employees are repeatedly praised and acknowledged for their "dedication", "exceeding great expectations", "making things happen", working hard, and their "untiring effort." Employees are important for two reasons: they help maintain Ben & Jerry's "uncommon culture" and they directly contribute to the economic mission:

"Our determination to preserve Ben & Jerry's uncommon culture and purposeful Social Mission is steadfast."

"…we were pleased to achieve our profit targets for the year, a remarkable accomplishment and a credit to this determined team of superstars, who, in the face of numerous hurdles, exceeded great expectations and made things happen."
"…The untiring effort of the Ben & Jerry's team positioned our company to achieve new levels of prosperity."

A second important identity attribute of the Projected Social Mission Identity (PSMI) are the 'progressive values' of the company. Progressive values are so essential to the

identity of the organization that the CEO would like to capture them: "Next, we're moving in a direction…to systematically secure this Company's tradition of values-driven thinking into our process and policies for the long haul." Furthermore these progressive values are closely connected to employee spirit—it is not clear if the values feed the employees or vice versa but the two concepts are interconnected: "...Ben & Jerry's team embodied in its commitment to *values-led* business..." This theme of "values" is quite prevalent in the 2002 CEO Letter. The term "value" appears six times throughout the letter:

> "..Ben & Jerry's team embodied in its commitment to *values-led* business.."

> "...secure this Company's tradition of values-driven thinking…"
> "…we will need to embed *values-driven* resolution into our decision making…"

> "..Ben & Jerry's and its unique commitment to integrating *values* into our infrastructure of operations..."

> "…holding ourselves accountable to the long established *progressive values* of Ben & Jerry's…"

> "…and continues to *create value* in the communities where we live and trade…"

Dual nature of social mission: a core essence <u>and</u> a process

As one analyzes further the CEO discourse for these years, the Projected Identity expresses the complex nature of the social mission. The social mission is treated both as a core essence, a stable bundle of valuable resources which must be captured and saved (the core nucleus made up of 'progressive values' and 'employee spirit') but also as a process in constant evolution. Yves Couette begins his 2002 Letter by stating that the original mission statement crafted fifteen years ago will remain "virtually unchanged…" He explains however that the social mission will require more focus to "ensure lasting momentum" and that it will be necessary to downsize the number of social mission initiatives to focus the social mission and help the company grow up: "I see our strength as a brand that's passed from adolescence to maturity." Mr. Couette wants to ensure that the social mission D.N.A is well anchored in the company's processes. He reiterates this point several times: "…we're moving in a direction to systematically secure this company's tradition of values-driven thinking into our processes and policies…"; "…we will need to embed values-driven resolution into our decision making systems…"; and "I believe initiatives in place such as the Values Led Steering Committee,....are a strong start to safeguard our social and environmental focus." In

the context of extreme change of governance structure, Yves Couette's role as expressed in his 2002 CEO Letter is clearly to preserve the social mission identity of Ben & Jerry's.

Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity under Yves Couette is complex, perhaps even filled with contradictions. It reveals a social mission with a dual nature. On the one hand Mr. Couette implies that Ben & Jerry's social mission is a valuable resource or asset which exists in the organization, was present at the time of the acquisition and which must be preserved at all costs: "Ben & Jerry's and its unique commitment to integrating values into our infrastructure of operations." This supports a view of organizational identity as a feature or property of an organization and essentially as a core essence (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Whetten & Makey, 2002; W.R. Scott, 2003). At the same time, Mr. Couette implies that the social mission identity is also a <u>process</u> in which he and his collaborators are direct participants. In fact, much of the 2002 Letter is dedicated to explaining the process of writing the environmental and social report and how such a process is in "significant departure from our customary process" because all Department Directors and many staff have been involved in the write up of the report. Such a new process is deemed important because it is an educational process for all and contributes to "anchor social mission principles into practices and operations throughout the organization." This second standpoint brings support to the polar opposite view that organizational identity is a process emerging from social construction (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Hatch, 2005; Czarniawska, 1997; Glynn, 2000).

Social mission feeds the brand

While the Projected Identity under Mr. Couette shifts significantly from a focus on the economic mission to the social mission—the motivation for this focus is not altruistic. When analyzing Yves Couette's discourse, it becomes clear that the reason he puts such great emphasis on the social mission is because he considers it to be the driver of "this extraordinary brand."

It is clearly under Mr. Couette's mandate that the notion of "brand" emerges. The term had first been used under Perry but with less emphasis as Perry was more concerned with the reputation of Ben & Jerry's than with the notion of brand as a concept in and of itself. The Projected Identity under Yves reveals Unilever's great experience and attention to brand management issues.

The relationship between brand and social mission is not completely obvious. In the 2002 Projected Identity, the "brand" theme is expressed several times: "..it was a sense of family that impressed me as much as the quality of this extraordinary brand." Later, it is mentioned that Ben & Jerry's is now a "mature" brand which has "passed from adolescence to maturity"—and the Letter ends with a call to "move forward in a way that upholds the *unique identity of our brand…*"

In 2003, the Projected Identity reiterates its emphasis on the notion of brand. Ben & Jerry's is described as an "offbeat, quirky and independently spirited brand." Much like the 2002 projected identity, the link between employee spirit and brand is not explicit—it is only through deductions that one understands that employee spirit feeds a virtuous cycle within the Ben & Jerry's organization which in turn creates an extraordinary brand. For Yves Couette, "employee spirit" leads to economic success which in turn builds organizational strength which leads to the creation of social community value. While Mr. Couette's reasoning does not go full circle, one can infer that the creation of social community value in turn feeds employees' spirit and sense of purpose. The model could look something like an onion with the three part mission at the core made up of employee spirit, economic success and social community value and with the 'extraordinary brand' as the outer layer of the onion. When the virtuous circle functions well, the mission feeds an extraordinary brand.

Visual representation of the 2003 Projected Identity:

To sum up, the 2002 Projected Identity has at its core a stable social mission that is being embedded into the systems of the organization, ultimately resulting in the creation of what CEO Yves Couette calls "an extraordinary brand." The Projected Identity is a combination of a core nucleus made up of progressive values and employee spirit, which inspire and feed into organizational actions which themselves further embed the social mission into the organizational fabric. As explained earlier, the Projected Identity is both stable in its core essential organizational identity attributes but it is also dynamic as revealed by the continuous process undertaken by management and employees of embedding the core three part mission into the organizational system.

Employee spirit directly contributes to the social, product and economic mission and drives the Ben & Jerry's three part mission. Firstly, employee spirit drives the economic mission: "…we've made solid progress, thanks to the resilient spirit and plentiful strength of the Ben & Jerry's team." Here, employees' "resilient spirit" and "plentiful strength" are acknowledged as having helped the company "make solid progress" and while it is unclear if

Yves Couette is referring to solid financial progress or simply referring to employees' strength regarding the many layoffs and restructurings that have taken place in 2002—either way, this is an example of employee spirit contributing to the bottom line or economic mission.

Employee spirit also drives the social and product mission: "I saw the passion of the Ben & Jerry's team embodied in its commitment to values-led business in a Company known to the world as much for its social and environmental leadership as for its surprising flavours." Ben & Jerry's employees are a vital asset for the company as they directly contribute to shaping the three part mission, itself at the core of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity.

As mentioned earlier, the economic mission, although only briefly touched upon at the end of the letter—is said to be a pillar upon which the three part mission is built. This is somewhat tautological as the three part mission includes the economic mission—following this logic, the economic mission is the pillar of itself (and of the social and product missions). Ultimately, although the economic mission is indeed part of the 2002 Projected Identity, it seems more like a necessary afterthought as it is not central in terms of space allocation.

To conclude on the Projected Identity for 2002, it is employee spirit and progressive values which dominate in terms of space allocation and permeate the 2002 Projected Identity—both forces contribute to shaping the three part mission and ultimately the extraordinary organizational brand.

Visual representation of 2002 Projected Identity:

Figure 4

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   2002 Projected Identity: Process of embedding 3 part       │
│   mission                                                    │
│   Into organizational system to create an extraordinary      │
│   brand                                                      │
│                                                              │
│              EXTRAORDINARY BRAND                             │
│                                                              │
│         Values led steering                                 │
│         commitee                                            │
│                              Writing social & envt           │
│                              report                          │
│              3P MISSION                                      │
│                                                              │
│          Values                                             │
│                   Employee                                  │
│                   spirit                                    │
│          Economic mission                                   │
│                                                              │
│                                                              │
│          Integrating Social mission                         │
│          Into processes                                     │
│                                                              │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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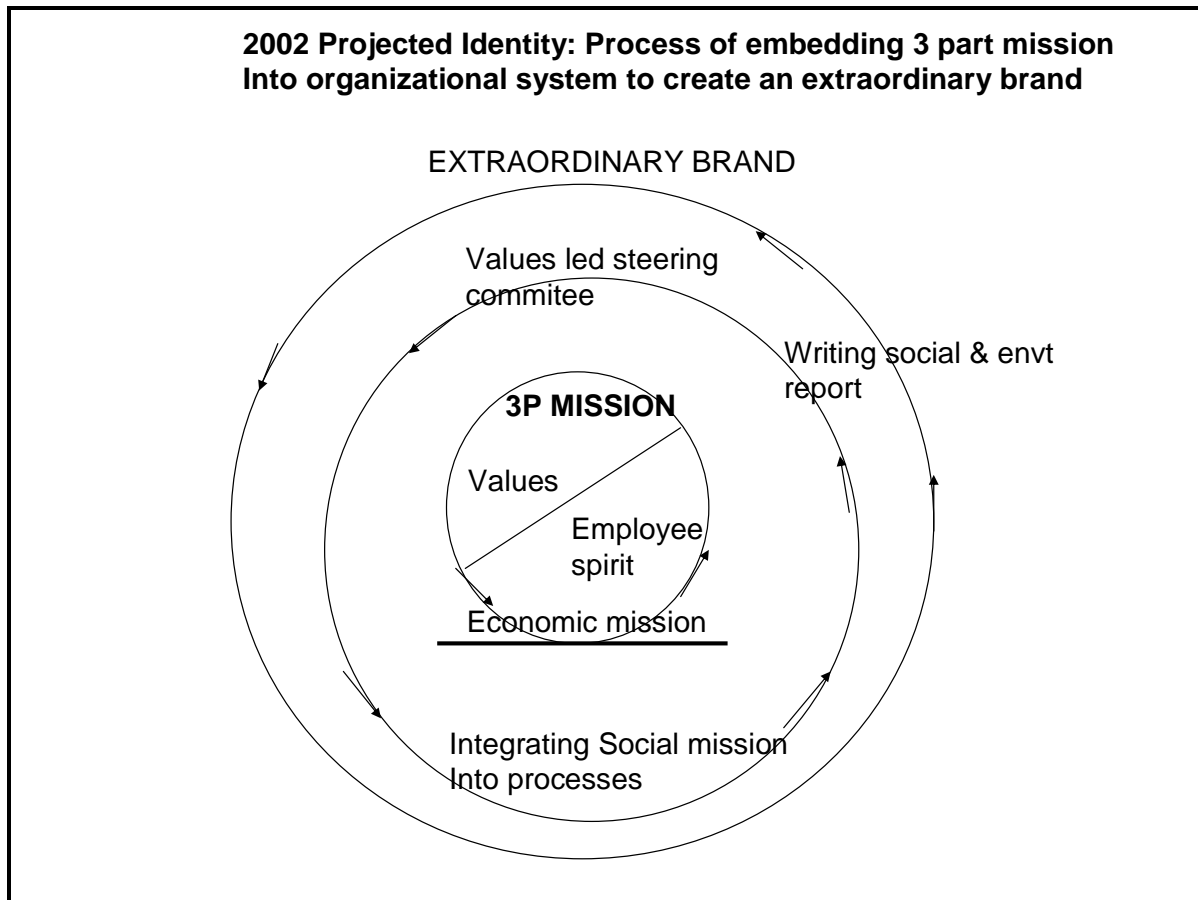
Culture or Brand?

The 2003 Projected Identity is ambiguous in its treatment of 'brand' and 'culture'. In the context of explaining the closing of Ben & Jerry's Vermont facilities and resulting layoffs, Yves Couette attempts to reassure that Ben & Jerry's 'culture' will be protected despite major organizational changes. Interestingly the value to be protected is labelled interchangeably using either the term 'culture' or 'brand':

> "…We remained independently spirited and protective of the offbeat, quirky ingenuity that defines this wonderful brand;"

> "Our determination to preserve Ben & Jerry's uncommon culture and purposeful Social mission is steadfast."

This interchangeable use of the terms 'brand' and 'culture' is surprising as the two concepts are antithetical—brand is about surface, marketing, the external layer of the

organization—while culture is about the depth, the subconscious insides of the organization. This reveals that for Yves Couette and thus for Unilever, a brand is a very deep and all encompassing entity which needs to be nourished by the soft insides or culture of the organization. The Ben & Jerry's brand must be fed by the company's social mission culture, which is itself made up of deep values and employee spirit. The Projected Identity under Yves Couette portrays the Ben & Jerry's brand as the receptacle of the organization's culture and mission. What is unclear is if making such an amalgam between brand and culture can make organizational culture thinner—if organizational culture becomes a brand, what happens to employee spirit? If employee spirit becomes a driver of the organizational brand or the organizational brand itself, the organization may lose the very spirit that made up its core identity in the first place.

Product mission absent

The product mission is flagrantly absent from the Projected Identity for most of the Yves Couette years and yet it is one of the three pillars of the Ben & Jerry's mission statement. The product mission is hardly mentioned in the 2002 Projected Identity (only one phrase mentions the "surprising flavours" of Ben & Jerry's) and not mentioned at all in the 2003 Projected Identity. The product mission only makes a comeback towards the end of Mr. Couette's mandate in 2004. This lack of attention to the product mission reveals how much of the focus of the CEO is on the social and economic mission—leaving the product mission to the periphery of the Projected Identity.

Major organizational events are reflected in the Projected Identity

Finally, the Projected Identity during the Yves Couette years reflects the importance of major organizational events. The Projected Identity reflects the major employee layoffs of 2002 (reported in the 2003 CEO Letter) which represent one of the most significant organizational events since the acquisition. The focus of the Projected Identity is not on the layoffs themselves but rather on the amazing strength and resilient spirit of the Ben & Jerry's employees in dealing with these layoffs and difficult economic environment.

While the CEO is not explicit about how he intends to protect the Ben & Jerry's "uncommon culture" or brand from the difficult economic environment or organizational changes (layoffs)—one can deduct from the emphasis made that the strength of the Ben &

Jerry's organizational culture and brand comes from the spirit of its employees[14]. Despite significant layoffs and major shifts within the Ben & Jerry's organization and external pressures from competitors, the spirit of Ben & Jerry's employees is so resilient that it continues to feed the virtuous social and economic cycle. The Projected Identity tells us that "employee spirit" leads to economic success which in turn builds organizational strength which ultimately creates social community value. While Yves Couette's reasoning does not go full circle, we can infer that the creation of social community value in turn feeds employees' spirit and sense of purpose. The model has the three part mission at its core. The three part mission is made up of employee spirit, economic success and social community value. The 'extraordinary brand' is either the receptacle or the outer layer of the organization. When the virtuous circle functions well, the mission feeds an extraordinary brand. The above discussion can be summed up in the following diagram:

Visual representation of the 2003 Projected Identity:

Figure 5
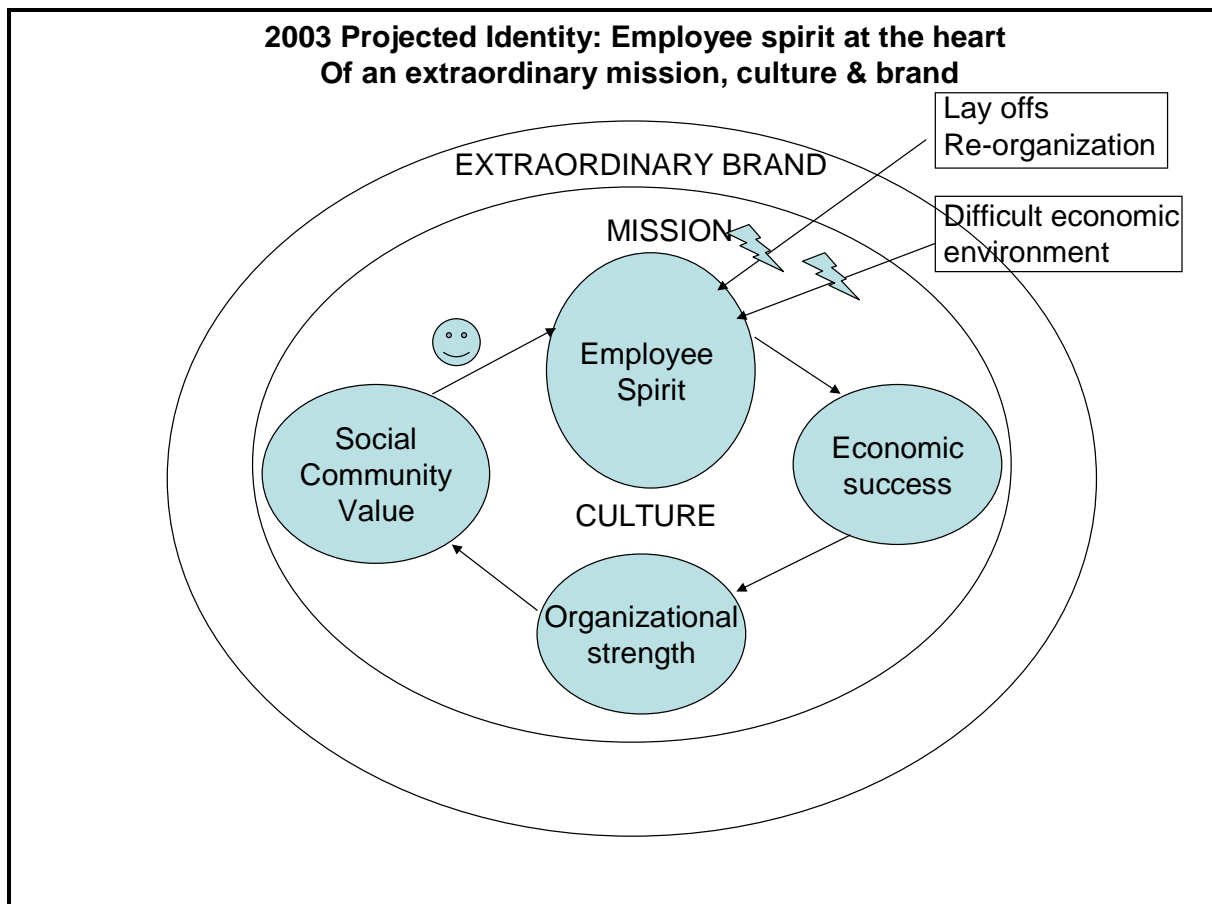
Power struggles are reflected in the Projected Identity

Towards the end of Yves Couette's mandate (in 2004), a significant shift occurs in the Projected Identity. While the three part mission makes an appearance once again and the product mission resurfaces (it had not been part of the Projected Identity since 1998), each part of the mission is treated as a separate entity and the interconnectedness so present in the 2002 and 2003 Projected Identity disappears. This corresponds to a time of tension in the organization between the North American Ice Cream organization managed by Eric Walsh and Yves Couette's own management of Ben & Jerry's. Mr. Couette is fighting hard to keep control of production and of the factories in Vermont. Ultimately the CEO will lose this control, as Eric Walsh and North American Ice Cream take over Ben & Jerry's supply chain.. This shift explains a less integrated expression of the three part mission in the Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity in the last year of Yves Couette's mandate. While Mr. Couette continues to pursue extensive social mission activities, the new disconnect from production brakes the interconnectedness between the economic, product and social mission.

'Employee Voice' evolves from a focus on employees to top management

In the 2004 CEO Letter, upper management is given the credit for Ben & Jerry's economic success. This contrasts the 2002 and 2003 Projected Identity where employees were given the credit for driving Ben & Jerry's economic success: "Thanks to the power of the brand and the tenacity of an exceptional management team, Ben & Jerry's franchised Scoop Shop network saw solid growth….Our international efforts, as well, showed a market upturn…" This shift marks a more traditional approach to business where top management is given the credit for the economic success of the organization rather than the base of the organization. Nonetheless, employees are still mentioned as important "keepers of the flame"—but whereas employees were previously directly linked to the economic success of the firm, they are now only recognized as the force which fuels the success of the social mission: "…thanks to so many untiring keepers of the flame, we continued to uphold Social Mission commitments…" 'Employee voice' has once again lost its central status in the Projected Identity.

Visual representation of the Projected Identity for 2004:

Figure 6

2004 Projected Identity: Lack of integration between Economic, Social and Product Mission

Economic Mission — Brand power | Top Management talent

??

Social Mission
- Value aligned suppliers
- Rbgh free
- Environmental initiatives
- Political campaigns
- Etc…

Product Mission
18% less consumer complaints re:quality
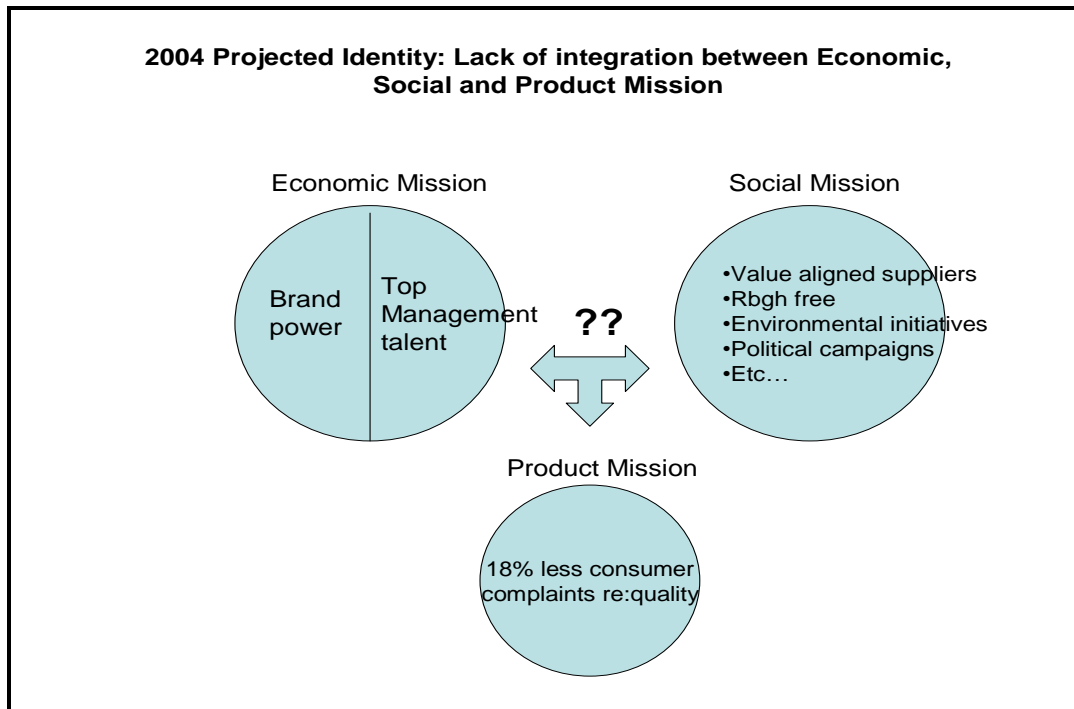
Conclusions on Yves Couette years

Several conclusions can be drawn from the Projected Identity during the Yves Couette years. Firstly, the Projected Identity no longer reveals any shared expression between the Founders and professional management—under Yves Couette, the Founders' voice has completely disappeared, leaving Yves Couette as the sole voice to express the Projected Identity for Ben & Jerry's. This leads to a Projected Identity with a more cohesive expression whereby the social mission and economic mission are fully integrated and explored at great length.

Secondly, the three part mission continues to be a core element of the Projected Identity—this three part mission also continues to be affected by external and internal events (layoffs, competitive environment). The social mission and its identity attributes (employee spirit and progressive values) serve as a buffer against unpleasant organizational events (layoffs). The relentless focus on the resilience of employee spirit in the face of adversity, allows the Projected Identity to shift the focus away from layoffs to a focus on the positive strength of the organization.

Thirdly, the heavy focus on the social mission and its drivers reveals the complexity of organizational identity and how it is both a core essence and yet also a dynamic process bringing support to two opposing views of organizational identity but also perhaps bringing support to Albert & Whetten's (1985) original work which first expressed the complexity and dual nature of organizational identity as a concept displaying both core features and an essentialist notion (central character) but also a process of social construction (political strategy).

Fourthly, the importance of the relationship between mission and brand is developed during the Yves Couette mandate. The concept of brand takes on great significance as it is equated with the concept of culture. The Projected Identity portrays a business organization morphing into a brand which is nourished by a strong mission and culture. This reveals organizational structural changes which have recently reassigned Ben & Jerry's production to Unilever supply chain and brings support to the idea that the Projected Identity may at times reflect real organizational changes.

Finally the Projected Identity does not become more instrumental over time under Mr. Couette's mandate—it shows instead a mixed orientation. While the social mission clearly serves instrumental goals, Mr. Couette hints at the idea that employee spirit is actually fed by the social community value (social mission activities). The Projected Identity seems therefore to be mixed in its economic/normative orientation: while the overall social mission is undertaken at the firm level for instrumental reasons, employees as a group do not follow this economic logic but are rather motivated by the social community value they actively contribute to (thus a normative motivation). The Projected Identity reveals a great deal of complexity and hints at a two layered motivation: economic at the firm level and normative/ethical at the employee group level.

Overall the product mission is absent from the Projected Identity except in the last year. This seems to indicate Yves Couette's preoccupations with the social and economic mission to the detriment of the product mission.

Walt Freese (2005-2009): From 3 part mission integration to globalization

After Yves Couette's departure from Ben & Jerry's in 2004, Yves Couette chooses Walt Freese, the Chief Marketing Officer since 2000 as his successor. Walt Freese has experience working for 'values led' businesses—he was General Manager of Celestial Seasonings prior to its acquisition by the Hain Food Group. Walt Freese is hired by Unilever with the mandate to be the guardian of the Ben & Jerry's brand. He is considered the person best suited for this mission given his experience with values-led businesses and his 'outsider' status with regards to Unilever as he explained to us during an interview in 2007:

"…Yves and Unilever…didn't want somebody running Ben & Jerry's marketing from inside Unilever—they wanted somebody to come from more of a non-traditional or values led—more anti-corporate kind of environment. So they went outside—which of course is not something they did all that often at Unilever, particularly for a role like that. They've got lots of marketers all over the world and I'm sure a lot of them wanted that job."

Walt Freese further explains how committed he was to the mission of the company and how for him, taking on the CEO position was much more than a career move:

"He [Yves Couette] said, 'In your role, Walt, you are going to be the guardian of this brand. That's your job.' And I took that job very seriously because for me this was not just a career move, this was about soul, it was about mission, it was about what I wanted my life to be about. So doing that was really central to who I was. I was thrilled to see when I came in—but not surprised- that so many people inside this building were committed too. It was a passion, a mission, a calling—much more than it was a career."

2005 Projected Identity: three part mission integrated once again

While the 2004 Projected Identity mentioned the product mission again—it did not successfully integrate the three parts of the company mission—most notably the links between the economic, product and social mission were not made. In the 2005 Projected Identity—the three parts of the mission are once again integrated—it is now clearly explained how the product and social mission feed the economic mission:

"We are growing for good reasons. Most importantly, we were able to deliver on our Product Mission in 2005, producing and delivering outstanding ice cream to our customers almost every time…"

"I firmly believe the growth of our company is directly connected to our Social Mission…"

The link between the social mission and economic mission is not a simple one however—the Projected Identity reveals that the social mission is not driven by economics but rather by an ethics and value based motivation which in turn creates stakeholder loyalty thus energizing

employees and producing "a real economic payoff." The social mission happens to lead to economic value but its driver is ethically based, not economics based:

> "I know that when we make our business decisions based on our values—we build loyalty in our employees, our suppliers, our franchisees, and of course, our customers. That loyalty keeps us energized, carries us through the tough stretches and produces real economic pay off, too. But it's the motivation of doing what's right that forms the underpinnings of our Social Mission."

Brand power

The term makes a brief appearance in the 2005 Projected Identity within the section about the Social Mission—it is the "power of our brand" which enables Ben & Jerry's to connect with the public on a social issues platform. While the link between the Social Mission and the Ben & Jerry's brand is still not explicit, a connection between the two concepts is implied.

Social Mission is a journey

The final important point expressed in the 2005 Projected Identity is that the Social Mission is an on-going process, which now includes constructive dialogue within Unilever:

> "…Participating in this conversation within Unilever reinforces the fact that Ben & Jerry's Social Mission is not a destination, but a journey. We'll never be able to say that we've arrived as a perfect company. Rather, we must keep examining our own practices, assessing our impacts, and pursuing honest dialogue to find new way to make Ben & Jerry's a better company—and the world a better place…."

If we sum up the 2005 Projected Identity, we arrive at the following diagram:

Figure 7

2005 Projected Identity: Three part mission is integrated

EXTRAORDINARY BRAND

MISSION

Product Mission

Ethics based Social Mission

Economic Mission

Stakeholder Loyalty

Employee Energy

Public

Social issues
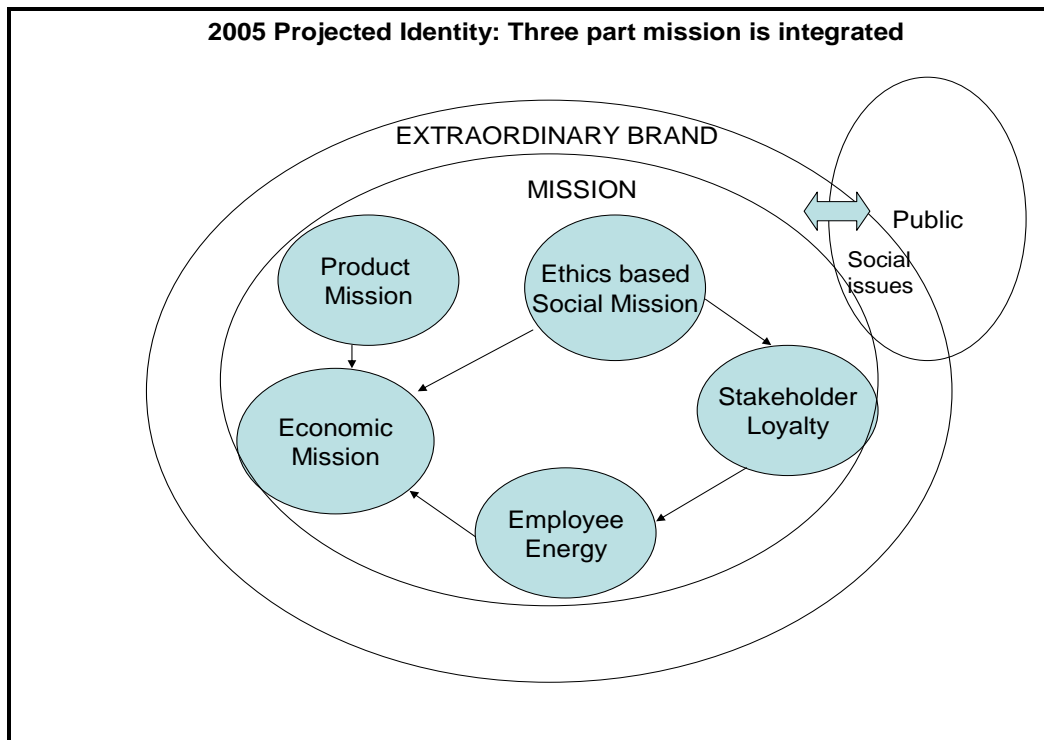
Note for 2005: Absence of External Auditor/Projected Identity is now unchecked

For the first time since 1997, the social and environmental report does not have an external auditor—this is attributed by the 2005 CEO Letter to a new on-line format:

"This is the first year that we've issued the report in fully-linked, easily navigated online format…Given the many changes and challenges inherent in this new format, we have not submitted this report to an outside auditor."

When challenged on this point, Ben & Jerry's Social Mission Coordinator explains that there had been some uncomfortable feelings with the last external audit and that the decision to stop it was made at the North American Ice Cream level:

"I think that's the kind of decision that was made at the NAIC level—Walt might have approved the auditor's letter—it is hard to have a letter in your report that says, "Here are all the failures in this company!"--when in fact on an objective scale we were still at that time a very progressive and leading company in lots of ways. So there is this feeling of self flagellation. And we did continue to work with the same fellow as a reviewer but not as an auditor." (Andy Barker, Social Mission Coordinator)

Since the write up of this report, there has been recently talk of re-integrating an external auditor and the role of the social report itself is under scrutiny:

"Yes there is discussion about having the report being audited again—I think the board would like to see that. The report is having a little bit of an identity crisis—we're not publicly held, we're not reporting directly to shareholders—the question is who are we reporting to—Unilever already does its own social report—they are the parent company—so what's our audience, what's our purpose?" (Andy Barker, Social Mission Coordinator)

2006 Projected Identity

Social mission dominates
Identity is framed as 'Actual vs. Desired Identity'

Differently from the previous report, the 2006 Projected Identity is dedicated entirely to the Social Mission—the economic and product missions are not mentioned once. The Projected Identity is back to a unique focus on the Social Mission, listing the number of accomplished Social Mission actions and reflecting on the drivers of these actions. The Projected Identity is dual: it is expressed as the <u>actual</u> identity of the organization and also as the <u>desired</u> future identity. The actual identity is expressed when the CEO acknowledges that some of the Social Mission actions of the past year (phasing in Certified Humane Cage-Free eggs and rethinking the pint packaging) have been driven by external forces (public opinion and supply chain pressures within Unilever) and not from within the organization. The desired organizational identity is expressed when CEO Walt Freese explains that he wants to shift from a reactive CSR to a proactive CSR by undertaking Social Mission actions that are driven by proactive, deliberate choices:

"…I am conscious of the fact that two of our highest profile initiatives in the social and environmental arena last year came in response to external forces….We want to be a company that is led by our values, not by circumstances…"

To become more proactive with regards to Social Mission initiatives, the desired identity calls for more innovation, employee involvement, working with passion, and focusing more than ever on values-led innovation—and such "...process will help us bring us even closer to being the transformative business we aspire to be."

'Employee voice' linked to Brand

Despite the fact that some of the major social mission initiatives in 2006 are driven by external pressures, it is thanks to two organizational identity attributes that Ben & Jerry's social mission actions are deemed successful: "brand spirit" and "folks who work at Ben & Jerry's." Once again, Ben & Jerry's employees are a central part of the Social Mission and once again the importance of the brand is mentioned. The Ben & Jerry's brand is said to be a

brand that is not like any other brand because it has depth and spirit, perhaps even a spiritual dimension. The link between brand spirit and employees is not made but the two terms are very closely associated.

Reputation

It is noteworthy that this issue has importance as it is cited early on in the CEO Letter—it is mentioned that Ben & Jerry's has been rated the most socially responsible company in the United States in 2006 in the Golin Harris' fourth national survey of corporate citizenship.

Social Mission is a journey

The same paragraph referring to the fact that the social mission is a journey and not a destination and that the conversation with Unilever is an on-going process appears, much the same as for the 2005 Projected Identity.

To sum up the 2006 Projected Identity, we arrive at the following diagram:

Figure 8

**2006 Projected Identity:
Actual Reactive vs Desired Proactive**

ACTUAL

BRAND SHIELD

REACTIVE SOCIAL MISSION

CSR pressure (public opinion, Etc..)

EMPLOYEE SHIELD

DESIRED

Transformative Business

PROACTIVE SOCIAL MISSION

Self examination

Innovation Passion Dialogue
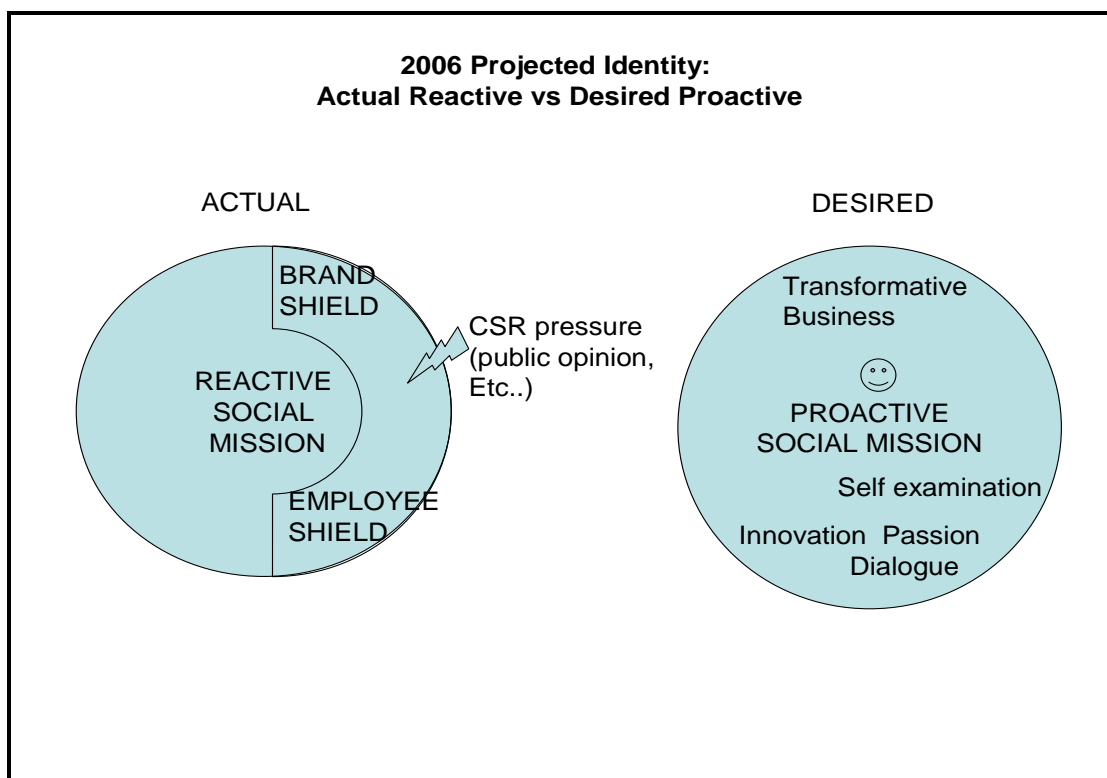
2007 Projected Identity

Three part mission

In 2007, the three part mission is only mentioned in passing as the main focus of the Projected Identity is global expansion, something which creates some tension with the local progressive roots identity of the company. For the first time however, the re-connection to the Founders is affirmed. The three part mission is acknowledged as a "guide" that connects the Ben & Jerry's organization "to the progressive vision of Ben & Jerry's." The Founders are once again making public appearances to support some of the social mission initiatives of the company. This indicates a turning point in the evolution of the Ben & Jerry's organization as the Founders had been silent and retrenched for many years due to mixed feelings about the acquisition and the course the company had taken post acquisition.

In terms of mission integration, the Projected Identity in 2007 is consistent with the 2005 Projected Identity. Values and ethics are once again affirmed to be the drivers of the economic mission which in turn creates community/social value: "This vision calls us to make business decisions based on our values—and to use the power of our business to change the world for the better."

Interestingly, the notion of brand is absent in the 2007 Projected Identity and instead replaced by the term, 'business.' This is perhaps due to the fact that Ben & Jerry's has undergone reporting structure shifts away from North American Ice Cream and is now directly reporting to Unilever corporate. The Burlington headquarters at Ben & Jerry's have regained power, more autonomy in their decision making and a greater ability to push forward the social mission into the very fabric of the business itself implying a newly found power to push for sourcing that is coherent with the social mission.

To sum up the relationship between various aspects of the mission and with the external world, we arrive at the following Projected Identity for 2007:

Figure 9

**2007 Projected Identity:
3 Part mission connects to Founders**

MISSION

Founders Progressive Vision

Ethics based Decision making

Economic Mission

Better world

Business Power
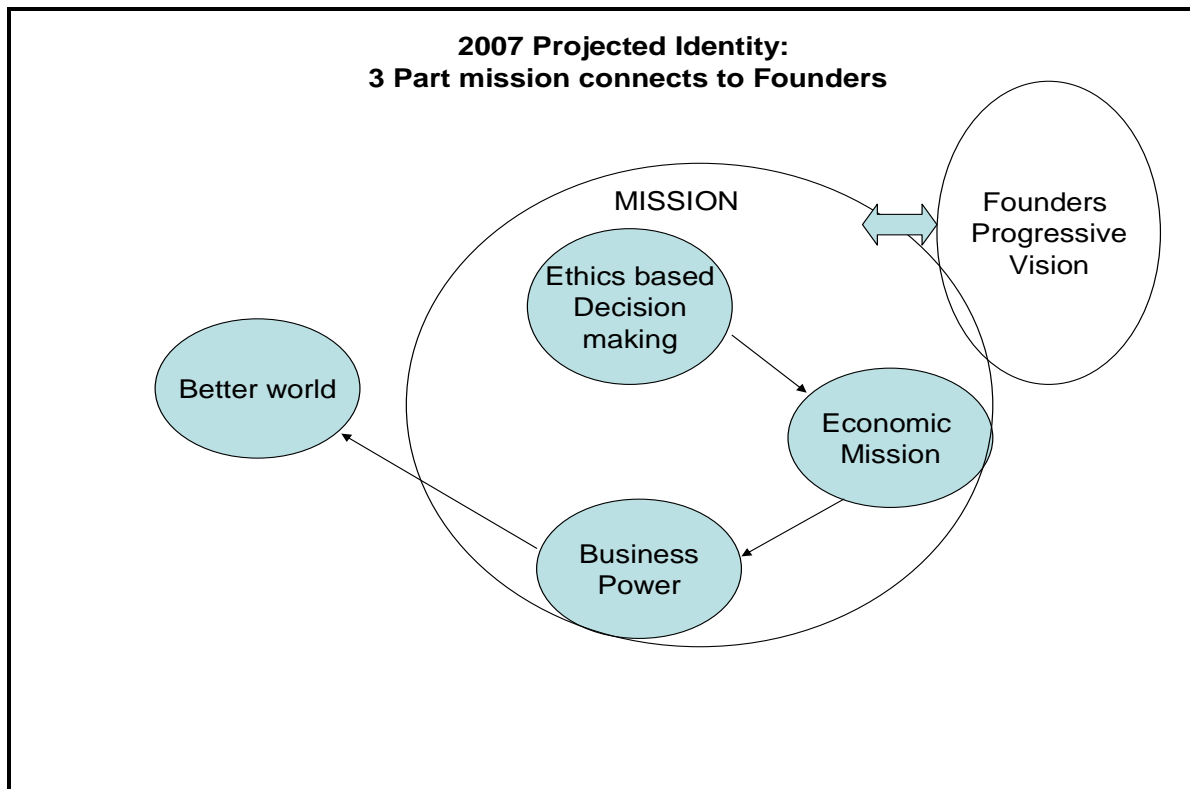
Tension between global reach and local connections

The 2007 Projected Identity takes another major turn—there is no longer talk of the drivers of the Social Mission or of the path towards reaching a proactive Social Mission and transformative business model. The new issue for 2007 is the company becoming a global company:

> "At Ben & Jerry's, the word of the year in 2007 was 'global.' Our ice cream business is thriving in the United States and Europe, and we have a growing presence in Asia. So it's time we started thinking like a Company with a truly global reach. Over the next couple of years, we will be building an organizational structure that better reflects this reality and designing ways of working that allow us to communicate, plan, and execute as a global business."

Yet despite becoming a global organization, the challenge for Ben & Jerry's is that it must keep its "progressive" values alive and maintain its connections to local, grassroots communities. Holding on to the company's progressive values yet expanding on a global scale is a new un-chartered territory and "an exciting path that few companies have gotten the chance to travel."

The Projected Identity for 2007 reveals the tension between global power and community connection. This morphing of the Projected Identity is in the making and unfinished. Further study will reveal how the tension is played out.

Taking into account the tension between becoming a global company and maintaining local roots, the Projected Identity in 2007 can be further elaborated upon to arrive at the following diagram:

Figure 10

2007 Projected Identity:
Global Business with Local Progressive Roots
'Brand spirit' & 'B&J folks' at the core of the Social Mission

Global Business

Founders Progressive Vision

3 PART MISSION
LOCAL Progressive Roots

Better world

Social Mission:
'Brand Spirit' &
'Ben & Jerry folks'
at the core

Economic Mission

Business Power
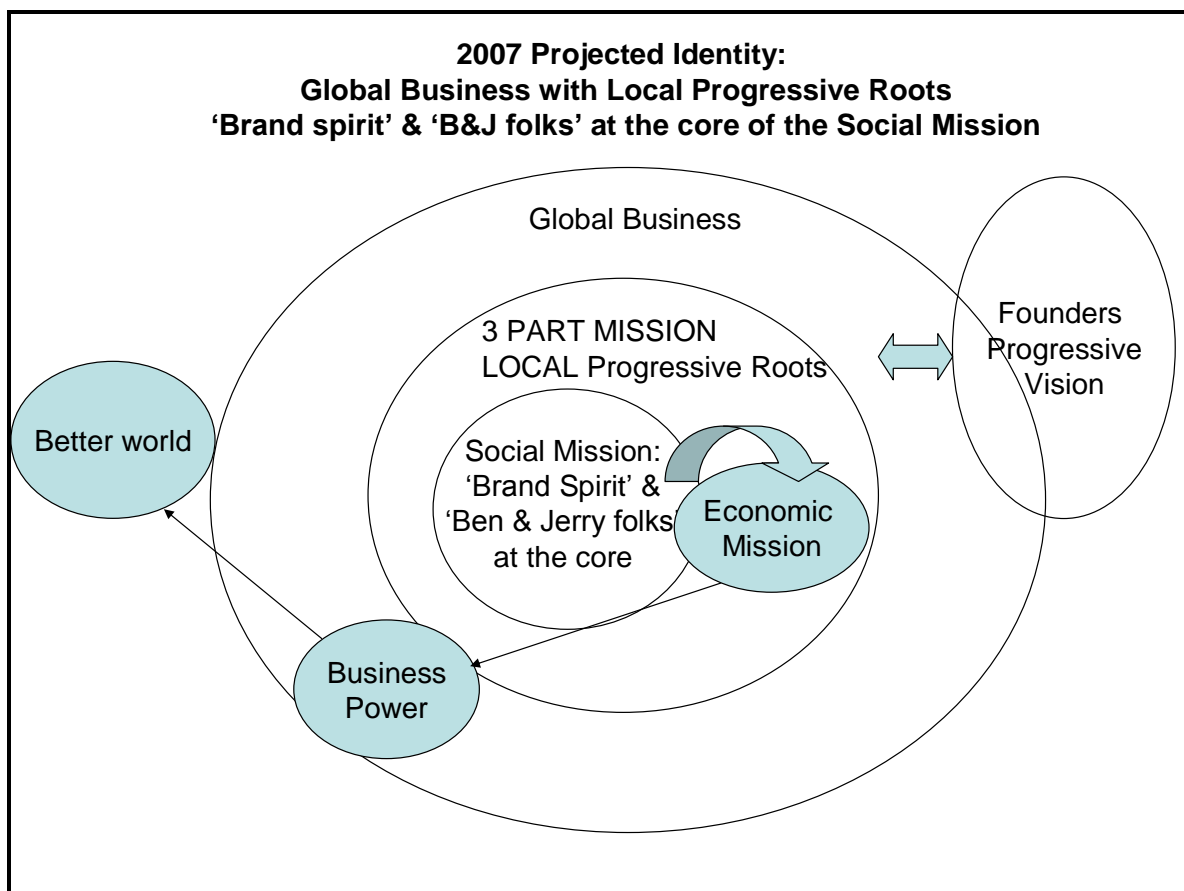
Conclusions on Walt Freese years

Several conclusions can be drawn from the Projected Identity during the Walt Freese years. Firstly, while the Projected Identity is only expressed by one voice (CEO), it is the first time that the Founders' voice is alluded to since the departure of the Founders from the Projected Identity in 1999. This happens in the 2007 Projected Identity when Walt Freese calls for a greater connection with the Founders' progressive vision. Within the context of a newly globalized organization, the need to reconnect with the original vision of the Founders is deemed important. The Projected Identity reconnects with the Founders' progressive vision

as they seem to serve as an anchor in the context of globalization. It is the first time in many years that the Founders are brought back into the Projected Identity.

Secondly, the three part mission continues to be the core and central element of the Projected Identity. This tri-partite mission continues to be at the nexus of two continuous movements as this mission is shaped by both external and internal forces (globalization under Walt Freese, layoffs under Yves Couette) but also simultaneously acts as a protective shield against these events and organizational upheavals (at least as expressed by the Projected Identity).

Thirdly, the Projected Identity reveals a mission that is both a fixed property (made up of core identity attributes consisting of 'brand spirit' and 'Ben & Jerry folk') and simultaneously a process ("Ben & Jerry's Social Mission is not a destination, but a journey"). This is consistent with the Projected Identity of the Yves Couette years which also revealed the dual and perhaps contradictory nature of the mission.

Fourthly, Walt Freese reinforces the focus on the relationship between mission and brand begun under Yves Couette. While the brand was not clearly defined by Yves Couette (he had used it interchangeably with the notion of organizational culture), it takes on a more focused and central role for Walt Freese as he now defines it as part of the core social mission: 'brand spirit' is associated with Ben & Jerry's employees ('folks') as two essential identity attributes which serve as a shield for the organization against external pressures from NGOs and consumers. This marks an evolution in the CEO's apprehension of what brand signifies. Under Yves Couette, the concept of 'brand' was diffuse and said to be fed by the mission while the notion of brand under Walt has now migrated to the core of the Ben & Jerry's identity: 'brand spirit' has replace the 'progressive values' identity attribute. This indicates the growing importance of the notion of brand, perhaps due to the external context of globalization in which Ben & Jerry's is evolving.

Finally in terms of economic versus normative orientation, the Projected Identity under Walt Freese reflects an ambivalent orientation. While the notion of brand (economic) has now acquired an important place in the Projected Identity, Walt Freese explains that it is a normative and ethical motivation which drives the social mission: "…it's the motivation of doing what's right that forms the underpinnings of our Social Mission." While the social mission can lead to positive economic results, the underlying motivation for social mission actions is an ethical one. Yves Couette had hinted at the idea that Ben & Jerry's employees were motivated by normative considerations, but he did not go as far as Walt in expressing that all of the firms' social mission actions are driven by normative considerations. The

Projected Identity now simultaneously embraces a deepening of both its economic and normative orientation: the company has become more of a brand than in the past (economic orientation) but the motivation for action is increasingly about doing what's right (normative orientation). The end result is an increasingly ambiguous Projected Identity.

Much like during the Yves Couette years, overall the product mission is absent from the Projected Identity except in the first year of Walt Freese's mandate (in 2005) when the CEO made a deliberate effort to integrate the three part mission and explore the connections between each element of the mission. Again, much like for Yves Couette, this seems to indicate Walt Freese's preoccupations with the social and economic mission to the detriment of the product mission.

4.1.4 Projected Identity: Overall analysis & conclusions

In attempting to understand how the acquisition of Ben & Jerry's by Unilever has impacted the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's, I analyzed the various CEO/Founders' discourses as expressed in their annual letter within the Social & Environmental Report. I soon realized that analyzing only the CEO Letter prior to the acquisition (Perry Odak) and contrasting that to the current Ben & Jerry's CEO Letter (Walt Freese) would provide a very limited understanding of how the acquisition had impacted Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity. Obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the acquisition's level of impact would require analyzing how the Projected Identity evolved prior to the acquisition. This led me to undertake a detailed longitudinal analysis of the CEO/Founders letter since the first years of the annual report's existence (1989) up until the present (2007). From this longitudinal analysis, the following analysis and conclusions can be made.

From pluralistic to unitary Projected Identity

First of all, Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity evolves from a pluralistic expression of the company pre-acquisition to a more monolithic form post acquisition. This evolution occurs incrementally and the process begins pre-acquisition. In other words, it is not the acquisition itself which changes radically the way the Projected Identity is expressed. In the early pre-acquisition days there are clearly two voices shaping the Projected Identity: the Founders and the CEO. This is evident under Chuck's mandate, and continues to be under Bob Holland. Under Perry Odak, the Founders voice has completely disappeared. This shift

away from a pluralistic expression to a monolithic one indicates several things. First of all it reveals that there was perhaps greater transparency in the pre-acquisition Projected Identity in terms of who the key players of the organization were. In the early days, we clearly see that it is Chuck Lacy who endorses the financial role while Ben Cohen endorses the role of the social mission guru and driver. Later under Bob Holland's mandate, power struggles emerge between Bob and the Founders—and this also transpires in the Projected Identity. By the end of Perry Odak's mandate, the Projected Identity is monolithic once again—meaning that there is only one voice expressing what it is--the Founders have disappeared altogether and the social mission is put on the back burner. Under Yves Couette and later under Walt Freese, there continues to be a single voice expressing the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's despite the fact that Ben & Jerry's is now part of a larger organizational structure. These findings reveal two things. Firstly, the organization began to change prior to the acquisition—the Projected Identity first took on a unitary voice with Perry Odak. This entails that organizational growth and the switch over to professional managers perhaps had a greater impact on the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's than the acquisition itself. Secondly, these findings reveal perhaps a greater level of transparency in the pre-acquisition days as to the distribution of power, power struggles and roles of key players at Ben & Jerry's. The post acquisition Projected Identity expresses an identity which does not give official voice to the greater Unilever Company and yet it is this greater entity which is responsible for the economic mission of the brand. Employees and managers at Ben & Jerry's revealed during interviews that power struggles continue to be an issue at Ben & Jerry's—these power struggles being particularly salient during the NAIC era and loosening up since the dismantling of the NAIC structure. My point is that while power struggles are inherent to all organizations, these struggles are more apparent in the pre-acquisition Projected Identity but seem to disappear altogether in the post acquisition Projected Identity.

From Projected Identity dominated by founders to professional managerial voice

Secondly, the evolution of the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's reveals the gradual disappearance of the Founders' voice. Surprisingly, this disappearance of the Founders' voice actually occurred prior to the acquisition and in a slow incremental way. By the time the last professional manager was leading the firm in 1997, the Founders' voice had completely disappeared. This finding puts into perspective the impact an acquisition may have on the organizational identity of a firm—contrary to much of the M&A literature which places heavy emphasis on the impact of the M&A on a target firm, my findings reveal that events prior to

the M&A such as external competition and firm growth issues may actually have more impact on the Projected Identity (in terms of Founders' discourse) than the acquisition itself.

Three part mission both endures and changes

Thirdly, the evolution of the Projected Identity pre and post acquisition reveals a three part mission which endures in some respects and changes in others. My analysis supports the idea that organizational identity can display both stability and change. This is consistent with Chreim (2000) and supports both Albert & Whetten's (1985) original proposition that organizational identity must be "enduring" for a significant amount of time and Corley's (2005) study which states that organizational identity change is possible and that one must strive to understand the nature of this identity change.

Three part mission endurance

The three part mission reveals identity endurance in the sense that it has been a central focus of the Projected Identity over the years both pre and post acquisition and under the various leaders' mandates. This brings support to the idea that official leadership discourse must continually seek a balance between giving the appearance of a stable but also fluid organization (Gioia, 1998). The succeeding periods show a continued focus of the CEO/Founder on the importance of the mission and on preserving this valuable mission which is at the core of the organization's identity. This repeated use of the three part mission as a platform to express discourse projects a certain stability in the Projected Identity. Clearly, the three part mission has been and continues to be a core identity attribute of the Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's both pre and post acquisition. While at various points throughout the history of Ben & Jerry's, major organizational events sometimes take the limelight, and thus push the three part mission into a more peripheral identity space (need to look inward under Bob Holland's mandate; the acquisition event itself under Perry Odak; layoffs under Yves Couette and globalization under Walt Freese), this only occurs temporarily and sooner or later the Projected Identity is back on course, focusing on its core three part mission identity.

The three part mission also reveals identity endurance in the way the Projected Identity has defined its nature. Both pre and post acquisition, the three part mission has been qualified as a core essence with essential characteristics and also a process of social construction which is never ending. Again there is some variation in the emphasis placed on the three part mission identity as being a core essentialist feature versus it being a process of social

construction. Under Ben Cohen's leadership in the early years, there is very little talk of what the social mission's core characteristics are. Most of Ben Cohen's discourse focuses on the social construction of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity—he talks of the social mission as being a continuous struggle like life itself, a quest for knowledge and spirituality. Ben's conception of the social mission is more one of a process of social construction than of a fixed and static core essence to be found. Under Bob Holland's mandate, there is more of a focus on essentialist features of what the social mission qualifiers might be—Bob Holland focuses on 'family' and 'consumer' attributes to define the new Projected Identity or the three part mission statement. He also focuses on the idea that the three part mission is a process and that the success of the three part mission is dependent on a greater focus on the economic mission. Post acquisition, there is a continued attempt to define the essential core characteristics of the social mission and its relationship to the economic mission—and there also is a focus on the social construction of this mission. Overall there is only one moment in time when the Projected Identity focused more exclusively on the social construction of the three part mission and this was under Ben in the early years. This was a time when Ben was exploring new territory and the Projected Identity clearly reflects that. Ever since this early period the company's history, the Projected Identity has been and continues to reflect managers' quest for the magic ingredients which make up the three part mission. There is therefore a heavy focus on trying to identify the three part mission's attributes so as to capture the magic essence of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. At the same time, the Projected Identity also reveals that managers seek to take an active part in the construction of the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity—thus this SROI reveals it is also a process of social construction.

Three part mission changes

The three part mission reveals change in terms of which part of the mission is focused upon (social, economic or product), in terms of the relationships between each aspect of the mission (how well the overall mission is integrated or not), in terms of the temporal aspect of identity (ideal/future or actual/present) and finally in terms of the explanation for the drivers of this three part mission (Founders, employee voice or top management).

There is more visible change in the evolution of the three part mission focus from one leadership cycle to another pre acquisition than there is between the pre and post acquisition organization. Pre-acquisition under Ben Cohen in the early years, there is an integrated three part mission followed by a period of intense economic focus (1993 when the stock price

drops) and then a mixed focus under Bob Holland and finally a purely economic focus under Perry Odak. Post acquisition the three part mission has a mixed social/economic focus and the product mission is left to the periphery or altogether absent from the Projected Identity. Furthermore, post acquisition we have an evolution of how well the three part mission is integrated—under Yves Couette the product mission is almost absent and makes an appearance only towards the end of his mandate but in a disjointed manner whereas under Walt Freese the three part mission is well integrated the first year of his mandate but less so in the later years where the social and economic dimensions take so much space that the product mission is almost absent.

The one critical aspect of the three part mission that has changed in terms of the Projected Identity is the product mission. While the product mission was clearly visible in the Projected Identity in the pre-acquisition days under Ben Cohen's leadership—the product mission wanes under the Professional Managers era to the point of almost disappearing in the post acquisition era. This may indicate that the focus of top management (at least in terms of the Projected Identity) since the Professional Managers' Era is primarily focused on the social and economic mission perhaps to the detriment of the product mission. The lack of focus on the product mission has waned since the acquisition either because the focus on the product mission has lessened or simply because the product mission is not a very differentiating discourse to have, while the idea of a double social and economic mission are more innovative concepts to project to the public.

Looking at the temporal aspect of identity change, CEOs are constantly expressing both the actual state of the Projected Identity (how the company is doing) but also projecting its future strategy and vision (ideal Projected Identity). The nature of the ideals will change over time—pre acquisition the focus is to improve the financial mission while post acquisition the general focus is to better understand and develop the social mission. There are also several key moments when CEOs acknowledge there is a gap between the actual and ideal Socially Responsible Organizational Identity of Ben & Jerry's. This occurs under Ben Cohen's mandate when the company is sanctioned by the stock market in 1993; it happens again under Bob Holland's mandate when he acknowledges the need to hone in on organizational issues and finally it occurs during Walt Freese's second mandate where he is very open about acknowledging some of the company's shortcomings, explaining that the actual social mission strategy has been reactive but that the ideal social mission strategy needs to become more proactive.

The final aspect of identity change in the Projected Identity concerns the drivers of the three part mission. The most significant identity change in terms of the drivers of the three part mission occurs during the switch over from Ben Cohen's leadership to Professional Management leadership (with Bob Holland). Under Ben's early leadership pre-acquisition, the driving force behind the three part mission and particularly behind the social and product mission are the Founders. During those days as mentioned earlier, the three part mission is framed by Ben as being more a process than an essence—it is a work in progress. If one was to qualify the central attribute of the three part mission under this early leadership period one could say that it is about "process" or "learning & struggle." Slowly as professional managers begin to take over, Ben's voice disappears and a new central attribute 'employee voice' is attributed by professional managers as being the new driver of the social mission. There is one exception that occurs under Perry Odak's mandate where 'employee voice' is not mentioned as Perry focuses exclusively on the economic mission, leaving human resource questions to the side. 'Employee voice' becomes a central three part mission driver once again post acquisition under Yves Couette and later Walt Freese—employees are acknowledged as key drivers and central identity attributes of the Ben & Jerry's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. Overall there is a clear evolution indicating a shift from Founders' presence to absence—and the need for organizational identity—at least in its projected form, to be carried and driven by someone—in the Ben & Jerry's case, employees are attributed as the key drivers of the three part mission once Ben's voice has disappeared entirely.

Normative versus utilitarian orientation

Albert & Whetten (1985) proposed that over time normative organizations will become more utilitarian. This trend is attributed to the increase in the size of the firm, bureaucratization and routinization of charisma (Weber, 1968 cited in Albert & Whetten, 1985). Furthermore, young, normative organizations are generally founded upon the ideological vision of a charismatic leader (Albert & Whetten, 1985, p.278). Over time, professional managers are necessary to ensure that the entrepreneur's initial vision is incorporated into organizational routines.

Overall it cannot be said that the Projected Identity is increasingly instrumental and economic (and less normative) as predicted by Albert & Whetten (1985) of normative organizations. This is perhaps because Ben & Jerry's was never a purely normative organization and that from the start it had a dual mission (actually triple: economic, social and

product mission). While my longitudinal analysis reveals periods of greater emphasis on one aspect of the mission (economic under Perry Odak; more normative in early years under Ben Cohen), overall there is a focus on both aspects of the mission both pre and post acquisition. Interestingly the Projected Identity post acquisition has not lessened in the importance it devotes to the social mission—quite on the contrary the two CEOs post acquisition have focused primarily on the social mission, attempting to define it in relationship to the economic mission so as to better capture it and institutionalize it into the processes of the firm. The economic mission also continues to take an important place in the Projected Identity discourse—but again the Projected Identity is not more instrumental than it was pre-acquisition. If one looks at the Projected Identity under the Perry Odak mandate, it was much more utilitarian than the current Projected Identity under Walt Freese or even the Projected Identity under Yves Couette. If one looks into the nature of the economic mission, the evolution from the pre acquisition days to the present does mark a shift from a focus on the notion of pure financial matters to a focus on more marketing and brand issues. This shift began under the Professional Managers' period with Bob Holland pre acquisition.

A significant shift in the Projected Identity orientation (normative vs. utilitarian) is its increasingly ambiguous nature. The current Projected Identity of Ben & Jerry's under Walt Freese is both more instrumental than in the past (brand becomes core identity attribute) and yet also more normative (explicit call for ethical motivation in social mission actions undertaken). The instrumental notion of brand has become central to the Projected Identity of the company and yet the Projected Identity also expresses an ethical motivation for social mission actions: "We do it because it's the right thing to do!" While the Projected Identity has always been somewhat ambiguous both pre and post acquisition, it takes on an even more ambiguous nature post acquisition. This can be explained by the fact that in an increasingly dynamic and changing environment, leadership must demonstrate that it knows how to cope with such turbulence and thus tends to maintain ambiguity in the discourse projected (Gioia, 1998) so as to project both stability and change in the Projected Identity. Such ambiguous discourse serves to reassure stakeholders that despite adaptation to a changing environment (some level of change) the organizational identity will maintain sufficient stability. Ben & Jerry's will keep on being Ben & Jerry's just as it was under Founders' leadership. The increasingly ambiguous nature of the Projected Identity regarding its normative and utilitarian orientation also comes from the new governance structure itself. Since the acquisition by Unilever, Ben & Jerry's is now part of a large multi-national corporation that must answer to its stockholders who expect strong economic returns. At the same time, one of the reasons

that Ben & Jerry's became such a successful company in the first place and the target of a takeover bid is precisely because it had differentiated itself through its triple mission (product, economic and social)—a difficult balancing act which defies the free market paradigm (see Friedman, 1970 for a virulent attack of the idea of corporate social responsibility going beyond economic responsibility).

A significant change regarding the orientation of the triple mission is the way top managers articulate the relationship between the three terms. Pre-acquisition, the Founders attempted to convince stakeholders that the firm's social mission could drive the economic mission. This reflected a time when Ben & Jerry's was a CSRS pioneer and one of the only publicly traded firms with a social mission as part of its core identity. Post acquisition, the Projected Identity reveals an organization nested within a larger one where two spheres co-exist: the Ben & Jerry's sphere at the central headquarters in Burlington, Vermont and the Unilever sphere at a more abstract corporate level. Within the Ben & Jerry's sphere, social mission actions can be ethically driven because there is a cocoon whereby these very social mission actions have been acknowledged as vital to the identity of the Ben & Jerry's brand. These social mission actions are authentic and genuine and the Ben & Jerry's employees are social mission missionaries, convinced of their social role and participation in making the world a better place. This "ethical sphere" constituted by social mission missionary employees is what feeds the power of the brand at a more global level. It is precisely because employees believe in the goodness of what they are doing and the fact that the social mission marketing activities are genuine and not cynical that the brand can be authentic and powerful. However these social mission endeavours do not exist in a vacuum—they exist because they feed the Ben & Jerry's brand which is itself one among many brands under the Unilever corporate umbrella. The motivations at the Unilever level are however not ethics based (or at least not solely ethics based) as Unilever answers to stockholders and must therefore have sound economic justifications for any of their social mission actions undertaken. The Projected Identity post acquisition (and particularly recently) reveals two different logics, nested within each other. A pure ethical logic (Ben & Jerry's headquarters in Vermont) nested within a more economic and global logic (Unilever corporate). This is an interesting discovery and a perhaps marks the appearance of a new organizational identity form that may be increasingly present in the future as companies become part of global corporations yet wish to maintain their authenticity within this global context.

The above discussion can be summed up in the following diagram (figure 11):

Figure 11

Projected Identity pre vs post acquisition
Logic behind the three part mission statement

Pre acquisition: One logic
Social mission drives
Economic mission

Post acquisition: Dual logic
One logic nested within another

Ben & Jerry's Organization

Economic Mission

Social Mission

Economic logic Unilever corporate

Normative logic Ben & Jerry's Headquarters, Burlington, Vermont

4.1.5 Projected Identity: Some Concluding Remarks & Theoretical Implications

While I allude to what may be the key influences that have shaped the evolution of Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity in the above analysis, some clarification and remarks on theoretical implications is necessary.

The first explanation for the evolution of the Projected Identity is a natural life cycle explanation of the growth of a firm. Evolving from a small Founders' led business to a larger professionally managed entity, a firm's identity needs to be sustained by the efforts of professional managers in order to 'routinize charisma' (Weber cited in Albert & Whetten, 1985). This 'routinization of charisma' in the Ben & Jerry's case translates into the attempts by the various CEOs to understand, capture and make the social mission their own. This process is evident in all periods identified above but does seem to intensify post-acquisition.

A second influence of Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity is the nature of CEO character or CEO competencies. Hambrick & Mason (1984, p.193) have argued that "..organizational outcomes are...reflections of the values and cognitive bases of powerful actors in the organization." Studies of top management teams have identified the importance of CEO

character and emotions in influencing firm strategy (Kisfalvi & Pitcher, 2003). In the Ben & Jerry's case, it is clear that the character of each leader/CEO has played a key role in shaping the organization's strategy and the Projected Identity. Ben Cohen's desire to change the world clearly shaped Ben & Jerry's strategy and in turn the Projected Identity of the firm. During Ben's leadership period, the Projected Identity reveals a process of consciousness in the making as Ben is himself trying to invent a new way to conduct business. Ben Cohen also had no formal management training. He had great intuitions and is considered by some to be a marketing genius but he did not know how to balance his own check book so that the financial issues escaped him. This aspect of his competencies is also reflected in the Projected Identity as Ben relegates financial matters to Chuck Lacy, keeping the social mission talk for himself.

The CEOs who followed, Bob Holland, Perry Odak, Yves Couette and finally Walt Freese have each had very different character traits and personalities which have also played a role in shaping the Projected Identity. The point here is not to delve into psychoanalysis of each CEO's character but simply to note that top management character, competencies and career experience play a key role in shaping a firm's identity and more specifically, it's Projected Identity. One aspect of CEO character trait/personality/experience that I do wish to focus on is the issue of career experience. Authors have argued that career experience can shape top managerial actions (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). This seems to be particularly relevant in our case study. Taking a look at each CEO/leader, one finds that career experience plays a key role in orienting each leader's perspectives, actions and in turn the Projected Identity of the firm. Ben Cohen had eclectic career experiences prior to entering Ben & Jerry's—he had been a potter, a social worker, a college drop out. Bob Holland had worked for McKinsey as a consultant. Perry Odak had worked for an arms manufacturer and was known as a firm turnaround specialist. Yves Couette had spent his entire career at Unilever. Finally, Walt Freese had worked for other social businesses prior to entering Ben & Jerry's.

A third influence of the Projected Identity is internal organizational issues. Under Bob Holland's mandate, the organization was under tension as the transition to new leadership was occurring. This was reflected in a Projected Identity which tried to present an ideal vision of the organization as a 'family'—quite the opposite of what was actually going on. When layoffs occurred under Yves Couette, the Projected Identity honed in on the extraordinary spirit of Ben & Jerry's employees as an integral part of the firm. While painful internal organizational issues tend to be transformed into positives by the CEO, they nonetheless do appear as shapers of the Projected Identity.

A fourth influence is external marketplace business challenges. Under Ben Cohen, this occurred in 1993 when the market sanctioned Ben & Jerry's stock price for the first time. As a result of this external signal, the Projected Identity looked inward, trying to find ways to improve the organization and Ben Cohen no longer spoke of interconnectedness and lofty ideals, focusing instead on the importance of the three part mission. Under Perry Odak, marketplace business challenges appeared again as the pressure from competitors intensified, orienting a strategy (and a Projected Identity) focused almost exclusively on the financial mission.

Finally, we arrive at the influence of the M&A itself on the Projected Identity. While the findings from the longitudinal analysis of CEO/Founders' discourse reveal that the change over from the Founders to professional management was a more significant turning point than the acquisition itself in terms of the evolution of Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity, the acquisition did have a strong influence on the expression of the three part mission.

Firstly, there is a significant shift in the expression of the product mission pre and post acquisition. Although the product mission discourse waned during the professional managers' era, it nearly disappears from post acquisition CEO Letters. The "loss of product 'talk'" post acquisition can be explained by several factors. Firstly, Unilever is a multinational that manages brands, not necessarily businesses, which implies primacy of marketing/branding over other issues (product itself). Secondly, towards the end of Yves Couette's mandate, the Ben & Jerry's factory was splintered away from the control of Ben & Jerry's headquarters to be controlled directly by Unilever supply chain. This shift in reporting relationship seems to also be reflected in the Projected Identity. Finally, Unilever's focus on improving operating margins may have impacted the quality of the product (although this may have begun during the Perry Odak years when the financial mission took primacy) thus creating a sense of shame or at least the unwillingness to discuss such issues in the annual reports.

Secondly, the acquisition seems to have had a significant impact on social mission messaging. While the social mission was present in CEO discourse pre-acquisition (to a bigger extent under Ben Cohen and to a lesser extent under Perry Odak), there is an intensification of the attention given to the social mission post-acquisition. This heightened focus is true both for Yves Couette and for Walt Freese who both place the social mission as a centre piece of their discourse. While both CEOs are authentic when they speak about the social mission of Ben & Jerry's (Yves Couette revealed during an interview that his time at

Ben & Jerry's had a profound influence on him and Walt Freese explained that working for Ben & Jerry's is practically a calling), the intensification of their social mission discourse as expressed in the Projected Identity also points to Unilever's desire to capture the non-tangible asset it has acquired: a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. It seems that post acquisition discourse is very focused on capturing and capitalizing upon this non-tangible asset, perhaps indicating an increasing commercialization of Corporate Social Responsibility.

4.2 Manifested Identity: The Artefacts Story

After having explored the evolution of Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity to better understand how the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity of a target firm is impacted by an acquisition, I now turn to the second part of the Ben & Jerry's story which concerns the visible manifestations of organizational identity (such as symbols, rites and myths), what I label the "Manifested Identity"—this also refers to elements that characterize the organization over time (the "historical" identity). This is consistent with the temporal dimension of Albert & Whetten's landmark definition of identity: "that which is central, distinctive & has temporal continuity" (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Manifested Identity represents the visible bi-products or expression of an organization's basic assumptions (Schein, 1985; Larçon & Reiter, 1979). Given this definition, I could very much have decided to include the analysis of annual CEO Letters as part of the Manifested Identity—after all these letters are also tangible and visible manifestations of organizational identity. The reason that I did not situate the official CEO/Founders' Letters as part of my analysis of the visible manifestations of identity is that I was specifically interested in isolating and analyzing the 'managerial voice' behind these CEO Letters, to uncover how an M&A affects social responsibility discourse . Being able to contrast managerial discourse with other sources of data is particularly pertinent given the abuse made by companies of unsubstantiated or tenuous CSR claims (i.e.: "green washing.") Being able to triangulate top management's "talk" (Projected Identity) to more tangible manifestations or company actions & processes (Manifested Identity) and finally to employee perceptions (Experienced Identity) is at the heart of my inquiry. I do acknowledge however that there is no air tight frontier between the Manifested and Projected Identity facets and that my CEO letter analysis included in the 'Projected Identity' section could very well have been included as part of the 'Manifested Identity section. The CEO discourse found in the annual Environmental and Social reports is just as much of a tangible manifestation of Ben & Jerry's identity as is product packaging. Taking this logic further, I could very much

have considered that product packaging was part of the 'Projected Identity' because it is in the realm of 'managerial expression of mission' as top management ultimately has the final decision on product packaging. Again, my model's boundaries are not air tight but for the purposes of this study, it was important to be able to contrast clearly official top management discourse—and only a letter signed and endorsed by a CEO could embody so clearly such a discourse. Product packaging on the other hand is the work of many actors and not necessarily the purest form of 'managerial expression of mission.'

To uncover Ben & Jerry's 'Manifested Identity'—I sought not things that pertained to top management discourse or speech but simply symbolic productions of the organization as a whole. I analyzed the evolution of product packaging, the Ben & Jerry's web site and media clippings. From an analysis of the Ben & Jerry's web site and media clippings, I made a list of what I found to be interesting artefacts which best represent visible manifestations of what Ben & Jerry's is all about both pre and post acquisition (defining attributes of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity). In the following section I will firstly briefly analyze how product packaging has evolved between pre and post acquisition and what this evolution reveals.

Secondly, I will briefly explain as factually as possible the evolution of a series of important organizational artefacts. This section will be brief as it only serves to provide a context for the reader to better understand the final section of this study which is about insiders' interpretation of the impact of the Unilever acquisition on Ben & Jerry's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI). The second reason why this section is brief is that as I collected data on organizational artefacts, I came to realize that artefacts alone don't necessarily tell us much about organizational identity—instead it is organizational members' interpretations of artefacts that are much richer and interesting to understand the evolution of the Ben & Jerry's SROI from pre to post acquisition. Interestingly, I had initially written an entire section entitled "Manifested Identity" that was to reveal employees' take on the evolution of organizational artefacts since the acquisition. Upon further reflection however, I realized that employees' interpretations of these artefacts should be included in the "Experienced Identity" section as this pertains to the realm of organizational members' experience.

4.2.1 Analysis of Product Packaging

Analysis of the product packaging reveals an evolution which confirms some of the findings in the Projected Identity as expressed by top managerial discourse in the CEO/Founders Letters in the previous section. The evolution of product packaging expresses the evolution away from an identity driven by the Founders to one driven by professional managers. It also expresses the fluctuating attention paid to the social mission of the company—with a slight lessening of social mission activity under the Perry Odak years pre-acquisition and a renewal under Walt Freese, the current CEO of Ben & Jerry's.

The shift in packaging is most significant in 1998 under Perry Odak and not at the time of the acquisition. Again this confirms a major shift in the Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity prior to the acquisition itself (see Appendix 6.8 for illustration of product packaging evolution). This brings further support to the idea that the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity of Ben & Jerry's was at least as impacted by growth issues and the arrival of professional management prior to the acquisition as by the acquisition itself.

Until the late 1980's, a photo of both Ben and Jerry is prominent on the pint lids—this is accompanied by a phrase, "two real guys" which appears next to the Founders' image. This is consistent with the first phase I identified of the Projected Identity—the Founders' Era—a phase that marks the dominance of the Founders as drivers of the organizational identity—here reflected in the design of the packaging itself.

In 1997, product packaging takes a significant turn under Perry Odak—the pints are redesigned so that the Founders no longer appear on the packaging. The lettering is also modified to bring more visibility for consumers—and this is explained in the 1997 annual report: "What's outside is a fresh new pint design that focuses on communicating product quality. Our consumer research found that the newly designed package translates Ben & Jerry's quality and flavour message more clearly, easily and quickly."

During this same period, in 1998, the "Eco-pint" is the first unbleached pint packaging to be launched by an ice cream manufacturer. This measure is environmentally friendly and a clear manifestation of the vibrant aspect of the social/environmental facet of the mission—but it is also more costly than the standard bleached package used by the industry.

The pint packaging reveals three other significant phases; an initial post acquisition phase, a phase under Yves Couette, and finally the phase under Walt Freese.

The Manifested Identity in the initial phase post acquisition seems to float and lacks a clear direction—this is a transition phase before Yves Couette has had time to give the social mission a new direction and a clear vision. During this transition phase, although the company continues to sell some of its social mission oriented flavours (such as Brownie flavour using socially responsible supplier Greyston Bakery or its "One Sweet Whirled" flavour, supporting environmental causes) there are no new specific social mission product launches.

Once Yves Couette begins to gain a greater understanding of the social mission, the product packaging takes on a more clearly social mission orientation. New product launches include an organic ice cream line and a flavour called "Fossil Fuel"—with the intention to increase consumer awareness of global warming—this echoes the new social mission strategy under Yves Couette which is to be more focused on environmental issues.

The last period under Walt Freese's leadership brings us to the present. The Manifested Identity as revealed by the pint packaging during this phase shows intense social mission activity. There are a great number of flavours and products launched that have a direct link with the social mission of the company: Fair Trade flavours (bring attention to North/South economic inequalities), the 'American Pie' flavour (focuses on US Government's spending on military versus education activities) and finally two well publicized product launches in partnership with media progressive personality Stephen Colbert and Country singer Willie Nelson. Both partnerships have a social mission flavour to them—a significant part of the profits of each ice cream will be donated to each personality's Foundation—also the partnership with Stephen Colbert is a manifestation of Ben & Jerry's progressive orientation given that Stephen Colbert is a self-proclaimed progressive (in terms of political views).

Finally, in September of this year, the renaming of an old flavour "Chubby Hubby" to "Hubby Hubby" is a particularly interesting manifestation of the evolving Manifested Identity of Ben & Jerry's and marks a return to the progressive and cutting edge political activism of the pre-acquisition days under Ben and Jerry's leadership. The flavour "Hubby Hubby" is meant to "celebrate the beginning of the freedom to marry for gay and lesbian couples in Vermont." This marks a fairly bold political stand for a business to take, particularly as part of a multinational answering to stockholders which may not share such "progressive" values.

What is noteworthy is that under Yves Couette's leadership, the idea for "Hubby Hubby" had come up but Yves had vetoed the idea arguing that it was too political and could potentially alienate consumers. The recent turn around and launch of "Hubby Hubby"

supports the idea that social mission identity at Ben & Jerry's is very much alive post acquisition.

The contemporary period does however reveal ambiguities in terms of the commitment of the company towards making real the social mission identity of Ben & Jerry's. The unbleached eco-pint packaging launched in 1998 as a way to minimize environmental damage has recently been terminated (2007) due to cost reasons—the company had hoped that other ice cream manufacturers would adopt the unbleached pint over time, thus decreasing the cost of the packaging—but this never happened. The pint packaging is today being replaced by a new pack from a supplier "with an excellent track record of sustainable forestry practices"—but this shift seems to indicate an increased focus on economic considerations to the detriment of the social/environmental mission. Interestingly, Ben & Jerry's does acknowledge in their 2007 social & environmental report that they did not reach their goal which was to achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for their new pint container in the United States. This acknowledgement reveals a certain level of transparency and honesty which has been one of the central identity attributes of Ben & Jerry's over the years.

To conclude on the Manifested Identity and its evolution based on an analysis of product packaging, the social mission continues to play a very important role today as long as it is compatible with the economic mission. Supporting gay rights on a pint does not cost extra money and yet positions Ben & Jerry's as progressive, innovative and politically cutting edge in the consumers' mind. Having an unbleached packaging that raises packaging costs is however, no longer feasible.

4.2.2 Analysis of Ben & Jerry's Website and Media Clippings

In this next section, I describe as factually as possible the evolution from pre to post acquisition of a series of artefacts selected from the Ben & Jerry's website and media clippings. These are the artefacts I later asked employees to react to. I analyze employees' reactions to these artefacts in the last section about employee experience ("Experienced Identity"). The list of artefacts is somewhat arbitrary—I attempted to take artefacts that I found to best illustrate Ben & Jerry's 'manifested' identity and that came up repeatedly either in media clippings and/or the Ben & Jerry's web site. I made sure that these artefacts represented the various stakeholders of the firm (employee relations, product, community,

environmental issues, suppliers)—and also sought a balance of relevant artefacts from both the pre and post acquisition time period.

The relevance of the selected artefacts was confirmed by the interviews with Ben & Jerry's employees and more particularly with central employees. When asked to spontaneously give examples of tangible, visible manifestations that best illustrate what Ben & Jerry's is all about, central employees mentioned most of the artefacts compiled from my analysis of the web site and media clippings. Central employees also cited three additional artefacts: factory seconds, woody cow scene graphics and finally artefacts directly linked to leadership style (linked to time period under NAIC leadership versus time period under new Unilever leadership). Interestingly, new factory employees were much less familiar with many of the artefacts I had selected. This will be discussed further in the factory experience section.

The complete list of artefacts analyzed is divided up into four topic areas: employee relations (salary ratio, Joy Gang); community (Ben & Jerry's Foundation, free cone day, factory tours, political campaigns, concerts/festivals, Vermont only stock offering); environment (eco pint), and product issues (fair trade flavours, cage free eggs, factory seconds, rbgh free milk, and Greyston Bakery.)

Employee Relations Artefacts

Five to one salary ratio (5:1)

This salary ratio was initiated by Ben in 1985 and from inspiration by Jeff Furman who had read about the Mondragon cooperative in Spain whereby top managers did not make more than three times what the lowest paid worker earned. In 1985, the salary ratio is born at Ben & Jerry's—it stipulates that the top salary cannot be higher than five times what the lowest paid employee makes. By 1990, the salary ratio evolves to seven to one due to the difficulty in recruiting good top management staff. In 1995, the salary ratio concept is eliminated but it is still mentioned in the annual reports until 2003. Post 1995, the salary ratio keeps increasing until it completely disappears in 2004 (at least it is no longer mentioned in the Annual Social & Environmental Report). Table 4 below summarizes the evolution of the salary ratio at Ben & Jerry's.

Table 4

Evolution of Ben & Jerry' Salary Ratio from 1985 to 2004		
Year	**Salary ratio**	**CEO or top management in charge**
1985	5:1	Ben & Jerry
1990	7:1	Chuck
1995	14.5: 1	Bob Holland
1997	17:1	Perry Odak
1998	16:1 excluding stock options	Perry Odak
2000	17:1 excluding stock options	Yves Couette
2002	17.5: 1 excluding stock options	Yves Couette
2003	17.6 to one excluding stock options	Yves Couette
2004	disappears	Yves Couette's last year

Joy Gang

This employee run committee was initiated by Jerry Greenfield in the late 1980s with the goal of bringing more joy to the workplace. This proposal came at a time when the company was growing at a frantic pace and when employees were working extremely hard— One employee had even referred to Ben & Jerry's during this frantic growth stage as "a

sweatshop in a pastoral setting" (Lager, 1994). Joy Gang activities throughout the years have included crazy dress up days, various food events at the workplace, prizes, and gifts— all done in a joyful and fun spirit. This artefact represents one of the founding attributes of Ben & Jerry's which is the fun and quirky aspect—as expressed in a flyer given out to customers one year after the business was started on which Jerry had written, "If it's not fun why do it?"

Community Artefacts

Ben & Jerry's Foundation

The Ben & Jerry's Foundation was started in 1985 when Ben & Jerry decided to make their business a 'values led' business. It was stipulated that the Foundation would receive 7.5% of pre-tax profits each year and use the funds for community oriented projects. The 7.5% of pre-tax profits has remained stable until the acquisition. Since the acquisition, financial numbers are not available for the Ben & Jerry's business—thus only an absolute number is given as to the money allocated to the Foundation but this no longer reflects the 7.5% formula. In the acquisition agreement, it was formulated that the Ben & Jerry's Foundation receive at least $1.1 million per year with adjustment upward based on sales growth. It is unclear if that corresponds to something which is higher or lower than 7.5% of pre tax profits. In absolute numbers the evolution of the donations to the Foundation has evolved from $288 971 in 1989 to $1.69 million in 2007.

Free Cone Day

This tradition of having one day a year devoted to giving out free ice cream to customers in all of the Ben & Jerry's scoop shops started one year after Ben & Jerry's were in business. It was a way to thank the community for its support and for allowing Ben & Jerry's to make it past the first critical year of business. During this first landmark event, Ben had written on a flyer given out to announce the event: "Business has a responsibility to give back to the community" while Jerry's quote was "If it's not fun, why do it?" The 'Free Cone Day' event still takes place today.

Factory Tours

This event began in 1986, shortly after the Waterbury manufacturing plant opened. The plant was built with the idea that it would have the capacity to welcome tours from tourists and consumers. According to Chico Lager, ex-Ben & Jerry's CEO, this was a

marketing idea which came from Ben and Chico. The idea was to differentiate Ben & Jerry's from Haagen-Dazs and to show through the tours that this was a real company with two real guys (as opposed to Haagen-Dazs which were "phoneys"). The Waterbury factory tour has become today Vermont's number one tourist attraction.

Political Campaigns

This 'artefact' refers to visible political events which Ben & Jerry's have either supported or been involved with as a company. A landmark 'political' campaign occurred when Ben & Jerry's was involved in a fight with Pillsbury Company in 1984—The Pillsbury Company was trying to enforce exclusive distribution for its own products, forcing distributors to exclude Ben & Jerry's from shelves. Ben & Jerry's retaliated by conducting a virulent poster campaign which read: "What's the doughboy afraid of?"—Jerry and Ben also went to Pillsbury's Minneapolis headquarters to picket using these same signs. Ben & Jerry were using social movement tactics from the 1960s to fend for their business—portraying their competitor as a 'goliath' capitalist against their small entrepreneurial business.

Other political campaigns over the years have included the One Percent for Peace initiative; Rainforest Crunch products; protests against nuclear power; campaign against global warming and most recently the American Pie Campaign to raise awareness on the Federal government's military spending. Political campaigns continue to be an integral part of Ben & Jerry's identity post acquisition.

Concerts & Festivals

Concerts and parties began as part of the annual shareholder meetings back in the 1980s- with sometimes up to 5000 Vermonters playing games of 'Tug of War', eating free ice-cream and listening to bands playing music. In 1991, these concerts and festivities became an even bigger event, taking on the name of "One World, One Heart Festivals' and were opened to the general public bringing over 100 000 people in three different locations (Vermont, Chicago and San Francisco). These festivals were highly publicized on pint containers, inviting everyone to attend the Festival for free.

The One World One Heart Festival took place annually until June 2000 when the last festival was held in Vermont.

Vermont-Only Public Stock Offering

In 1984, Ben & Jerry's set a legal precedent by establishing a Vermont-only public stock offering to raise money for a new manufacturing facility. This event is critical in the history of the company as it created an extremely strong bond between the Ben & Jerry's company and citizens of Vermont. This event is cited today by both old and new timer central employees as an example of a visible manifestation of what Ben & Jerry's is all about.

Environment Artefacts

Eco Pint

In 1998, the 'Eco pint' was introduced—it was the first unbleached pint packaging introduced by a frozen food company. The company had been working on the unbleached packaging since at least 1997. The 'Eco pint' is made from unbleached brown craft paper with a non-toxic printable clay coating. Bleaching is a chemical process considered to be one of the country's leading causes of toxic water pollution. In 2007, as explained earlier, the 'Eco pint' is phased out, to be replaced by another packaging from a supplier "with an excellent track record of sustainable forestry practices." It is unclear if this is a positive or negative step for the environment. What is clear is that the 'eco point' is abandoned due to cost reasons. Ben & Jerry also acknowledge in their 2007 social & environmental report that they did not reach their goal which was to achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for their new pint container in the United States.

Product Artefacts

Fair Trade Flavours & Values Led Sourcing

The Fair Trade movement is an effort to help small-scale farmers in developing countries compete and thrive in the global marketplace. As the Fair Trade movement is quite recent, Ben & Jerry's was obviously not present on this segment pre-acquisition. It is only in 2004 that Ben & Jerry's joined the global Fair Trade Movement by transitioning all of its coffee extract purchases to fair trade. In 2006, Ben & Jerry's extended Fair Trade ingredients for its vanilla and chocolate flavours in Europe. In 2007, it transitioned some of its vanilla extract and chocolate pints to Fair Trade in the United States. That same year in Europe, it added to its list of Fair-trade certified ingredients: Chunky Monkey (made with Fair-trade banana puree, sugar, and cocoa powder) and Vanilla Toffee Crunch (with Fair-trade vanilla, sugar, and cocoa powder). The data revealing the actual percentage of Fair Trade ingredients used versus total ingredients is not available.

Ben & Jerry's does have a tradition of sourcing its ingredients as much as possible from companies aligned with the social mission of Ben & Jerry's. For instance Ben & Jerry's have sourced its milk from the St. Alban's milk Cooperative or from Greyston Bakery (which employs people with difficult job histories/drug abuse history etc) since the very beginning of the pre-acquisition days. Ben & Jerry's has published since 1997 (metric started under Perry Odak) the evolution of its 'Values-led sourcing ingredients.' Below is a table showing the evolution of values led sourcing from pre-acquisition under Perry Odak to today. If one compares today's percentage of values led sourcing to 1997 levels, it is almost equivalent (38% versus 35%--see Table 5 below). Available data to compare the early pre-acquisition period (pre 1995) versus today is lacking and does not allow comparison—if such data was available, substantial differences may be uncovered.

Table 5

Evolution of Ben & Jerry's Values Led Sourcing 1997-2008 Source: Ben & Jerry's annual Social & Environmental Reports		
Year	**Percentage of values led ingredients versus total ingredients used**	**Values led sourcing includes**
1997	35%	Milk from St. Albans Cooperative, Greyston Bakery brownies, coffee and nut suppliers
1998	38.6%	
1999	40%	Unbleached paper board pint is now included in metric (was not previously included)
2000	41.1%	Includes unbleached paper pint
2001	51%	No longer includes unbleached pint
2002	50%	
2004	59%	
2005	55%	
2006	49%	Falling price of milk explains decrease in percentage
2007	39% of ingredients for Vermont production are from socially aligned vendors—Figures from production at other plants not available at time of report publication	
2008	38% of North American production from socially aligned vendors	Ben & Jerry's anticipates that next year's VLS percentage will rise significantly after completion of the phase-in of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified paperboard for our United States pint packaging and the transition of virtually all of European dairy purchasing to Caring Dairy supplier.

Cage free eggs

In 2006, driven by consumer and NGO pressure, Ben & Jerry's made the decision to transition all of the eggs used in its U.S. ice cream production to Certified Humane cage-free suppliers over a four-year period, beginning in 2007. This decision made Ben & Jerry's one of the first national food manufacturers to commit to using Certified Humane cage-free eggs. The Certified Humane designation means that egg-laying hens are guaranteed to have wholesome, nutritious food, access to clean water, and adequate space to engage in normal behaviours, among dozens of criteria crafted by veterinary professionals. Compliance with these standards is provided by the non-profit organization Humane Farm Animal Care in Herndon, Virginia.

Factory Seconds

This 'artefact' is not mentioned on the Ben & Jerry's website or on any of the media articles we researched on Ben & Jerry's but it came up during interviews with old timer Ben & Jerry's employees. This notion of "factory seconds" refers to the ice cream which did not qualify as good enough to be sold or packaged into pints—instead they were given to Ben & Jerry's employees or donated to non-profit organizations in Vermont. Post acquisition with better efficiency and a focus on waste & cost control, 'factory seconds' no longer exist as all of the ice cream produced is packaged and sold.

Rbgh free milk

Ever since the early 1980s, the company has expressed its opposition to the use of rBGH milk by supporting family farmers who pledge not to use this type of milk and by labelling its products as "rBGH free." rBGH is a synthetic growth hormone given to cows to increase milk production. The company has continued to support its farmers who pledge not to use the synthetic hormone in all of its plants in the United States (as a new plant opened in Nevada in 2007). In 2007, Ben & Jerry's declared on its web site that upon opening its new plant in Nevada, it made sure to source its milk and cream from family farmers who pledged not to use the rBGH hormone. However in the 2008 social & environmental report, Ben & Jerry's only confirms that it sources rBGH free milk from Vermont but says nothing of its Nevada factory. In Europe this synthetic hormone is prohibited by legislation so it is a non issue there.

Greyston Bakery

In the late 1980s, Ben initiated a partnership with Greyston Bakery to source brownies from them. Greyston Bakery was started by Bernie Glassman a Buddhist who also set up a Zen community in New York State. Greyston Bakery hires the homeless and the hard-core unemployable to make cakes and brownies—the profits from the bakery are used to provide housing and training for its employees, to break the cycle of homelessness (Lager, 1994). The relationship with Greyston has been a difficult one as Ben & Jerry's has had to spend a significant amount of time and money working with and training them given that they were not as "professional" as other traditional suppliers.

The relationship with Greyston Bakery has been maintained throughout the years and continues to this day.

4.2.3 Manifested Identity: Overall Analysis & Conclusions

Several key conclusions can be made based on the above analysis of Ben & Jerry's 'Manifested Identity.' Firstly, the Manifested Identity as expressed in the evolution of the physical pint packaging supports the Projected Identity finding that the Founders' voice begins to disappear and is replaced by a managerial voice prior to the actual acquisition by Ben & Jerry's. Ben & Jerry's 'Manifested Identity' shifts from a more quirky, fun and normative identity orientation to a more utilitarian and business like orientation prior to the acquisition (the shift happens with Perry Odak). This finding provides support for a more longitudinal and contextual approach to organizations and waters down Mergers & Acquisition studies which attribute the bulk of organizational change to the M&A process itself. My study provides evidence that significant organizational identity change can occur due to simple organizational growth issues.

Secondly the 'Manifested Identity' reveals that the three part mission has evolved in both positive and negative ways since the acquisition. If one looks at the social mission, overall conclusions are generally very positive. For employee relations, we have the disappearance of the salary ratio but the appearance of the liveable wage; we also have the maintenance of the Joy Gang. For community relations, the Ben & Jerry's Foundation continues to operate much in the same way as it always has; Free Cone Day is stronger than ever, the Factory Tours and Political Campaigns are also strong artefacts integral to the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity. The one weak point in terms of Community Relations is the

disappearance due to cost reasons of the One World One Heart Festival which used to be such a central part of Ben & Jerry's pre-acquisition.

The product mission reveals a mixed evolution. It remains stable concerning the relationship with Greyston Bakery. According to Ben & Jerry's website and social & environmental report, the relationship with social mission supplier Greyston Bakery is still alive and well. Values led sourcing continues to be a central part of Ben & Jerry's product mission and is now equal to what it was in 1997 in terms of overall percentage. This seems to be a fairly positive point. There are however some weaknesses which transpire in the evolution of the product mission. Cage free eggs are a positive newly added 'social/product mission' attribute—however the circumstances under which this policy has been adopted reveal a reactive CSR strategy and not a well thought out proactive one. Finally, factory seconds no longer exist due to both cost reasons and greater operational efficiencies at the factories--and this may also contribute to a lesser focus on product quality.

4.3 Experienced Identity: The Insiders' Story

The third and final story to understand the impact of the Unilever acquisition on the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) of Ben & Jerry's is the "Experienced Identity" story. This "Experienced Identity" expresses what an organizations' members experience—it is the collective representation held by members. This is the interpretative conceptualization of identity which is most frequently adopted by organization theorists (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Dutton & al., 1994; Corley & Gioia, 2004). By listening to the stories of Ben & Jerry's employees I seek to arrive at a "thicker" description of organizational identity and also to reach a greater awareness of organizational context (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003).

To probe into insiders' understandings of how the acquisition has affected the identity of Ben & Jerry's—structured questions were asked about the company's mission and the artefacts listed in the previous section. Questions were directed so as to understand how organizational members understood the evolution of the three part mission, various important organizational artefacts and organizational image. More open ended questions were also asked about how employees thought the visible manifestations of their organization had evolved. Finally, in a third round of interviews employees and managers were asked about five different themes that emerged from my analysis of the first and second round of interviews. The four themes are: employee empowerment, leadership, manufacturing culture and innovation.

Organizational members from both central headquarters in Burlington, Vermont and from the Waterbury manufacturing plant in Waterbury, Vermont were interviewed (as explained in the methodology question in more depth). It became very clear that the "Experienced Identity" of the factory members was very different from that of the central office members.

The "Experienced Identity" section is therefore structured as follows. Firstly I focus upon central headquarters members' interpretations of the impact of the acquisition on Ben & Jerry's organizational identity. Secondly I proceed to analyze Waterbury factory members' interpretations of the impact of the acquisition on Ben & Jerry's organizational identity.

Although organizational image is not central to this study, I do acknowledge its importance and role in shaping organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 1997, 2002; Moingeon & Soenen, 2002). I therefore conclude the Experienced Identity section with a

short analysis of both central and factory members' experience of how image has evolved since the acquisition.

4.3.1 Central Headquarters

This first section is divided into three sub-sections: members' experience of the mission evolution since the acquisition, members' interpretation of organizational artefacts and finally members' interpretation of four identity themes which came up during interviews.

4.3.1.1 Central Employees' Experience of the Mission

Central members' experience of the company's mission reveals there is not a monolithic experience of the company's mission—one cannot speak of a single 'Experienced Identity' regarding the mission's evolution. This brings support to the differentiation perspective of organizational culture whereby consensus does not take place organization wide but rather within various sub-cultures (Balmer & Wilson, 1998; Bartunek & Moch, 1991; Brunsson, 1986, Christensen & Kreiner, 1984). This also provides support for the idea that hierarchical status (Corley, 2004) and time spent in the firm will colour one's experience of organizational identity.

There are two different voices which emerge to express the mission's evolution: new timer employees and old timer employees. Old timer employees are employees which have been with Ben & Jerry's since before the acquisition (prior to 2000) whereas new timers have been hired post acquisition (post 2000).

Furthermore, my findings reveal that the Experienced Identity of one employee group (or 'subculture') can change over time. For instance, old timer employee attitudes evolved positively from the second to the third wave of interviews (January 2008 versus November 2008)—reflecting the shift in reporting relationships away from NAIC. This brings support to the dynamic view of organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002) whereby identity is not static but rather in a constant state of flux, influenced by both internal and external factors.

Finally while hierarchical status does not seem to play as important a role as time of entry in the firm, I did find that managers as a group had a differing perspective—they are both more critical than new comer employees in their perception of how the three part mission

has evolved but also more hopeful than old timer employees in their vision for the future. Finally while Experienced Identity is far from unanimous regarding the product mission, there seems to be more universal agreement regarding the evolution of the Social Mission. For the Economic mission, there is agreement on the surface but new comers tend to be slightly more positive than old timers in framing their experience.

4.3.1.2 Central Employees Experience of the Product Mission

New Employees' Experience of Product Mission

New employees tend to be very positive about the product mission and to view it in present or future terms, not looking back to the past and to what it may have been like pre-acquisition. Their cognitive framework is very much anchored in the present or looking towards the future:

"I think the ice cream is awesome. Since I haven't been tasting it from day one to now, I don't really know that there's a difference. But I know that when I pick up a pint, I'm happy with it. And I'm a true chunks monger, I love the chunks—so there could always be more chunks in my opinion. I was talking to John Schaffer and apparently you can't classify the product as ice-cream if it has more than 120 grams of cookies or whatever—we can't put any more chunks than we already do! That's interesting, I just learned that." (New comer employee)

"Our product mission is about great tasting ice cream—but I want our product mission to be more than that—It's got to have a Ben & Jerry's personality—but what other way to be able to impact the world and impact consumers than by bringing our social mission integral into the products that we develop." (New comer employee,)

When newcomers do point out some of the tensions between Unilever and Ben & Jerry's regarding cost issues, they are very positive that in the end the product mission is upheld:

"As far as the product quality, I think it's stayed fairly consistent over the years. Obviously, they're always looking for ways to cut costs but we usually push back pretty hard on those measures to keep the product quality as high as possible." (New timer employee)

Here again, a new timer does acknowledge a lapse of the product mission for a time under NAIC—but she expresses that things have evolved very positively since:

"I can tell you what the perception is—of folks that have been here for a while-is that because of the acquisition—and certainly during our time with NAIC that the product piece of the mission was not as important—we had to really struggle—the sourcing, cage free sourcing and fair trade—some of these things that cost more money—but since NAIC is gone, we've seen a swing back in the other direction—so it really has to do with the leadership in that segment of the business." (New timer employee)

New comers also point to the positive aspect of having been acquired by Unilever and the possibility of making more of an impact on the world thanks to Unilever:

"I don't think it has changed at all (the three part mission). That is the core of our driving force--to really uphold this three part mission. And because of the acquisition, we're getting an opportunity to do it on a much larger scale with a worldwide impact." (New timer employee)

Old timer Employees' Experience of Product Mission

Old timers are generally less positive about the evolution of the product mission since the acquisition. For most old timer employees, cost cutting and the need for higher profit margins are major reasons for the erosion of product quality. Overwhelmingly old timer employees make a link between the evolution of the product mission and how this affects them personally in terms of emotions. Old timers express strong emotions regarding the evolution of product quality—this is something they care deeply about because it is a core attribute of who they have been as an organization and as individuals belonging to this organization. Product quality thus emerges as a central attribute of employees' sense of who they are as members of Ben & Jerry's—a central attribute of their organizational identity or "Experienced Identity."

What is noteworthy is that these employee viewpoints were collected in January 2008—just prior to the major organizational shifts in reporting relationships between Ben & Jerry's and Unilever—the following quotes reveal the tensions which arose between North American Ice Cream and Ben & Jerry's when Ben & Jerry's reported directly to NAIC:

"It's become more corporate which is sad. Our quality is suffering because of the acquisition—it's all driven by profits—and it's not the same—they just keep trying to push it as far as they can." (Old timer employee)

"The product has lost quality—it has been affected, it has declined. It's still good ice cream but not great ice cream." (Old timer employee)

"I think that the view right now is, "Look what they did to Breyers by cutting out as much as they could? By cutting all the costs—they drove it into the ground and it may end up dying. Do they really want to do that to Ben & Jerry's?" (Old timer employee)

"North American Ice Cream generated lots of business for Unilever by acquisition and cost cutting. For seven years now we have all in our individual ways tried to stop as much of that as possible because if everybody knew where the tipping point was on a brand, we'd all be rich. But nobody does. Breyers now has proven that you don't know where it is because Breyers is now a broken brand as is Klondike—and this was acknowledged publicly this week here......Today, the product statement is hanging on—it needs to really be looked at seriously in a very clear and safe way." (Old timer employee)

"I think there has been a dip in the quality of the product under Unilever's control and guidance. They are very tough—we can make money hand over fist but are we making enough money for them. So there have been some changes made to the product, to cut costs, to improve the bottom line and the financials. And this has been met with some disillusionment over time." (Old timer employee)

Very few employees actually speak about what the product mission was like pre-acquisition—most employees are focused on the present state of affairs. One old timer manager does explain how in the pre-acquisition days, the product mission was superb because Ben was committed 100% to product quality. This old timer implies that the NAIC top management doesn't have the same sense of commitment:

"Ben's feeling all along and from the very beginning was that the cost should go into the product and not into the package. So we purposely bought the most cost effective package.....Eric Walsh is a crazy man and Ben was a crazy man—that's ok—crazy men are sometimes how things get moving in the world. But one thing that Ben never screwed with was the quality of the product. He might be off the shelf—he could be abusive—he could be a lot of things—but he never screwed with the quality of the product—if anything he went the other way. And that's the major difference—when people say, "Ben was an unknown half the time!" Yes—but he never screwed with the quality." (Old timer manager)

Shortly after January 2008, North American Ice Cream as an entity disappeared and Ben & Jerry's began to report directly to Unilever corporate. I interviewed some of the same old timer employees in November 2008 and their viewpoints while still being more critical than new timers had evolved positively. They express a sense that things have changed since the switch over away from NAIC and to Unilever. One employee emphasizes how happy she is that Unilever is finally acknowledging how great Ben & Jerry's is:

"We were stifled under NAIC and because I'm not part of the innovation group—I don't know how stifled—Now we're being allowed a lot more freedom to be creative—so that has improved." (Old timer employee, November 2008)

"The constant challenge is the financial mission—because we were so tied in with Greenbay (NAIC) and because they were doing so bad—there was no money—we were all lumped together—those four brands were sucking air—and we were doing good—but it was looked at as ice cream. Now that we've sort of been set aside, I think Unilever's acknowledging how well we're doing. Before, they were just seeing numbers as a whole. I watched a video of the head of Unilever in London and he singled out Ben & Jerry's—Magnum is growing at 9.8% and Ben & Jerry's is growing even faster—we were the only brand in North America he mentioned and that made me feel good, yeah!!" (Old timer employee, November 2008)

Managers' Experience of Product Mission

Overall, managers differ from old and new timer employees in that they tend to be more nuanced about their answers. While they generally tend to agree that the product mission has been hurt post acquisition—they focus on the need to reclaim the three part mission and on the shifts happening since the dismantling of North American Ice Cream:

"I do know that the product mission has been compromised to return margins but I think there's been a line drawn—it's not going to go beyond a certain point…We feel that our three part mission is out of balance and we feel it's our responsibility to bring it back into balance and reclaim the business model which is the three part mission." (Old timer manager)

"..I do know from having worked closely with the NAIC team—there was a constant—not just pressure—constant mandates about bringing costs down. [Lately] I haven't heard those discussions—so there's definitely a dramatic difference between NAIC and the US ice cream team." (Old timer manager)

4.3.1.3 Central Employees' Experience of the Economic Mission

Overall, employees unanimously agree that the economic mission is strong today and that being owned by a large company provides opportunities to expand the social mission on a wider scale:

"Because of the acquisition, we're getting an opportunity to do it [three part mission] on a much larger scale with a worldwide impact. Having Unilever backing us is such major help—They show strong support with what we're doing." (New comer employee)

"Yeah, it's gone up and down. I'm not sure that it's any better or worst under Unilever. Under Unilever because it's such a huge corporation, we've been able to use their avenues of distribution for our ice cream and that gives us a much more stable economic comfort zone. We don't have to worry about getting our ice cream where it needs to go. And we can be global—they're worldwide so we can use that to our advantage." (Old timer employee)

For old timers, the pre-acquisition days were pretty much a mess in terms of the economic mission:

"There was a lot of money wasted because people didn't have a sense of the economics involved. I think we had all good intent twenty years ago but it was a disaster at times. (Old timer manager)

"I know that when Ben was running the show, we didn't have as much money as we needed to do all the things he wanted to do—so at that point, he realized he needed to relinquish his position-from a business standpoint—and he realized he needed to hire a trained CEO—and from a business standpoint we certainly needed to make sure that we focus maybe more on the bottom line in order to be able to do the rest of what we wanted to do." (Old timer employee)

However while the economic mission was not emphasized enough pre-acquisition, some old timers think it has probably gone too far today:

"I don't think it's a bad thing to understand that [economics] better. I think that it is definitely understood better now—in terms of how to control costs and that if you have a good sense of how your product is made and how to sell it—that's going to help your bottom line. I think you really need to understand that. So in terms of the financial part of the mission statement, I think things have gotten better on a lot of levels. Have they gone too far? They've definitely been brought to a challenging place." (Old timer manager)

Overall it seems that while employees unanimously agree that the economic mission is more attended to since the acquisition—new comers tend to have a slightly more positive angle—seeing this increased focus on the financials as necessary to ensure the survival of the company while old timers see the increased focus on the financial mission as having gone too far and having had an impact on the product mission:

"…there's an economic part of the mission also-and the reality is that the larger that we can make B&J's—and the more profitable—if it is looked at as profitable and healthy within Unilever—the more room that we have to be able to further our social mission and to be able to show that this type of company can work." (New timer employee)

"I think that [bottom line] puts a cap on the creativity that we have. I'm sure R&D really feels the crunch on that—the Hagen- Dazs mantra is, "We find the best possible ingredients to put into our ice cream!" Ours is, "We find the best possible ingredients as long as they don't cost more than this." So it cramps our style (laughs)." (Old timer employee)

4.3.1.4 Central Employees' Experience of the Social Mission

The Experienced Identity of central members regarding the evolution of the social mission post acquisition is overwhelmingly positive (There are two exceptions to that view which come from two old timer managers—one is only negative about the evolution while the other speaks of the need to reclaim the social mission):

"I would say that the social mission is still there and stronger than ever." (New timer employee)

"We have more reach as the brand grows…We have a new flavour of ice cream—Chocolate Macadamia—it talks about the mission on the back of the pint—it's something where you can buy something and feel like you're doing some good—so I'm happy to see new stuff coming out like that. And I feel that Unilever is not trying to squash that." (New timer employee)

"I actually have felt pretty good about it [the social mission]." (Old timer employee)

"In terms of the social mission part of things, I also think that things have improved. The world has caught up with Ben & Jerry's on some levels—and Andrea Asch is still here and still doing great things. And people putting packaging together—still trying to move from bleached paper to brown paper—we're continually moving in simple things as well as in the more global—and I think that that has also improved." (Old timer manager)

"The social mission—that's probably the good news of all this is that—Unilever in the end is not a bad company to work for. I think they do try to do the right thing. From what I've seen and what we've heard. In the end it could have been a whole lot worst. If Dryers had bought us, we wouldn't be here today—B&J would be a brand manufactured in Ohio—just with the packaging—they would have bought the brand and shut us down." (Old timer employee)

Social mission pre-acquisition

Regarding the perception of central members of what the social mission was like pre-acquisition—old timers unanimously mention the key role of Ben as a driving force for the social mission:

"Ben would say, 'You know what, we're not going to give dividends again this year because I'm going to take the money that we're getting from the dividends and I'm going to keep doing the social work that I want to do!' And there was no objection—there was just so few people that would object to that—most of them said, "Yes, go ahead, no problem!" (Old timer employee)

"Ben would meet somebody at the Social Venture Network and would say, "Great, we're going to partner with these people because we love them!" And it would get passed down to Liz and everybody would make it happen." (Old timer manager)

One employee explains how Ben was initially the sole incarnation of the social mission and how progressively as he disengaged from the company, employees took over as vehicles of the mission:

"I think he [Ben Cohen] was not questioned—he was treated as the social mission king. Ben for years was undoubtedly the driving force of the company. When I came into the company in the late 80s and there were one hundred people, obviously the guy had more of an impact whereas in the mid 90s, there were other people in those roles and Ben was taking less and less of a management role and more of a director role. Mid 90s it wasn't Ben saying, "Hey this is what we need to do for the social mission!" It was much more the organization that was working on it together." (Old timer employee)

Employees also point out that pre-acquisition there were some setbacks in terms of the social mission, notably under Perry Odak who didn't understand the value of the social mission:

"[Perry] he sat there in front of us all and said, "If somebody can show me that the social mission contributes to the bottom line, then I'll buy more into it." He didn't seem bought into it at all. And I sat there—the social mission had no value because it wasn't contributing to the bottom line in a tangible cause and effect sense." (Old timer employee)

Social Mission Motivation: Was 'mixed' pre-acquisition and continues to be today

Pre-acquisition it seems that Ben & Jerry's had pure motives for doing social mission activities but that the Founders actually had to use an economic argument to convince both employees of doing social good within the parameters of a business. One ex-top manager of Ben & Jerry's from the pre-acquisition days explains that Ben used to justify the social mission with a financial argument to convince of the validity of what he was doing. This could happen back then because Ben & Jerry's was one of the only companies doing social mission activities—today it would probably be accused of 'green washing' if it argued in that way:

"Clearly, Ben would always say, he made no shame of the fact that he would say, "Yeah, this [social mission] will help grow the brand!"...he would say, look we can do this—this sets us apart, this builds the brand and it's no different from somebody else doing x,y,z—it just happens that this has benefit and meaning and it taps into something that people want. That was a great and accurate statement in my view and it was a different world—pre-cynicism because they were the first ones out and now, you know--Sort of before green washing was known. I don't know that you could get away with it now." (Ex top manager at Ben & Jerry's from pre-acquisition days)

Today, the logic has been inverted—one is not supposed to justify the social mission with an economic argument. One new comer employee explains that she is almost reprimanded by the Ben & Jerry's CEO Walt Freese, when she tries to justify the social mission with an economic argument:

"I think that I've even said it wrong. The way that I've even worded things, Walt has gotten uncomfortable. Because I'm a firm believer in the mission statement but I also recognize that working for a large company, you're going to have to prove financially why that works. And that's the hard part—because I'm out there testing a concept that is tied in to social mission—and to be able to see the balance between the two—to be able to show what that authenticity is able to do to us in terms of consumer interest. And there is a concern here that we do it because it's the right thing rather than because it's going to make us more money. And my point is that people high up—I think that if you can show them it's both—why not?" (New comer employee)

Overall, employees perceive that the motivations for the social mission pre-acquisition were pure and ethical and reflected the Founders' personal values to make a difference in the world:

"They wanted to do something more than make a profit—they wanted to give back to the broader community in which they worked. They were pioneers for social responsibility…" (New timer manager)

"Ben had a real moment of enlightenment—a conversation with a friend who said to him, if you don't like what business does in the world—why don't you run your business in a way that will solve some of these problems and make it a reflection of your personal values." (New timer employee)

"I think a lot of it is because I'm of the age of Jerry and Ben and we did come from the sixties and seventies wanting a better world and peace and all that—a lot of it is our age." (Old timer employee)

"I think their motivations were pure—they really did believe that the business had a responsibility to give back…" (New timer employee)

Today employees agree that the motivations for the social mission are still pure at the heart—they allude to the people working within the central Ben & Jerry's headquarters as being motivated to do the right thing and as being the embodiment and vehicles of this social mission "purity." But several members allude to the fact that the social mission is also driven by something other than pure altruism and that it has proven to be profitable and to help recruit customers. Clearly there are mixed motives driving the social mission today, just as there were in the pre-acquisition days. The difference is that today Ben & Jerry's must convince the public that it has pure motives for doing social good as pre-acquisition Ben Cohen had to reassure investors and employees that doing good had financial pay offs:

"I think at its heart, it's pure—but I also think there is something called values based marketing—it's politically correct, it's socially correct—when you're making a choice in choosing a product—you're going to choose a product that you know is helping the environment and the

community…I've heard that Ben was fully aware of that concept back in the day—I may be naïve but I do believe that even now, there is purity at the heart—but that it's also proven to be profitable." (New timer employee)

"I think it's [social mission motivation] the same for the this group of employees and managers here—the challenge now is living within a parent company—the values and views and structures is different—that said it's a challenge and it was a challenge before the acquisition—so I still think it's hopeful—I'm just an optimist." (New timer manager)

Finally, one employee points out that it is a subset of the employees at central who are driven by the social mission—and this is not necessarily related to the time spent in the company:

"Today there are a lot of people who are proud about and committed to the legacy of the company—even people who haven't been around for twenty years—there are certainly people who have been around a long time and feel personally connected to those early days and the social mission. I've only been here four years but I feel pretty invested in the mission and I think a lot of the people who come to work at Ben & Jerry's and who have been hired in the past ten years have also come because they know we are a company with a mission and that's important to them. There's a real desire to do meaningful work and not waste your life way making money and selling your soul….there is a subset of our work force that is really engaged in the social mission and a subset that is not." (New timer employee)

4.3.1.5 Analysis of Central Employees' Experience of the Mission

To understand the various components of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity, I have analyzed in the first and second sections of this dissertation the Projected and Manifested Identity. I now turn to an analysis of the Experienced Identity (first about central employees and later about factory employees). Each Experienced Identity section is split up into three sub-sections—experience of mission, experience of artefacts and finally experience of identity themes.

In conducting this research, my starting point and assumption was that there existed a shared collective sense of 'who we are' within the Ben & Jerry's organization. I later came to the realization that this vision is very much anchored in the 'Integration' perspective of identity which is based on the assumption that there exists a strong culture and organization wide consensus and consistency (Balmer & Wilson, 1998; Schein, 1985). I approached the Ben & Jerry's case study, believing that this firm possessed a strong coherent organizational culture or Experienced Identity and was curious to see how such an identity could be impacted by an M&A. Upon analyzing my research findings, I was surprised to discover that organization wide consensus was not necessarily a given and that multiple employee voices emerged. My findings bring support to the differentiation perspective (Balmer & Wilson,

1998; Smircich, 1983) whereby consensus does not exist organization wide but rather at the level of different subcultures within the organization. My findings support the idea that there is the presence of a "multiplicity of different internal systems of meaning" (Trice & Morand, 1991) and that the contours of these subcultures can only be found through empirical examination as subcultures do not exist as pre-defined categories. As Trice & Morand (1991, p.99) explain:

> "...the determination of the boundaries of a culture, or even of subcultures, the boundaries of shared understandings, remains ultimately as an empirical question—the location of subculture always remains indeterminate until empirically established."

My findings regarding Central Employees' 'Experienced Identity' of the Ben & Jerry's three part mission reveal a collective and unanimously shared understanding of the social mission. To most employees, the social mission is vibrant and doing quite well and the acquisition has affected the social mission only positively in the sense that there is actually more money for social initiatives today and for social mission products given the global power and breadth of Unilever. While old timers explain there was a time under NAIC leadership when the social mission was threatened, this is no longer the case as the social mission is front and centre again since the switch over away from North American Ice Cream back to Unilever corporate.

When it comes to the product or economic mission, however, there is no shared understanding or unanimous 'Experienced Identity' and one finds instead divergent answers and lack of consensus. This brings support to the differentiation perspective on organizational culture/ 'Experienced Identity'. Time of entry into the firm plays a key role for shaping employees' experience of their organization. Old timers tend to be more critical of the evolution of the product mission and focused on a golden past while new timers are more enthusiastic, positive and focused on the present. Regarding the economic mission, while all agree that it is more focused upon today than it was pre-acquisition, old timers are more negative in their appraisal of this evolution whereas new timers are overwhelmingly positive about using the power of a global company to push forward the social mission of the Ben & Jerry's organization.

From an integration perspective, Ben & Jerry's central employees agree only on one third of the company's mission. The shared sense of 'who we are' today at the central headquarters revolves around the social mission—an integral part of Ben & Jerry's socially responsible identity. Yet one could argue that this shared understanding is fairly thin given that Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity includes a three part mission and is not solely about the

social mission. Overall, the 'Experienced Identity' of central employees regarding the three part mission is somewhat thin given the lack of consensus regarding the product and economic mission, perhaps threatening the overall equilibrium of Ben & Jerry's SROI.

One last key finding that emerges from central employees' experience of the evolution of the mission is the role of leadership as a driver (Ben Cohen pre acquisition or Walt Freese post acquisition) or hinderer (Perry Odak pre acquisition) of the social mission. Employees also explain that justifications for the social mission have always been mixed (both normative and instrumental) since the beginning. The difference is that pre-acquisition, the justification given for engaging in social mission was economic (in an attempt to convince stockholders and the world that this new business paradigm made sense) while today within the Ben & Jerry's headquarters, justifications for the social mission are ethics based ('We do it because it's the right thing to do!')

To conclude, two main questions remain: one is theoretical and the other empirical. Firstly, from a theoretical point of view, Ben & Jerry's could very much be apprehended both from an integration and differentiation perspective. From an integration perspective, one could argue that while employees do not express a unanimous and shared understanding of their organization today, some common grounds do exist thus proving that a Ben & Jerry's coherent and consistent identity exists, albeit in fairly thin form. Taking a differentiation perspective, one could argue again that there exists some common ground but that within this common ground, several subcultures emerge very clearly—old timers versus new timers' visions of things. The theoretical question which remains is how thin or thick does a shared understanding have to be so that an organization may qualify as having an integrated and consistent culture or in our terms a fairly solid and consistent 'Experienced' Identity?

Secondly, the empirical question which remains unanswered is whether or not Ben & Jerry's 'Experienced' Identity was also 'differentiated' and not monolithic pre-acquisition. Being able to answer this question could help us answer our first question so as to better situate the evolution of the 'thickness' and consistency of Ben & Jerry's 'Experienced Identity.' Unfortunately as I only interviewed employees post-acquisition, I do not know how much more 'integrated' and 'coherent' Ben & Jerry's might have been pre-acquisition and if other 'subcultures' might also have existed. While many old and new timers today idealize the golden past of the pre-acquisition days implying a more unified 'Experienced Identity'— only interview data from the pre-M&A time period could validate or invalidate these claims. It would be interesting for future studies to access employee data both pre and post acquisition to study the evolution or emergence of subcultures in the organization and try to disentangle

which subcultures are products of the acquisition and which are products of organizational growth and life cycle.

4.3.2 Central Employees' Experience of Artefacts

To assess the Experienced Identity of Ben & Jerry's through evocation of artefacts, employees were asked the following open ended question: "What do you consider to be some tangible, visible manifestations which best express what Ben & Jerry's is all about, both pre and post acquisition?" Employees were also asked to react to a list of artefacts which characterize Ben & Jerry's organizational culture. The open ended question confirmed that the selection of artefacts was pertinent—spontaneously, employees listed the same artefacts I had selected—the only new artefacts cited by central employees that I had not included in my interview guide were the 'woody cow scene' graphics cited by one graphic designer and various artefacts pertaining to leadership (to explain the contrast in leadership styles between NAIC and post-NAIC era).

The following section is divided into two sub-sections. The first gives an overview of central employees' spontaneous experience of artefacts—or how employees spontaneously spoke about their conception of Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity both pre and post acquisition. This section is useful because it provides additional artefacts not initially included in my listing and it also provides a more in depth analysis of the Manifested Identity. The second sub-section is about employees' reactions to the list of artefacts I probed them with.

4.3.2.1 Overview of Central Employees' Spontaneous Experience of Artefacts

For central employees, there is no single answer as to how the Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity has evolved post acquisition as the interpretation of what constitutes the tangible reality of the organization is coloured by the length of time spent in the organization (old vs. new timer), job function and hierarchical level (employee vs. manager). Old timer managers experience the most significant level of change in terms of their perception of the Manifested Identity of Ben & Jerry's.

For a majority of old timer employees Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity has not changed significantly from the pre acquisition days to the present. Most old timer employees

tend to agree that to arrive at a present state which closely resembles the pre-acquisition days, Ben & Jerry's has gone through various cycles—the last down cycle being under the North American Ice Cream management structure which stifled the vibrancy of the Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity—the fun, blue collar culture, employee empowerment, good stakeholder relationships, political events, and festivals—all were put on hold until the recent dismantling of the NAIC structure and reorganization of Unilever reporting relationships (since January 2008).

For many old timers and ex-Ben & Jerry's managers, there are, however, significant shifts that have occurred—while things seem to be the same on a surface level—if one digs a little further, these old timers reveal that Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity has evolved from extremely powerful and engaging pre-acquisition to less cutting edge and more reasonable post acquisition, thus generating less emotional attachment for employees.

Finally, for newcomers—the Manifested Identity is only spoken about in present terms and there is no mention whatsoever of what it may have been like pre-acquisition. Furthermore, for many newcomers, Manifested Identity is expressed as closely connected to each employee's individual job function.

Old timers: Manifested Identity is the same: Cycles of ups and downs…and now back up again

For most old timer employees, the Manifested Identity is very much the same today as it was pre-acquisition—it includes elements of social mission such as political campaigns, supporting family farms, having fun, and taking care of the environment and employees. Most employees explain how the company has gone through phases and cycles where the social mission was more or less activated. Today, after a difficult period under NAIC leadership where the social mission was stifled, the organization is back to where it was pre-acquisition in terms of tangible manifestations of its three part mission:

"When I think about what makes Ben and Jerry's Ben & Jerry's before the acquisition and after the acquisition—it's the same thing—and it does go back to the social mission and the working environment—taking care of its employees, having fun and doing what we can to help the rest of the world. And I thankfully do think that we're doing an equally good job today as we were—there's been set backs and moving forward and steps back—but from where we stand right now versus to how we were prior to acquisition, we're in pretty good shape." (Old timer central employee)

"I don't know. It's very much the same. We were here and we're doing things with our festivals and the peace pops and the boys being out there front and centre and doing their thing about bovine growth hormones and family farms and all that stuff—and then it just stopped, it just dried out. It was just ice cream, product, sell, buy. And now it is ramping right back up again—it's almost like we're using the social mission to drive the company again." (Old timer central employee)

"I went to a meeting on Wednesday here—right next door in these rooms here—not to say that even when I was here—that Ben & Jerry's hadn't started to get more serious—the worst time was when Ben & Jerry was scrubbing up to sell itself—that was a terrible time because it kept bringing in people into marketing and CEOs that were purely looking at bottom line. I found the meeting the other day positive because it was talking about the change from Greenbay to New Jersey as the new centre for Unilever America and that things were going to change and that they were willing to entertain the idea of cross pollination between Ben & Jerry's and Unilever." (Old timer central manager)

One old timer employee explains how she now feels proud to wear a Ben & Jerry's tee-shirt once again—after a time period under the North American Ice Cream leadership structure where she had lost this sense of pride:

"It's going on vacation and you happen to be wearing a Ben & Jerry's tee-shirt and having people come up to you and say, "You work at Ben & Jerry's!" And having that kind of—for a while not so much pride—but now coming back again and saying, "Yeah I do!"-- And I don't know if that happens at Exxon Mobil!! (Old timer employee)

Manifested identity took a different turn under NAIC era

Old timers point out that under the NAIC era and under Eric Walsh's leadership, Ben & Jerry's faced major culture clash—this culture clash was for instance apparent in the requests made by Eric Walsh—concerning the type of car he used, the water he drank, etc, etc…down to even the type of toilet paper he wanted when visiting Ben & Jerry's:

"There was the time period when we reported to Greenbay where it almost felt like night and day—are we going to be able to be who we've been?.....because under NAIC—the manifesto that was sent to the hotel—he [Eric Walsh] needed so many bottles of a certain brand of beer, certain toilet paper—it was a list that I have a copy of—he could only be picked up at the airport in a black certain brand of car—it couldn't be a white one—well they didn't have any rentals of that colour in Burlington—we had to scramble—and he only rode in the car by himself—anyone who flew in with him had to ride in the car behind him—it was all that kind of—Oh my god, this is SO NOT Ben & Jerry's!!!" (Old timer central employee)

Today, under the new Unilever leadership, the Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity is once again more in synch with the Unilever leadership team—for instance when the Unilever leadership last visited, they organized a picnic lunch and this is much more in line with the casual Ben & Jerry's style of doing things:

"Now we had the head of Unilever North America come up and they did a picnic lunch— eating with your fingers would have been so far out in the other guy's league. So it feels like if we work on them long enough maybe they'll see it our way—whereas the folks in Greenbay, never ever would we have been a match." (Old timer central employee)

For this employee, the NAIC period is a very intense one because she felt that the Ben & Jerry's way of doing things was not at all understood by NAIC employees who thought that Ben & Jerry's employees just played with their dogs all day:

"When they announced the Greenbay closing, we had a great deal of empathy because they were now going through what we had gone through—One of the questions from one of the employees in Greenbay was, "We have such a good work ethic, how can you let us go?"--And you could just hear, "Because those people in Vermont that play with their dogs all day, don't work hard!" And we were just looking at each other saying, "We're busting our asses here!" And they just didn't get it out there—that you can do business differently and still be successful." (Old timer central employee)

Old Timer Managers: From magnetic and cutting edge to good place to work

Old timer managers (of which two ex top managers of Ben & Jerry's) mention how Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity has evolved from one of "magnetism and spark" and "cutting edge" pre-acquisition to just being "a good place to work" or "playing catch up" post acquisition. Interestingly, the two people who express the most critical perspective as to the evolution of the Manifested Identity were both not impacted by the recent NAIC shifts (one is now no longer working for the company and the other is in a function not affected by NAIC):

"And I think the company has continued to be very stiff around how it manifests its mission—it does great stuff—environmentally, socially and everything else. But it lacks a certain magnetism and spark that was the attraction to people then. Now the attraction is, "Oh, this is a good place to work, it's prestigious, we get to be pretty loose and get to work with smart people." So it's become a good employer out of the ashes of being the IT place to be because it was just raw passion sort of thing. And that's what I hear from employees who are there » (Ex top manager Ben & Jerry's)

Old timer managers express nostalgia about the way the Ben & Jerry's identity used to manifest itself pre-acquisition—it was something that reached very deep back then whereas today the Manifested Identity is more mechanical and rational and employees are less connected emotionally. Pre-acquisition, the annual Vermont festivals were not organized for marketing reasons but had a genuinely generous and joyous spirit which resonated very deeply with old timer managers' sense of pride to work for Ben & Jerry's.

For one old timer manager, the Manifested Identity pre-acquisition is about the festivals, an all company event that epitomized the company's 'heritage'. The Manifested Identity mentioned post acquisition on the other hand is more narrowly defined and associated to his own area of expertise—product development. The pre-acquisition Manifested Identity is more integrative and all encompassing, going beyond simple job function utility whereas the Manifested Identity post-acquisition is more circumscribed, rational and utilitarian:

"For example our One World One Heart festivals—which I've always thought were a great way to express ourselves as a company—you might ask, what was the brand value to that? Well it wasn't necessarily—the point of it was not brand value—it took place in Vermont—there was no real reason for us to do that—it was in Vermont because that's our heritage, that's where we started the company and if you wanted to celebrate with us, you could come to it—but other people would say,

well you're probably better off doing it in Texas because people don't know you there—you can really show case your brand there—but it wasn't about that for us—the One World One Heart Festival was just us—to really get together and have a good time and celebrate the fact that we're a different kind of company. Now-- I would say probably our focus on launching at least one flavour a year that has a global brand activation and that flavour really needs to be connected in some way to our mission statement—make money, great product and have some kind of values led initiative to it." (Old timer central manager)

Another old timer manager explains how the pre-acquisition identity manifested itself in the OWOH Festival which made employees feel proud—again, this confirms that old timers perceive that they had a very strong emotional connection to the way the Ben & Jerry's identity manifested itself pre-acquisition. This pride came from feeling that one worked for a cutting edge company—while today the company has gone from being revolutionary to just being a good employer:

"The festivals—We used to have our One World One Heart Festival—and those were just like—proud--those were based around our annual meetings, before the acquisition—employees were really proud of the company. Our sourcing—the Greyston story, the rbgh story—things that pushed the envelope for the company and really set us apart from other companies and bringing attention to those issues for anybody else—and now I feel like we're not pushing the envelope—we're trying to catch up with other socially responsible companies—we're not inventing the next domestic partnership benefits—that was a big thing then—and I don't feel like we have those in our pocket anymore." (Old timer central manager)

Manifestation of Ben & Jerry's identity today is still about the social mission but the approach is more rational, and well thought out—it seems that everything needs to be justified, ultimately in terms of marketing and economics—there are no loop holes for doing things that may not have a rational orientation:

"I think we're still trying to come up with products that are good manifestations of the three part mission statement—For example our 2009 launch will be Chocolate Macadamia—which will have fair trade ingredients and sustainably sourced ingredients—that's another expression of how we're trying to use our products and sourcing and business to hopefully have a small step towards social and economic justice." (Old timer manager)

New Comers: Manifested identity is understood through individual job function and only in present terms

New comers tend to speak about the manifestations of Ben & Jerry's identity through their job function lens and only in present terms. It seems that there is a "professionalization" and an "individualization" of the Manifested Identity post acquisition. While pre-acquisition, the Manifested Identity was about something company wide, all encompassing, today it has become more circumscribed and linked to an individual's job function. A graphic designer mentions visual elements as representative of the Manifested Identity while HR people view

manifestations of identity as linked to HR issues:

"The visual representation is the woody cow scene. To me we are rural Vermont—which is emphasizes the source of what we're doing—That's what I focus on a lot. Any time we're doing design work, that always comes back—people on my team who have been here twelve or so years get a little tired of that [the cows]—and I can see that—that there's not much we can do to change it—but I like it." (New timer web developer central employee)

….Also, the Joy Gang—an employee run morale boosting committee—they come up with stuff that I would never dream to come up with—and they are very much self reliant—and much like a grassroots team. They do everything from feeding employees to making sure they have windshield wiper fluid to—it's just very community oriented." (New timer central HR manager)

Overall, new comers are overwhelmingly in the present and do not mention the past at all when they speak of the manifestations of Ben & Jerry's identity:

"The fighting for the product mission in terms of things that have happened in the last year—fighting for the rbgh free labelling standards—Also we have a Dream Team—we donate office space to a group who do a mentoring program for at risk kids—so every day you see the social mission in action—they share our kitchen, they share our space—we do activities together—there are nine to twenty people present in the building---it depends." (New timer central HR employee)

One Marketing Manager, also very focused on the present, expresses her understanding of Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity as being primarily about the social mission—this may indicate that the social mission is now at the heart of the marketing function:

"Opposition to cloning, our peace demonstrations, cage free eggs, our commitment to developing social metrics, holding Social Mission Summits—the primary purpose of that meeting is to identify where we're going to go over the next three years." (New timer central marketing manager)

New Timers: Employee spirit as embodiment of Manifested identity

While most new timers tend to view manifestations of their company's identity only through their narrow job function lens, several newcomers seem to take a broader view and speak of the notion of employee spirit. This brings further support to the differentiation perspective whereby several sub-cultures may exist within the same organization. It seems that within the newcomer group at central headquarters, there are several that view Manifested Identity as something fairly deep and all encompassing which I have labelled 'employee spirit'—these employees are aware of the amazing energy harnessed by employees themselves and which is a direct manifestation of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity. Newcomers speak for instance of the energy of employees at the last Halloween event held recently at central headquarters, of the commitment to the mission of the new employees which have been hired in the past few years and finally of the skills of Ben & Jerry's employees in doing grassroots work:

"Halloween this year just made an impression on me—everybody got involved—I had not been here for a Halloween yet. I don't think anybody did any work—people were running around, putting their costumes on—we had a parade—The winner of the best costume, got a 32 inch huge flat screen TV—and that's all out of the Joy Gang budget—they gave away video cameras, i-pods, GPS systems, a blue tooth headset…I was just blown away at Halloween—how involved—They're very picky about people who work here I've been told—I was worried when I applied for this job because I didn't have any experience—But they told me: "It doesn't matter what experience you've had because you're Ben & Jerry's material!" Halloween really hit me—And also I think of cows, a homey feeling—I know that's not really tangible—Also the slide when you first walk in is a great representation—it's kind of shocking." (New timer central employee)

"I would also say that some of the new people that have come on board over the past few years are really embracing the three parts of the mission statement—especially many people that have come into marketing—are really actively putting the social mission right up there in the discussion as they develop marketing plans and platforms—even from last year to this year, it's even at a greater enthusiasm—so that's really good. (New timer central manager)

"We won a Corporate Service Award in April for volunteerism here at central—representing 150 employees' efforts—and we were nominated by the group that we had helped which was the Dream Team (?)—to me, the fact that I sat up on a stage with Walt Disney—with these major corporations with huge structures and organizations in place for volunteerism—here was Ben & Jerry's at one of its finest—a grassroots effort doing something different by working and partnering with the Dream Team—it's one of the things that we just do so well.." (New timer manager)

4.3.2.2 Central Employees' Reactions to List of Artefacts

As a reminder-the complete list of artefacts chosen for analysis is divided up into four topic areas:

- **Employee relations** (salary ratio, Joy Gang);
- **Community** (Ben & Jerry's Foundation, free cone day, factory tours, political campaigns, concerts/festivals, Vermont only stock offering);
- **Environment** (eco pint),
- **Product issues** (fair trade flavours, cage free eggs, factory seconds, rbgh free milk, and Greyston Bakery).

During interviews with central employees, however, it was not possible to collect data on all of these artefacts in a systematic manner. I therefore chose not to include employees' views of the following artefacts: Ben & Jerry Foundation, cage free eggs, and rbgh free milk.

Employee Relations artefacts

5:1 Salary Ratio

This artefact reveals that new employees either have no knowledge about this organizational artefact or if they do have some knowledge, they only have a very positive vision of it.

Old timers are less idealistic towards this artefact and have a more sober view of it. They explain that the ratio progressively disappeared prior to the acquisition due to the difficulty of hiring external qualified top managers—for old timers, the issue around the salary ratio is an organizational growth issue and it has nothing to do with the acquisition itself.

This artefact reveals the lack of knowledge of many newcomers regarding artefacts which are central to the Ben & Jerry's pre-acquisition history:

"I have no idea what that is either." (New timer central employee)

The salary ratio artefact also reveals how new timers tend to idealize organizational artefacts from the pre-acquisition days—most new timers interpret the changes with a positive lens as they tend to attribute different terms with the same meaning—for instance while they acknowledge that the salary ratio is now gone, it is not problematic for them since it has been replaced by the "living wage." New employees are not very critical of how the living wage may be different from the salary ratio. One new comer does have a critical attitude towards the evolution—but despite his criticism, his viewpoint reveals that he too like other new comers tends to idealize an organizational artefact which was part of the Ben & Jerry's identity pre-acquisition:

"I haven't heard it put that way. I think it's wonderful—it's great—every company should have that—because CEOs nowadays are making ridiculous money and outsourcing to China—and paying their workers less—it's ridiculous. I don't know [how it has evolved]—it's the same, I don't think it's changed. I know that Walt's salary is making something like five hundred thousand dollars a year—which is nothing compared to other CEOs who are making millions of dollars." (New timer central employee)

"Yeah!!!! There is so much for companies to learn from that. The five to one and the living wage--They are great for our economy—they are fair—people that have a living wage are able—they are better employees—they are happier—they are more involved with their work—I have two kids so I have someone who works for us at home—and we pay her a lot more than people say we should pay her—but it's a living wage—we believe you've got to be able to walk the talk—and that's something I've taken from Ben & Jerry's and created into my own life." (New timer central employee)

"That's completely gone. That's a great example of how we've gone from being a company that was truly revolutionary to a company that is responsible—we pay a liveable wage. We do a very good job of actually calculating a liveable wage. But there is no transparency about how much people are paid, certainly beyond Walt's level within Unilever." (New timer central employee)

New employees reveal that even when they do realize that this concept may no longer be relevant, they assimilate the concept with a similar yet very different concept (living wage) and do not discriminate. The five to one salary ratio was the manifestation of a very egalitarian vision whereby top managers could not make more than five times what the lowest employee was paid while the 'living wage' is about providing a good wage for lower level employees but there is no connection made between various hierarchical levels within the organization. Given these major differences, one could argue that the 'living wage' is a watered down version of the 'five to one' and yet new timers do not differentiate between the two concepts.

For old timers, this artefact is about growing as a business and it became unrealistic once the business started to search for external top professional managers. The five to one reveals that the shifts in the manifested identity occurred prior to the acquisition during the professional managers' era:

"That was about us growing as a business—even pre acquisition—it was first changed in 1994…" (Old timer employee)

"That started to change before the acquisition—that happened when Ben realized it was time for him to relinquish his CEO position and we recognized that we couldn't hire—we're talking about now having to go traditional and we couldn't hire somebody on that guideline. So we changed it to seven to one—we tried to maintain it for a while and eventually lost it. I believe that it was before the acquisition that the board decided there was no point in trying to continue [the 7 to 1 ratio] because it just wasn't working in the traditional business model. It's too much to ask." (Old timer employee)

"At the time it was probably good when it first started but I don't think it is realistic today." (Old timer employee)

Joy Gang

New and old timers are overwhelmingly positive about the Joy Gang. Some Old timers have more sobering view of the way Joy Gang was pre-acquisition—it wasn't a perfect world back then and the people who needed Joy Gang the most didn't have the time for it (manufacturing employees). New timers put the Joy Gang on a pedestal and see it as a pillar of the 'original' Ben & Jerry's identity and the way the company has not changed. Many of these organizational artefacts help employees (and particularly new employees) to drive and perpetuate Ben & Jerry's historical (pre acquisition) organizational identity.

Ben & Jerry's management has understood the importance of organizational artefacts such as Joy Gang and Walt Freese has recently re-hired an old timer who was one of the originators of the Joy Gang.

Finally, the Joy Gang artefact reveals some tensions between old and new timers, for instance that the Joy Gang is mostly run by old timers who are not very inclusive towards new timers. This represents probably a minority view and is only cited by a few new timers. Under Walt's leadership, all employees are included to participate in the Joy Gang so that both new and old timers can mix and co-create the Ben & Jerry's culture.

"Right and learning about that before I started working here was definitely a factor in deciding me to take the job—because that's such a great thing to have--even to the point that I brought it up in my interview." (New timer central employee)

"Corporate culture here is great—and people who've been here for a while forget how great it is to have dogs, to dress up your office. I came from a suit environment—ah, it's so nice. The gym— I went today at lunch. But I love the Joy Gang." (New timer central employee)

"Good concept but the internal joke is that the leader of the Joy Gang—they call her the Joy Gang Nazi. It's a group that's led by someone who's been here for a really long time and there are wonderful things that they do but whenever there is a contest or a competition, it's always the same group of the old people that always wins—so it's really discouraging for new people to even bother to participate—for things like Halloween—so people still do and it's fun but you kind of know going into it—I think it's something I'd love to see reformed." (New timer central employee)

"It's important stuff I think that they continue to take care of employees. A couple of weeks ago, I was leaving the building and got an email saying, "There's windshield wiper fluid by the side of the door." So when you're driving around in the winter, you use a lot of that stuff. So those little things are absolutely essential for us to maintain what it is that is special about Ben & Jerry's—about working here—about having fun at work." (Old timer central manager)

Community Artefacts

Free cone day

This artefact reveals a unanimous feeling among both old and new employees that things have stayed the same since the acquisition. All employees are extremely enthusiastic about it. This artefact is a central part of what Ben & Jerry's manifested identity is all about.

"It was probably the original iconic event that defined what the business was about. Probably the most important—it's a very important thing in the evolution of the company because it was before they had made money saying we're going to celebrate with the community and that's when they put those two quotes out, that basically in my mind, declaring to the world, "This is the business that we're going to be! We survived the first year and this is the business that we are and that we're going to be." (Chico Lager, ex Ben & Jerry's president)

"It's great, still going strong. I love going to scoop and getting my free ice cream. I love seeing the same person in line for the fourth time and asking, "What should I get this time?" (Old timer central employee)

"Very similar—I don't think it's changed very much at all." (New timer central employee)

"It's great from every aspect—great thank you to the consumers—it's awesome for people who are here—like myself--I did my first free cone day last year—and I am not kidding you, I almost cried because my arm hurt by the end of it—and I'm not a baby, I've had two kids—but by the end of the shift I thought, please ask for lemon sorbet, something soft—because you have no idea how tough it is to be scooping ice cream all day—and granted there's a bigger line than there is on a regular day—it's great—it allows us to appreciate the community—it brings the community unto us—and then also allows the staff to interact and appreciate where our roots came from." (New central HR employee)

Factory Tours

This artefact reveals that old timers are nostalgic about how the tours have become more corporate. New timers on the other hand are very enthusiastic about this organizational artefact.

"Factory tours are the number one tourist attraction in Vermont—it does really well--when people come to Vermont they think of Ben & Jerry's and it's a great way for us to stay visible and it's kind of a fun place to go." (New timer central employee)

"Great marketing!" (New timer central employee)

"I think the tour itself has lost a little bit of its two real guys running a company—it feels more corporate, it feels like, "this is how it started out and now…a big huge monster!" (Old timer central employee)

"It's hard, that's the part where I started. It used to be this charming little mom and pop thing before acquisition and now it's a great big—it's definitely not Disney, it's not glossy to the point of being impersonal. But it's hard for me to look back at it because it used to be this charming little duck tape together opportunity—and there was a lot of charm to that." (Old timer central manager)

Political Campaigns

This artefact reveals that new timers are mixed in their reactions: some don't know much while others are very enthusiastic about the intensity of the political campaigns post acquisition. This artefact also reveals the difficulty of taking a political stance today as part of a multinational corporation. Yet employees explain that Ben & Jerry's is able to still make fairly strong political statements in various campaigns.

"Those were before my time—I don't know too much about either of them." (New web developer employee, central)

"They're stronger than ever—we've continued to do that—and Ben & Jerry are very involved. It's tough because we're bi-partisan and we choose to be that way because we don't want to offend anybody or single anybody out." (New timer central employee)

"Peace Pops was more a risk taking given the times—it was a very out there thing to be doing back in the 80s—American Pie—that was Ben's initiative—so that's a good example of people not feeling empowered—people felt like that's what Ben's doing—because he has this whole other group—I also think it didn't push the envelope enough—it was too safe—we had some pretty bold advertising that we ran that we never produced." (New timer central marketing manager)

"Definitely the organization is very politically driven—it's pretty polar here—it's a fairly liberal company—a lot of times, just for legal reasons, you can't really take a stance—but we sometimes get around it and do sneaky things in that sense." (New central marketing employee)

Festivals

This artefact reveal how new timers have a very positive vision of an idealized past. New timers idealize the One World One Heart Festivals from the pre-acquisition days—and reveal how emblematic they were of Ben & Jerry's identity—these festivals were about fun and community. This contrasts with old timer employees who have a less romantic vision of the festivals and who are more 'sober' in their assessment of the Festivals from the pre-acquisition days--they were particularly well liked by consumers but a lot of work for employees. Interestingly old timer managers, much like new timers also idealize the festivals as events which were at the heart of Ben & Jerry's identity and heritage:

"For example our One World One Heart festivals—which I've always thought were a great way to express ourselves as a company—you might ask, what was the brand value to that? Well it wasn't necessarily—the point of it was not brand value—it took place in Vermont—there was no real reason for us to do that—it was in Vermont because that's our heritage, that's where we started the company and if you wanted to celebrate with us, you could come to it.." (Old timer central manager)

"Also the One World-One Heart Festival—although I didn't attend them, I've seen footage— That's a great representation because it was free for everybody--free ice cream, music and people just having a good time—I look at it as Ben & Jerry's really brought everybody together and it's because of them that they made everything happen. They had this vision of what it was supposed to be like and they were the ring leaders of the festivals—I heard there were over 30 000 people—just having fun and you knew the underlying theme of that was not just to party but also we made a difference."(New timer central employee)

"Glad they're done—because they were a lot of work. They were a wonderful thing that we did for the community in Vermont and people enjoyed them. But wholly molly were they a lot of work, at least for me and for a lot of people. And it was fun to do at the time—it's too bad they stopped in many ways but oh boy, I'm too old for that!" (Old timer central employee)

Vermont Only Public-Stock Offering

Both old and new timers come to an agreement and are unanimously positive about this artefact. This event was critical for the company as it anchored Ben & Jerry's identity to the territory of Vermont. With this public offering, Vermonters were able to own a piece of Ben & Jerry's and could derive pride from it. The stock offering also enabled Ben & Jerry's to grow identity roots anchored in the State of Vermont.

"Revolutionary. It made every citizen of Vermont feel that Ben & Jerry's was theirs." (Dave Barrash, ex- Ben & Jerry's top manager)

"Good marketing ploy--but is also the reason we're here today acquired by Unilever." (New timer marketing employee)

Environment Artefacts

Eco-pint

This artefact reveals both the lack of knowledge of new timers and their optimism. It seems that new timers are sometimes blinded by their overwhelming optimism towards their organization that can do no wrong. For instance, the disappearance of the eco-pint is not viewed negatively. On the contrary, one employee explains that what is happening now is even better, something that is debatable. While Ben & Jerry's is now aiming to work with a new supplier who uses sustainable forestry practices, the non-bleached pint packaging has been abandoned. Ben & Jerry's as an organization does display significant transparency when it officially admit in its 2008 Environmental report that it has not yet been able to get FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certification for its pint.

Old timers questioned on broader environmental issues (going beyond the eco-pint itself) explain how environmental issues were not considered central by Ben or by the general business environment in the pre-acquisition days. For many old timers, the changes around environmental issues have taken place in the business environment so that while Ben & Jerry's may have been considered innovative several years ago with its anti global warming campaign, it now blends into the overall competitive environment. Old timers' perspectives highlight the fact that the notion of organizational identity is not something which exists in a vacuum but rather within a specific societal context. Clearly, while the Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity regarding environmental issues may have changed in absolute terms over the years, what most matters is that the company is no longer a pioneer and cutting edge in relation to other businesses today. This brings support to the idea that organizational identity

is a relational and dynamic concept (Hatch & Schultz, 2000). Hatch & Schultz (2000) argue for a relational definition of organizational identity, culture and image—arguing that one's definition of each concept will vary depending on whether one is situated inside or outside the firm. Hatch & Schultz (2000, p.358) also argue that organizational members will interpret corporate identity (identity communicated by top management) based on work experiences, cultural patterns of their organization and influence from external relations with the environment. The way that old timer central employees interpret shifting environmental issues at Ben & Jerry's supports the idea that the external environment has an important impact on the construction of organizational identity—in our case here of manifested identity as understood by organizational members.

Several employees highlight the important role of the external environment in playing a role in shaping their definition of organizational artefacts or Manifested Identity:

"Ben didn't know how to spell the word, "environment"; He had an affinity for but didn't come from a burning position on environment. Environment was not central at that time. Environment started with Gail Mayville." (Ex top manager of Ben & Jerry's pre acquisition)

"Pre acquisition I don't think we were held to such high standards. When we first started, it was like, "Oh the company is doing great things!" Now its like, "They better do that or else!" (Old timer central manager)

"Climate Change College—that's a European initiative—over here we've done Lick Global Warming. Frankly I think Lick Global Warming has always been one part marketing, one part social mission so I don't see that this has changed much over the past several years. One thing that has happened is the landscape has changed around us. When we started the Lick Global Warming Campaign was kind of novel and edgy and companies weren't really talking about that—and certainly not trying to make a loud public noise about it since industry was a culprit. But that's changed now—everybody's talking about climate change."(New timer central employee)

New timers tend to be extremely positive and view all organizational artefacts through 'rose coloured' glasses—yet not having a complete mastery of all the facts. Several new timers just don't know much about the eco-pint itself, perhaps supporting the idea that employee knowledge about their organization is increasingly compartmentalized:

"Again, I'm not too sure—I think they're working towards a compostable pint—but technology is not allowing it to happen—they can't find something that will stay good in the freezer but also be compostable—but they're working on it—always trying to think of it." (New timer central employee)

For several old and new timers, the eco-pint was phased out due to cost issues but this explanation is viewed very differently depending on whether the person is an old or new timer—the old timer is upset about the cost control while the new timer seems factual with no emotional attachment coming up:

"We no longer have an eco-pint—It was phased out due to cost—it must have been in early 2000—when we were using unbleached paperboard in our pints—we were trying to set a trend here, being a first mover into it—and no one else followed suit—we ended up having to drop it just because costs were so high and it wasn't turning into a trend in the market." (New central marketing employee)

"Again, we haven't been allowed to do what we want to do--Resources. We've actually lost ground in my opinion. And the reason we have is bottom line and tying into the structure which already exists—all the suppliers that are already providing for Good Humour Breyers and now Ben & Jerry's needs to come on line and it's a cost factor." (Old timer central employee)

Product Artefacts

Fair Trade

This artefact reveals old timer managers who are very positive about fair trade at Ben & Jerry's and who believe that this is a positive post-acquisition development given that Ben & Jerry's didn't have fair trade pre-acquisition. New timer managers are more critical and think Ben & Jerry's could do more and that the company is not a pioneer in this field. Finally, new timer employees are very enthusiastic.

"It's much better [today vs. old days]. I don't know the ins and the outs of the realities, how much it really helps everybody but I like the idea that its moving in the right direction and that we are selling flavours that have fair trade ingredients—and that the awareness around the world for this kind of action has gained some critical mass—that I think is great and that Ben and Jerry's has been somewhat instrumental in that." (Old timer central manager)

"Too little too late--There are a lot of businesses—if we're supposed to be a leader—there are a lot of businesses who have gotten to fair trade a lot sooner than we did—and we're still a very small presence." (New timer central marketing manager)

"Our vanilla is fair trade, our coffee, chocolate is fair trade—and those are programs where we provide a fair price to farmers for their work—and that's what we've always stood for—giving back to the little guy, making sure no one's being taken advantage of. It's a great example of us living by the mission statement—you pay more for the ingredient, it taste the same but you're still doing good for the community." (New timer central marketing employee)

Greyston Bakery

This artefact reveals how newcomers are very positive in their vision and also how some of them know very little. There is unfortunately not sufficient data from old timers on this artefact.

"All I know is that we source from them and they help I think folks who have criminal records to return to work—as part of the social mission." (New timer central employee)

"It's been an amazing partnership. According to the story Ben told, there was not a lot of forethought—it was a wild idea that somebody had—but they made it work and it's been this lovely partnership with this other socially minded business—and now we're definitely reviewing this partnership because we are their major client and there are some struggles with it—I'm not sure I

understand all the details of the struggle—they would not be self reliant without us—which I'm not sure is a good thing—I believe it's a very costly partnership—but that's not the only issue." (New timer central HR manager)

Analysis of Central Employees' Experience of Artefacts

There are four important conclusions to be made regarding the evolution of the Manifested Identity of Ben & Jerry's as interpreted by central support employees. Firstly, central employees share a limited understanding of organizational artefacts. Overall, only four artefacts drew consensus. This brings support once again to the presence of strong sub-cultures at Ben & Jerry's where there is no overarching monolithic organizational members' voice to express what the Manifested Identity is all about. Secondly, there are not many artefacts which play their role of facilitator of shared meanings for employees. Thirdly, pre-acquisition organizational artefacts are a very powerful source of organizational identity ('sense of who we are') for new timer employees while they tend to have a lesser effect on old timer employees. Finally, new and old timers differ in their understanding of what is an essential manifestation of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity: new timers believe that employee spirit or the 'employee voice' is an essential manifestation of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity while old timers speak of the social mission as being this central pillar.

The first finding regarding central employees' experience of artefacts reveals a fairly limited collective and shared understanding. Much like central employees' experience of the three part mission, one may conclude that the 'Experienced Identity' of artefacts is fairly thin as only four artefacts generate consensus among central employees. These are: free cone day, the Joy Gang, the Vermont festivals and the Vermont only public-stock offering. These four artefacts generate enthusiasm and the same collective understanding from all employees. Two of these four artefacts no longer exist today—the Vermont only public-stock offering was a 'one time' event that took place early in the history of Ben & Jerry's and the Vermont festivals ended right after the acquisition in the spring of 2000. These findings reveal that one cannot speak of a monolithic employee voice to express what the visible manifestations of Ben & Jerry's organizational identity are and how this identity may have evolved since the acquisition by Unilever. Again, the notion of sub-cultures emerges, revealing two distinct voices: old timers versus new timers. Arrival time in the organization is the most critical factor that shapes members' experience of Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity. Time spent

during the pre-acquisition years when the Founders coloured organizational members' cognitive understanding of Manifested Identity is very important. Hierarchical rank also affects organizational members' vision but to a much lesser extent—in other words, managerial 'voice' appears as a distinct entity in very few cases.

To sum up, old timers tend to be more nuanced in their answers and tend to highlight the changes that have come about for some of the artefacts. Some of these changes are attributed to the growth of the firm pre-acquisition or simply to an evolving environmental context (salary ratio, environmental issues). Interestingly, old timers tend to paint a less rosy picture of some of the landmark artefacts from the pre-acquisition (salary ratio, festivals, Joy Gang) days but they do express some nostalgia towards artefacts that still exist today but which have changed (factory tours). New timers on the other hand unanimously view artefacts as positive and as not having changed (pre acquisition or present day artefacts) with the exception of Joy Gang which triggers some criticisms that this activity is not inclusive enough for new timers today.

The second main finding reveals there are not many artefacts that actually play their role of drivers of shared meaning so as to enable members to experience a sense of commonality of experience and to facilitate coordinated action (Smircich, 1983). In fact, there were only two such artefacts—and only one that still exists today. The two artefacts that organizational members agreed unanimously upon as being positive (and as not having changed for the still existent artefact) are the 'free cone day' and the 'Vermont only public-stock offering.' Of course, the Vermont offering was a onetime event that no longer exists but it remains in both old and new timers' cognitive radar as a very positive and central identity event for the organization. Free cone day is the only artefact still in existence and that is viewed in the same light by all organizational members. It is noteworthy that the current CEO of Ben & Jerry's has been doing some work trying to reactivate organizational artefacts—putting emphasis for instance on the Joy Gang activities, trying to include a majority of employees in the monthly event and even having hired recently one of the originators of the Joy Gang back into the company.

The third important conclusion from the analysis of the Manifested Identity as understood by central employees reveals the importance of the role that organizational artefacts play as a source of identity continuity for organizational members. Symbols are very important to organizational life and an organization without them would probably be

unworkable for human beings (Daft, 1983, p.199). Symbols help employees understand their organization by providing information about status, power, commitment, motivation, control, values and norms (Daft, 1983, p.199). Yet in the case of a major organizational event or discontinuity such as a merger or acquisition, organizational artefacts or symbols can be broken if for instance new management chooses to discontinue its support of 'old symbols' (Dandrige, 1983).

What appears at Ben & Jerry's is that the initial mix of organizational artefacts from the pre-acquisition days is so powerful that even though some of these symbols have disappeared today, they continue to act as a source of organizational identity (or sense of who we are') for new timer employees. This brings support to the idea that artefacts or symbolic processes can act as vehicles to facilitate the continued existence of particular organizational realities even after key actors (the Founders in this case or old timer employees from the Founders' era) have departed from the scene (Smircich, 1983).

What is surprising is that it is new timer employees who seem most invigorated by pre-acquisition organizational artefacts and not old timer employees. New timers (both employees and managers) unanimously express a very positive attitude towards Ben & Jerry's organizational artefacts—be they artefacts that still exist in the organization today or artefacts that date back to the Founders' years and have since disappeared altogether from the organization.

Old timers on the other hand are more critical of pre-acquisition artefacts—they tend to view them with more judgement, weighing the positive and negative aspects of each artefact. In short, old timers have a more nuanced vision when they speak of the landmark artefacts from the pre-acquisition days—they are critical and believe some of these artefacts have disappeared because they were not realistic or simply due to organizational growth issues. For instance, the festivals were fun but a lot of work; the salary ratio was a great thing but not very realistic and the Joy Gang was not always fair to manufacturing employees who had no time to participate in it. Old timers seem to draw less 'identity energy' from landmark organizational artefacts—perhaps because they idealize them less than new timer employees.

The lack of a unanimous positive attitude towards organizational artefacts may indicate that there has been some erosion of the Manifested Identity at Ben & Jerry's since the acquisition—at least as far as old timers are concerned. This erosion seems to be due to multiple factors: the acquisition itself and the growing emphasis on cost control since the acquisition but also to the growth of the firm. While the eco-pint and the festivals have disappeared since the acquisition for cost allocation reasons, the five to one salary ratio

actually disappeared pre-acquisition because Ben & Jerry's could not find qualified managers for the salary they offered.

The fact that old timers seem less enthusiastic than new timers about pre-acquisition artefacts may not just be an indication of the erosion of organizational artefacts. It may also just reflect old timer's long historical experience with these artefacts and thus their more nuanced view and less idealized vision of them. For instance, while old timers love and praise the Joy Gang, they do highlight that in the pre-acquisition days, this organizational artefact was far from perfect because those who needed it most (manufacturing employees) had no time to enjoy it.

Finally, the fourth and final conclusion to be made about central employees' experience of artefacts (or Manifested Identity) and its evolution since the acquisition by Unilever is that new timers and old timers differ in their understanding of what is an essential manifestation of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity. New timers believe that employee spirit or the 'employee voice' is an essential manifestation of the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity while old timers speak of the social mission as being this central pillar. New timer employees agree that a central and distinctive identity characteristic of Ben & Jerry's is the 'employee spirit' or incredible dedication, energy and overall spirit of Ben & Jerry's employees. This concept of 'employee spirit' is obviously not a tangible thing or artefact but it appears when employees speak of the Manifested Identity spontaneously—recent manifestations are Halloween parties at work, a volunteer award received by Ben & Jerry's employees and the dedication and mission orientation of recently hired new employees. Old timers on the other hand do not mention 'employee spirit' as a central element of the present 'Manifested Identity' but rather as an attribute of the pre-acquisition identity—they express nostalgia of past all company festivals and events which have been replaced by more rational mission driven product activities. For old timers, the central characteristic of the 'Manifested Identity' is the social mission—something which has always been a central part of Ben & Jerry's identity (with an interruption during the NAIC or Perry Odak years).

4.3.3 Central Employees' Experience of Identity Themes

4.3.3.1 Employee Empowerment

When central members are asked to speak about 'employee empowerment' and its evolution since the acquisition, two distinct visions come up based on time of entry into the organization (whether it is pre or post acquisition). 'New comers' overwhelmingly focus on the present and do not compare their evaluation of the current situation with the pre-acquisition days--they are also all unanimously positive about the degree of employee empowerment at Ben & Jerry's.

Old timers systematically have a more longitudinal perspective, comparing both pre and post acquisition days. Interestingly most old timers are also positive about the degree of employee empowerment, saying that while things worsened after the acquisition, they have recently improved in the last year or so since the restructuring of NAIC and the modified reporting relationships between Ben & Jerry's and Unilever. Finally, for a minority of old timers, employee empowerment has evolved only negatively post acquisition.

Nature of employee empowerment: both old & new employees agree on definition

When employees speak about employee empowerment, they speak mostly about the depth and extent of it and its evolution pre and post acquisition. Employees also speak about their conception of the nature of empowerment—employees seem to generally agree as to the meaning of employee empowerment. Most old timer employees conceive of empowerment as employee involvement that ranges from involvement in mission driven activities to creative brainstorming to decision making. New timers view employee empowerment as employees having a voice, being able to ask questions and very little hierarchy.

Old timers: Employee empowerment follows a "U" shape: Worst & then Better

For a majority of old timers, employee empowerment follows a "u" shape. For these mostly old timer employees (who represent approximately half of central employees interviewed), employee empowerment decreased after the acquisition but it has recently been on the rebound since the re-organization at NAIC. (Two new comers from the Social Mission team also share this vision):

"I'd say we're regaining that [employee empowerment]—since maybe the last 18 months or so." (Old timer central manager)

"Now I would say—very little empowerment under the NAIC regime and I think we have a new birth of freedom under the…but there's a lot of work to do…So we've got some work to do but I'm optimistic that we're going to win some and maybe lose some but on the whole, move forward." (New central employee)

Employee empowerment under Ben not perfect

Interestingly while most employees agree that employee empowerment was strong pre-acquisition, two employees nuance their response, explaining that working under Ben Cohen was not always easy—as his leadership style was extremely forceful:

"…in the old days I think employees were in some ways empowered but in other ways not—I understand that Ben Cohen was an extremely forceful leader of the company and there were a lot of people who got chewed out and did not feel particularly empowered by that—That chaotic leadership style was not particularly empowering—that said there was always a very human culture here—just look at the brand—a lot of great ideas come out of this brand—and they didn't all come from Ben's head so clearly there was a lot of good work done at the employee level." (New central employee)

"Pre acquisition there was complete empowerment. But I think Ben had the reins in many cases—A lot of it came from Ben—There was an atmosphere where people felt empowered but when it came down to it—Ben was really owning a lot of that..." (Old timer central manager)

Asked if she thinks that employees pre-acquisition were upset about Ben's leadership, this old timer central manager answers that the collective sense of mission made people feel empowered despite the fact that Ben was really the main decision maker:

"I think there might have been people who didn't always agree with him [Ben Cohen]—but I don't think that people felt un-empowered in that sense because in the end they felt that we were doing the right thing—and I think that's why people felt empowered because they didn't feel as though they were being discouraged from voicing an opinion—they were along for the ride." (Old timer central manager)

This old timer employee seems to infer that employee empowerment can emerge from having a collective sense of mission and values and not necessarily from actually having decision making power as an employee. Employees pre-acquisition under Ben's leadership may not necessarily have been extremely empowered in terms of their ability to make final decisions as Ben was usually the final decision maker. What employees did have was the ability to voice combined with a collective vision of mission—this led to a feeling of employee empowerment.

Minority of Old Timers: Less empowerment

For a minority of old timers (concerns only two people), employee empowerment has decreased since the acquisition and there is no positive vision of the present or near future. For one manager, employee empowerment has been lost because of the disconnection

between the central headquarters and the plants and the fact that decision making is now elsewhere:

> "Pre-acquisition, I think the employees were really involved in a lot of the company decisions and made the company what it was—and now I think that the employees—I feel that central support is the marketing arm of Unilever and not necessarily a holistic or a whole company anymore and the plants are disconnected too so employees don't feel empowered at all—I think that they all feel they have really good jobs and people do feel that they are contributing but ultimately it's somebody else's decision." (Old timer central manager)

For another old timer, there is less empowerment post acquisition because employee benefits have decreased—and this has affected her own sense of empowerment in that she no longer feels she can nurture newcomers like she used to:

> "There's less [employee empowerment]. It's something that happens overtime. You don't lose your sense of empowerment immediately—but what happens is you go to do something that you normally would have been able to do before and now that option is not available to you—because of the Unilever process. For example—now we have a part time person that works with us—and it used to be that anybody who worked in the building was eligible for flu shots—for whatever reason and we have not had an explanation as to why but she was excluded—and in the past that was not how Ben & Jerry's would react—things like that, little things that erode your sense. Empowerment—this person is new to the department—so I could have done this for her—and I can't do that anymore—I have to go and ask to make sure if we can get permission or not—I didn't even want to tell her—I went to HR—I was embarrassed I guess that we now aren't able to include everybody who works at Ben & Jerry's in what I call these basic needs." (Old timer central employee)

For these employees there is no mention of any recent improvements with regards to employee empowerment. This can perhaps be explained by the job functions held by these employees (neither works in marketing, a function that has perhaps most benefited from the recent reporting relationship changes to North American Ice Cream).

New employees: Great empowerment

New employees (mostly entry level) are unanimously positive about the level of employee empowerment at Ben & Jerry's:

> "Employee empowerment—the first thing that comes to mind is that we have a lot of employee empowerment—everyone here has a voice and is encouraged to voice their opinions about things—it's always encouraged—I've never heard of people being discouraged to say anything." (New central employee)

One newcomer HR manager explains how newcomers are so overwhelmingly positive about the degree of employee empowerment at Ben & Jerry's:

> "I think most newcomers think, "Oh isn't this amazing! What is the deal here?" I usually hear people pretty positive about the climate and the organization." (New central HR manager)

New comers are also unanimous in speaking only about the present state of affairs and not at all speculating about how things used to be pre-acquisition. Furthermore these

employees compare Ben & Jerry's not to the past but rather to other companies in the current competitive environment:

"Talking to most of my friends who are also entry level employees—the fact that I have the ability to just walk in to Rob's office and say whatever I want is just shocking to people—and I do that. And Rob is on the same level with our CEO yet I've been in the car with him to go to the warehouse to dig up old clips with him—I think that it is very horizontally structured and that they don't look down on you to say things." (New central PR employee)

The only new comers that tend to put things in perspective and adopt a more longitudinal view are two of the top Social Mission team members. They agree with old timers that things have not always been rosy, particularly during the time period under NAIC leadership. However they are very positive about the present and very hopeful for their ability to impact the future—for them the social mission is a living thing that can be reclaimed:

"…as I said earlier talking about the three part mission—we are coming to that realization that nobody else is going to stand up for the mission if we aren't—and we need to build that culture of empowerment back up and make it strong enough so that we can defend and advocate for the plans that we have in terms of our three part mission." (New timer central employee)

Claims to empowerment: Old & New differ

Old timers and new timers differ in their understanding of who can both claim and drive empowerment. Old timers tend to view empowerment as something that has decreased due to the loss of many old timer employees who had a strong sense of mission and empowerment:

"I do think that one of the unfortunate consequences of the acquisition is that we've lost a lot of people who were the heart and soul of Ben & Jerry's—and particularly during the NAIC years, we lost a lot of people who were really here for values reasons." (Old timer central manager)

New timers on the other hand believe that having the new status doesn't prevent one from claiming the mission and empowering themselves:

"…I think people are feeling like they're starting to reclaim the business and reclaim their own empowerment—so I think we're starting to see an up cycle of that." (Old timer central manager)

Top managers: "It's cyclical!"

While most of the Experienced Identity for Central employees regarding employee empowerment is shaped by the length of time spent in the organization, top managers (old & new) seem to make up a sub-group of their own by the more relativistic tendency to put things in perspective. They downplay the effect of the acquisition on Ben & Jerry's organizational

identity, arguing that Ben & Jerry's has gone through many ups and downs since the beginning:

"No, that [employee empowerment] hasn't changed. It all depends who's on the stage—it goes in waves—but it's always gone that way. It depends who's in the audience…" (Old timer central manager)

For another top manager, while the acquisition is an important turning point, his vision of employee empowerment is not dichotomous (pre vs. post acquisition) but rather something that evolves in cycles, with ebbs and flows—moves forward and backwards:

"In different quarters of the business—some people may feel less empowered and some people may feel more empowered—Again like anything--this is cyclical—pre acquisition there were certain hay day moments—early to mid 90s where people probably felt empowered and grooving—and then people felt subjugated and less empowered right prior to the acquisition—and then there was a period of time right after the acquisition where nothing happened—so people were probably in a twilight zone—and then there was a lot of consolidation and people were leaving and jobs were being cut out [circa 2004]—and that was probably the worst time for people—And we are now on an uptrend where people are feeling more empowered but they still are very sceptical as to how Unilever is evolving—and because this is a US business that is now growing globally—you may have different viewpoints on this—the EU team may have a different viewpoint from the US team—but I think people are feeling like they're starting to reclaim the business and reclaim their own empowerment—so I think we're starting to see an up cycle of that. I think marketing felt very subjugated under NAIC, I believe they may feel more empowered now." (Old timer central manager)

The ability to put things in perspective and to be philosophical about such a major event as an acquisition may be linked to managerial status. Managers with high status and more power and ability to do things are perhaps less impacted by the acquisition than middle managers or lower level employees. This is what these two top managers' answers might lead us to believe. However, high managerial status is not always a shield from the negative impacts of an acquisition as top factory managers revealed during interviews. In the Ben & Jerry's case, central managers are more positive about employee empowerment than factory managers. This is perhaps due to the fact that top central managers (those part of the 'MOM' group) have been able to maintain a significant amount of power and lee way despite the acquisition and especially since the reorganization of NAIC in the past year and a half.

4.3.3.2 Leadership

No universal agreement on what leadership is

When asked to speak about leadership both in terms of what it is today and how it was pre-acquisition, central support employees and managers do not come to a universal agreement. Leadership means different things to different people. Furthermore, although I had initially thought that employees/managers would apprehend leadership using a

dichotomous approach—contrasting the way leadership used to be pre-acquisition versus how leadership has evolved today—only one manager structured her answer in this way while all others evoked leadership either solely in the present tense or as part of a continuum of cycles.

Leadership and time: New comers in present, old timers take long view

It seems that generally new comer employees tend to speak about leadership in the present tense only (and hardly evoke the pre-acquisition leadership) while old timers frame their thoughts on leadership using a longer time frame, referring to both the present and the past. Most people interviewed gravitated around three conceptions of leadership—I labelled them: 'split present', 'Walt dominance' and 'continuum of cycles.'

Majority of new timers: Split present

One third of the central employees interviewed refer to leadership evoking what I label, "split present." For these employees (4 new comers and one old timer), leadership is split and dual because the local Ben & Jerry's leadership represented by Walt co-exists with the more businesslike and far removed Unilever leadership. This situation is judged frustrating for one employee but for most employees it is not judged negatively—instead employees recognize the challenges faced by Walt and he is praised for his difficult juggling act between the Ben & Jerry's values and Unilever corporate:

"Leadership today is a reflection of the business that we're part of—we're part of a huge corporation so therefore the leadership is reflecting a more corporate mindset—and I think Walt does an excellent job—I have a huge amount of respect for Walt—he's in a really difficult position balancing the Ben & Jerry's values against the business side of Unilever and I give him a huge amount of credit and I enjoy working for his team." (Old timer central employee)

"…Walt—definitely has a challenge to find the balance of evolving business yet maintaining and celebrating the amazing values of this company—celebrating the model." (New timer manager)

Central employees seem to see Walt as the go between Unilever corporate and themselves—they recognize his difficult juggling act but trust Walt and believe that he will defend them and the Ben & Jerry's values:

"…we're given the impression that he's [Walt] our advocate—out in the field and with the Unilever people—I feel pretty confident every time I hear him speak—it sounds like he's doing what needs to be done and that he's an advocate for us…" (New timer central employee)

For central employees, Walt is strong enough to navigate the Unilever waters, upholding Ben & Jerry's values. One employee does highlight that sometimes Walt may have his hands tied by the more abstract Unilever entity. Walt is perceived as a great likeable leader who can do no wrong because even if he were to make an unpleasant decision, he would not be held

accountable for it by Ben & Jerry's employees. To stereotype the situation, Walt seems to have taken the "good cop" role while Unilever has endorsed the role of "bad cop":

"And I really like Walt—he's in a tough position—because the Unilever leadership is pulling him one way and he's pulling another way—and I think he does a great job at managing it. He talks from his heart—and his priorities are Ben & Jerry's priorities and when he's forced to make an out of character decision for the company—that's not coming from him, it's coming from above. And I've heard that on Friday we're having a Martini hour—and initially he was like, "Yeah, Martini, for everybody!" And then he was like—"Ooh—I'm going to get in trouble!" But it is happening—he was ok with it—so it will happen at 2 o'clock in the afternoon on Friday—I don't know that our Unilever leadership would like that." (New comer central employee)

New Timers: Walt dominance

For a smaller group of employees, leadership is also about the present but it is not split—for these employees who are younger and very recent employees (newcomers), leadership is associated only with Walt's leadership which they unanimously praise:

"I think we do have strong leadership here in the building—Walt really leads by example—he's always very visible—he walks around the office a lot—says hello to you—asks you what's going on, is there any problems—it seems he's always there if you have a question—and Dave Stever who is our Director of Marketing, he's very visible—comes around and talks and hangs out with everyone and really listens to what the problems in the building are to try to address those—We do see good leadership here and I think that's why we've been so successful lately." (New comer central employee)

"Leadership—the first thing I think of is Walt Freese, our CEO—he is such an amazing example of being a good leader—thinking about our business and upholding our mission as well as taking care of everyone—he just does an amazing job. Sometimes I just sit back in awe." (New comer central employee)

It seems that young newcomer central employees do not see a struggle between Unilever leadership and Walt's leadership. For these employees, Unilever leadership is not mentioned spontaneously and does not appear on their mental maps.

To conclude, the "split present" and the "Walt dominance" employee group combined represent half of the central employees interviewed in November 2008. Overall, for new timers (which represent half of people interviewed), leadership is spoken about in the present tense. For most of these newcomers, there is no reminiscence of the past (pre acquisition) and leadership is conceived as being a split leadership between Walt and Unilever. Finally, for a small group of younger new comers (entry level jobs), Walt is highly admired and seen as the only embodiment of leadership and Unilever is not even mentioned.

Old Timers & Managers: Continuum: cycles of the heart vs. cycles of the head

For many old timer employees, leadership is a continuum of cycles that is impacted by the personality of leaders—and this is true both pre and post acquisition. For this group of

employees—who are mostly older in age and have also been Ben & Jerry's employees for a long time (except for one HR senior manager who is a new comer), leadership is perceived as something to be taken with a grain of salt—from a longer term perspective—in other words, it's not a question of pre and post acquisition, where pre acquisition leadership would be rosy and wonderful and post acquisition become something terrible. For these employees, the acquisition in itself is not the factor which has had the biggest impact on Ben & Jerry's leadership. What matters is not governance structure but rather the cycles of leadership:

> "There's been different cycles of leadership—up and down—I think we're on an up cycle of leadership right now. Pre-acquisition we had up and down cycles of leadership—who really were able to comprehend the three part mission statement and actualize it—In many ways the leadership now is among the strongest to understand the three part mission and to actively work to bring it back into balance." (Old timer central manager)

These cycles of leadership can be interpreted by some as being a reflection of the personality of the various leaders which have led Ben & Jerry's both pre and post acquisition. For one old timer manager, a boss is a boss is a boss—and the differences between a sometimes autocratic Ben pre-acquisition and a much disliked Eric Walsh (head of NAIC) post acquisition are not very big:

> "It's always been kind of crazy. I've been in a position where I've served many masters—to survive in this organization for twenty years—you have to have your own ability to lead and not follow—and the leadership here—the founders are very challenging—they would challenge people to follow their lead in terms of what they wanted to do as entrepreneurs and founders—there wasn't too much dialogue—you just did it—And even thought there may be a little more dialogue now, you still end up doing it."

For another old timer employee, leadership is clearly about the personality of the leader itself. This employee for instance is very passionate about the series of leaders that Ben & Jerry's has had but does not make a clear separation between the pre-acquisition days and the post acquisition days—for her, leadership is a long continuum with different cycles of leaders:

> « Pre—I worked under Ben so I can say that was chaotic. I loved the man dearly but it was hard. We used to say that you never knew whether Ben was on his meds or not (laughs)—we had no idea if he was on medication or not (laughs)—but some days he'd be agreeable and it was the best idea ever—and two weeks later that same idea would be shit and why is the marketing department spending time working on that? We went from that to a do as I say leadership under Perry Odak—to Yves that was so focused on the financials that it was hard to understand him in regard to anything else—he just didn't get the social mission—so it was hard for him to lead there—Walt I wish had a little more backbone sometimes but I also understand what he's going up against—he has to pick his fights and there are a lot of fights to pick—But sometimes I wish Walt would just say 'No!'" (Old timer central employee)

Leader personality is not the only important factor in determining leadership—there is also the question of the internal dynamics of an evolving business. In other words, for this

group of employees, it is also a question of organizational growth and evolution and the different needs of a business over time. At times an organization will require a leader to hone in on the economic mission while at other times the social mission will need to take centre stage.

It therefore makes sense that pre-acquisition there were both idealistic and pro-social mission leaders (the founders) but also leaders who were more focused on the economic mission and getting the business back into gear (Perry Odak)—to the detriment of the social mission. This cyclical nature of leadership is evident post acquisition as well with Yves Couette playing the "clean up" role and putting a big emphasis on the economic mission while Walt Freese is seen as the biggest advocate of the Ben & Jerry's social mission since the founders.

One central support employee explains how during the Founders' era, Ben and Jerry led from their hearts while under Perry Odak the social mission "had fallen off the map." Post acquisition, she explains that Walt Freese also leads with his heart but that Unilever "...they're still leading from their heads—I think their heart plays a bigger role than it did for NAIC…" This can be interpreted as meaning that Ben & Jerry's leadership has evolved in a cyclical manner and in a continuum throughout the years with alternating periods of 'heart' and 'head' driven leadership. This statement also brings support to the vision that the present leadership is split between Walt and more abstract Unilever.

4.3.3.3 Manufacturing Culture

When asked to react to 'manufacturing culture' and how the acquisition may or may not have affected this—central organizational members share a collective understanding and there are no differences based on time spent in the firm. Overwhelmingly, employees express the feeling of being disconnected from the plants since the acquisition. Two minor themes are also expressed: empathy for factory employees' lowered morale and fear for the future and finally greater efficiency and its impact on production, having both a positive and negative impact.

Disconnection from the plants

For central employees, the dominant experienced identity with regards to 'manufacturing culture' is a feeling of disconnection between the central Ben & Jerry's headquarters in Burlington and the Vermont factories:

"I wish I could tell you what it is [manufacturing culture]—we don't get together with them anymore. They were definitely separated off from central support under Greenbay…" (Old timer central employee)

Overwhelmingly people agree that prior to the acquisition there existed a connection to the plants that no longer exists. This feeling of connectedness took various forms such as all company picnics, Christmas parties, gatherings. Several employees referred to this pre-acquisition connectedness with the factories as feeling like one family:

"I've heard about people nowadays saying how we're now missing that—we would have these central meetings where all the employees would come to—these family picnics in the middle of the summer…" (New central employee)

"We used to have a connection to the manufacturing group as part of the family—we used to have these all company meetings and get together..." (Old timer central employee)

Today, employees find that the link with the factories is no longer there and that the company is not whole the way it was prior to the acquisition:

"Pre-acquisition we were all part of one company Ben & Jerry's—I was seeing people in the plants, I would know their names, we would have events together—company Christmas parties, festivals—and now I feel like we're divided—there's a division between Ben & Jerry's and the Unilever plants." (Old timer central manager)

For one employee this separation and lack of interaction between the plants and central headquarters has created an almost antagonistic feeling between both entities—this employee holds Unilever responsible for the situation:

"We are completely separate from manufacturing so I can't tell you much about that other than that there have been some hard feelings because of the acquisition—they split this part of the business from the manufacturing…..there really has become a bit of an us and them mentality—and I believe that has been directed from Unilever." (New timer central employee)

For another manager, the factories are removed from the three part mission of Ben & Jerry's—something that is so central to Ben & Jerry's organizational identity:

"Manufacturing culture feels distanced from the core culture that the three part mission statement has created—if the mission statement was a living breathing thing—I think they'd feel they've been removed to the next building." (Old timer central manager)

Empathy for factory employees

A second theme that comes up for central support employees and managers when asked to speak spontaneously about "manufacturing culture" is empathy for the Ben & Jerry's factory employees in Vermont and the potential precariousness of their situation. This feeling of empathy for factory employees is expressed by a minority of central employees (only two) and both are newcomers and Vermonters—meaning that they have grown up in Vermont and/or gone to University there. Perhaps being from Vermont makes them more empathetic

to the economic situation of employees at the plants. These employees explain that the combination of opening a new Ben & Jerry's factory in Nevada and Unilever ice cream's slowing sales for other brands has contributed to less output in the Ben & Jerry's Vermont factories.

"All I know is that the St. Albans crew feels that their situation is precarious as far as whether they're still going to be there for the long term--just due to distribution costs and even just so many people's jobs getting relocated to New Jersey—they're worried about becoming irrelevant." (New timer central employee)

According to these central employees, this situation has affected factory employee morale as people fear for the longevity of their jobs:

"Our plants—morale there is not as high as it could be—there's been a lot of down time lately in the plants because we have extra capacity—so I know morale has been a little low there—but I know they've been trying to swap a lot more capacity back to Vermont—to make sure that all our guys are staying in their jobs and working to their full capacity here…" (New timer central employee)

Efficiency

The third and last theme that comes up for a minority of central employees when talking about 'manufacturing culture' is the issue of "efficiency." As explained earlier, the majority of central employees are concerned about the link between the central office and the factory. But for two old timers, manufacturing culture is not about issues of connectedness but rather about technology and operational efficiency—and their perception is that since the acquisition, the Ben & Jerry's manufacturing culture has become more efficient. Interestingly this greater efficiency in running the factories is perceived from two divergent perspectives—for one old timer manager greater efficiency means more scrutiny and less waste:

"There is more focus on running a better manufacturing facility and this comes with not wasting the product and looking for ways to save money—In the past we were on the other end of that—we weren't too concerned about what are gross margins money were—we didn't have the same kind of scrutiny that Unilever requires for our plants to run efficiently." (Old timer central manager)

In contrast, for another old timer manager this production efficiency has been achieved to the detriment of product quality:

"[Manufacturing culture] today: make the ice cream and get it out the door—and there is concern about quality among employees…I don't say there's an intention to compromise quality but through cost cutting initiatives you can't help but impact quality and there's a lot of concern from old time employees to make sure the level of quality is not compromised." (Old timer central manager)

4.3.3.4 Innovation

When expressing their views on innovation, two clear group clusters appear: old timers on the one hand and new timers on the other. Old timers view innovation as having decreased post acquisition but are hopeful for the future, especially since the recent organizational structure shift away from the North American Ice Cream Division. New timers view innovation in a positive light—with a slight nuance within the new comers group. While older newcomer managers tend to highlight that it may still be too early to tell how innovation will evolve given the recent reporting relationship changes, younger more entry level employees express only positive views about the state of innovation at Ben & Jerry's today.

Old Timers: Relative optimism

Old timers are generally not extremely favourable about the state of innovation at Ben & Jerry's today but they are very hopeful and have noticed a shift since reporting relationships have moved away from NAIC. The current situation is judged in a context of comparison with a previous period under NAIC dominance where innovation was "stifled." Old timers take a longitudinal perspective, tracing back to the history of the company pre-acquisition through the post acquisition NAIC days and finally to the present:

"Pre-acquisition the company was in terms of their social mission very innovative—and leaders in terms of rbgh, domestic partner benefits—things way back that nobody would dare take on—these were just about our values—and product innovation it was fun—and there was always a story where consumers could make up flavours—And then post acquisition that started fading away where some of our social mission initiatives—there was nothing new coming down—we were just status quo—Now I'm feeling like there's more happening—the company's getting more involved in issues." (Old timer central manager)

"We were stifled under NAIC and because I'm not part of the innovation group—I don't know how stifled—Now we're being allowed a lot more freedom to be creative—so that has improved…it's based on the fact that I'm not hearing the same kinds of comments and frustration that I was hearing before." (Old timer central employee)

Old timers are hopeful both because of structural reporting relationship changes and because of recent recruitments of ex Ben & Jerry's employees—one of which is a product developer who will surely contribute to energizing the product mission:

"I'm hoping that innovation will get back on track with more creative products as we move away from the GHB model—that's just my hope." (Old timer central employee)

"I have a lot of hope now that Peter Lind is back with the company—and I don't want to slight our R&D guys in the least because heaven knows they're working hard—but Peter has another spin on flavours that is very different from a lot of other folk." (Old timer central employee)

One old timer is only negative about the evolution of innovation and does not indicate any hope for the future. This represents a minority view point.

"I don't think we're doing so good on that [innovation]. We're coming out with a couple new products for 2009—a novelty called, "Flipped Out"—it's a sundae—and it's different from anything we've ever done—that's new and there's something else. But it's been a long time in my book that we've come out with anything innovative product wise or flavour wise—We're coming out with Chocolate Macadamia flavour next year—big whoop—we've been putting chocolate covered nuts in our ice cream for a long time—There's got to be another Cookie Dough out there for us, we just have to figure out what it is—the product that every other company wants to copy." (Old timer central employee)

New Timers: Positive & Too early to tell

New timers tend to have a very positive attitude towards everything—including innovation. New comers are generally not burdened with the vicissitudes of the past of the company and do not have a pre-acquisition reference point to refer to and which sometimes clouds old timers' present perspectives. Such a focus on the present allows new timers to have an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards their organization:

"We're always thinking on two wave lengths—one is the product and one is the social aspect of things—and how they reciprocate each other—here's a cause, what can we come up with to support that—and there's still an amazement of how much innovation people will come up with here—just at the product level—one of the things they're launching next year is the sundae—it's such a neat concept, I can't wait until it comes out." (New comer central employee)

For another entry level newcomer, innovation is also viewed in the present and in a very positive light. This new employee does however compare with the recent past under NAIC—she thinks that innovation has evolved for the better since the dismantling of the NAIC structure:

"I think that [innovation] continues to be great. During the NAIC period, innovation was curbed because they looked at innovation from a profit and loss perspective and the logistics—"No we can't make this particular innovation because it's too expensive!"--Whereas before it was more let's get together and have these fun and crazy brainstorming innovation sessions—and come up with something that sounded like a great idea then the factory would figure out how to do it. Whereas now—there was--under NAIC, much more of a curving—"Oh that sounds like a good idea but we're not going to do it because it's too expensive and it will mess up the GHB line-because obviously we didn't make GHB products before." (New central HR employee)

Some variation does appear in the viewpoints of older and more senior new managers. While older new comers are also very positive about innovation, they also express that it may

be too early to tell how things will evolve since the reporting structure shift away from NAIC is quite recent:

"From my view it's almost too early to tell—because NAIC wasn't terribly innovative—I have a sense that Unilever is probably a bit more innovative than NAIC." (New central manager)

New Timers: more process & more innovation under Unilever

New employees addressed the issue of the nature of innovation--explaining that the type of innovation under Unilever is different from the type of innovation under Ben & Jerry's pre-acquisition—for these new employees, under Unilever, things are more process oriented. For one manager it is too early to tell if such a way of handling innovation will actually lead to more and better innovation—as the new reporting relationship under Unilever is fairly recent:

"From my understanding you could do innovation differently than you do it now. It's very process oriented now and there's a huge funnel as they call it where innovation goes through. What I don't have a good perspective on—is whether or not that will produce better innovation—it certainly doesn't feel like the way I understood that they created innovation before—in a group—hey what do you think about that—The opportunity is that there may be more technology and resources available for innovation that we may not have been able to do here before—From my view it's almost too early to tell—because NAIC wasn't terribly innovative—I have a sense that Unilever is probably a bit more innovative than NAIC. I'm very excited by our flipped out product—We have a new product coming out that is very cool." (New central manager)

For another employee, there's been almost too much innovation (product) under Unilever and since Eric Walsh's departure. The viewpoint that Unilever's process approach actually fosters more innovation than before seems paradoxical--but as this new comer marketing employee suggests, more process just means better planning, not less innovation. When asked if he finds that Unilever is fostering more innovation, he responds:

"Yes definitely—more innovative products—but I also think to some extent they're almost doing too much innovation—they're trying to push too many new products to be launched—We really need to launch a product and then support it—Right now it looks like we're going to be launching products and then the year after another new product and it doesn't look like we're going to be devoting enough attention to let the new products really flourish in the market." (New central marketing employee)

When asked to explain how he can reconcile an acceleration of product launches with the fact that he had expressed earlier that Unilever was more process oriented, thus resulting in a slowed down system, this new comer explains:

"Yeah it is slowed down—and yet innovation has increased—we just plan ahead more—it takes more time to do it—Whereas with Eric—I've heard stories of Eric changing our entire product line in November—and then we had to launch brand new products in three months—and that includes

the production time—nowadays that would never happen—the process is so slow that that's not even imaginable." (New central marketing employee)

4.3.3.5 Analysis of Central Employees' Experience of Identity Themes

Based on an analysis of central employees' experience of identity themes, the following conclusions can be made:

Firstly, among the four identity themes analyzed above (employee empowerment, leadership, manufacturing culture and innovation), I found only one shared collective understanding around the theme of manufacturing culture. Central employees unanimously expressed a feeling of disconnection between themselves and the manufacturing plants— something they attributed to the new reporting relationship between the Ben & Jerry's factories and Unilever supply chain. This organizational split between the Ben & Jerry's factories and central headquarters leaves central employees feeling that they no longer share a common organizational culture or identity with their factories. Central employees' limited shared experience of their organization indicates that their 'Experienced Identity' is tenuous and fragile.

Secondly, although I began my research from an integrationist perspective on organizational identity, assuming and looking for a collective understanding of identity shared by employees, my empirical findings unmistakably uncovered the existence of sub-cultures within the Ben & Jerry's organization. I can brush stroke some common denominators of organizational culture or 'Experienced Identity' at Ben & Jerry's central headquarters today— for instance, from a bird's eye view, employees feel empowered, happy with Walt's leadership and with the level of innovation in their company. However, such a seemingly cohesive and coherent vision is perhaps what top management desires but does not reflect the empirical reality of the organization. As Trice & Morand (1991, p. 99) argue, an instrumental vision of the firm that seeks to increase productivity, strengthen commitment and control may improperly induce researchers to ignore sub cultural phenomena in organizations.

When one begins to dig deeper and take a closer look into employees' experiences, subtle differences and contrasted world views emerge, revealing that time of entry into the organization (pre M&A versus pos) is a differentiating factor which colours employees' experience of their organization. This brings support to the differentiation perspective of organizational culture (Balmer & Wilson, 1998) and to the idea that sub-cultures can exist

within the organization (Trice & Morand, 1991). Newcomers tend to be overwhelmingly positive about the various themes at Ben & Jerry's and to view them only in present terms while old timers tend to view the themes in longitudinal terms and to compare the present with the pre-acquisition organization. Old timers tend to view changes as being cyclical and linked to various stages in the growth of the firm and not necessarily as due to the acquisition while new timers are so overwhelmingly in the present that they do not adopt a comparative perspective at all—if only with other businesses today.

There are two clusters of "Experienced Identity"—the 'new comers' cluster who view Ben & Jerry's as a place where employees are empowered and where there is great innovation and leadership and the 'old timer' cluster who are more critical of their organization. Within the "new comers' cluster, there are two subgroups—the very young newcomers group and the slightly older new comers who are both older in age and have spent more time in the organization. The youngest and most recent into the organization are the most positive about Ben & Jerry's—empowerment, innovation and leadership are highly praised. These young newcomers also do not mention the acquisition and its potential impact on Ben & Jerry's. For the slightly older newcomers, their experience is overwhelmingly positive as well but in comparison to the very young new comers, they are slightly more critical. For instance, many think it is too early to tell if innovation under the new structure will start up again—(since the changeover from NAIC to Unilever). Also for this group, leadership is experienced as something split between Walt and a more removed and abstract Unilever entity.

The second "Experienced Identity" cluster concerns old timer employees—people who have been in the organization since the pre-acquisition days. These employees have a much more longitudinal perspective and are not focused only on the present state of affairs. This group views the evolution of the various identity themes as cyclical. For instance, leadership and employee empowerment are viewed as having gone through ups and downs pre-acquisition—just as they have gone through up and down cycles today—the present state being on an up cycle since the recent changeover away from NAIC leadership. Old timers tend to be less enthusiastic in their "Experienced Identity" of Ben & Jerry's than the new timers cluster--for instance they consider that innovation has decreased since the acquisition but they do express hope for the future under the new reporting relationship under Unilever. Finally, old timers 'Experienced Identity" displays more identity ambiguity and complexity while the 'new comer' cluster's 'Experienced Identity' is more homogeneous and uncomplicated.

My third finding is that old timers and new timers have a different conception of who

the drivers of identity are. Old timer employees give credit to Ben and to ex Ben & Jerry's employees for contributing to the sense of employee empowerment at Ben & Jerry's and in turn to its exceptional organizational identity. Old timers seem to imply that the SROI of Ben & Jerry's can no longer be driven today as the key drivers (Ben and ex employees) are gone! Newcomers on the other hand believe that they can be actors and drivers of the organization's identity, employee empowerment and innovation.

Finally, while time spent in the organization is more of a factor for shaping one's vision of the organization—managers do stand out as a group as they tend to situate themselves in the middle between the extreme optimism of young new timers and the sometimes negative attitude of old timers. Managers systematically downplay the impact of the Unilever acquisition on the Ben & Jerry's organizational identity and insist on the fact that change has come about both progressively and in a cyclical manner—due to natural organizational growth and not particularly because of being acquired by a multi-national corporation.

4.3.4 Factory Experience

After having explored central headquarters members' interpretation of the impact of the Unilever M&A on Ben & Jerry's identity, I now turn to factory members' interpretations. The following section is divided into three sub-sections: factory members' experience of the mission evolution since the acquisition, factory members' interpretation of organizational artefacts and finally factory members' interpretation of the four identity themes which came up during interviews.

4.3.4 Factory Employees' Experience of the Mission

4.3.4.1 Factory Employees' Experience of the Product Mission

Factory employees' experience of the product mission is split into two major groups: old timers and managers in one group and new timer employees in another. Much like at the central headquarters, new timers tend to be more positive than old timers:

"It's quality—it's still very quality oriented. I think it still lives by its mission statement. Sometimes it's difficult." (New factory employee)

"Better production efficiency and there are a lot less mess ups." (New factory employee)

The above quote is interesting as this new timer employee does not highlight the improvement in the quality of the product itself but rather points out how the product mission is now more clearly intertwined and working to promote the social mission. When asked about product mission—old timers mention product quality whereas new timers think in terms of social mission partnerships. This may point to a shift in emphasis whereby the social mission has gained momentum perhaps to the detriment of the product (quality) mission post acquisition.

For the old timer employee and manager group, the product mission is seen in a more critical light. For this group, product quality is not what it used to be pre-acquisition. This is explained by different factors. For one manager this is due to more attention to health and obesity issues in society and given these new issues, it is legitimate that the product now has less fat, thus resulting in some taste difference. For two other employees, the lessening of product quality is due to the decrease in factory seconds (reworking of ice cream) and this is explained by more efficient production methods. Finally for one old timer employee, quality has suffered due to increased attention to cost issues. Interestingly this last employee does not see this in a negative light and explains that attention to economics is vital and necessary to keep the business going:

"I think the product portion is probably faltering—I don't know if it's faltering but I don't know if it's as strong as it was. It's been compromised, it's not the same ice cream as it used to be. Again, there may be very good reason for that—there's obesity, there are kinds of health issues associated with extremely fat desserts." (New factory manager)

"We don't have as many seconds as we used to. A lot of the ice cream is incorporated back into the ice cream. I think it has affected the quality of the product—but it depends who you ask. I don't think our ice cream is nowhere near the quality it was—as far as taste and texture, I don't think it's the same." (Old timer factory manager)

Finally, one old timer employee expresses hope that product quality will improve now that they are no longer reporting to North American Ice Cream:

"I'm hoping the quality part is going to get better now that we got rid of NAIC. That's how we sell. Short term, yes—you make enough money to get through the year but long term if you hurt the brand bad enough, then you don't have sales, you don't have a job, you don't have plants, you don't have anything." (Old timer factory employee)

4.3.4.2 Factory Employees' Experience of the Economic Mission

Factory employees are unanimous that the economic mission is doing well post acquisition. Again differences in experience emerge based on length of time spent with the company—old timers tend to speak of the economic mission in the context of a more glorious past imbued with more meaning and values while new timers are more positive and speak of the economic mission in the present and highlight current reporting relationship issues with Unilever and with NAIC:

"Everything is money driven now [since the acquisition]. Back then we used to do something just because it was a challenge." (Old timer factory manager)

"The company is more profitable than it ever has been—and that's important because if you're not making money, you can't do anything—The way they went about it—I don't know if they were 100% aware of what Greenbay was doing or not..." (New factory manager)

"There are good and bad changes. Good changes would be the marketing of our products, the growth of Ben & Jerry's has been phenomenal—but it's tough on a small company like this—You had Ben and Jerry here—you had the people that founded it and the constant input whereas now you have to answer to a higher authority." (New factory employee)

One last interesting finding is that factory employees display a strong sense of individualism in their perception of the company's economic mission. A majority of factory employees emphasize what's in it for them as individuals:

"I know Unilever is doing really well with us and I'm not doing badly either—as an hourly employee, I do all right." (Old timer factory employee)

"The economic mission is still pretty good just because of the fact that they do have all these extra companies where we can get discounts from..." (New factory employee)

4.3.4.3 Factory Employees' Experience of the Social Mission

Overall, most factory employees and managers are very positive about the evolution of the social mission since the acquisition. A minority of old timer employees believe that social mission actions have decreased since the acquisition (three people out of ten interviewed). For most factory employees, however, the social mission has remained a strong element of the three part mission and for some it has even increased in terms of scope since the acquisition:

"I believe we actually do more for the community now than we did when we were younger. There's more projects that we're going out in the community and doing..." (Old timer factory manager)

"[The social mission] is a little bit more global—which is great—the more people we can tell, the better." (New factory manager)

"We're still very involved in the social mission—we still do our CAT projects—I do a cancer walkathon every year and they match...I know the Ben & Jerry's is still receiving its funding through the company which is doing very well as far as I've heard. I know a lot of our products still are attached to a mission statement—that's something that hasn't changed." (New factory employee)

Social Mission Motivation

In terms of social mission motivation, factory employees tend to agree that Ben & Jerry's has always had a mixed motivation for its social mission, both pre and post acquisition. Factory employees are very clear that pre-acquisition Ben and Jerry were altruistic and believed in giving back to their community, as they were very much products of the sixties. However, employees agree that the social mission was also part of marketing and that from the beginning the social mission was closely interconnected with the economic and product missions:

"Ben always said that businesses have a social responsibility to the public out there." (Old timer factory manager)

"It was more because everybody believed in it [the social mission] but it was part of marketing too. We would always get so many hits in the news media for doing that—that it's money you don't have to spend on marketing that you can put back into the business or give out to the community." (Old timer factory employee)

Today, most factory employees agree that the motivation for the social mission continues to be mixed:

"I'd say marketing is the motivation for the social mission today—although I'm not sure we've let go entirely of wanting to be a good guy...but the concern for profit is always there...it's a delicate balance—it's hard to walk the fence but that's what you have to do in order to maintain a healthy balance between the two." (Old timer factory employee)

One new timer employee explains how the social mission in an essential part of Ben & Jerry's identity and something which sets it apart from other companies. For him, Unilever has understood that the social mission must be preserved because it is part of the company's sustainable competitive advantage:

"..without the social mission, Ben & Jerry's would have just become another ice cream company—and that's one of the things that Unilever has seen—not only as a tool that sells the product—but they've incorporated it into their other plants.." (New factory employee)

4.3.4.4 Analysis of Factory Employees' Experience of the Mission

My findings regarding factory employees' 'Experienced Identity' of the Ben & Jerry's three part mission reveal a collective and unanimous shared understanding of the social mission. This is very much in line with central employees' experience of the social mission. For a majority of factory employees, the social mission is vibrant and doing quite well and the acquisition has affected the social mission positively because Unilever's size and market power has generated more money for social initiatives and social mission driven products.

In terms of the product and economic mission, there is no longer a collective understanding and agreement and the same sub-cultures found at the central headquarters appear. Time of entry into the organization (pre-acquisition entry versus post) has a very powerful affect on employees' perception of the evolution of the three part mission. New timers are very positive about the product and economic mission while old timers are much more critical. Old timers at the factory tend to be even more critical of the product and economic mission evolution than old timers at the central headquarters.

From an integration perspective, one may conclude that factory employees' experience of the three part mission (their 'Experienced Identity of Ben & Jerry's) is one of a social mission organization. However, when it comes to the product or economic mission, Ben & Jerry's 'Experienced Identity' splinters into two differing worldviews, thus bringing support to the idea that there are two subcultures that co-exist within the larger social mission organization.

4.3.5 Factory Employees' Experience of Artefacts

Much like for central employees, factory employees were first asked an open ended question regarding what they think constitutes a tangible manifestation of what Ben & Jerry's is all about. Afterwards, they were asked to react to a list of various artefacts that I had identified as significant by doing an analysis of the Ben & Jerry's website. The following section first summarizes employees' spontaneous naming of artefacts that best represent their organization and its evolution post-acquisition. This section is followed by an analysis of employees' reactions to artefacts that I identified.

4.3.5.1 Overview of Factory Employees' Experience of Artefacts

Pre: acquisition: Nurturing organization

There is a general consensus, for all factory employees and managers, both old and new that Ben & Jerry's pre-acquisition was a nurturing organization. Ben & Jerry's sponsored concerts and festivals, gave out factory seconds (free ice cream) to multiple non-profits and to employees. When asked to name a tangible manifestation of what Ben & Jerry's was all about pre-acquisition these three newcomers (a manager and two employees) cite the key role of the concerts, festivals and free ice cream. Ben & Jerry's was nurturing both to its employees and to its wider community and it manifested this generosity through product donations and festivities:

"The concerts and giving out ice cream there. The Cherry Garcia, the Grateful Dead." (New factory employee)

"I went to the festivals—when I moved to Vermont that was one of the things we went to--it was great--it was ten bucks a car so it encouraged you to carpool and then the whole thing was free—it was just a great weekend." (New factory manager)

"The seconds—and I remember just visiting here—I was struck that Ben and Jerry are two hippies who started a company. They used to have seconds coolers where they would sell very cheap ice cream—now we still get three pints a day—that's one of the best things--and a lot of people don't even bring them home." (New factory employee)

According to both old and new employees, the founders genuinely cared about their employees—with Jerry getting particular credit:

"They did a lot for their employees. You still Jerry and you see Ben. Not as much as—when I first started, everyone was housed here in the plant—everybody was here, manufacturing, marketing." (Old timer factory manager)

"They were definitely more about their employees and making people happy—from what I've heard—and it sounded like it was more Jerry than Ben—Jerry was more of a people person and he wanted to make sure that people were taken care of—they would throw winter solstice parties—they would really do it up and they would have presents for people and lots of really cool things like that. And they did things like that throughout the year—they allowed employees to go to other countries, like when they went to Russia—employees actually got to go there." (New factory employee)

Nurturing of employees translated into the five to one salary ratio where the highest paid manager couldn't get more than five times what the lowest paid employee got and this contributed to a sense of equality among employees and managers so that everyone was like a big family:

"The five to one salary ratio--When I first started with the company, the person at the top couldn't make more than five times the lowest salary. Now that is so far from the truth—it doesn't even exist." (Old timer factory manager)

Furthermore, Ben & Jerry's pre-acquisition was very politically and socially active in the community:

« In the beginning, people were proud working here—we made a good product, we got to work in the communities to give back and the company did a lot for the employees back then—this building on the right over here was a child care centre." (Old timer factory manager)

The important sense of community was epitomized by the opening of up of the company's stock to Vermonters only in the mid 1980's:

"I remember this—this was just a little bit before I came along—they sold stock to anybody in the State of Vermont who wanted to buy stock—and a lot of people did—that was very Vermont and very Ben & Jerry's—that was a great idea—it was so novel at the time—and they may have used that money to build this plant. (Old timer factory employee)

Commitment to Ben's dream comes with a price

Interestingly, both old and new employees seem to build up a myth around the era when the founders had control, describing an almost idyllic and pure organization with only positive attributes—a giving organization towards all of its multiple stakeholders, all rooted in a strong Vermont community. Only one old timer factory manager is perhaps more realistic and explains that the level of intensity and commitment which people felt towards Ben & Jerry's 'dream' back then came at a high personal price—he attributes his own divorce to the fact that he spent too much time at work:

"Ben & Jerry's back then had a lot of people with the same dream that Ben had—people would work 12-14-16 hours a day to help get to that dream—and no matter what it took, we would get the job done—if you had to be here 4 days, 5 days, 7 days, it didn't make a difference. It was [hard]—there were a lot of divorces here. I was one of them—I spent a lot of time at work—it's hard to go home and apologize to your kids because you spent more time at work than you did at home." (Old timer factory manager)

Ben & Jerry's manifested identity post acquisition is less monolithic

While Ben & Jerry's manifested identity pre-acquisition is viewed in a monolithic fashion, the evolution of Ben & Jerry's manifested identity post acquisition varies from positive to negative or neutral, depending on which factory employees/managers are interviewed. For the two old timer managers, the evolution is negative while for new timer employees and managers, things are more positive. For old timer employees, no value judgements are made, just fairly neutral comments.

Old timer managers: Less employee empowerment and less equality

It seems like old timer managers remember a time when there was more employee empowerment and collective motivation to make Ben's dream happen, whereas today, there is a feeling of more control and less employee enthusiasm. One manager attributes this decrease in employee motivation to the fact that they have all gotten older and that they just don't have the energy they used to have in the pre-acquisition days. This manager also seems to imply that a small thing such as the front door now being locked gives off a more contrived feeling:

"You don't see that today—if you put up a sign up sheet today, you probably wouldn't get a full sheet. Something has changed—people don't volunteer like they used to—and it's in every department, not just in production, it's everybody—For one, we're getting older—I don't want to work 12 or 13 hours anymore. Not to say that I wouldn't—you don't see that today. And it's certainly different—you go up there and the front door is locked—to get into the reception area—it's locked. It never used to be locked. » (Old timer factory manager)

Another old timer factory manager shares a fairly negative viewpoint regarding the evolution of Ben & Jerry's manifested identity—mostly because for him there is less equality among employees and managers today:

« In the beginning, people were proud working here—we made a good product, we got to work in the communities to give back and the company did a lot for the employees back then—this building on the right over here was a child care centre. They had one on site—that didn't work out so they closed it down—but they had a benefit—now the benefits are changing because they are trying to standardize across Unilever U.S—so us being higher on the benefit thing for employees means employees are going to see reductions in their benefits which is probably going to have a big effect on the plant. And over the years they just see less—they used to get bonuses—Ben & Jerry's treated everybody kind of equally—there were different bonuses for employees and managers, even back then—but the employees used to share in more when the company did well—and now when the company does well, just the higher level managers get the bonuses out of it." (Old timer factory manager)

The feeling that equality between employees and managers has lessened translates into the complete disappearance of the five to one salary ratio post acquisition:

"The five to one salary ratio--When I first started with the company, the person at the top couldn't make more than five times the lowest salary. Now that is so far from the truth—it doesn't even exist." (Old timer factory manager)

When asked if this change took place post acquisition, this factory manager does acknowledge that the salary ratio had already changed pre-acquisition. However, she does reiterate that there is a sense of unfairness in the lack of transparency of the pay scale today—it is unclear if she is referring to top management within Ben & Jerry's headquarters or at Unilever:

"That was before the acquisition—I think it actually was seven to one—they increased it because they really wanted to get somebody as we started to get larger—to attract a CEO—and then it

went out the door a couple of years but you had a sense of what the top is making and now it's…."
(Old timer factory manager)

New timer employees and managers: Good employer, less passion and generosity

For new factory employees and managers—the evolution of Ben & Jerry's manifested identity is very positive for several reasons: continued political activism and festivities (although perhaps a bit less than pre-acquisition), good benefits compared to other companies today, and better sponsoring opportunities. Firstly, political activism continues to be an integral part of the company:

"There's definitely an activist—the brand is known for its activism and trying to be better— there's the whole fair trade coffee and vanilla—so that's what they're known for now—which was started pre acquisition and was carried over—and as far as I can tell they're still trying to do that—I would like to think that it was good ice cream too—because we definitely liked it when I was younger." (New factory employee)

Secondly, the company continues to nurture its employees through various forms. One manager mentions the recent 30th Birthday Party celebration that occurred in the fall of 2008—an event reminiscent of pre-acquisition festivals and celebrations:

"We had our 30the anniversary party in October—which I think was great. It was a company party where anybody could go—it was in Burlington in a theatre—they had music and Ben and Jerry were there—they had slide show of whatever has happened over thirty years, they had performers who had played at some of the festivals—it was nice—it was a blast from the past. (New factory manager)

When asked about the annual Christmas party, however, one new timer factory employee explains that while the party still exists, the company is less generous than it used to be pre-acquisition towards its employees:

"They do [still exist] but they don't give out gifts anymore. They used to allow for an open bar—and now you pay for your own stuff. It sounded like it was more of a party environment before the acquisition whereas now, it's—you can't be doing that, it's a work function." (New factory employee)

It is also worth noting that while employees cite examples of being nurtured by their organization, the term "take care of" is no longer used—instead the term, "benefit" is used by employees when speaking about the advantages of working for Ben & Jerry's—such terminology may indicate that the relationship between Ben & Jerry's and its employees has become less passionate today and more reasonable to the point of being almost transactional:

"They do have some benefits that a lot of companies don't have. I enjoy massage and they have a back and foot masseuse that comes around several times a month. And they do have a lot of different teams—to improve production on the floors—or the Vitality teams—that give people different challenges—such as finding an alternative mode of transportation and car pooling." (New factory employee)

Interestingly, the passionate affair between Ben & Jerry's employees and their organization is perhaps not altogether gone. When asked to speak about a tangible manifestation of what Ben & Jerry's is all about today, one new factory manager points out that it is the old timer employees themselves who contribute to the value of Ben & Jerry's today as they are the heart and soul of the business:

"…what's tangible is the people, the spirit that these [Ben & Jerry's pre M&A employees] people have—and they're here because they love working here—and yeah they've seen a lot of changes but it's still a great place to work—they love what they're doing… (New factory manager)

This new timer manager is able to understand the value of the old timer employees as contributing to make Ben & Jerry's organizational identity unique and a great place to work—yet he does not include new timers such as himself as contributors to this organizational identity—it seems he idealizes old timers to the point of giving them a special status which he cannot accede to by the mere fact that he hasn't worked for Ben & Jerry's long enough. He seems to imply that to possess this amazing employee spirit, one has to have lived and endured the vicissitudes of Ben & Jerry's history.

A last example of Ben & Jerry's positive manifested identity is the increase in visibility of the company due to an increase in sponsors and advertising. One new factory employee views Ben & Jerry's becoming more visible and mainstream as something positive—which is paradoxical as Ben & Jerry's became an icon precisely because it was not mainstream and did not conduct business like anyone else:

"The sponsors of the ice cream—there are a lot more sponsors today than there was before—Stephen Colbert, Willie Nelson, John Lennon, One Cheesecake Brownie. It's also Ben & Jerry's being well known globally. I was just in Ireland recently and talking to people there and they were saying they're seeing a lot more Ben & Jerry's now than there was before. Also, commercials—seeing more commercials here and there--When I was little I didn't see many commercials of Ben & Jerry's. And now they're getting more main stream, which is nice." (New factory employee)

Old timer employees: neutral vision

Old timer employees are neither positive nor negative regarding the evolution of Ben & jerry's manifested identity—one mentions the CAT teams in a very descriptive manner, without emitting any form of positive or negative judgement:

"The CAT teams without a doubt--that they have a donation program where they just donate ice cream to good causes."(Old timer factory employee)

4.3.5.2 Factory Employees' Reactions to List of Artefacts

After giving their spontaneous opinion as to what constitutes a tangible manifestation of what Ben & Jerry's is all about, factory employees were asked to react to specific organizational artefacts. The list of artefacts was chosen from the corporate website's historical timeline of Ben & Jerry's key events—I attempted to choose artefacts that concerned multiple stakeholders and topic areas (see appendix for interview guide and listing of various artefacts). My interview guide contained a more complete listing of artefacts but due to time constraints during the actual interviews, I was not able to probe employees on the complete listing. Employees were asked to react to the following organizational artefacts: Employee relations artefacts (five to one salary ratio, Joy Gang); Community artefacts (Ben & Jerry's Foundation, free cone day, factory tours, political campaigns); Environment artefacts (eco-pint) and Product artefacts (fair trade, cage free eggs, factory seconds, rbgh free milk, and Greyston Bakery).

Employee Relations Artefacts

Five to one salary ratio: new employees are unaware, old timers regret it

Viewpoints on the five to one salary ratio are quite dichotomous: most new timers don't know much about it and speak instead of the 'living wage' while old timers and managers (both old and new) see its disappearance as a loss for the company:

"Everybody had a stake in the ice cream. You were given bonuses over the years back then, profit sharing—the pay—when I came here it was five to one then it went to seven to one and then it went away. Everybody had a stake in the ice cream—versus today you collect your pay check—there is no more profit sharing and you kind of got to be on teams to get any kind of a bonus that not everybody can be on—so it's kind of a hit or miss—if they've got room for you on a team to get a bonus, then you can get there—if you don't then you're not going to get one." (Old timer factory manager)

"The five to one salary ratio--When I first started with the company, the person at the top couldn't make more than five times the lowest salary. Now that is so far from the truth—it doesn't even exist." (Old timer factory manager)

Employees agree however that the salary ratio began to change much before the acquisition because the reality of the marketplace caught up with the idealism of the founders—Ben & Jerry began having a hard time hiring qualified managers due to their salary ratio rule:

"But Ben & Jerry's changed a lot before the acquisition too—You had the seven to one—the highest paid employee couldn't make more than seven times what the lowest paid employee made.

Then they changed that to 10:1 and then got rid of it altogether because they went outside for the CEOs. And my personal opinion is that the last CEO set us up for sale." (Old timer factory employee)

For another old timer factory employee, the salary ratio was not a very realistic mechanism and he does not regret it:

"That's been a sore spot for a lot of employees for a long time. I think it started out with five to one—you could not make more than five times more—and that's the idealism coming through—it's more than values, it's idealism—and that didn't last long—then it became seven and then they dropped it. And the reason is—and this is my point again—they ran up against reality—if you're going to have the ratio, you're not going to get the quality person that you want—that's the point I was trying to make. It sounded good when they first started off but I don't think that ultimately it's very practical." (Old timer factory employee)

Unlike old timers, new factory employees are not familiar with the five to one salary ratio:

Julie: Five to one salary ratio
New timer: What is that?
Julie: You've never heard of it?
New timer: No. What is that?

For another new timer, the five to one salary ratio is not on her cognitive radar screen—what matters to her are issues around cost of living increases and this seems to confirm increased individualism of employees' working identity. The issue is not self versus other within one organization—or how does my individual identity relate to the collective where I am working—but rather how does my individuality compare to other people who are like me in other organizations. New factory employees seem to care only about comparing themselves to employees who are similar to them, at their same wage level and do not seem concerned with the overall architecture of the wage scale within their organization:

"I've heard something about it but I haven't really noticed it. They used to do a cost of living increase and apparently they did that for all pay levels whereas now when they do a cost of living increase its just for the bottom level. So the older people that have been here a while are not getting the cost of living increase that they were used to--so they feel that they're getting gypped and the newer people that are coming in without any experience are getting good pay since they're getting cost of living." (New factory employee)

Clearly the historical salary ratio is not an issue for new timer factory employees because they never experienced it and don't really know about it. What matters to new timers is that their wage is fair as compared to other companies, not as compared to what the top boss is making:

"That doesn't happen anymore, does it? They do keep up with their raises and their minimums—there are not many places around here that can do that." (New factory employee)

When asked about the living wage, this new factory employee also agrees that Ben & Jerry's policy is better than other companies around:

"Could be better [the living wage]—but it's better than most companies out there. Our bonuses could be better for the liveable wage—with the price of gas sky rocketing—I think it should go up at least a little bit to go with the rising cost of everything." (New factory employee)

Joy Gang

New timers are unsure

When asked to speak about what the 'Joy Gang' is and how it may have evolved since the acquisition, factory employees react much the same way as they did to the five to one salary ratio and new comers are generally unsure as to what the Joy Gang does:

"I've heard of them but I'm not really sure what they do. They have a pumpkin weight thing—they might have been in charge of the Christmas thing but they're not allowed to do as much anymore. There used to be a safety drawing but I don't know if that got taken out of their hands too—because it was connected to safety. They've got an exercise log too—something about the person who exercises the most will get a prize at the end of the year. Lately it seems like they're not doing anything but that could be because they're not allowed to. It's a good idea and a lot of people like it—and I think a lot of people take it for granted." (New factory employee)

"In May we had chips and salsa out and little prizes to give away—different things—I'm not really sure what they've done lately." (New factory employee)

New comers also tend to focus on a more recently created employee program (much like they focused on the living wage instead of the salary ratio):

"I don't pay much attention to them [Joy Gang]. I'm in the CAT project teams—where you go out and help the community. And I enjoy that a lot because we go out and help a non profit organization for a day, whatever they need help with." (New factory employee)

While the Joy Gang is not that relevant for new comer factory employees, some seem to have knowledge of the fact that there are two Joy Gangs and that the central headquarters' Joy Gang is better than theirs—this reveals the rift which exists between central and factory employees:

"Yeah—from what I hear central has a lot more perks than we do—their building is nice—they have couches, they have a gym, they can bring their dog to work and everything." (New factory employee)

One new factory manager does know quite a bit about the Joy Gang and is very enthusiastic as he is looking to restart the Joy Gang—this is an example of managerial strategizing wishing to improve employee morale and organizational cohesiveness:

"The Joy Gang!!! We're hoping to re-quick start the Joy Gang. How d'you know about the Joy Gang? Without the Joy Gang, I'd have no Ben & Jerry's tee-shirts….and I have lots of them. They come and go and try stuff and it doesn't work and then they try things and it works—it's an important thing to have—we have a lot of those funky Joy Gangs—and it's important to keep things alive and remind people that they're not in this factory and that they're part of the same team." (New factory manager)

Old timers have regrets but are unclear as to who's responsible for waning of Joy Gang

Old timers have a less positive attitude towards the Joy Gang. Much like the five to one salary ratio, most old timers tend to also have a fairly pessimistic attitude towards this organizational artefact as they tend to regret that the Joy Gang hasn't been as active as it once was. Employees are however, not unanimous as to who is responsible for the waning of Joy Gang—one asserts it happened pre-acquisition, another is unclear and a third seems to attribute responsibility to Unilever's focus on cost saving measures:

"Before it was fun, we did a lot of stuff. But that started slipping away before the acquisition." (Old timer factory employee)

"I don't hear much about the Joy Gang lately—I think that was Jerry's idea—he didn't think there was enough joy in the company—so he got that thing going and that was popular for a while. I just don't hear much about it anymore—I don't know whether it's still in existence or if it's dormant—It feels to me that it's dormant. That's another idea that is so novel—I haven't heard of a Joy Gang in another company." (Old timer factory employee)

"Before the Joy Gang was everywhere—we saw many different wonderful projects that came through the Joy Gang. I don't even know [if they still have Joy Gang]—I think they rolled into Vitality because Vitality is Unilever. I think they have one at central. We've literally had to make cuts on budgets—and saying, ok the magazines that we supply—gone—every possible thing that we could think of and taking it away." (Old timer factory manager)

Community Artefacts

Ben & Jerry Foundation

This organizational artefact reveals once again that new timers have limited knowledge regarding historical Ben & Jerry's artefacts. Old timers generally think that the Ben & Jerry's Foundation hasn't changed much since the acquisition but overall people tend to highlight that the Foundation doesn't communicate much about what they do. For one old timer factory employee this is because information regarding the Foundation is no longer posted on the factory walls: "I have no idea what they're doing. I know there still is one but where the money goes, I don't know. [Pre-acquisition] we knew, it would be posted in the Factory where the money went."

Old timers: Foundation still active

Most other old timers believe the foundation is still active and that it hasn't changed much since the acquisition:

"It still exists [the Foundation]—which is a good thing. It's now combined I believe with the central foundation [at Ben & Jerry's central]." (Factory old timer manager)

"I was once going to be on the Foundation—at the last minute I backed out—I just didn't think that I could devote the time to it. But it's still going strong and that's a big thing—that could be under the social mission part—that's really good. To my knowledge it has not changed very much since the acquisition—it's still very strong and it is still giving away a lot of money, nationwide. Community Action Teams are local in terms of giving away money, as well as performing service things around the community—but the Foundation gives away money nationally to all kinds of great causes—I'd forgotten about that—that's a big one—still going strong for us." (Factory old timer employee)

New timers: Limited knowledge about Foundation but involvement with CAT projects

New timers, unlike old timers, seem to have little knowledge as to what the Foundation does and highlight that communication about the Foundation's activities is lacking. One employee mentions that it is more difficult for factory employees to get involved with the Foundation for grant selections because they cannot spend time working on the Foundation while they are at the factory site and once their shift is over, they want to go home:

"I don't know much about it—I know they give grants to different organizations—I don't know how they do that—I know there was an opening and they were trying to recruit a couple production workers a year or so ago…"(Factory new timer employee)

"I think it's a good idea—I don't know much about it other than it's bigger than our own plant CAT teams. It's more like a larger scheme social mission thing. I've interacted with the people on it a couple of times. Yeah, they're actually encouraging people from manufacturing to come do it—you go there for one day and read a bunch of propositions…but I don't think any manufacturing people have any interest in it—or they don't have the time. Because we have to be here during the week—I don't know how the Foundation does it—I think they expect people who sign up to be willing to do it after hours or on weekends and most of the people in manufacturing—once we're out of here, we want to be out of here." (New factory employee)

Finally, new employees mention the CAT projects when asked about the Ben & Jerry's Foundation—this is more concrete to them as they are more directly involved with this community project:

"I'm in the CAT project teams—where you go out and help the community. And I enjoy that a lot because we go out and help a non profit organization for a day, whatever they need help with." (New factory employee)

Free cone day: Employees unanimous: it's great and hasn't changed

Old and new factory employees and managers are unanimous regarding free cone day—this organizational event has not changed since the acquisition and it is still perceived very positively by everyone as an innovation, a great marketing event, a success and generally a busy time of year:

"There's an innovation—it has not changed. I believe that began under Ben & Jerry. They still have that—it's a good thing—a great marketing tool." (Old timer factory employee)

"It's still great. They're getting pretty much better every year because more people are trying the ice cream and having other people try it." (New factory employee)

When asked if he thinks free cone day is more a marketing event or a community event, one old timer manager thinks it's more about marketing but answers that people really enjoy it—seeming to imply that the event may also have a community aspect to it:

"That's probably more marketing. But people really look forward to it." (Gary, old timer manager)

One employee is exceptional in his answer as he states that he doesn't like the idea of free cone day because it's hard for him to be giving it away for free. What's interesting is that despite his negative comment about free cone day--he seems extremely passionate and committed to the business to be saying what he says:

"I never liked free cone day—I work too hard here to be giving it away. So there still is free cone day and I don't really care for it. I guess it's good for business but it was never my cup of tea." (Old timer factory employee)

Factory tours

New timers: Feedback from the public reinforces positive self image
Old timers: Image not an issue

Factory tours provide new comers with a very positive sense of themselves and their organization. This occurs through an interaction with the public that is gratifying because it breaks the monotony of factory work and also makes employees feel special—'like a celebrity' in the words of one manager:

"I enjoy having people looking down—as boring and monotonous as production work is—it's nice to look up and make the kids laugh—I'm always dancing around, giving them their three dollars worth…"(New factory employee)

"…you walk out into the gift shop when it's busy out there and there's this great vibe—and it's nice to be a part of--you feel like a celebrity walking out there because people want to see where you work." (New factory manager)

Old timers are also positive about the factory tours but do not mention the gratifying effect of having the public send them a positive image of themselves. Instead they focus on the increasing size of the tours, number of visitors and improved quality of the tour facility:

"It's still booming—I wish I could give you the figures—but I always make it a point to find out what was the count was today and last year I think they broke an all time record for one day and I think it was 2400 if I was not mistaken—that's by the amount of tickets sold for the tour. If they sold 2400 tickets—and that's enormous—there could have been 3000 people here. Tours are still big. » (Old timer factory employee)

"I think the tour has gotten better. Especially in the past couple of years because we've had money from Unilever to give a fresh design to the plant—so it's been updated—but that's happened throughout the years. But this time around they did it in a really nice big way. But that was really through NAIC. It was such a separate entity—as long as it delivered bottom line numbers."(Old timer factory manager)

Political product campaigns

New timer employees: low employee involvement
New timer manager: paradox of relationship with Unilever

This artefact reveals two things for new timers—for employees, it reveals their low level of involvement with particular social responsibility actions of the company—while for a new factory manager, it reveals the paradox of reconciling two organizations (Ben & Jerry's and Unilever) with very different political cultures. Hierarchical level seems to play a role here and confirms that lower level employees have less of a stake in the social responsibility actions of their organization whereas upper level management is more aware and involved. The new timer employees interviewed either mentioned they were not involved or had no opinions on the matter:

"We didn't have much to do with that. I certainly loved reading the information that Ben & Jerry's put together for that…" (New factory employee)

The situation is different for a new timer factory manager as he is very aware of Ben & Jerry's political campaigns—at least the more recent ones such as 'American Pie'—and he points out the paradox and challenge for a company like Unilever which has a neutral political identity to accept an organization such as Ben & Jerry's which has a much more left leaning and political organizational identity. Overall, he seems to think that the 'relationship is working out:'

"Peace Pops I don't know a lot about. American Pie was kind of a flop—well, that might not be fair to say—the whole goal was to raise awareness—it had to do with nuclear weapons and the amount of spending for education for kids. So Unilever—which as far as I know their code of ethics says, we don't contribute to any political campaigns on one side or the other—they are very neutral which is a great thing—I wish all companies could be like that—so in theory Unilever shouldn't have a lobby in Washington saying, "Don't worry about killing the Rainforest…." But then you have this very liberal brand underneath it that is very political—so it's just a weird mix. They seem to let us march on Washington—it seems to be working out—it's just an interesting relationship." (New factory manager)

Old timers: lack of interest for politics and lack of corporate communication on issue

This artefact reveals two things for old timers—first that they lack personal interest for politics and secondly that the organization doesn't communicate well to employees on such

issues. Old timers have mixed views on this artefact. For one old timer, the political campaign, "Peace Pops" was about business and didn't solve the social and political issues of world peace:

"I don't care for politicians or the political scheme. It certainly didn't hurt us I don't think— I'm sure it brought us more business but Peace Pops didn't bring peace. (Old timer factory employee)

For another old timer factory employee, there is a lack of information and communication in the company today and this differs from pre-acquisition were there used to be all company meetings to inform employees of new political campaigns:

"Peace Pops—I haven't heard that term Peace Pops in a long time—I don't know whether that's still an ongoing thing or not. American Pie---that's an innovation since the acquisition—but I haven't heard a lot of promotion—I remember we used to have these meetings and they would play the commercials and some of them were quite cute—I have yet to see a commercial on TV—I don't watch a lot of TV and I still have yet to see one. This company has never advertised a lot on TV. » (Old timer factory employee)

Environment & Product Artefacts

Certified cage free eggs & Eco-pint reveal newcomers' lack of knowledge of historical identity and social responsibility identity

These two organizational artefacts reveal that new factory employees are not particularly invested and informed about important tangible manifestations of social responsibility in their company. It may also be that these two particular social responsibility artefacts are either too historical (eco-pint) or far removed from their everyday considerations (certified cage free eggs). The factory employees interviewed are also perhaps too far down in the hierarchy to be informed about such issues. Another possibility is that these social responsibility matters are relegated to the corporate headquarters, leaving the Waterbury factory out of it. Regarding the cage free eggs, when asked if she knows what exactly happened, one new factory employee answers she is not sure. For the eco-pint, an important environmental landmark in the history of the company, new comers don't know about it at all. Finally, one old timer factory employee does know and guesses that they disappeared due to cost considerations:

« Never heard of that [the eco-pint]! » (New factory employee)

"I was thinking about that the other day. Those were the ones that were unbleached, right? We went away from them for some reason. I don't know why we went away from them—probably money savings. That was a good idea but it didn't last I guess." (Old timer factory employee)

Fair Trade Flavours: great thing but small part of overall product portfolio

Both old and new employees are positive about the fair trade flavours and think that it is a good idea and that the number of flavours has actually increased over time:

"That's a good idea and if the money is really going where we're saying it's going, then I think it is. We hooked up with Green Mountain Coffee Roasters on one of those. I know they do a lot for the community too and the world. One of our coffee flavours is a fair trade and I think we're hooked up with Green Mountain Coffee on it." (Old factory employee)

"That's a good idea—I like it—We've actually seen an increase in it—before it used to just be coffee and now it's also vanilla and something else—maybe it has to do with the nuts." (New factory employee)

While agreeing that this initiative is very positive, several employees regret that these flavours represent only a small percentage of the overall product portfolio:

"That's great, the more fair trade—coffee and vanilla…It's only a small part of the business and of the overall picture." (New factory employee)

Factory Seconds

This organizational artefact wasn't in the initial interview guide but is worthwhile to mention as several old timer employees spontaneously brought it up during our discussion of organizational artefacts. Factory seconds are second quality product that used to be given out to charities and to Ben & Jerry's employees pre-acquisition. Today, due to an increased focus on product waste control and cost control issues, there are no longer any "factory seconds" as all of the ice cream produced is sold. While new timers did not mention this artefact at all, several old timers expressed their unhappiness that factory seconds had disappeared. For one employee this translates to lesser benefits for employees as there is less access to free ice cream. For one manager, absence of seconds has impacted product quality:

"Yeah. We used to get factory seconds—they used to sell factory seconds for lower cost—which usually it didn't have as many chunks in it—and people loved that just as much—and you don't see that anymore. We do get three pints of ice cream a day—we do still get that luckily—they have not taken that away yet—but it's a lot more limited because before when we made factory seconds, that's what we were able to take from—and now it's usually test products or if something didn't get banded right upstairs—we don't have nearly as much to offer as far as employee ice creams as when we made factory seconds." (New timer factory employee)

"We don't have as many seconds as we used to. A lot of the ice cream is incorporated back into the ice cream." (Old timer factory manager)

When asked if he thinks this has affected the quality of the ice cream, this old timer manager answers that it has:

"I think it has—but it depends who you ask. I don't think our ice cream is nowhere near the quality it was—as far as taste and texture, I don't think it's the same."

Rbgh free milk

I didn't collect much information on this artefact so it is difficult to analyze only two quotes from factory employees. What is evident here is that both old and new timers are proud that their company has taken a strong political and ethical stance much ahead of any other company as taking such a stance revealed Ben & Jerry's capacity to be a leader and influencer in the corporate social responsibility area:

"That one has been around for a long time—we've always been against it. I don't think they [NAIC] had a problem with it at all. I know everybody is against it now—there's been a commercial on lately about it with the Vermont farmers association." (New factory employee)

"We started it and a whole lot more companies have followed suit. I don't think that Monsanto liked it. B&J's has started a few things that were needed—and people listen." (Old timer factory employee)

Greyston Bakery: Lack of communication about the evolution of this partnership

This social responsibility partnership artefact reveals a certain lack of communication between management and factory employees. While old timers know about Greyston Bakery (a partnership established by Ben Cohen with a non-profit bakery dedicated to helping disadvantaged people acquire working skills to get back into the job market) they don't seem to know much about how the relationship has evolved recently:

"I think it was a good idea. They still are doing stuff for us, right?...Yeah, they're still making our brownies and I know they've helped a lot of inner city people with problems—and I believe we're still doing it." (Old timer factory employee)

"I haven't heard much from them lately—here I am a custodian and I haven't heard from them! I used to hear the name quite a bit—they had some quality control problems for a while—then that cleared up and they did quite a bit of business with each other." (Old timer factory employee)

New timers are split about Greyston—one has never even heard of it while another knows about it but acknowledges that at her hierarchical level, she wouldn't be informed much about the partnership and its evolution:

"What is that? Never heard of it! " (New factory employee)

"That is the bakery that helps out underprivileged people or former convicts. I think it's a good idea but I can't stand the brownies we get from them, I think they're disgusting…I don't think that [the partnership with Greyston] has changed. We still get stuff from them—I don't think that has changed at all--but if it had changed—they don't tell us so I wouldn't know." (New factory employee)

4.3.5.3 Analysis of Factory Employees' Experience of Artefacts

The following conclusions can be made about factory members' experience of organizational artefacts: Firstly, factory employees' experience of organizational artefacts and their evolution since the acquisition is less positive than for central support members. All factory employees tend to look back on the pre-acquisition organization with nostalgia. This was not the case for central old timers who were fairly critical of the pre-acquisition days. This is perhaps due to the fact that the factory has been disconnected from Ben & Jerry's central headquarters and now directly reports to Unilever supply chain. The Ben & Jerry's factory organization as employees knew it has changed significantly since the acquisition.

In terms of spontaneous reactions, all factory members are unanimous that the pre-acquisition organization was a nurturing, community oriented and politically active place to be. Most employees tend to idealize what the pre-acquisition Ben & Jerry's organization used to be. Regarding the evolution of the Manifested Identity since the acquisition, answers vary according to time spent in the organization. While for old timer managers there is less empowerment and employee enthusiasm, for new timer employees, Ben & Jerry's is still a very good employer.

Secondly, much like for central headquarters members, there is no monolithic employee voice that emerges. Instead, time spent in the organization is the dominant factor which colours members' experience of their organization and its tangible manifestations or artefacts. For old timers, there is a sense of nostalgia concerning how Ben & Jerry's has changed since the acquisition. From a nurturing place to be it has become a place where there is less empowerment and enthusiasm among employees. For new comers on the other hand, while there is also an idealization of what Ben & Jerry's was like pre-acquisition, the feeling remains more positive today as employees believe Ben & Jerry's is a good employer. When asked about specific organizational artefacts, however, many newcomers do not know much about many "historical" artefacts such as the salary ratio, the Joy Gang, the Foundation, the eco-pint and even Greyston Bakery.

Thirdly, even more so than at the central headquarters, artefacts are not fully playing their role of facilitators of shared meanings. The lack of knowledge of most new timers about many organizational artefacts contrasted to a sense of regret of old timers points to a fragmented organizational experience. Clearly, the symbolic productions of Ben & Jerry's historical identity no longer function well for the factory employees. There are, however, (much like at the central headquarters) several artefacts that generate unanimous approval and

agreement among both old and new timers. These artefacts are: the free cone day, the factory tours and fair trade. For all factory members these artefacts are central to Ben & Jerry's identity and have not changed much. Regarding fair trade, this is a post acquisition artefact and all employees agree it is a very good thing and wish it represented a larger percentage of the overall product portfolio. To sum up, Manifested Identity at Ben & Jerry's at the factory and headquarters rests on just a few organizational artefacts. Beyond this short list, most other artefacts trigger differentiated responses from organizational members.

Fourthly, and this is quite different from my findings at central headquarters—pre acquisition artefacts do NOT act as a powerful source of organizational identity for newcomers. In other words, while at central headquarters, newcomers tend to idealize all organizational artefacts and hold on to historical artefacts as an important identity source, at the factory, newcomers acknowledge having little knowledge of many artefacts. Many historical artefacts are 'dead' for new timers: for instance, the salary ratio or Joy Gang or even the Foundation elicits very little reactions from new timer employees. New timers do cite however more recently created artefacts such as living wage, CAT teams and Vitality as community oriented activities actively supported by Unilever. There is a general sense that new timers at the factory have internalized new artefacts created by Unilever as these seem to better reflect their sense of who they are and what their organization is all about. This is not the case at headquarters.

Finally, much like new headquarters members, new factory members also seem to have a more individualistic and functional approach to their organization when they express how Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity has evolved. New timers care about having a fair wage in comparison to other factory workers at other companies, and not in comparison to the top management structure within their organization. In other words, new timers conceive of their identity in terms of function and not in terms of belonging to a whole organization that would have fairness instilled throughout.

Regarding employee spirit as a defining characteristic of Ben & Jerry's Manifested Identity—all factory employees are unanimous on this fact for the pre-acquisition organization. Post acquisition, however, old and new timers differ as old timers believe there is less empowerment today while new comers are satisfied that they have a good employer and a good job and do not mention any lack of empowerment.

4.3.6 Factory Employees' Experience of Identity Themes

4.3.6.1 Employee Empowerment

Old Timers: Less empowerment

Old timer factory employees and all managers (old and new) unanimously express a sense that there is less employee empowerment since the acquisition (with perhaps one exception--an old timer employee who doesn't feel impacted personally). New timer employees are split on the question: some agree there is less empowerment while others think not.

Both new and old timer managers express a certain level of frustration about having little manoeuvring power to decide "what's right for the site." Managers differ in terms of the object of their frustration. While for some the lessening of employee empowerment originates from inside the Waterbury site, for others it comes from an external force from outside the site (from abstract Unilever). For one old timer manager, it is frustrating that now engineers are telling production people what to do and that there is no longer a grassroots collective approach to problem solving:

> "It used to be you give somebody a project—whether it's a production worker or maintenance worker—somebody to drive a project—whether it be a new flavour or a new piece of equipment—it's no longer—that's all driven by engineering now. There are about three or four projects right now—it pretty much was handed down—here you need to do this and this—versus, let's sit down and have a meeting, we got to do this project--what does everybody see, who wants to run this project? It's not that anymore—it's already been decided—the engineer comes down and says I need somebody to do this or it's subcontracted." (Old timer factory manager)

For this same manager, people don't have the drive they used to and this in part due to their lack of involvement in the production design process:

> "The drive is not there. We kept our same standard but the drive is not there to do what we used to do. But we don't have a part in it anymore either. The people on the floor would help design the ice cream—ok, we're going to come up with this flavour—let's everybody give input—they'd put it together—we'd be the first ones to taste it and say, is it going to fly or not—We don't see it now until it comes down and says, put it in the cup." (Old timer factory manager)

For old timer employees, there was more employee empowerment pre-acquisition which led to more learning, creativity and free spiritedness while today there is more focus on waste control and fewer mistakes are made:

> "Day to day, back when it was just Ben & Jerry's, you had more say—if you had an idea for a flavour, for a change in policy, a change in the process—it was a lot easier to be heard back then. Which wasn't always a good thing because we changed things that didn't work—but you learned a lot and we always made things that other people couldn't make or didn't start out making which is how we got big." (Old timer factory employee)

"[Pre-acquisition] it gave you more of a sense of free spiritedness—you were more empowered to make decisions and do things—I'm not saying that that's good or bad because I think this has really forced us to get better about waste and safety [today]—the thing that bothers me is people have lost their spirit because they don't feel empowered to make decisions—they don't feel that sense of, "I'm important and I'm part of a bigger picture!"—It's I have to do this and I have to look at how to do it within a certain window." It's taken creativity away." (Old timer factory employee)

One old timer employee explains how the more demanding expectations combined with a more acute sense of responsibility on the part of Unilever has created more distance between managers and employees as employee mistakes are less tolerated than they used to be in the past—thus shattering the "buddy buddy" culture of the pre-acquisition days. This situation is not viewed as negative or positive but increased professionalism is seen to create more distance between managers and employees:

"I think there is a little more distance now between the workers and the managers. They are much less tolerant of mistakes right now on the production floor and companywide—especially if it has to do with a lot of money—you make a mistake—and it's quite easy to do if you're on certain machines—when I was out there and you were to make a mistake and it cost several thousand dollars—it's not like it was before--before if you made a mistake it was like, "Oh, it's ok!" It was much more forgiving, much more buddy buddy—Much more running out of the seat of your pants--Now, it's not that way at all, much more responsible, much more expectations on you as an employee and quite predictably that has created some distance between employees and managers. And again that's a double edged sword—it's unfortunate that you create that distance but it may be necessary also." (Old timer factory employee)

For several of the old timer employees, 'employee empowerment' has not changed much in terms of their own jobs—but some do recognize that upper management is more impacted:

"In my daily job, [employee empowerment] has changed very little. As I said, if you think you're right about something and you pursue it—there are a lot of strong heads in this building…but I know it is much more difficult for higher levels because they're answering to who knows how many people." (Old timer factory employee)

"I think [employee empowerment] it's roughly the same at this plant." (Old timer factory employee)

When asked if the lessening of empowerment and motivation has happened since the acquisition, one old timer factory manager explains that employee motivation had actually begun to decrease prior to the acquisition—beginning when marketing and central offices moved away from the physical plant to establish their offices downtown Burlington. This point is critical as it implies that the acquisition itself is not necessarily responsible for all of the significant changes occurring at Ben & Jerry's. It could also imply that the lessening of employee empowerment may have been a gradual process over time and not something clear cut pre and post acquisition:

"It's really changed since the acquisition but some of it started before that when they moved to central and got away from us. But they'd still come down and they would do test flavours with people on the tours—they'd take people off tour and ask them what they thought---we haven't seen this in quite a while." (Old timer factory manager)

For another old timer manager, while employee empowerment was certainly greater pre-acquisition, Unilever continues to involve people through a team process approach:

"We had a lot of teams then—We have a lot of teams now. Unilever itself has a team process—so there are still ways for people to get involved and everybody is not involved—but there are a lot of people on teams." (Old timer factory manager)

For this manager, the change since the acquisition lies more in the amount and depth of input that employees can make. Whereas pre-acquisition employees could potentially impact Ben & Jerry policy, post acquisition, employees have a more targeted and circumscribed impact:

"Some of the changes that employees were working on back at Ben & Jerry's could have more of an effect plant wide and companywide whereas the changes the teams are working on are focused on process or individual areas at the plant. We're not going to make Unilever policy or we will not change Unilever policy. Whereas before employees could have an effect on Ben & Jerry's policy." (Old timer factory manager)

For two other factory managers, the issue of diminished employee empowerment is more directly attributed to Unilever management (off site) which either does not sufficiently care about Ben & Jerry's employees or simply and (rightly) is so focused on standardizing its factories to remain competitive, that the scope of local managerial decision making is necessarily reduced:

"The people here—the leadership group [in this building]—they really care—but as you start to go outside of this building and higher up, my feeling is they really don't care. It really does feel like it's more about the bottom line." (Old timer factory manager)

"We're going through a Unilever Americas standardization right now. It's going to be a bit of a challenge—certain benefits like personal time, sick time—that stuff is changing. There's a lot going on here, in the world—Unilever's pitch is that the company needs to stay competitive—we can't have thirty different plants with thirty different vacation plans—they're trying to standardize so that one third party provider can deal with it all—so everything needs to be standardized for everybody— which all makes sense—yes, we need to be competitive" (New factory manager)

Old and new managers differ in their vision of employee empowerment in that old timers evoke a ***collective vision of employee empowerment***, speaking from the vantage point of all employees while new timer managers adopt a ***group managerial perspective***, speaking on behalf of their own particular management group within the organization:

"When I started working in production there was a comment board outside of production where you could write whatever you wanted to write on that board—and you used to feel safe doing that. Now, there's no comment board anymore. » (Old timer factory manager)

"Everybody had a stake in the ice cream [pre acquisition]. You were given bonuses over the years back then, profit sharing—the pay—when I came here it was five to one then it went to seven to one and then it went away." (Old timer factory manager)

"From a management perspective—before, it was, let's talk to Ben and Jerry and if they agree, then go ahead—that's the way I hear it—but maybe it wasn't that simple—maybe then it grew to something—and now we're thrown into the Unilever world—as managers we feel more like implementers at one level than people who can actually decide what's right for the site—which can be extremely frustrating at times." (New factory manager)

New employees: All have individual vision of empowerment

For new factory employees, the evolution of employee empowerment since the acquisition is viewed both positively and negative. What does appear very clearly however is that all new employees (and managers) have a more ***individual vision*** of employee empowerment. They view empowerment as a personal thing to be determined by the self motivated individual who has decided or not to empower him/herself. Implicit in this discourse is that empowerment does not come from the top down or from the organization but from individuals themselves:

"It's there [employee empowerment] if you take advantage of it. I'm a self motivated person—I'm on six different teams—only two of which are part of the quarterly bonus—the other ones I'm involved with because I feel I should be involved with." (New factory employee)

This same employee explains how there are programs set up by Ben & Jerry's and Unilever available for employees so that the employees in the factory who are not feeling empowered are responsible for their own fate:

"…if you want to be empowered in the company, you need to set it up to do it—but the people that aren't empowered in the company are the ones that are not doing anything and that complain about everything. The Ben & Jerry's programs and the Unilever programs allow for you to show who you are and to associate with what's going on." (New factory employee)

One new factory employee has a less positive take on this individual empowerment as she believes that employee empowerment has shifted from a more personal and family environment pre-acquisition to a less personal an individualistic system which is felt to be imposed upon employees:

"I think it [employee empowerment] was more so before from what I've heard. They do still give us things—there are creative idea forms that we can fill out if we think of something—there are lots of helpful assistance—legally—or whatever we need in our own lives that can help empower us. It's still there—it's just not as personal. Before it was more personal, more like a family—you had your fellow employees and you could go to Ben & Jerry's and say, "I need help!"—from what I've heard. Now if you go to HR, they give you a 1-800 number—our HR has gone downhill—it's not personal—it's you take care of yourself—in that way it's empowering because you are the one in control of everything." (New factory employee)

The meaning of work

Old Timers used to be 'passionate idealists' but have now come to be 'pragmatics' just like new timers

A final insight discovered while analyzing factory members' experience of empowerment is how employees conceive of their work. Old timers regret the days pre-acquisition were they were engaged in a passionate affair with their organization. Today old timers feel they are more disengaged and see their job as just a job. New timers seem to have a pragmatic relationship to their work—for them a job is just a job and there are not nostalgic of any past but just content with the good job that they have today. In a sense today, all employees, both old and new have come to adopt a more 'pragmatic' attitude towards their job.

One old timer manager explains how the meaning of work from pre acquisition to today has evolved from a passionate affair with his organization (to the point where he explains it was so hard on his family life that he got a divorce) to a situation today where a job is just a job and where the drive is no longer there:

"I think Ben and Jerry had a dream and everybody wanted to be a part of it. Ben & Jerry's back then had a lot of people with the same dream that Ben had—people would work 12-14-16 hours a day to help get to that dream—and no matter what it took, we would get the job done—if you had to be here 4 days, 5 days, 7 days, it didn't make a difference."

"So many things have changed. It's not as personal anymore. People came to do a job and it was personal--you were part of it—and it's not that anymore. It's pretty much a job—you still care about your job, but it's a job now. I don't know if that would have happened if we were just getting big and had stayed independent. It pretty much seems like people don't care as much but still care about the standards that we have." (Old timer factory manager)

For another old timer manager, people pre acquisition were proud to work for Ben & Jerry's—they were proud to be part of a socially responsible company, doing good for the community. This manager also seems to imply that employee's sense of pride to work for Ben & Jerry's also came from greater employee inclusion in profit sharing:

"In the beginning, people were proud working here—we made a good product, we got to work in the communities to give back and the company did a lot for the employees back then—this building on the right over here was a child care centre….Ben & Jerry's treated everybody kind of equally— there were different bonuses for employees and managers, even back then—but the employees used to share in more when the company did well—and now when the company does well, just the higher level managers get the bonuses out of it." (Old timer factory manager)

One old timer employee remembers feeling extremely proud to work for Ben & Jerry's in the past and when asked if he is proud today he does not answer the question directly but rather expresses merely that he is satisfied:

"We were voted Small Business of America one year—I was a very proud employee that year when Ben and Jerry sat on the White House lawn and got that award."

[Are you still proud today?] "I am a very satisfied employee. My career making ice cream for thirty one years—there are a lot worst occupations." (Old timer factory employee)

This old timer employee is also showing some nostalgia for a glorious past where he was very proud to work for his company—in this way he is displaying similarities with the other old timer managers who are also nostalgic of a past where employees and managers were proud to work for Ben & Jerry's. The difference between this old timer employee and old timer managers is that the employee is very positive about his experience at Ben & Jerry's today—although he does not actually say that he is a proud employee today, he is nevertheless, "very satisfied." This seems to indicate that old timer factory employees are generally less affected than managers by the shifts which may have occurred since the acquisition.

New comer employees are much less passionate (and perhaps idealistic) about the way they speak about their work or its meaning. For many, a job is just a job and fills functional, economic requirements, allowing for a balanced quality of life with good working hours and decent pay. New timers are quite pragmatic in their work philosophy. They do not have great expectations regarding the meaning they can potentially derive from their work and therefore do not express frustrations like some of the old timer managers:

"The hours that I work are just right because I have a young girl—and she had never been to day care before—that was her transition into day care—it's Monday through Friday and the pay is decent, I can support her on that—and it's pretty low stress—I had never worked in production before—it's kind of boring, you feel like you're part of a machine and I feel like I could do a lot more than this but right now it fits my life—I save my patience and my energy for when I get home with my daughter for dancing or to do gardening (laughs)." (New factory employee)

For another new factory employee, the choice to work for Ben & Jerry's was not a deliberate choice of working for a mission driven or socially responsible company but rather just a job opportunity that provides good hours and decent pay :

"I didn't really choose to work for Ben & Jerry's—I kind of fell into it—I had to leave a former employer and then went to a temp agency and they found me this place—and it worked out—I was like, hey you guys are willing to pay me and I can be on first shift so I came here as a temp." (New factory employee)

4.3.6.2 Leadership

Two forms of leadership

When asked to speak about the term, "leadership," factory employees and managers unanimously refer to two different forms of leadership: the leadership at the Waterbury plant, and the offsite Unilever corporate leadership. None of the employees or managers speak of the Ben & Jerry's corporate headquarters leadership in Burlington spontaneously. It is only once probed to speak about the Ben & Jerry's corporate headquarters that they unanimously agree they have very little contact with the leadership, are unsure of the exact title of the leadership there and are not very concerned by this leadership.

"…there is no longer a president of Ben & Jerry's. A lot of the corporate structure is gone—it went to Unilever. But there is some there—I know there is Walt Freese—I don't know what his official position is but he's the top guy there." (Old timer factory employee)

"I don't know if we have a CEO now—I know there is this guy Walt Freese or something that's the head of Ben & Jerry's. But it's more Unilever now to me because I didn't work here enough when it was Ben & Jerry's before the acquisition." (New timer factory employee)

Good local plant leadership tied to abstract corporate control

Factory members' organizational universe is made up of two entities: the physical site of the Waterbury factory itself and the more abstract and fairly unknown off site Unilever corporate entity. While both the Waterbury plant leadership and the Unilever leadership are present on the mental maps of factory employees and managers, plant leadership seems to hold a more central place just because it is the first thing that people talk about when asked about leadership. Plant leadership is also cited overwhelmingly as being "good" leadership by both employees and managers. The core physical site leadership seems to be the rock upon which employees rest their notion of leadership.

Furthermore, it seems that factory employees tend to think of their organization primarily in terms of its factories. When asked to talk about his organization's leadership, one new factory employee spoke only about the Waterbury plant leadership. When probed to speak further and to include his entire organization's leadership, this employee did not mention corporate headquarters but rather spoke about the other Ben & Jerry's factory in St. Albans, Vermont:

"When you're talking about the leadership, you're talking about the leadership here at the plant—not for Ben & Jerry's as a whole?"

"I can only say what we have here—I have limited exposure to the St. Albans leadership—although I've had to take care of things with them and they've always been good about it—my direct exposure is to the leadership here." (New factory employee)

While local plant leadership is central to factory employees and managers, the notion of plant leadership is intertwined with the notion of abstract off site corporate control. Almost all the managers and employees who spoke about plant leadership associated it with leadership from outside the plant. When speaking about the strength of the plant leadership, many employees find the plant leadership to be good and likeable, but also not completely independent because it is controlled by outside corporate Unilever:

"I like our leadership here—we have accessible leadership—I just find sometimes their hands a little tied in terms of what they can and cannot do." (New factory employee)

One new manager explained that since the acquisition there has been a shift where site managers now have less control over decision making:

"Leadership is more corporately driven and less site driven. It has shifted. The site people have become more implementers, getting directions from this corporate entity that maybe they feel is out of touch with the day to day." (New factory manager)

One new entry level employee did not mention the local good leadership at the plant and spoke only of Unilever's power: "Everything has to go through Greenbay, NAIC, I'm not sure." One old timer manager spoke of plant leadership as being good in the past but no longer very present given that now corporate Unilever tells local leadership what to do:

"After being bought out, we don't see much of our leaders—it's pretty much handed down from Unilever to what we're doing and what we're going to do." (Old timer factory manager)

This outside corporate control seems fairly abstract to both employees and managers—some employees explain that they don't have any contact with outside Unilever leadership while most seem to speak of Unilever as an unknown outside entity that now controls upper level management both at the factory and at Ben & Jerry's headquarters. Most factory employees and managers agree that Unilever leadership is an unknown and mysterious entity with which they have little contact:

"When you get outside of this building, I'm not really sure who's in charge anymore. I don't know if there's a mystery Unilever somewhere or not…" (Old timer factory employee)

"We have no direct contact to Unilever leadership." (New factory employee)

But while most employees and managers speak of Unilever as having power over the factory leadership, overall they do not speak negatively about this corporate leadership. Only one factory employee spoke negatively about the Unilever leadership saying, "To the very top of Unilever I think it's more about jockeying things around and sneaking money—it doesn't give you a good feeling."

Lack of organizational "wholeness"

Most employees express feeling torn between the local factory leadership and the abstract off site Unilever leadership. This lack of organizational wholeness comes in part from the lack of information coming from Unilever leadership towards Ben & Jerry's factory employees, thus contributing to a climate of organizational disconnection:

"It's become much more grey—the lines are more fuzzy—it's much more diverse--Before there was more of a connection from the top to the bottom. Before you could ask somebody, "Who's the CEO of this company?" and everybody would know. Now you ask, "Who's the CEO of this company?" And they could say, Walt Freeze overseas Ben & Jerry's—but of Unilever, the percentage is going to be very low." (Old timer factory manager)

4.3.6.2 Manufacturing Culture

All factory members: Safer working conditions

Factory members experience the evolution of the manufacturing culture in a unanimous fashion. Both new and old timers agree that safety has improved (to a fault for one employee) since the acquisition and that working conditions are easier, in part due to Unilever's stricter and more rigorous safety procedures but also in part because of the slowdown of production at the Waterbury factory site:

"We're a safer plant now—it's been a long road." (New factory manager)

"[Working conditions] are easier—we've done away with a lot of lifting, we have more computers—we get to push buttons now and make ice cream, we don't have to manually do it." (Old timer factory employee)

All factory members: More safety but less innovation

While all factory members agree that manufacturing culture has evolved towards better safety since the acquisition, they also associate the change with less innovation:

"I'm guessing we're a much safer place—we're more methodical about how we make changes but on the same routine we don't make big changes as much anymore. An innovative flavour now might be, swirl these two together instead of something crazy like Karamel Sutra where throw this plug of caramel in the middle of that—which was how the hell do you do that—there was equipment, there was testing and there was a lot of risk involved in that—in terms of dollars and the equipment." (New factory manager)

"I think the company has lost some of its culture as far as its manufacturing—it's become more standardized—Ideas are kind of lost in Unilever terms…" (New factory employee)

"In the beginning [pre-acquisition] it was more an entrepreneur type deal—people would do whatever it took to get out a new flavour—and you did some wild stuff. In the safety world back then we had a lot of injuries—and now our injury rates have gone down a bit—but Unilever wants zero which is beyond where we are right now—so it's pushing the bar a little bit more." (Old timer factory employee)

Old & New Employees Express Anxiety for the future & Gratitude towards Unilever

The recent slowdown of production in the Waterbury plant is generating some anxiety among employees (both new and old timers) as people fear for the future of the factory and for potential layoffs if production is back to running only one line at the Waterbury factory:

"Hopefully next year we won't have as much down time—they were cut back to one line for six weeks so half of production was working with the tourists—I was helping parking cars for eight hours a day." (New factory employee)

"There's a little bit of nervousness going around—it's not rampant—people don't talk about it—but there's a little anxiety about what might happen in the future under this company—for instance, how long they might tolerate running one line and coming up with stuff for people to do during that time. We're running two lines lately so we'll see." (Old timer factory employee)

However, employees are thankful for Unilever's ability to find other type of work for production workers during the slow down period in production and for not laying anyone off:

"…it says something of the company that at least they didn't send us all out with no pay or 2/3 pay—I just wonder how long it that will last…" (New factory employee)

It is unclear how long the Waterbury factory will be running two lines (and not just one like it did last summer)--because employees explain the slowdown in production at the Waterbury site is the result of a new Unilever plant opening in the Midwest—which has taken millions of gallons away from Waterbury. The logic of this production redistribution is explained by both old and new timers as an environmental measure to save gas on transportation:

"We're not running nowhere near as much as we used to because they've opened other sites up to help produce ice cream and so we've had to share the gallons that we would be producing here—the last half of this year, we've been running three days, four days a week—never had that problem in the past. They've opened up out there in the Midwest, it's a GHB plant maybe or one of Unilever's plants—they've put in one of our pint plants out there so we don't have to ship pints all over the country which kind of makes sense—but it's taking gallons away from this end of it—you can only sell so many gallons—so you get split between the sites." (Old timer factory employee)

"I know with the gas prices and that, there are Ben & Jerry's products being made in Nevada. They moved a million gallons out there—so it's not like we're not making the product—the product is being made and our growth is higher than forecast—it's just that the volume has been redistributed. We're not just being made in St. Albans anymore—and I understand the use of gas and getting to the West Coast—because our West Coast has grown—so because they are putting more product out on the West Coast, they don't want to truck it." (New factory employee)

4.3.6.3 Innovation

When evoking 'innovation'—two visions clearly emerge in the factory: old timers versus new timers. Factory employees' vision of innovation is influenced mostly by the length of time spent at Ben & Jerry's and whether they were present pre-acquisition or not.

It is important to note some variations within each sub group's interpretation of 'innovation.' It seems that managers (both old and new timer managers) are generally less optimistic than employees. One old timer manager holds Unilever responsible for the decrease in innovation while old timer employees view the decrease in innovation as a natural phenomenon. Similarly, while new timer employees are optimistic about the state of innovation in the factory today, one new timer manager while also optimistic about innovation does mention some negative issues that have upset him.

Old timers: Less innovation post acquisition

For all of the old timers interviewed, innovation has decreased since the acquisition. It seems that lower level factory old timers attribute this decrease in innovation to more systemic factors while for a higher level factory manager the issue is with the acquisition itself and Unilever.

The lessening of innovation takes different forms for different employees—One employee spontaneously mentions what he finds was an extremely innovative action pre-acquisition—the famous CEO Contest where Ben & Jerry's publicized in the press their search for a new CEO—he explains that he can't really think of anything comparable in terms of innovation post acquisition:

"I haven't seen much since the acquisition—but maybe I'm not in a position to from where I am. But before the acquisition—I understood it was the Board of Directors that came up with this idea—they came up with the "YO do you want to be the CEO!" That was quite innovative—it got lots of publicity and indeed they found a CEO—that stands out. That was a big deal—but since something as big as that under Unilever—I'd be hard pressed to think of it—That doesn't mean that there hasn't been some innovations. Coming up with new flavours—but that's an ongoing thing—I think chocolate chip cookie dough back under Ben & Jerry's again—I don't think anybody had come up with that flavour. Since then we've had imitators—some of the flavours might be considered innovative…" (Old timer factory employee)

For several old timer employees, innovation has lessened post acquisition but this is not so much due to the acquisition itself but rather to the fact that over a long time period it becomes increasingly difficult to come up with new flavours and ideas. When asked if he thinks the lessening of innovation post acquisition is due to the acquisition or just to the company getting bigger, this old timer factory employee answers that it's because of

innovation saturation: "I think they were running out of funky stuff to make." (Old timer factory employee)

When asked if Ben & Jerry's is still coming up with innovative flavours, another old timer factory employee agrees that *you can come up with just so much innovation:*

"I haven't seen one so far that I thought was a Cherry Garcia for instance—that was a big deal for instance. There's always a possibility but the longer you go on, the tougher it gets and there's only so much you can do with ice cream." (Old timer factory employee)

So while lower level employees attribute a lessening of innovation to factors that are not linked to the acquisition itself—for an old timer factory manager, the lessening of product innovation is the direct result of the acquisition and Unilever's focus on cost savings. While he acknowledges that technological innovation still occurs, for him everything is now driven by cost savings:

"Product innovation is not us anymore—we don't see that down here anymore. Technology—maintenance is still allowed to look around and see what's out there and what will work for us—we can still do that—we'll have to justify it dollar wise—is it going to be a cost savings—everything is driven by cost savings. Technology we do stay up with—we have some pretty good programmers here—we have our electricians, plumbers—but anything outside of that is not driven here. If it is, I'm not aware of it." (Old timer factory manager)

New timers: Positive present

New timer factory employees are much more positive about the state of innovation at Ben & Jerry's. For them, Unilever encourages innovation through team work and there is also better equipment and less product waste since the acquisition:

"Unilever is a very team oriented company—so there are a lot of different teams and you get benefits quarterly from being in teams if you meet their criteria for the teams. They also have a creative idea program which if you come up with a money saving idea, you can get money in return from Unilever—it just happens to take a lot of work to prove everything. I've put in a lot of creative ideas and I've gotten paid off on two of them. It takes a LOT to actually get paid out. » (New timer factory employee)

This same new timer employee does agree that there has been some stagnation in innovation lately—however he also cites many examples of current innovations and seems very optimistic about these innovations:

"Ben and Jerry's has always had a lot of innovation—I think it's become a little stagnant—although there are certain things that we've done—as the teams have done—to innovate and make the product a better product—We do what we do now—We try to make the best fattiest ice cream with the most add ins—The machinery that we use is there—we've improved it some but-I know we have—We have a new product coming out—I don't know if I can tell you that—But also we make the mini cups—those are newer and are selling like crazy—people don't feel so guilty with a single serving cup—They sell like crazy—St. Albans makes these and they cannot keep up with them—they're running that line six days a week." (New timer factory employee)

For another new timer employee, innovation is actually improving:

"It's getting better [innovation]. Like upgrades to the equipment." (New timer factory employee)

When asked if he's heard stories of what it was like pre-acquisition—he responds:

"Like hand filling pints; wasting a lot more. They're getting better with the equipment so there's less waste and more product to the volume itself." (New timer factory employee)

Finally, for a new timer factory manager—innovation is also on an upturn—although like the old timer manager, he is more critical than the employee group and he also makes a reference to Unilever's tendency to focus on cost control—he gives the example of distributing ice cream to Wal-Mart at very low prices and explains that such action does not please him. His viewpoint, however, seems to be more optimistic than the old timer manager because he does acknowledge there have been new recent product innovations and that there seems to be a shift going on--it is not clear if he thinks this is occurring because of central headquarters' new reporting relationships to Unilever:

"We're doing some good things now so maybe there was a lapse and now with Unilever we're coming out with new products that are very innovative so hopefully that's on the upturn. But it did seem like for a while it was like--Ah Wal-Mart wants mint chocolate chip—so let's make mint chocolate chip—and then it becomes this big seller because Wal-Mart sells it for 2 bucks a pint. It's tough to be happy about something like that. » (New factory manager)

Innovation for factory employees and managers can be summed up with the following matrix:

	Employee	**Manager**
NEW	"Great"	"Better"
OLD	"Nobody's fault"	"Unilever's fault"

New employees are generally happy about innovation at Ben & Jerry's post acquisition—they also conceptualize innovation only in present terms.

New managers are generally also more positive about innovation at Ben & Jerry's but they adopt a more longitudinal perspective—saying that innovation has decreased post acquisition but is now on an up cycle.

Old timer employees generally think there has been a decrease in innovation at Ben & Jerry's post acquisition but they don't blame anyone in particular for this situation, it is "nobody's fault"—innovation has simply decreased over time as a naturally occurring phenomenon.

New employees are generally happy about innovation at Ben & Jerry's post acquisition—they also conceptualize innovation only in present terms.

__*Old timer employees*__ generally think there has been a decrease in innovation at Ben & Jerry's post acquisition but they don't blame anyone in particular for this situation, it is "nobody's fault"—innovation has simply decreased over time as a naturally occurring phenomenon.

__*Old timer managers*__, like old timer employees are also more negative about the evolution of innovation post acquisition but differ from employees in that they hold Unilever responsible for the situation, thus, "Unilever's fault."

4.3.6.4 Analysis of Factory Employees' Experience of Identity Themes

The analysis of factory employee experience of identity themes reveal some shared collective understanding around the themes of leadership and manufacturing culture. All factory employees interviewed agree on what these themes reveal. Leadership is seen as split between the local Waterbury plant leadership and a more abstract Unilever corporate control—Walt Freese is not mentioned spontaneously and the Burlington headquarters has disappeared from the cognitive map of all of the Waterbury employees and managers—when asked about leadership, factory members only speak about leadership pertaining to their factory, not pertaining to the entire Ben & Jerry's organization.

Interestingly, while central headquarter members experienced a feeling of disconnect from the factories and thus a longing to potentially reconnect with them to regain a sense of organizational wholeness, factory members indicate that their conception of their organization doesn't even consider central headquarters anymore. For factory employees, their factory and its ties to Unilever corporate is the only organization that exists in terms of their day to day.

Manufacturing culture is also experienced from a collective standpoint—all factory members agree that since the acquisition, the plants are much safer yet that the drawback is that there is less innovation than in the pre-acquisition days.

The two other identity themes, 'employee empowerment' and 'innovation' reveal the existence of divergent voices or sub-cultures at the factory site. Much like at central headquarters, there is support for the differentiation perspective on organizational culture/identity (see Balmer & Wilson, 1998 for listing of authors adopting the 'differentiation perspective') and this leads to question how integrated the factory organizational identity ('Experienced Identity') really is.

The 'Experienced Identity' for factory members is coloured by time of entry into the

organization (pre versus post acquisition) but also by hierarchical rank—for instance the identity theme 'employee empowerment' reveals that new comers tend to adopt a more individualistic, pragmatic and functional approach to their work while old timers have a more collective vision of their organization and are nostalgic of the past. This theme also reveals that old timers used to have an extremely passionate relationship to their work pre-acquisition and are a bit frustrated that their empowerment has lessened and grown thin today.

The identity theme 'innovation' also reveals the importance of time of entry into the firm and hierarchical rank—new timer employees are optimistic and satisfied with the level of innovation at their factory while new timer managers adopt a more longitudinal perspective highlighting that innovation has gone through ups and downs and is probably on an up cycle now. Old timers are generally more critical than new timers—and within the old timer cluster, old timer managers attribute the decrease in innovation to Unilever's fault while old timer employees attribute the decrease in innovation to a natural progression of things, not blaming Unilever.

4.3.7 Image for factory and central employees

When interviewed about how they think the public or media perceives Ben & Jerry's, employees and managers are unanimous that the general public has both a favourable and stable image of their company. Many employees mention however that Vermonters are a special case—because Ben & Jerry's as a company has been so closely connected to Vermont—Vermonters are more sensitive and aware and thus unlike most non-Vermonters, they are well aware of the acquisition.

Ben & Jerry's image is positive and unchanged

Employees and managers are unanimous both in the Waterbury factory and in the Burlington headquarters that Ben & Jerry's reputation—or 'construed external image'— how employees perceive external stakeholders' perceptions of Ben & Jerry's—is both positive and unchanged since the acquisition:

"I would say that it's the same [the public's perception of Ben & Jerry's today versus pre-acquisition]. Everywhere I go people ask me what I do and where I work and when I say, "Ben & Jerry's"—I get the same response and have gotten the same response since I started here…" (Old timer central manager)

When asked what characteristics have stayed the same at Ben & Jerry's since the acquisition, 'reputation' is the first thing that comes to mind for one old timer factory employee:

"It's reputation and perception in the public eye. The mystique—the Ben & Jerry's

mystique—which is ultimately value driven—And the ice cream itself—it's still good ice cream in the public's view. And the plant is still here—I still have a job. I think it's still known as quirky and cool and the ice cream is still good—those are the two big things that have stayed the same."(Old timer factory employee)

Employees emit several hypotheses to explain why they think Ben & Jerry's image has not changed. Firstly, most consumers are unaware of the acquisition itself. Secondly, consumers don't necessarily associate Unilever and Ben & Jerry's (both at a visual level on the packaging but also in conceptual terms). This second reason is of course, closely connected to the first reason. It is a little different in that employees who mention that consumers haven't made the link between Unilever and Ben & Jerry's are not necessarily un-knowledgeable about the acquisition—it is simply that they don't make the cognitive connection between the two names—and this is because the Ben & Jerry's packaging itself only has a very small "U" logo representing Unilever's brand name. Thirdly, Ben & Jerry's has undertaken many positive actions since the acquisition which contribute to the maintenance of a positive external image.

There are two types of answers regarding image—one that perceives consumers as unknowing of major structural change which has taken place (the acquisition) and one on the contrary which views consumers as aware of the actions undertaken by Ben & Jerry's—particularly regarding social responsibility issues. According to the 'construed external image' of the employees and managers interviewed—most consumers are unaware of the acquisition and yet aware of the many socially responsible actions undertaken by Ben & Jerry's—thus for most consumers, Ben & Jerry's still has a powerful, independent and positive image.

Consumers unknowing about acquisition

For many employees, one of the reasons that consumers' perception of Ben & Jerry's has not changed is that they are not aware of the acquisition by Unilever:

« For the most part, I don't think people know that we've been acquired by Unilever. I've told a lot of people that we have and they've been pretty much like—what?..." (New central employee)

Consumers and the public have not only not perceived any changes in Ben & Jerry's image but according to some employees, many live in the myth of the company—for instance believing that the company still operates the way it did many years ago. In other words the public is generally unaware that Ben & Jerry's is no longer run as an independent company:

"A lot of consumers don't even know the acquisition happened, truthfully. When we have focus groups, people ask the same questions, "Are Ben and Jerry's still involved in the company?"—

And "I think your five to one salary ratio is a great thing! A lot of people live in the myth—there are certainly people out there that are aware of the acquisition—but the majority of our consumers just want us to make really good ice cream." (Old timer central manager)

Ben & Jerry's not associated with Unilever

Many employees mention that consumers don't make the cognitive connection between Unilever and Ben & Jerry's:

"I think consumers still see Ben & Jerry's as a progressive, socially responsible business—I don't know if they really link B&J's to Unilever much in terms of any kind of cognitive…" (Old timer central manager)

This absence of cognitive connection seems to come from the fact that the Unilever logo is not very prominent on the Ben & Jerry's packaging:

"I think some consumers still think we're Ben & Jerry's—We don't have a big blue U on our logo so they left the brand as is—some consumers don't even know that there was a change." (Old timer factory employee)

"I think consumers when they are in the aisle shopping, they are looking at Ben & Jerry's—I don't think they're thinking about Unilever." (New factory manager)

Good actions reinforce positive image

The second reason why employees perceive that their company's image is so positive is that the external public is aware of positive actions which continue to be undertaken by Ben & Jerry's and which reinforce its positive image:

"I think people still look at Ben and Jerry's as one of the great companies that went over and stretched out—much like the frontiers did years ago when they came across the Midwest—Ben & Jerry's is one of those companies that stepped out and other companies have followed—and said this is how we're going to do business--and I think the company is still trying to do that and the public sees that. We're still trying to do things—we've taken that freezer for instance—we've incorporated different ways of freezing the ice cream that's more friendly to the environment—we're trying to do away with those kinds of freezers and the freons—we still do all of that, it's just not seen as much." (Old timer factory manager)

For one central employee, while some people might be upset because of the acquisition—it is undeniable that Ben & Jerry's has continued to undertake socially responsible actions despite the new governance structure:

"I think there are some folks that are real purists who think that it's a tragedy that Ben & Jerry's has sold out but on the other hand it's hard to argue with the fact that it hasn't stopped us from doing good in the world." (New central employee)

Another central employee explains that while most people are probably not aware that Ben & Jerry's has been acquired by a multinational—for those consumers who might be aware—their perception could not be negative thanks to the company's recent positive actions:

"I think there's probably a very small percentage of people who see it differently and who would see it negatively because they're well aware that we're part of a multinational—and just being a part of a multinational automatically makes you in the wrong camp. But I do believe that most people if they are aware they don't necessarily see it as a bad thing because of our actions recently." (Old timer central manager)

Finally, for one old timer central manager, socially responsible actions undertaken by the company are communicated quite fast to the public through the media—thus consolidating Ben & Jerry's socially responsible image:

"In the EU it's a little different because the EU is a younger market place and they're trying to establish the character of socially responsible—so they've done different programs such as Climate Change College and fair trade communication--so B&J's is gaining as a company in the EU that's starting to build awareness just for its products and also as a socially responsible company—it also gets in the news a lot. And news goes so fast--so when we do things in the US that are progressive— we did anti-clone things and people saw that….So I think people still see us out there as a socially responsible progressive company." (Old timer central manager)

Positive company image makes employees feel proud

Ben & Jerry's employees and managers benefit from a very positive 'construed external image' both due to the fact that the external public is generally unaware of the acquisition (and thus what this could entail in terms of changes) and also because it is aware of positive actions undertaken by Ben & Jerry's. This positive 'construed external image' translates into positive employee self-conceptions and pride to work for Ben & Jerry's. One employee mentions his sense of pride in his frequent interactions with the public at the Waterbury factory gift shop and the factory tours—he explains that he almost feels like a celebrity working for Ben & Jerry's when he interacts with the public there:

"…you walk out into the gift shop when it's busy out there and there's this great vibe—and it's nice to be a part of--you feel like a celebrity walking out there because people want to see where you work." (New factory manager)

For another employee, this notoriety is sometimes almost cumbersome—yet he is still willing to spend time with consumers to speak on behalf of his company:

"I don't think it has changed very much at all—if I leave this state and go to Connecticut—or wherever I might go—and I spring up, "I work for Ben and Jerry's!"—then for the next forty five minutes, I'm forced to speak about making ice cream for Ben & Jerry's—which is also kind of a pain in the butt but I also sit there and do it." (Old timer factory employee)

Vermonters have perceived a change

There are, however, a little less than one third of the employees interviewed (with a majority from the factory) who mention that while most consumers are not aware of any

changes having occurred at Ben & Jerry's—the perception is different for the Vermont consumer for whom the acquisition was a bigger deal:

"I don't know that that many people know about the acquisition—maybe people here in Vermont or maybe people that are already socially conscious—then they probably know about it—but the average consumer might not at all—they just know it's good ice cream and it's real expensive." (New factory employee)

When asked if she thinks consumers are aware that Unilever bought Ben & Jerry's—this new central employee (who is also a native Vermonter) answers:

"Oh yeah—well, definitely Vermont consumers. I'm sure that the people out of state who know is less—but for Vermonters it was a very big deal." (New central employee)

One factory manager who has spent a large part of his life in Vermont agrees that some consumers have perceived a change in Ben & Jerry's—the change is felt in the taste of some of the flavours and in the fact that the Vermont festivals have disappeared:

"Some [consumers] do. Whether it's people who loved our vanilla and they know--they can taste it when we change something—or people who used to go to our festivals and it's not there anymore—and why is it not there—because it was too expensive—it was a lot of money and a lot of fun…" (New factory manager)

But when challenged that such a perception would probably only concern Vermonters, he agrees and laments that most people probably don't care where products are made—and yet he clearly seems to care because for him, Ben & Jerry's identity is intrinsically connected to Vermont:

"Yeah that's what I mean, I'm too close. If I went out to Kansas and started talking about Ben & Jerry's-- I don't know if they would know what I was talking about—do you know if it's from Vermont and do you care where it's made?" (New factory manager)

Several other employees also perceive that for the Vermont consumer, the product has been affected and this translates into a taste difference:

"Some [consumers] do [know there was a change], like locally and some people can taste the difference and some of the changes that were made—and they ask you about it—locally--people always would say, "Oh, I love that stuff!" and now people are saying, "What did you do to it?" (Old timer factory employee)

One manager goes even further arguing that if local Vermonters have noticed a taste difference, then surely other consumers have also felt this change in the taste of the ice cream. This manager is, however the only person interviewed who actually extrapolates on what the general public may perceive—based on her knowledge of the Vermont consumer:

"I have to say that people—friends and family have made comments—if people locally have noticed—then people who have been Ben & Jerry's consumers for a number of years have also noticed…that the ice cream doesn't taste as rich." (Old timer factory manager)

Conclusions on Image

To conclude on image—or more precisely—on how Ben & Jerry's employees perceive the public's image of their company—for most of the employees interviewed, it is both very positive and stable since the acquisition. Our definition of image takes the perspective of organizational insiders as we adopt Dutton & al.'s 1994 definition of image (or 'construed external image') as, "what a member believes outsiders think about his/her organization." Our discussion of image is not about outsiders' beliefs about an organization, also referred to as reputation (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990) or attributed identity (Moingeon & Soenen, 2002). We do however acknowledge the strong connection between external stakeholders' perceptions of an organization (attributed identity or reputation) and insiders' experienced identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

Both factory and central employees unanimously believe that most consumers don't perceive a change in image because they don't know about the acquisition and don't associate Unilever with Ben & Jerry's—particularly because the Unilever logo is not very prominent on the Ben & Jerry's packaging. Four employees (three of which are managers) believe that the favourable and stable image of Ben & Jerry's comes from socially responsible actions undertaken by the company.

For less than a third of the employees interviewed however (and this concerns primarily factory employees), Vermonters are mentioned as an important external stakeholder group which has perceived a change in Ben & Jerry's. Vermonters are aware of the acquisition having taken place, have noticed a taste difference in some flavours and regret the absence of festivals. Factory employees seem concerned and upset that local Vermonters have sent them such mixed perceptions of their organization. Factory employees' experienced identity and its evolution since the Unilever acquisition is also generally less positive than for central employees. While the number of factory interviews remains limited, some tentative conclusions can be made about the link between 'construed external image' (what members believe outsiders think about their organization) and employees' experienced identity. There may be a connection between factory employees' less positive experience of their collective identity and the mixed feedback they have been receiving from local Vermonters. As Dutton & Dukerich (1991) explain, "damage to the organization's image hurts individuals personally"

Dutton & Dukerich (1991) also argue that when faced with negative external feedback, individuals will be motivated to take actions to restore their organization's image. My

findings differ from Dutton & Dukerich (1991) in that I do not find that factory employees' less positive construed external image has led them to take up actions to improve their image and thus also their collective identity. In fact, factory employees seem to express a greater sense of powerlessness over their collective identity than central employees who generally seem to display a greater sense of control over their actions and the future. These are only speculations given that I did not investigate if and how employees are actually carrying out actions to counter these negative external perceptions. Understanding how employees of acquired target firms with socially responsible organizational identities strategize to improve their sense of collective identity and image when under external pressure may be an interesting subject to investigate in future studies.

4.3.8 Experienced Identity: Overall Analysis & Conclusions

Several conclusions can be made based on the analysis of Ben & Jerry's employees and managers 'Experienced Identity' both at the central headquarters in Burlington and at the Waterbury factory in Waterbury, Vermont.

Firstly, it is difficult to speak of one overarching 'Experienced Identity' which holds true for all Ben & Jerry's employees and managers. My findings reveal that there are clearly two separate 'Experienced Identities' at Ben & Jerry's—one at the central headquarters and one at the factory site. The differences do not stop there as I also found that within each site, subgroups or 'subcultures' emerge, revealing very different worldviews and interpretations of how Ben & Jerry's has been impacted by the Unilever acquisition. These various clusters of identity experience bring support to the idea that organizational identity is not a monolithic concept and that "the hallmark of modern consciousness is an enormous multiplicity...and the first step is surely to accept the depth of the differences" (Geertz, 1973, p.161 cited in Trice & Morand, 1991). Today the Ben & Jerry's factory and the Ben & Jerry's headquarters function like two separate organizations in terms of the collective experiences of its organizational members. Within each site, further clusters appear based on time of entry into the organization, age, hierarchical rank and function.

Central headquarters

To understand central members' interpretations (or their 'Experienced Identity') of how the Unilever acquisition has impacted their organization, I asked them to respond to three sets of items: three part mission evolution ('Projected Identity'), organizational artefacts

('Manifested Identity') and finally reactions to various identity themes. Based on this data, the following conclusions can be made.

First of all, Ben & Jerry's central employees experience their organization today as having a powerful social mission. Central members unanimously agree that the social mission today is doing well and has evolved for the better since the acquisition. Employees do acknowledge that the social mission was stifled for a few years under the North American Ice Cream leadership (due to an overemphasis on cost control over social mission activities) but all agree that things have changed significantly for the better since the shift away from NAIC and towards the new reporting relationship to Unilever corporate. Central employees are so positive about the social mission that many believe that today the level and depth of involvement in social mission activities is equal if not greater to the early years of Ben & Jerry's under Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield's leadership:

"When I think about what makes Ben and Jerry's Ben & Jerry's before the acquisition and after the acquisition—it's the same thing—and it does go back to the social mission and the working environment—taking care of its employees, having fun and doing what we can to help the rest of the world. And I thankfully do think that we're doing an equally good job today as we were—there's been set backs and moving forward and steps back—but from where we stand right now versus to how we were prior to acquisition, we're in pretty good shape." (Central old timer employee)

Divergent worldviews emerge however regarding the product and economic mission. The 'new timer' vs. 'old timer' subcultures clearly appear regarding these aspects of the mission--new timers are overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic and speak in present terms whereas old timers have a more longitudinal perspective and are more critical of how the acquisition may have impacted the product mission. Also while all employees view the economic mission as doing well today—new timers view this positively in the sense that they believe the company can actually do more good in the world thanks to Unilever's economic muscle whereas old timers are concerned that such emphasis on the economic mission has been made to the detriment of the product mission.

Secondly, organizational artefacts still play their role of drivers of meaning, particularly for new timer employees who seem to derive tremendous 'identity energy' from some of the historical Ben & Jerry's artefacts. Interestingly, some of these artefacts that no longer exist—the festivals and the Vermont only public stock offering (a one-time event) bring out great enthusiasm from both old and new timer employees, perhaps revealing that these artefacts are at the core of Ben & Jerry's identity DNA.

Thirdly, central employees experience strong employee empowerment, strong leadership under Walt, and a good level of innovation. Employees also experience a

disconnection from the factories and seem upset that an 'us versus them' mentality has emerged somewhat due to this disconnect.

If one takes a deeper look at employee viewpoints however, one finds that subcultures or 'Experienced Identity' clusters emerge. New timers are unanimously anchored in the present and have a positive outlook whereas old timers have a more longitudinal and critical perspective. Taking the example of the 'employee empowerment' theme for instance, while all employees adopt a positive viewpoint, old timers adopt a comparative perspective, (explaining that current empowerment under Walt is better than it was under the NAIC leadership period), while new timers only evoke Walt and speak only in present terms, not mentioning the past. The same is true for leadership and innovation—new timers are overwhelmingly positive while old timers are positive but again adopting a comparative and longitudinal perspective. For old timers, leadership has gone in up and down cycles—and this transcends the pre and post acquisition cleavage in that there were positive and negative leaders in the pre-acquisition days just as there are both in the post-acquisition phase. Similarly, old timers view innovation as having been stifled under NAIC leadership and are now hopeful given the change in reporting relationships.

Factory site

Based on my data from the factory site, three conclusions can be made.

Firstly, factory employees also share a collective understanding of the social mission. For a majority of factory employees, the social mission is vibrant and doing quite well and the acquisition has affected the social mission only positively in the sense that thanks to Unilever's size and market power, there is actually more money for social initiatives and social mission driven products. In terms of the product and economic mission, there is no longer a collective understanding and the same sub-cultures already found in the central headquarters re-appear. Time of entry into the organization (pre-acquisition entry versus post) has a very powerful affect on employees' perception of the evolution of the three part mission. New timers are very positive about the product and economic mission while old timers are much more critical. Old timers at the factory site tend to be even more critical of the product and economic mission evolution than old timers at the central headquarters.

To conclude on factory employees' experience of the three part mission—from an integration perspective, the 'Experienced Identity' of Ben & Jerry's is one of a social mission organization. However when it comes to the product or economic mission, Ben & Jerry's 'Experienced Identity' splinters into two differing worldviews, thus bringing support to the

idea that there are two subcultures which co-exist within the larger social mission organization.

Secondly, factory members' experience of organizational artefacts (or 'Manifested Identity') is less positive than for central headquarters. All employees look back to a pre-acquisition organization which was more nurturing and community oriented. Both new and old timers idealize what it used to be like pre-acquisition. Differing perspectives emerge however concerning the reality at the factory today—old timers are very emotional about the fact that they experience less empowerment than in the pre-acquisition organization while new timers express satisfaction that Ben & Jerry's is a good employer.

Thirdly, except for a few artefacts (free cone day, factory tours and fair trade), most organizational artefacts at the factory no longer play their role of facilitator of shared meanings for employees. The symbolic productions of Ben & Jerry's historical identity no longer function—new timers have very little knowledge of historical artefacts such as 'five to one salary ratio', 'Joy Gang', 'eco pint', etc. This contrasts with the central site where new timers derive tremendous identity energy from historical artefacts.

Finally, in terms of identity themes, factory employees share a common vision of their leadership and manufacturing culture. Leadership to them is split between abstract Unilever corporate and the local manufacturing plant leadership. Interestingly, central headquarters leadership is not mentioned by the factory. Factory members seem to hardly know about Walt Freese and many do not know what his exact title is. Unlike central headquarters who are upset about their disconnectedness from the manufacturing site, factory members do not seem to regret a time when they used to be more connected with central headquarters. Regarding manufacturing culture, factory employees agree that the Unilever acquisition has brought more safety to operations but also less innovation.

Factory employees differ in their appreciation of employee empowerment—new comers are generally fairly satisfied while old timers are nostalgic of the pre-acquisition days which were more empowering for employees. These findings reveal once again the presence of several sub-cultures within the Ben & Jerry's factory site.

Overall, we can conclude that the Ben & Jerry's factory functions as an organization which is connected to Unilever supply chain but no longer to the Ben & Jerry's central headquarters.

Theoretical Implications regarding the Experienced Identity at Ben & Jerry's

Overall, both the factory and central employees find that their organization is still living out its social mission, much in the same way if not better than under Ben & Jerry's leadership pre-acquisition. The acquisition has not hurt Ben & Jerry's social mission and has even helped it in many regards. Yet despite this common agreement, many differences set central and factory employees apart, leading to the conclusion that there are two sets of 'Experienced Identity' at Ben & Jerry's today: one at the central headquarters and one at the factory site. One cannot speak of a unanimous and cohesive organizational experience.

At central headquarters, the Ben & Jerry's historical legacy lives on through many organizational artefacts but this is no longer the case at the factory site where artefacts no longer play their role of facilitators of meaning. At central headquarters, employees feel empowered, appreciate their leadership and are relatively satisfied with the level of innovation, particularly since the switch over from NAIC. At the factory site employees generally feel less empowered, experience a split leadership between their plant and an abstract Unilever corporate entity and despite improved safety, feel there is less innovation post-acquisition.

Once one begins to delve more deeply within each site, however, one finds that the sense of a monolithic collective shared experience dissolves somewhat—and this is true at both sites. My findings reveal two main 'Experienced Identity' clusters which are based on time of entry into the organization (pre or post acquisition). I find that time of entry into the organization colours heavily employees' perception of their organization.

New timer employees are generally young and inexperienced of organizational life. At the headquarters they are very positive and enthusiastic about Ben & Jerry's and view their organization with 'rose coloured glasses.' This can be partly explained by the fact that at their hierarchical level they are functioning in a bubble—they are isolated and 'protected' by their immediate management from Unilever corporate management. New timers' overly positive worldview may also come from their status in the organization—because they are unsure of their roles and apprehensive about their status (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p.26), new timers may tend to be more 'royalist' than the king himself in order to gain acceptance into the organization.

Furthermore, despite their sometimes lack of knowledge about historical artefacts, central headquarters new timers seem to derive tremendous 'identity energy' from all

organizational artefacts (pre and post acquisition artefacts). At the factory site, new timers are less enthusiastic about the social mission aspect of Ben & Jerry's and reveal they have very little knowledge of historical artefacts but that they are generally happy about their organization. New factory employees generally do not have great expectations about their job as they are pragmatic and consider their job a good one compared to jobs at other companies—but their job is not a calling.

Finally, new timers have not lived through the acquisition like old timers have and are therefore unencumbered by the difficult memories of major change and upheaval, lost colleagues due to layoffs, etc. As one old timer central employee told me about new timer employees, "It's as if they've wiped their memory clean!" The fact of the matter is that new timer employees have no organizational memory of the acquisition itself or what Ben & Jerry's may have been like pre-acquisition.

Old timer employees on the other hand have lived through the M&A and have some organizational 'historical baggage' with them. They may feel guilt at having 'survived' the lay-off waves or feel a sense of loss simply from the changes that have occurred (Mirvis & Marks, 2003). Some M&A researchers have compared employee reactions in the acquired company to those following death and loss (Marks & Mirvis, 2001)—at least in the initial aftermath of an M&A. While my findings do not reveal old timers who are still in a state of shock, it is interesting that eight years after the merger (at time of data collection), their perceptions are still deeply coloured by the acquisition. Thus old timer employees are more critical of the evolution of Ben & Jerry's today and more negative towards the impact of the acquisition on Ben & Jerry's.

Interestingly old timers are not just more critical of the post-acquisition organization. They seem to adopt a fairly detached and analytical attitude whereby they are also critical of the pre-acquisition organization. Unlike new timers who idealize and seek to perpetuate the Ben & Jerry's myth, perhaps as a way to 'assimilate' themselves better into their new organization, old timers don't have to prove anything and thus adopt a more distanced viewpoint, putting into perspective the pre-M&A myths—or what newcomers use as a springboard to feed their experience of their organization.

Finally, all employees mention 'employee spirit' or 'employee voice' as an essential manifestation of Ben & Jerry's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. Again, the key identity cluster is time of entry into the organization. New timers are unanimously positive about this 'employee spirit' or sense of empowerment and give recent examples of its

manifestations and their active role in its activation while old timers at both central headquarters and at the factory site are more negative about its evolution since the acquisition.

4.4 Overall Conclusions on Socially Responsible Organizational Identity
4.4.1 Theoretical implications

This study attempted to study the impact of an M&A on a target firm from a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity perspective. In order to do this, I took three different angles of analysis: firstly top managerial vision about the organization's mission and identity, secondly how organizational manifestations/artefacts reflect (or not) this vision and finally employees' interpretations of mission, organizational artefacts and identity themes in the context of the acquisition. These three perspectives provided an in depth knowledge as to how a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity evolves over time and particularly in the context of a major acquisition. Furthermore taking this tri-partite outlook allowed a deep dive into both the nature and the drivers of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity—an identity I argue has great symbolic power and which directly contributes to the financial value of the firm.

The following conclusions can be made based on my study.

Coherence between identity facets

Firstly, there is a certain level of coherence between the findings from each of the identity facets. There are not enormous gaps between what top management discourse projects and what organizational artefacts and insiders revealed during interviews. This is an interesting finding because it means that official corporate discourse can be a valid source of information regarding an organization's identity. Top management discourse is often criticized as projecting an ideal identity but not necessarily reflecting the "real" identity of a firm. Top leaders are said to project desired future image as a means to change currently held identity (Gioia & Thomas, 1996, p.394). Top organizational members are also said to be 'managers of organizational meaning' as this is where power lies (Reitter & Ramanantsoa, 1985) and are thus actively engaged in identity management (Elsbach & Kramer, 1996). Such management of identity can lead top managers to engage in hypocrisy at worst or wishful

thinking at best. My findings reveal that while there are certainly elements of desired identity rather than actual identity (Balmer & Greyser, 2002) as in the case for instance when Bob Holland is Projecting an Identity about "family" when in fact Ben & Jerry's is going through organizational turmoil and growing pains (going from a Founders' led organization to one led by professional managers), overall we have a Projected Identity which reflects the evolution of the company's three part mission and which is coherent with the findings from the Manifested and Experienced Identity facets.

The three part mission, a centre piece of the Ben & Jerry's SROI has changed post acquisition. Interestingly, it is not the social mission piece that has changed significantly but rather the product mission. All three identity facets confirm this. The social mission is alive and doing better than ever as indicated by the Projected, Manifested and Experienced Identity analysis. Unilever has understood how important the social mission is in terms of symbolic value for the Ben & Jerry's brand. As explained above I have found that it is employees' spirit and energy which directly contribute to the activation of the social mission.

The economic mission is doing better today than pre acquisition. This is also confirmed by the Projected and Experienced Identity analysis. Unilever has brought its corporate and financial know-how to the entrepreneurial sized firm that Ben & Jerry's was prior to the acquisition. Thanks to Unilever, Ben & Jerry's will have the economic support to become a brand with a huge global reach—something it probably never could have achieved on its own prior to the acquisition.

The product mission is however less in the limelight—virtually absent from CEO discourse post acquisition and considered less focused upon by old timer employees. In the Projected Identity, the product mission is hardly mentioned post acquisition as most of the CEO focus is on the social mission perhaps because the social mission has the most symbolic value (of the three different missions) and ultimately financial value for Unilever. In the Experienced Identity, old timers reveal their concern that the product mission has declined over the years—particularly during the time period when Ben & Jerry's reported directly to North American Ice Cream under the leadership of Eric Walsh. Employees do express optimism that this situation is evolving as the new reporting structure is shifting away from NAIC and towards a direct reporting relationship to Unilever.

While we don't know what the future holds, we can conclude that at this point in time there are winners and losers among the various stakeholders of the firm. Clearly, stockholders and non-profit organizations are the winners post acquisition. While pre-

acquisition, stockholders never received much in terms of dividends under Ben's leadership—today Unilever has increased profitability and their return on investment is excellent. Non-profits and NGOs which are the beneficiaries of the social mission activities of Ben & Jerry's are also clear winners—while pre-acquisition they were not always sure of the amount of money they could receive from Ben & Jerry's given the ups and downs of the company's financial situation—today the firm is doing extremely well as employees and management have confirmed—the performing economic mission can therefore feed the social mission.

The losers post-acquisition are perhaps consumers. While consumers still have access to products with immense symbolic value (carried by the social mission), the product mission has lost its centrality as indicated by the absence of discourse on the subject in the Projected Identity and it has lost in quality according to the Experienced Identity analysis. The quality is still excellent of course—but it does not meet the exceedingly high expectations that the Founders placed on product quality pre-acquisition—often to the detriment of financial margins. It must be noted that pre-acquisition, according to some employees interviewed, some flavours were actually sold at a loss to the company. While it is difficult to know if this is actually true—what is true is that the economic part of the mission pre-acquisition was much less attended to than post-acquisition.

Nature of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity: a constantly evolving essence

The second finding concerns the drivers of Socially Responsible Organizational Identity. The Projected, Manifested and Experienced Identity analysis revealed that while top managers play an important role in driving meaning and providing a sense of 'who we are' to an organization, at Ben & Jerry's, employees also play an important role in embodying and driving the symbolic meaning and three part mission as defined originally by the Founders. According to the Projected Identity analysis, this began to occur soon after Ben Cohen left the company in the hands of professional managers such as Bob Holland. Post acquisition as expressed by the Projected Identity under both the Yves Couette and Walt Freese mandate, employees are clearly at the core of the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity of Ben & Jerry's.

My findings confirm the dual nature of organizational identity—as being both a core essence but also a process. On the one hand there are ex old timer employees who incarnate the Ben & Jerry's employee spirit—this is identity as a core essence. On the other hand there is the notion that organizational identity is a process—it is something that is constantly being

re-enacted by organizational members. Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) is made up of essential attributes but this essence is constantly evolving. Employee spirit/energy is at the core of this essence as it fuels the SROI of Ben & Jerry's. Without this spirit/energy, which is in turn fed by social mission actions, the Ben & Jerry's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity would most probably lose its potency and value. This essence is not static however as it is constantly re-appropriated and re-enacted by organizational leaders and members. This re-enactment process is particularly telling in the new comer central employees who consider themselves as vehicles for making Ben & Jerry's three part mission come alive. These new timers are extremely positive and enthusiastic about Ben & Jerry's social mission and show tremendous commitment to making the Ben & Jerry's SROI come alive through their work every day. My findings also revealed that new timers derive 'identity energy' from many organizational artefacts from the pre-acquisition days.

Both the Projected and Experienced Identity confirmed that employees find their motivation for work at Ben & Jerry's in the social good they create in surrounding communities and in society, thanks to the implementation of the social mission in their daily work. Artefacts also play a key role in perpetuating Ben & Jerry's SROI long after the Founders have left the organization. Interestingly new comers seem to derive the most energy from organizational artefacts. Old timers are generally less positive about the evolution of Ben & Jerry's post acquisition although they express that positive shifts have begun to take place since the change over in reporting relationship away from North American Ice Cream. Old timers' more negative vision of Ben & Jerry's SROI seems to come from a purely essentialist understanding of organizational identity. For old timers the SROI will never be the same because the Founders and many old timers have left. New timers have a more positive apprehension of SROI because they see it as a more dynamic process and consider that they can influence and shape their organization's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity.

Another surprising finding is that employee identification and attachment to their firm is driven not only by their ability to conduct social mission actions (as both the Projected and Experienced Identity indicated) but also from their pride in the high standards of the product mission (as found in the Experienced Identity analysis). This information is important given that employee perception (particularly on the part of old timers) is that product quality has

waned since the acquisition due to an over emphasis on cost considerations on the part of Unilever's North American Ice Cream Division. If employee's sense of attachment and identification to Ben & Jerry's is based on the double premise of a strong product and social mission, and given that employee spirit and attachment is itself at the heart of the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity—if one of the two mission pillars is hurt, employee attachment will in turn wane and the SROI value may also be impacted—thus impacting the symbolic value of the firm—and ultimately its financial value.

M&A not only factor which shapes SROI: Firm growth also critical

My third finding is that while the acquisition has contributed to the evolution of Ben & Jerry's SROI—other factors such as growth issues have also played a very significant role in the evolution of Ben & Jerry's SROI. My findings reveal that when professional management took over pre-acquisition, Ben & Jerry's SROI began to shift significantly as the economic mission took centre stage, sometimes to the detriment of the social mission. This finding seeks to put into perspective mergers and acquisitions studies which overwhelming attribute identity changes to acquisition events. In the Ben & Jerry's case, dramatic change began pre-acquisition.

Hybrid identity maintained but expressed differently post acquisition: Normative identity now nested within a larger instrumental logic ('Dual Logic').

My fourth finding concerns the normative versus instrumental nature of Ben & Jerry's organizational identity. I argue that to be have a SROI, a company's communication and actions of SR must be grounded in the ethical motivation of corporate leaders/decision makers. My findings reveal that Ben & Jerry's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity continues to be grounded in the ethical motivation of its corporate leaders. I was amazed by the sense of calling and mission found among both managers and the top management team at the Ben & Jerry's headquarters in Vermont.

Yet Ben & Jerry's has always been a hybrid organization, being both normative and utilitarian (Albert & Whetten, 1985) both pre and post acquisition. The three part mission at the heart of Ben & Jerry's organizational identity continues to nourish this hybrid identity. What has changed since the acquisition is that today Ben & Jerry's is now part of a large

multinational dominated by an instrumental logic. Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream today functions under a normative and ethical logic but this logic is nested within Unilever's instrumental logic, accountable to stockholders. This new situation reveals a new organizational form which I label a 'dual logic'—this form may become increasingly widespread in the future with the acceleration of globalization and mergers and acquisitions.

What my findings reveal is that the rationale given for this hybrid identity (or even tri-partite identity as we also have a product mission) has changed significantly from the pre-acquisition days to today. Pre-acquisition under Ben's leadership, Ben & Jerry's was a pioneer engaging in social mission activities despite being a publicly held company and thus Ben had to give an economic justification for engaging in social mission activities—he had to reassure stockholders that their money was being spent in a rationale way. Today Ben & Jerry's Projected Identity indicates that the social mission is undertaken for ethical and not instrumental reasons—"we do it because it's the right thing to do!"—and this was confirmed during interviews with employees. Employees and managers at Ben & Jerry's are convinced that they are doing social mission actions because it's the right thing to do.

A new organizational form

Finally, my findings reveal that Ben & Jerry's has changed the contours of its organizational form since the acquisition. While up until most of Yves Couette's mandate, Ben & Jerry's functioned as an integrated stand alone business by the end of Yves Couette's mandate, the production facilities were severed from marketing and attributed to report to Unilever's North American Ice Cream Division. This change in organizational structure explains why a lot of the Projected Identity has evolved from talking about Ben & Jerry's as a 'business' (under Perry) to Ben & Jerry's as a 'brand' (under Yves and now Walt). As mentioned earlier, the notion of brand has grown in importance over the years—so much so that the notion of 'brand spirit' has now become one of the central core attributes of the Projected Identity under Walt Freese. This organizational structure change also explains why there are today two very different 'Experienced Identities' (in terms of employees' experiences) at the factory and at central headquarters.

4.4.2 Socially Responsible Organizational Identity Model Revisited

Based on the above conclusions and the empirical findings from this dissertation work, the sources of influence on a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity are now more clearly apparent. A major organizational event such as an M&A does indeed impact the Projected Identity of a firm, but other factors such as firm growth, internal organizational issues and CEO character and experience may also influence a firm's Projected Identity and thus its overall SROI.   Other key factors that may shape a firm's Experienced Identity and SROI are: time of entry of employees into their organization (arrival pre or post acquisition); function/geographical location in the organization (factory versus central headquarters); hierarchical level and finally the image that employees perceive external stakeholders to have of their organization (construed external image as defined by Dutton & al., 1994). This can be summarized in the following diagram (Figure 12):

Figure 12

Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) and its sources of influence

Projected Identity:

Managerial expression of Social Responsibility Mission

Manifested Identity:

Visible actions/ Manifestations of Social Responsibility

Experienced Identity

Employee perceptions of Social Responsibility

• M&A
• Other external events
• Internal Events
• CEO character

• Time of entry (pre/post M&A)
• Function
• Hierarchical level
• Construed external image

Ethical/mixed motivation of Corporate Leaders

4.4.3 Conclusions and Researchable Questions

The Socially Responsible Organizational Identity of Ben & Jerry's has been preserved despite the acquisition and this is due to a number of factors. The drivers of this SROI come from Ben & Jerry's top management (Yves Couette right after the acquisition and now Walt Freese since 2004) and from Ben & Jerry's employees themselves. While Unilever may not have fully realized how valuable Ben & Jerry's SROI was when they initially bought it, nine years later they are fully convinced that it is this very SROI which has propelled this brand to become one of the top performers of Unilever's North American Ice Cream Division. This realization has translated into support for Ben & Jerry's current CEO and his genuine commitment to making Ben & Jerry's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity authentic. Secondly, my findings show that Ben & Jerry's employees also play a key role in the resilience of Ben & Jerry's SROI. Surprisingly, newcomer employees (who have arrived post acquisition) are the most passionate about making Ben & Jerry's true to its socially responsible organizational identity roots. This may also be due to the fact that the current Ben & Jerry's CEO has been hiring people who are 'Ben & Jerry's material' (in words of one new comer) and who are committed to the three part mission legacy.

My findings show however that the Unilever acquisition of Ben & Jerry's is a mixed model whereby marketing has kept some autonomy but where finance, IT, communications, sales and manufacturing have been "absorbed" (Mirvis, 2008). Ben & Jerry's SROI has therefore been preserved but only within a narrowly defined geographical scope—today the factories are no longer inside the SROI perimeter. Ben & Jerry's and Unilever are at a crossroads and it will be interesting to follow what happens to the SROI perimeter in the future—will it expand and spread to supply chain and other parts of Unilever or will Ben & Jerry's remain an authentic but isolated brand nested within a large instrumental multinational organization?

My future research will explore how Ben & Jerry's SROI evolves in other parts of the Ben & Jerry's business—in newly created factories (in Nevada) and also in new subsidiaries in Europe and Asia as the company continues to internationalize. I also seek to compare the Ben & Jerry's and Unilever case to other companies such as DANONE and Stonyfield or L'Oréal and Body Shop to create a typology of acquisition and SROI target firm dyads—

seeking to understand what types of post merger integration strategies (preservative, absorptive, mixed model) are most fruitful to preserve the golden SROI nuggets.

4.4.4 Managerial Implications

The following three managerial implications can be drawn based on my findings.

Firstly, the attempt by acquiring companies to capture a firm's Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) may be illusory as such identity is both made up of fixed and dynamic elements. As SROI is a constantly evolving essence, preserving it means actively engaging in the dynamic action of embedding the social mission into the very organizational routines and processes of the organization. Indeed my findings bring support to recent suggestions given by scholars to acquiring companies to 'not homogenize [the target firm] into your organizational systems, structures and practices' (Austin & Leonard, 2008). The idea is instead for the acquiring company to focus on embedding the social icon's processes into its own processes to engage in mutual learning. Such a process is not about capturing but rather about mutual learning. Indeed if acquiring companies want to preserve the social icons they have acquired, they must engage in a posture of active learning and organizational wisdom (Brown & Starkey, 2000). Acquiring firms may take time to learn but in the Ben & Jerry's/Unilever case, despite a period of significant culture clash when Ben & Jerry's reported directly to Unilever's North American Ice Cream Division, Unilever has shown recent signs that it is now willing to learn from Ben & Jerry's, thus making it potentially a transformative acquisition (Mirvis, 2008).

Secondly, my findings reveal that the 'guardians of the social mission'(Austin & Leonard, 2008) may not necessarily be the 'old timers'/ long time employees present in the target firm since the pre-acquisition days. The Experienced Identity findings reveal that newcomer employees are often more enthusiastic about preserving the historical identity of Ben & Jerry's than old timers who have remained in the merged firm. This implies caution when top management seeks to identify guardians of the social mission as the best guardians may be a combination of both old and new employees and not necessarily just 'old keepers of the flame'. Finally, our findings reveal (particularly our Projected Identity findings) that the growth of the firm may be the most important factor which hinders a firm's SROI and not necessarily an M&A. This means that managers seeking to preserve or develop a firm with a SROI must be vigilant with regards to how they grow, both in terms of firm size and

governance structure. As Waddock (2008) argues, the growth paradigm may need to be revisited as it is no longer appropriate in a context of diminishing natural resources. This calls for present and future social entrepreneurs to "learn whatever lessons of independence and self-regulation...to be able to sustain their multiple bottom line approaches indefinitely" (Waddock, 2008, p.108).

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APPENDIX 6.1
LIST OF KEY EVENTS AT BEN & JERRY's 1978-2002

(Source: B&J's website, November 2008)

	1963	1977	May 5th, 1978	May 5th, 1979	1980	1981
Sales evolution						
	Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield meet in 7th grade gym class in Merrick, New York (Long Island).	Ben and Jerry move to Vermont and complete a $5 correspondence course in ice cream-making from Penn State (they get a perfect score because the test is open book).	With a $12,000 investment ($4,000 of it borrowed), Ben and Jerry open their Ben & Jerry's Homemade ice cream scoop shop in a renovated gas station at the corner of St. Paul and College Streets in downtown Burlington, Vermont. Ben and Jerry hold their first free summer movie festival, projecting movies on the outside wall of the old gas station in Burlington.	Ben & Jerry's marks its one-year anniversary by holding the first-ever Free Cone Day: free scoops of Ben & Jerry's for all, all day long. Now an annual celebration at Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops nationwide.	Ben and Jerry rent space in an old spool and bobbin mill on South Champlain Street in Burlington and begin packing their ice cream in pints. The reason? To distribute to grocery and Mom & Pop stores along the restaurant delivery routes Ben services out of the back of his old VW Squareback wagon.	Ben & Jerry's moves its expanding pint-packing operations from the spool and bobbin mill in Burlington to Green Mountain Drive in South Burlington, behind a car dealership. The first Ben & Jerry's franchise opens on Route 7 in Shelburne, Vermont.

Key Events at Ben & Jerry's 1978-2002 (Source: B&J's website)

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Sales evolution			Over $4 million in sales (+120% increase vs 1983).	Over $9 million, in sales (+143%).	Just under $20 million (+100%).
	Ben & Jerry's moves its original ice cream scoop shop from the old gas station (which was demolished to make way for a parking lot) to the corner of Cherry Street and South Winooski Avenue in Burlington.	Ben & Jerry's ice cream is used to build "the world's largest ice cream sundae" in St. Albans, Vermont; the sundae weighs 27,102 pounds. The first Ben & Jerry's out-of-state franchise is opened in Portland, Maine. Ben & Jerry's pints begin to be sold in Boston through independent ice cream distributors.	Ben & Jerry's sets a precedent by establishing a Vermont-only public stock offering to raise money for a new manufacturing facility Haagen-Dazs tries to limit distribution of Ben & Jerry's in Boston, prompting Ben & Jerry's to file suit against the parent company, Pillsbury, in its now famous "What's the Doughboy Afraid Of?" campaign.	B&J's Common Stock begins trading on NASDAQ Ice cream manufacturing plant and company headquarters are built on Route 100 in Waterbury, VT. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation is established with a gift from Ben and Jerry to fund community-oriented projects; it is then provided with 7.5% of the company's annual pre-tax profits.	Waterbury factory tours open to the public begin. Ben & Jerry's launches its "Cowmobile," a modified mobile home used to distribute free scoops of Ben & Jerry's ice cream in a cross-country "marketing drive" -- driven and served by Ben and Jerry themselves. The "Cowmobile" burns to the ground outside of Cleveland four months later, but there were no injuries. Ben said it looked like "the world's largest baked Alaska." Coffee Heath Bar Crunch flavour is introduced in pints.

Key Events at Ben & Jerry's 1978-2002 (Source: B&J's website)

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Annual sales evolution	Just under $32 million (+59%).	Over $47 million (+ 49% vs 1987).	Over $58 million, (+23% vs 1988).	Over $ 77 million (+32% vs 1989).	$97 million (+ 26% vs 1990).
	Launch of Cherry Garcia ice cream flavour named for Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia--it becomes the first ice cream named for a rock legend. Ben & Jerry's second Cowmobile, dubbed "Cow II," travels across the U.S. serving free scoops of Ben & Jerry's ice cream. Ben & Jerry's Homemade Ice Cream and Dessert Book is published-- written by Ben and Jerry with Nancy Stevens. Haagen-Dazs again tries to enforce exclusive distribution, and Ben & Jerry's files its second lawsuit against the Pillsbury Company. Ben & Jerry's sends its scoop vehicle to New York City's Wall Street to serve free scoops of That's Life and Economic Crunch ice cream following the October 19 stock market crash.	Ben & Jerry's receives the Corporate Giving Award from the Council on Economic Priorities for donating 7.5 percent of its pre-tax income to non-profit organizations through the Ben & Jerry's Foundation. The first Canadian Ben & Jerry's ice cream scoop shop opens in Montreal, Quebec. Ben and Jerry are named U.S. Small Business Persons of the Year by President Reagan in a White House Rose Garden ceremony. Help establish a non-profit initiative known as "1% For Peace," its goals to redirect 1% of the national defense budget to fund peace projects. Purchase of a manufacturing plant in Springfield, VT, to produce novelties—launch of Peace Pops.	Ben & Jerry's comes out against Bovine Growth Hormone (BGH), based on concern about its adverse economic impact on family farming. Launch of Rainforest Crunch ice cream. Sales of the ice cream indirectly benefit rainforest preservation efforts. David Letterman rolls up the "Top Ten Least Popular Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Flavors" list which includes "Zsa Zsa Gaboreo" and "Norieggnog."	Launch of Chocolate Fudge Brownie ice cream in pints. The brownies come from Greyston Bakery in Yonkers, New York, which employs and empowers disadvantaged people from the local community. Ben & Jerry's protests New Hampshire's Seabrook nuclear power plant with a Boston billboard declaring, "Stop Seabrook. Keep our customers alive and licking." Ben & Jerry's prints a "Support Farm Aid" panel on 8 million pint cups in a grass-roots effort to support family farmers.	Ben & Jerry's Circus Bus hits the road for a national tour. Ben & Jerry's Low Fat Frozen Yogurt is launched. Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough is released in pints after five years of research and development. The flavor rockets to the top of the most-popular-in-pints list. Ben & Jerry's holds its first series of One World, One Heart Festivals in Vermont, Chicago, and San Francisco. 100,000 people attend the San Francisco festival in Golden Gate Park. The festivals highlight music, arts, crafts, and social action. To help combat Vermont dairy farmers' losses during a period of volatile prices in the dairy industry, Ben & Jerry's pays a dairy premium totalling a half million dollars to the family farmers who supply the milk for Ben & Jerry's ice cream.

Key Events at Ben & Jerry's 1978-2002 (Source: B&J's website)

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Annual Sales evolution	$131.9 million (+36% vs 1991)	$140.3 million **(+6.3%** vs 92)	$148.8 million (but due to write-down against assets related to the new Saint Albans manufacturing facility, 1994 ends up with a net loss of just under $1.9 million).	$155.33 million (+4.4% vs 94)—net income is just under $6 million	$167.155 million (+8% vs 1995)—net income is $3.926 million.
	Ben & Jerry's joins in a cooperative campaign with the national non-profit Children's Defense Fund; the campaign goal is to bring children's basic needs to the top of the national agenda. Ben & Jerry's builds its new Distribution Center in Bellows Falls, Vermont. Ben & Jerry's opens in Russia.. Ruble profits from 2 shops fund cross-cultural exchanges. The one millionth tourist visits the Waterbury factory on August 14th. It's Frank Woo from Connecticut.	New flavour launched: Wavy Gravy--it's named after the famous 1960's Woodstock Festival personality who is now a one-man non-profit helping kids.	Ben & Jerry's begins distribution of ice cream in pints in the United Kingdom. Eight flavors of the new Smooth, No Chunks! line are launched with an unprecedented national advertising campaign featuring eight artists/activists including: Spike Lee. Ben & Jerry's begins a national search for a new CEO, by hiring a search firm and by holding a "YO! I'm Your CEO!" contest.	Former McKinsey & Co. partner Robert Holland is selected as new CEO in February. Discovered by the search firm, Holland nevertheless captures the spirit of the contest by submitting a poem. Production begins in March at Ben & Jerry's new plant in St. Albans, Vermont. No Fat Frozen Yogurts and Chubby Hubby ice cream flavour are launched. Ben & Jerry's web site is launched: (http://www.benjerry.com). Ben & Jerry's pints debut in France.	Ben & Jerry's international expansion continues with new licensees in the Benelux Countries. Launch of: Sorbets! Made with Vermont Pure Spring Water and the best fruits (using organically-grown fruits wherever we could find a sufficient supply) and flavourings. CEO Bob Holland, having successfully accomplished "Phase 1" by improving manufacturing efficiencies, steps down as CEO, citing the company's need for a "Phase Two" CEO with expertise in meeting new marketing challenges.

Key Events at Ben & Jerry's 1978-2002 (Source: B&J's website)

	1997	1998	1999
Annual Sales evolution	$174.26 million (+4% vs 96)—net income is $3.89 million.	$209.2 million (+20% vs 1997)—Net income is $6.2 million	$237 million (+13.3% vs 1998 sales)-- Net income is $3.3 million
	Perry Odak becomes CEO on January 2, 1997. Phish Food flavour is launched—it is named after famous folks who've made their mark through great talent and good deeds. Low Fat Ice Cream launched. Ben and Jerry publish Double Dip (1997, Simon & Schuster), a retrospective on the start-up and growth of their company and their vision for business in the future. In an unprecedented legal settlement, the State of Illinois agrees to permit Ben & Jerry's and other food companies opposed to the use of rBGH to voluntarily label their products as free from the bio-engineered growth hormone. Launch of Peanut Butter & Jelly ice cream, together with a national sweepstakes called "Lids For Kids" and its Grand Prize: a lifetime supply of Ben & Jerry's. Ben & Jerry's and leading Internet guide, Yahoo!, team up to help kids and schools get techno-connected via the national "NetDay" organization; each Ben & Jerry's pint lid that folks submit to the sweepstakes results in cash donations for NetDay.	The company re-launches its entire pint line with an entirely new look, re-designing and re-styling all packaging to reflect an easier-on-the-unfamiliarized-eye consistency across product lines while retaining the eye-catching elements Ben & Jerry's familiarized fans so highly prize. As part of an April Fools' Day national launch of Ben & Jerry's newest flavor, "Dilbert's World™ Totally Nuts™," the company teams up with United Airlines to surprise two planeloads of passengers by deplaning them to arrival gates "cubicle-ized" to resemble comic strip character Dilbert's totally nutty workplace world. Introduction of Ben & Jerry's in Japan. Launch of the ice cream industry's first pint container made from unbleached paperboard. The new "Eco-pint" carton, made from unbleached brown kraft paper with a non-toxic printable clay coating, represents a breakthrough key to one of the company's environmental mission goals: reducing the company's use of all paper products bleached white with a chemical process that is one of the country's leading causes of toxic water pollution. 1,010 adults, polled by the Harris Poll to name the "major companies that (they) think are really good companies," place Ben & Jerry's among top 20.	New flavors: Ice cream: Triple Caramel Chunk™ , Bovinity Divinity™, Pistachio Pistachio™. Low fat ice cream: Chocolate Comfort, Mocha Latte. Frozen yogurt: Chocolate Heath Bar Crunch, Chunky Monkey. Internationally, Ben & Jerry's begins distribution in Peru; B&J's in the U.K. launches the Flying Friesian, a raucous tour bus retrofitted for fun, with a focus on fundraising for U.K. kids-in-need network, Childline. Ben & Jerry's marks its 21st Anniversary with a record-breaking Coast-to-Coast Free Cone Day. Almost 200 Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops scoop more than 550,000 free cones. Newest PartnerShop is opened in Chicago: Lawson House (YMCA). Of the Top 30 Most Reputable US companies, Ben & Jerry's ranks #5 overall, also earning a #1 ranking in the "Social Responsibility" category in New Harris "Reputation Quotient" Poll. Media impressions generated in 1999: over 390 million. Dec. 2, 1999 -- Ben & Jerry's announces it has received indications of interest to acquire the Company.

Key Events at Ben & Jerry's 1978-2002 (Source: B&J's website)

	2000	2001	2002
Annual Sales evolution	Not available	Not available	Not available
	Ben & Jerry's launches an 8-flavor lineup of 2Twisted!™ ice creams -- creative combinations of our most popular flavors deliciously amalgamorphed into fabulous new flavors with uniquely Twisted names, like half-baked™ (a crazy combo of Chocolate Fudge Brownie & Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough), From Russia With Buzz™ (a wicked-wacky mix of White Russian™ & Coffee Coffee Buzz Buzz Buzz™), and Jerry's Jubilee™ (a classic jam of Cherry Garcia & Chocolate Fudge Brownie). April 12: Ben & Jerry's announces the company's acquisition by Anglo-Dutch corporation, Unilever. Ben & Jerry's Board of Directors approve Unilever's offer of $326 million ($43.60 per share, for 8.4 million outstanding shares), as well as a unique agreement enabling Ben & Jerry's to join forces with Unilever to create an even more dynamic, socially positive ice cream business with a much more global reach. Under the terms of the agreement, Ben & Jerry's will operate separately from Unilever's current U.S. ice cream business, with an independent Board of Directors to provide leadership for Ben & Jerry's social mission & brand integrity. CEO Yves Couette, succeeds CEO Perry Odak. Couette's 24 years at Unilever have helped shape his extensive experience in all aspects of the ice cream business, as well as experience in managing businesses that, although part of Unilever, set their own course in their own way. Strengthening of existing markets (U.K., France, Benelux, Canada, Lebanon, & Japan) by opening 52 Ben & Jerry's scoop shops in those markets.	Ben & Jerry's completes transition to Eco-Pint packaging for 2001. All pint flavors are now packaged in unbleached paperboard Eco-Pint containers; using brown-kraft unbleached paperboard is a critical first step toward a totally biodegradable pint made without added chlorine. 2001's new flavors -- made to make some joyful noise, to make a few folks famous, and to make more waves than ever before: KaBerry KaBOOM! ™ - full of cracklin' candy to tingle your tastebuds, it's our playful way to build awareness - & safe playgrounds! - with the non-profit KaBOOM! And just when some of us thought we knew what we were when we launched Festivus as a Limited Batch in 2000, the rest of us thought we'd never hear the end of the airing of grievances from fans of Festivus (TV-comedy Seinfeld's classic holiday episode) who couldn't get enough of Festivus (the flavor). Thanks to them, the rest of us can rest easy at least a little longer this year, because Festivus is back. It's still a Limited Batch...but we stretched it some, okay?	New flavors for 2002: Makin' Whoopie Pie™, Peanut Butter Truffle™, S'mores™, The Full VerMonty™, Honey I'm Home!™, and Half Baked™ Frozen Yogurt. Core Concoctions: Karamel Sutra™ with a Caramel Core, Fudge Central™ with a Fudge Core, Peanut Butter Me Up™ with a Peanut Butter Core. It's an ice cream flavor...it's an environmental action website: it's One Sweet Whirled™ -- and it's all interconnected, as Ben & Jerry's partners with the Dave Matthews Band and SaveOurEnvironment.org in a campaign to fight global warming.

APPENDIX 6.2
LIST OF KEY FIGURES AT BEN & JERRY's 1978-2007
(Source: Annual Environmental & Social Reports)

History of plants/corporate locations
1985: Waterbury plant opened/ Corporate offices also there
1988: Springfield plant opened
1991: Corporate headquarters moves down the road ("loss of togetherness", p.15, 1993 annual report)
1992: St. Albans plant opened
1993: New B&J's distribution center completed

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Social Activism	Customers	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	Community Support/ Cash Reserves
1988	150/ One major site	$47 million (+49%)		54 accidents/ 10 days lost							
1989	?	$58 million+ 23%/	5 :1 (but not mentionned in the social performance report)	76 accidents 109 days lost; Employee Advisory Group formed; Work on development of on site day care at Waterbury; Manager of Training & Development hired	$288 971 to 70 groups (1% for Peace received $35 433); 7.5% of pre-tax earnings; Employee Community Fund created (receive 50% of money from tours)--$57 000 donated to Vermont groups	Environmental issues Peace Children Family issues Disadvantaged citizens	1% for Peace BGH Rainforest Crunch Soviet Union	Customer enthusiasm; Customer complaints about high fat content; Distributors inadequately informed about social mission	Creation of Manager of Environmental Development; Recycling of office paper; Pint container issue Wastewater treatment issue	(300 regular suppliers) Greyston Bakery Community Products Consumers United Insurance Co. St. Albans Cooperative Creamery	"Financial support for communities $186 000 of seconds donations
1990	326	$77 million+ 32%/	7 :1	20 accidents per 100 000 hours worked ; 33 lost days per 100 000 hours worked ;Employee Survey	$363 000 (7.5% of pre tax earnings); Employee Community Funds at plants donate to Vermont groups$60 000	Under question —will be debated in the summer	Giraffe Project Solar Scoop Truck Political messages on packaging Big Apple Circus	Talk of high fat is now under « Nutrition column »	Recycling Wastewater Treatment Energy Consumption	$1Mil of candy purchased from Community Products ; $730 000 from Greyston; $330 000 of blueberries from Indians of Maine $16 million: St. Albans Coop	$209 975 of factory seconds donations/ 14% of cash reserves invested in community banks

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Social Activism	Customers	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	Community Support/ Cash Reserves
1991	349 (100 at Spring field)	$97 million+ 26%	7 :1 but no move to extend stock ownership	354 days lost at Springfield	$528 000 (7.5%) ; Cash grants to community groups in Vermont= $61 000	Company's efforts too scattered —focus for 1992 is to be on children	Sponsorship of 4 big outdoor festivals; Save the family farm campaign; Employee visit to Northern Quebec & Cree Indians & to Children's Defense Fund in Atlanta;	Nutritional labels finally going on pints in early 1992	Difficult to evaluate because no rigorous reporting standards established		
1992	446	$131.9 million+ 36%	7 :1 ; Employees receive 5% of pre tax profits; But only .04% of company stock is in the hands of employees	(EMPLOYEES) On site day care at Waterbury; Atmosphere of workholism; Very high injury rate: 1702 lost days for both Springfield and Waterbury (up from 902 in 1991); Disparity in benefits between Waterbury and Springfield (no day care in Springfield); Paid family leave instituted	(COMMUNITY) 7.5% of pre tax earnings; Employee Community Fund;	(COMMUNITY) Focus on Children through links with Children's Defense Fund	Leave No Child Behind campaign	(CUSTOMER) Number 1 complaint: lack of chunks or add ins— because difficult task; Issues of communication between consumer affairs & management —due to rate of growth Rate of complaint: 11.75/10 000 gallons	(ECOLOGY) Excellent recycling program thanks to Green Team; Signatory of CERES; New St. Albans plant will be more energy efficient; Issue of Vermont made versus increasing size of company—	(COMMUNITY) Trying to identify minority suppliers/ suppliers with progressive social mission: Work progresses w/ Federation of Southern Cooperatives; Beginning of partnership with La Soul Bakery	(COMMUNITY) On going relationship with South Shore Bank; Deposits in Vermont National Bank's SR Banking Fund; Concerns by some Waterbury residents that factory not become a theme park

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Social Activism	Customers	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	Community Support/ Cash Reserves
1993	500	$140.3 million +6%; Sharp drop in stock price: "The end of an age of innocence in the Company"	7:1/ Plans underway to grant stock options to all level employees in 94	Different cultures have been created at 4 different sites; Lack of leadership; People overwhelmed by effects of growth; Lost time days due to injuries fell from 1666 to 1302; not high by industry standards	7.5% of pre tax profits	Children	Call for Kids campaign (with Children's Defense Fund); For second consecutive year, B&J's sent largest delegation to annual meeting of Children's Defense Fund meeting—and only one from corporate America	Issues of communication between different quality assurance departments—also they do not report to top management; Customer rate of complaint steady (11.86 per 10 000 gallons) 1989: 1.2 fan letter for every complaint vs 1991: 1.6 complaint letters for every fan letter New FDA labelling laws reveal that B&J's is not all natural	2 independent environmental audits conducted but not finished at time of social report	B&J's became larest customer of Aztec Harvests Coffee Company (family farm cooperative in Mexico); B&J works w/ African American family farmers in Georgia; Greyston La Soul Bakery St. Albans Cooperative B&J actively engaged to source only rBGH free milk	Truckloads of ice cream seconds sent to flood victims along Mississippi ; Waterbury 2nd shift raise funds for women's crisis center &Burlington Emergency center; for Midwest flood relief for a trip to Disney world for a critically ill child; Expansion of Russian partnership; 1 Million $ invested in low income housing project in NYC; Credit cards shifted to VT National Bank's Card for Kids

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Social Activism	Customers	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	Community Support/ Cash Reserves
1994	619	$1.9 million **loss**	Top 10% to bottom 10% is 3.3 to 1 (new way of measuring introduced here!) Progress in increasing employee ownership : 2.5% of outstanding shares were optioned to staff; Average 400 shares per employee/ Contrasts to 180 000 shares given to incoming CEO (stock option ratio of 500 to 1)	Worklife Survey indicates rising job dissatisfaction —38% of people often think about quitting vs 19% in 1992 Dramatic improvements in safety indicators: 452 lost time days due to injury (vs 1214 in 1993)	7.5% of pre tax profits or $255 384 (to be divided among Foundation (35%), CAT (50%)and Corporate Giving (15%). Given company's financial loss in 1994, funds given to Foundation during first three profitable quarters have been booked as advances to be repaid to the company	Children & families; Disadvant aged groups; the environme nt	(Community continued--- everything is under **"Community")** Continued commitment to oppose rBGH (premiums paid to St. Albans Coop= $430 000); $1 240 000 investment in tax credits for renovating low income housing in NYC; also invests tax credits for affordable housing in Vermont; Franchised scoop shops promote B&J's community focus through support of thousands of local non profits	Small minority of customers who oppose gun control are taking issue with B&J's support of Children's Defense Fund campaign against gun violence; Issue with high fat content now on labels	CRM report states that company lacks unifying environmental vision; Five areas are identified as B&J's most serious environmental impacts: waste, energy, packaging, transportation and chemical use. Also issue of commodities market— sugar, chocolate sourcing which contribute indirectly to child hunger elsewhere	Over 20 relationships with progressive suppliers; More proactive supplier relationships include: **Community Products** (purchases are 50% less than in 1990 since RainForest Crunch flavour is maturing in marketplace)—Debate as to the claims made regarding sourcing of RainForest Crunch; **Greyston Bakery** ($2.2 million/year purchased); La **Soul Bakery** (issue is decline of flavour using La Soul Bakery pie as la Soul is dependent on B&J's for its viability; **Aztec Harvests** ($830 000 of purchases vs $244 000 in 1993)	Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger; Co credit cards issued by Bank of Vermont, 'Card for Kids'; Company sent two employees to El Salvador as members of the US Citizens Elections Observer Mission

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Stockholders (new area)	Customers	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	Community Support/ Cash Reserves
1995	703	$155.33 million +4.4%	14.5 to 1 excluding stock options— If including options then ratio is 18 to 1	Incident rate per 100 workers higher than national benchmark (no precise numbers)—this is due to aggressive reporting policy	7.5% of pre tax profits or $768 008	Not clearly stated anywhere	No dividends given back (ever) First stock sold publicly to Vermont residents in 1984 Company went fully public in 1985	Admit that customer research not advanced; 84% of customer complaints are from fans whose complaints are the exception to their experience with B&Js; Continued public position against rBGH milk (paid $345 000 to St. Albans for not using rBGH milk)	Previous report not statistically valid—need to set new indicators Goals are set for future wastewater reduction (20% reduction goal for 1995 was **not met**) Energy consumption (transportation, distribution) not known with sufficient accuracy to report No violations of wastewater permits in 94 and 95	No clear policies & procedures re selection of suppliers (at this point but intention is to clarify for next year's report)—Beginning process of formal certification process for suppliers; We do have a number of suppliers that have a specific social intent; End of relationship with La Soul Bakery (legal battle followed)	(PHILANTROPY) 7.5% of pre tax profits allocated to CAT Teams (35%); B&J Foundation (50%); Corporate giving (15%)—this three way giving has been established since 1994 so as to be more responsive to local Vermont more mainstream groups (through CAT) In kind giving (no numbers provided)

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth& sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Finance/Shareholders	Social Activism	Marketing/Sales	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	International
1997	708	$174.26 million (+4%)	Compensation redesign project (since 1995)—Liveable age commitment (since 95) No mention of salary ratio—But it is 17:1 (as indicated in 1998 report)	On site day care at Waterbury still there B&J's voted 100 Best Companies for Working Mothers by Working Mothers Magazine No employee lawsuits in 97 No workplace regulatory actions taken against company in 97 **Rate of injuries per worker** on improvement trend but **still higher than the industry average**	7.5% of pre tax profits divided among three funds (since 1994): $510 000 for 1997 50% to B&J Foundation	95% of cash in socially screened investments (up from 91% in 1996); Credit Card program for employees—donates 1% of charges to Vermont Children's Forum	Franchisees spent $441 868 on social mission activities in 97: Beach clean up day; Parents as reading partners, Inner city playground cleanup, KaBoom!, etc.. Political positions in 97: -Campaign against land mines -Support for Vermont's rBGH certification labelling law -Joined Children's Defense Fund in urging Congress to provide health insurance for kids	Double Dip Book published (advanced sales $88 000 donated to campaign finance reform organizations) B&J's takes Illinois to court to label pints with rBGH free label—and wins! Lids for Kids program Product royalties ($159 000 to Phish for a Foundation; $55 000 to Pauley Trudeau Foundation (Doonesberry royalties); $21 000 Wavy Gravy royalties to Camp Win a Rainbow) Festival Activism (One World One Heart Festival)-generates 15 000 postcards to Congress urging health insurance for uninsured kids; Sponsorship of Newport Folk Festival for 10th year Factory Tours 260 895 visits in 1997 (5% of tour proceeds—$30 000 to Vermont's Children Forum)	Work on development of chlorine free pint packaging (to be introduced in 1998) Peace Pops packaging modified to use more materials (box instead of simple wrapper) due to consumer disapproval of simple packaging Paper Use other than Packaging; Waste reduction of 34% in 1997; solid waste reduction of 11% Transportatione xperimentation with train in 1994 unsuccessful	**35% of company's purchases reflect social mission** St. Albans Coop (22 626 million—with $350 000 premium for rBGH free milk); Greyston 2.7 million; Community Products ($774 000); Coffee Enterprises ($745 000); Cia Agricola La Gavilana ($254 000) Litigation with La Soul Bakery settled in early 1998 Supplier diversity Program & Vendor Certification Program developed 29% of fruit purchase is organic but decision to discontinue at end of 1997 (too expensive)	Goal is to develop social mission strategy for international expansion (goal not fully met) War Child and Peace Pop partnership ($5000 donated) Partnership in France with Parene to promote out of work women entrepreneurs ($55 000)

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Finance/shareholders	Social Activism	Sales/Marketing	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	International
1998	766 (extrapolated from minority representing 3% of total workforce)	$209.2 million (+20%)	16:1 (not taking into account stock options) To date, stock benefits have gone to senior management— This year decision was made to award 316 stock options to each employee	Closing Waterbury day care centre Partial unionization of employees at St. Albans plant for first time in company history Safety remains an issue—injury rate higher than industry average	Unchanged (7.5% of pre tax profits= $792 595) 50% to Foundation	94% of cash invested in socially screened investments Company Credit Card (1% to help kids)	Political positions: Sought amendment to the Vermont Business Corporation Act; Testified in support of Vermont bill S.73 to improve rBGH labeling law; Testified in support of Vermont bill H.749 to enable State of Vermont to recover Medicaid expenses for treatment of tobacco caused health problems; Signed letter to Clinton regarding budget priorities	Unbleached pint is a remarkable example of values led marketing initiative Product royalties: Phish=$200 000; Doonesbury= $40 000 Wavy Gravy= $20 445 In kind product donations=$70 000	Introduction of unbleached pint packaging (first frozen food company to do so)	Successful expansion of vendor certification program Socially aligned suppliers represent 38.6% of all purchases 93% of sugar comes from beet sugar instead of cane sugar (in 1998) Continue to source cocoa from unsustainable suppliers	Issue of how to export social mission abroad is unresolved at this point Absence of new strategic values led initiatives in international arena

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth & sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Finance & Shareholders	Marketing Initiatives	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	International
1999	719	$237 million (+13.3 %)	16:1 (does not include unrealized gains on stock options)	# of lost time days -77% in 1999 vs 98—still injury incident rate remains higher than industry average	7.5%= $1.13 million	Pillars of social mission are: Environmental sustainability and social & economic justice	83% of cash in screened investments (vs 94% in 1998) Company Credit Card	Product donations= $50 000 in 1999 (v $70 000 in 98); Product royalties (Phish Food= $244 918; Doonesbury= $14 176; Wavy Gravy= $20 445)	1/3 of product line converted to Eco-Pint (met objective); Use of Totes (reusable bulk containers) Reduction of solid (-10%) and dairy waste (-11%)—etc—charts for various energy use reduction given with precise numbers Sustainable Agriculture Initiative	Socially aligned suppliers account for 40% of total purchases (this year they include Unbleached paper Container)	Small product donations/ philanthropy in existing foreign markets

Year	# of employees/ sites	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Values led marketing and sales	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	International
2000	739 (422 manufacturing/distribution; 221 corporate office; 50 sales force; 24 in company owned scoop shops; 22 in international operations	17:1 (excluding stock options)	#of lost time days reduced by 12.5% in 2000 (vs 99) butt overally injury incident rate remains higher than industry average Strong focus on safety training (10 500 hours of safety training) (Huge difference between 1998 & 2000 for manufacturing lost time days—from 1706 to 312)	$1.285 million—unclear if this equals 7.5% of pre tax profits for 2000 (Foundation; CAT; Corporate giving)	List of sponsorship events Activism—Civil Union law in Vermont—B&J's appeared in newspaper ad to appear the morning of the vote Organic cotton clothing—no number given Product donations--$14 400 (vs $50 000 in 1999) Royalties continue (Phish Food, Doonesbury, Wavy Gravy)	Begin development of "Ecological Footprint" Solid waste -8% per gallon Recycling -10% per gallon of product produced Begin measuring emissions associated with ice cream production (CO2) Vermont Dairy Farm Sustainability Project	$1.5 million with diverse suppliers (exceeded goal of minority supplier program) 41.19% from companies that are aligned with Ben & Jerry's values (unbleached paper is included)	Did not enter new markets

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth& sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Issues focus (of social activism)	Values Led Marketing & Sales	Environment	Socially minded suppliers	International
2001:First full year as Unilever company	756 (430 manufacturing/distribution; 204 at corporate; 42 national sales force; 30 company owned scoop shops; 50 international operations)		16:1 One time bonus distributed to employees who stay at B&J's at least until 6 months after the merger (approx $6500)	Safety improved—Overall accident rate is now below industry average for the first time! Liveable Wage policy continues Employee profit sharing plan is discontinued	$1.2 million (under acquisition agreement, must be $1.1 minimum, adjusted upward based on sales growth)		Completion of conversation of pint to Eco-Pint rBGH free milk pledge continues Global Warming Campaign Listing of sponsorships/events In 2001, B&J only corporate signator of Invest in America Statement of National Priorities sent to the President (to address needs of children in poor communities) Intended plan of action regarding child forced labor for chocolate production Product quality complaints (same in 2001 as 2000)— 50% of tee shirt volume in B&J's stores is organic Product donations (approx $36 000); Royalties	Development of frameworks standards—initiated by Unilever (Environmental Management Systems—EMS) Initiation of Global Warming campaign Continued development of bulk handling systems for ingredients—aim is to return to Totes in 2002 Vermont Dairy Farm Sustainability Project continues	$61.2 million or 51% of total purchases spent on socially aligned vendors (+11% vs 2000) This time unbleached paper is **not** counted	International social mission focus on product donation and philanthropy in the UK—other markets focus is on strengthening business Japan business closed

Year	# of employees/ sites	Annual growth& sales	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation "Giving Back"	Issues focus (of social activism)	Values Led Marketing & Sales	Environment	Socially minded suppliers
2002	819 worldwide (no details given); significant layoffs in 2002: 189	Between $200 and $500 million	17.5 to 1	Closing of Springfield Manufacturing plant & Bellows Falls distribution center "exemplary" Continued improvements in safety: Overall Injury Incident Rate now lower than industry average (9.21% vs 10.1%)	$1.2 million Tour revenue now reallocated for One Sweet Whirled Campaign (and no longer for local community groups) First quality product donations= $22 144	New format for Social & Environmental Assessment based on GRI/ No longer publish a CERES report Economic & social justice; the environment; community involvement	This section no longer exists—it all goes under "Giving Back Section"	Global Warming Campaign New refrigeration project research launched Vermont Dairy Farm Sustainability Project funding continues	50% of ingredient and packaging suppliers are aligned with B&J's values—**no longer give detailed numbers for "competitive reasons"** For A Change Flavours launched
				In the NEWS					
2003	498 (worldwide) —B&J's Sales force shifts to NAIC= 43 sales people either transferred to NAIC (11) or fired (32)		17.6 to 1	For first time (in 2003 report)—section on external communication called "In the News" appears					

Year	# of employees/ sites	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Social Activism	Connecting with Consumers	Environment	Socially minded suppliers
2006	511 (in Burlington) 357 manufacturing; 154 central	None Liveable wage Bonus Incentive Plans	No numbers available on Ben & Jerry's—site refers to Unilever's 2006 Sustainability Report (with no detail on individual factories)	$1.587 million (9% increase from 2005) Factory seconds= $11 491 contributed to organizations in 2006	Social activism is addressed in the "In the Public Eye" section now	American Pie Campaign Giving free DVDs of Inconvenient Truth Cool Your Jets Initiative to educate the public about carbon offsets Consumer Affairs inundated by emails for B&Js to source cage free eggs— transition will begin in 2007	Reached/exceeded environmental performance goals at Vermont manufacturing plants	Goodbye to Eco Pint (but new supplier has excellent track record of sustainable forestry practices) VLS (values led sourcing)= In 2006: 49% of raw materials from suppliers aligned with B&J's values (vs 55% in 2005 and 59% in 2004)—explanation is falling price of milk Fair trade certified vanilla extract, cocoa powder

Year	# of employees/ sites	Salary ratio	Safety/Work life	Donations to B&J's Foundation	Social Mission Issues Focus (4 year goal established)	Connecting with Consumers (includes social mission campaigns, social mission flavours…)	Environment	Socially minded suppliers
2007	508 (in the US; 63 Unilever employees; 100 manufacturing employees in Europe	None Liveable wage	No numbers available on Ben & Jerry's—site refers to Unilever's 2007 Sustainability Report (with no detail on individual factories)	$1.69 million granted Factory seconds= $5 955 contributed to organizations in 2007	Increasing 'Values-Led' sourcing Fighting climate change Pursuing Eco-packaging Promoting prosperity, peace & justice	No Clones Campaign Lick Global Warming Climate Change College Cool Your Jets Fair Trade Month Environmental Action Contest Save Darfur	We did not reach one of our goals for 2007, which was to achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for our new pint container in the United States	In 2007, 39% of the raw material spend (i.e., ingredients, dairy, packaging) for our **Vermont production** went to initiatives that we see as aligned with our values, compared to 49 percent in 2006. Figures for production at other plants were not available at the time of this report's publication.

APPENDIX 6.3

Interview guide for Wave 2 interviews January 2008
(Central headquarters only)

Principles

Open ended question:
1. Could you tell me what you consider to be the most important principles of Ben & Jerry's as expressed by its leaders?

Can you talk to me about those principles before the M&A and after?
Please explain any changes you may have perceived.

Guided question:
2. The principles of organizational identity as expressed by Ben & Jerry's top management and founders can be found in the three part mission statement: Product, economic and social mission.

What do you think of the mission statement?
How has the mission statement changed since the M&A? (How was it interpreted before M&A? How is it today?)Do all three parts have equal weight today?)

Actions/artefacts

Open ended question:
3. Could you list for me what you consider to be actions or tangible, visible manifestations which best express what Ben & Jerry's is all about?

-Pre acquisition (pre 2000)
-Since 2000
Which actions/way of doing things/processes has changed?
Which have stayed the same?
What are some new actions/way of doing things since 2000?

Guided question:
4. What do you think of the following items? Before the Unilever acquisition and after if applicable.

Community:
- Free cone day
- Partnershops
- Factory tours
- Vermont only public stock offering
- B&J Foundation
- Political activism (1% for Peace; American Pie Campaign; Stop Seabrook)

Corporate governance:
- Five to one salary ratio

Employee relations:
- Joy gang
- Nap room
- Renovated headquarters building
- Living wage
- Springfield manufacturing plant

Environment
- Solar powered bus
- Eco pint
- B&J Green Team
- Climate Change College
- Social and environmental reports

Product
- Greyston bakery
- Fair trade flavours
- Factory seconds
- Certified Humane cage free eggs
- rBGH free milk

Image:

Open ended question

5. What is your perception of Ben & Jerry's public image?
-Pre acquisition (pre 2000)
-Since 2000

Guided question:

6. What do you think of these two rankings?
In 1999: Reputation Quotient rated B&J n.5 overall of the Top 30 Most Reputable US companies, and #1 in the "Social Responsibility" category.

In 2006: American consumers rated Ben & Jerry's the most socially responsible company in the United States (Golin Harris' 4th national survey of corporate citizenship)

APPENDIX 6.4

Interview guide for Wave 3 interviews November 2008
(Central & factory employees)

Introduction

Please introduce yourself, title, age, how long you've been with B&J's

Evolution of reporting relationship with Unilever

Since last January, reporting relationships have evolved between Unilever, NAIC and Ben & Jerry's. Can you speak to me about how Ben & Jerry's is evolving and how your job has been impacted (or not) by these changes? How do you see the future?

General organizational identity question

In your opinion, what are the **central, distinctive characteristics** which define Ben & Jerry's today?

In your opinion, is Ben & Jerry's different today than before the acquisition? If so, how?

Principles

(Open ended)
Can you talk to me about what you think are the founding principles that defined what Ben & Jerry's is all about?
Are they any different today?

(Guided)
How has the three part mission statement changed since the M&A?

(From Identity themes in Jan 2008 interviews):
What do you think is the motivation for the social mission today? (Versus pre-acquisition?)

Actions/artefacts

(Open ended)
Could you list for me what you consider to be actions or tangible, visible manifestations which best express what Ben & Jerry's is all about?

How have these actions/ visible manifestations changed since the acquisition?

(Guided)
What do you think of the evolution of the following (pre/post acquisition):

(From Identity themes in Jan 08 interviews)
- **Leadership**
- **Employee empowerment**
- **Manufacturing culture**
- **Innovation**

Community:

- Free cone day
- Factory tours
- B&J Foundation
- Political campaigns (Peace Pops, American Pie Campaign)

Corporate governance:
- Five to one salary ratio

Employee relations:
- Joy gang
- Living wage

Environment
- Eco pint

Product
- Greyston bakery
- Fair trade flavours
- Certified Humane cage free eggs
- rBGH free milk

Image:

(Open ended)

How do you think consumers and the media perceive Ben & Jerry's today? Is it different from how they perceived it pre-acquisition?

(Guided)

What do you think of these two rankings?

In 1999: Reputation Quotient rated B&J n.5 overall of the Top 30 Most Reputable US companies, and #1 in the "Social Responsibility" category.

In 2006: American consumers rated Ben & Jerry's the most socially responsible company in the United States (Golin Harris' 4th national survey of corporate citizenship)

Drivers for organizational identity change

(Open ended)
What do you think are the events which have had the most impact on Ben & Jerry's identity?

(Guided)
-When B&J's became a publicly traded company in 1985
-When B&J's became significantly big in size and sales growth
-When Ben became less involved in business
-When Perry Odak was CEO
-When Unilever acquired Ben & Jerry's
-When many old timer B&J's employees left the company post acquisition
-Walt's arrival

APPENDIX 6.5

Additional Quotes from Central Employee interviews

Central Employees Experience of Ben & Jerry's Mission:

Central Employees' Experience of the Product Mission:

"There's a continuation of trying to maximize your profit so if you can trade out this cookie dough for that cookie dough and if your consumers don't find any difference for taste and you can save some money and it still fits into their values, it's something that we execute. It's good business practice probably-- if your consumers don't taste any difference and you're not compromising your business ethics, your quality--that makes sense. It's something of great concern—when you look at our mission statement, the lead has always been our product. We want to make the best quality product that we can and it's a concern---how many times can you go in and say, "Can we save another quarter of a cent on this pint?" A concern would be, for how many years can you do that before you say, "This is not the same product as it once was?" (Old timer employee)

"Sad--It's not what it used to be. It's not the rich product that was in the original formula. We don't use the same fun ingredients anymore. We used to put more stuff in. We're using now lesser expensive add-ins and working around what we have—what we're allowed—rather than being more experimental." (Old timer employee)

Central Employees' Experience of the Social Mission:

"There are still opportunities that present themselves that way here—a year ago, I went down to New Orleans with a team of seven or eight other employees to help tear down houses that needed to be rebuilt. And there are numerous other opportunities throughout the year of getting involved with company programs—for me to go down do the New Orleans thing was a great opportunity for me to give back." (Old timer manager)

"We've done some very interesting things—we've taken a lot of ideas and even thought they might look like purely a cost saving idea—they've been good for the environment, they've been good for the carbon footprint. But I will say this that when we used to do something because we thought it was right, we can't do this anymore. We can only do it if it fits into the margin, however right it might be and that's a huge difference." (Old timer manager)

Central Employees' Perception of Motivation for social mission pre-acquisition:

"The social mission was the motivation for the business—Ben and Jerry knew that they wanted to make a difference in the world and they wanted to change things." (New timer employee)

Central Employees Experience of Organizational Artefacts:

"The balance of the three parts of the mission has always been tough—at the Social Mission Summit, Ben and Jerry were there and they said, "This has never been easy!"—and on any given day you're going to have that three part mission statement going all over the place--and even pre-acquisition there were days when we had to focus more on the economic mission—to the compromise of the product or social mission—Over time you just try to have it as smooth a line as possible." (Old timer central manager)

Joy Gang

"It's a nice thing—they come around once a month and there is always an event and they do things to keep employee morale high which is great—they'll come around in the morning with coffee and donuts—sometimes we'll take a break in the afternoon—we did Price is Right—sometimes we'll do a B-B-Q and have lunch outside—once we did SMores in the afternoon—all sorts of fun stuff—and they'll give out gifts—one day last winter they gave out windshield wiper fluid as people were leaving for the day." (New timer central marketing employee)

"As one of the founders of the Joy Gang, I think it was a great thing. Did I always think that it was getting to the people who needed it most? No. I had to leave eventually because I felt like all of the fun was directed to people in the offices who could take time off of their work whereas the people who needed it at least as much were out on the floor making the ice cream. So it seemed like an inequitable situation—I didn't feel right." (Old timer central manager)

"I think every company should have that too—that is a must. I've always said that if I start my own business, I'm going to model it after Ben & Jerry's and have a Joy Gang—it's unusual but once people have experienced it and what it does to employee morale—it's foolish not to have one." (New timer central employee)

"Very active—they continue to bring joy—spontaneous." (New timer central marketing manager)

"It was always a little contrived because you can't legislate joy. Jerry saying some people are tired--we were doubling sales each year. Stressful, tired place to be. Jerry saying we need to bring more joy in. Let's give back rubs to people--Jim said, "Are you fucking out of your mind? I can't take any more joy!" Chico saw the benefit of it. Institutionalized Chico's mannerism which is wonderful, inclusive, joyous way to be...Jim's point was: let's give people 2 days off in a row." (Ex old timer central manager)

"I'm not sure they were before acquisition—I think that's an after thing—I think that's a Walt Freese piece." (New timer central manager)

Free Cone Day

"It's a great initiative—it's funny being on the other side of the coin now—not being a consumer—knowing how much it pisses off franchisees—some of them when they're upset with us want to boycott it—they just want to use any kind of leverage they can get. Growing up here, it was never a huge thing—I never saw it as vastly important to the brand. The other social mission that they do is much more important and has a much larger impact than just giving out free ice cream. When we give free ice cream to non profits, I like that idea better than free cone day." (New timer central employee)

"I don't remember how many millions of impressions—We're now being copied by Baskin Robbins—Starbucks gives out free coffee all the time—A lot of people have started to give stuff away on income tax day—so we're not the only ones there anymore—I still think as a tradition I would hate to see it go away because this is something we've done forever—I'm a big tradition person." (Old timer central employee)

"We still do it the same way." (New central HR manager)

Factory Tours

"There's been improvement in the factory tours from what it used to be—with the renovations that were done." (New central HR manager)

"It's a great idea—I'm glad we still do them—at times they've been a little sloppy—Some of the enthusiasm from when I first took the tour as a new person living in Vermont—there seemed to be a lot of energy and a lot more fun—And as I've come back, taking other people coming to visit, it's a little bit more lacklustre." (New timer central employee)

"Then they used to be a lot of fun." (Old timer central manager)

"Now I find them a little whitewashed. My wife helped design the movie they have on the tour so I can't be entirely objective about this—but it just seems scrubbed up. If you didn't know the old tour, it's probably fine. And you known what, it's all about change." (Old timer central employee)

Political Campaigns

"I don't know a lot about them—I know that with Peace Pops and Americone Dream, we're known as being a liberal company—but I've seen the animation team also reach out to the Republican party as well, just trying to be fair. They had a presence at the Democratic National Convention and offered to be at the Republican Party as well—of course the Republican Party wanted them to pay to be there." (New central HR employee)
"I've never even heard of the American Pie Campaign—is that a new thing or old thing? Peace Pops thing—there was much more visibility with that name—but if I wanted to go to the gas station, I wouldn't say, "Get me a Peace Pop!" anymore—I think it used to say "Peace Pop" on the stick but I don't think it does anymore. That's interesting--I never even noticed that change. Being a Vermonter—it's a testament to the fact that the visibility is way down on that since the acquisition." (New timer central employee)

Festivals

"It was a great—a perfect example of us being able to go out to our customers—a perfect example of grassroots marketing—of Ben and Jerry's bringing to life that whole concept of grassroots marketing. [They don't happen anymore because] there's a tremendous amount of work that goes into them—that's what I did when I was in the marketing department for four, five years. It's a great thing but it's a difficult model—it affects people in a smaller area but in a greater fashion." (Old timer central employee)

"The pictures of the festivals—I think was one of the things that Ben & Jerry's did pre-acquisition that was phenomenal—I didn't participate in any of them—this is all historical—but for the 30 Years Birthday Bash, they had pictures of them, events—giving back to the community and letting people participate in them—I just see that as one of the things that really represents us well." (New timer central HR manager)

"Those were always fun—they don't happen anymore. People are really disappointed—they're always asking, "Are you guys going to do another festival?" I think employees are ok [about them not happening anymore]." (Old timer central employee)

Vermont Only Public Stock Offering

"What a great way to get ownership of the company for the people who were really going to support this business and make it viable. There would be no Ben & Jerry's without Vermont! The spirit of Vermonters—the stubborn independence in support—it made a community that would

support a business like this. And one that was progressive enough—even though they are kind of these old crusty Yankees—they're not the person to come out and say, "Hey, I made you a basket of fresh muffins, welcome to the neighbourhood!" But they are the people who are going to back the truck up when you're off the side of the road and say, "I saw you're in trouble there so I decided I'd pull you out of the ditch!" They are good people and they definitely have helped make this company what it is." (Old timer central manager)

"Again, that was brilliant. It was Ben who gets credit for that. It was brilliant on so many levels. One, it meant that we were able to raise the 750 000 dollars to build our Waterbury plant. We only gave up 17% of the business compared to the VC offers where we would have had to give up a third of the business. Just economically, we raised the money and gave up less of the business. Two, instead of a VC partner which would have dramatically changed how that business was managed and never would have allowed it to evolve into the business it was--we had minority owners and the great thing about minority owners is that they really were minority owners, people who had invested very little money, not life savings and who were really into how this was doing as into their investment. It was a great marketing tool—shareholders would go around and straighten out the pints and it became part of our identity and we leveraged that from a marketing standpoint too." (Chico Lager, ex Ben & Jerry's CEO)

"It was wonderful. Vermonters loved it. It really helped solidify B&J's as a Vermont company for Vermonters and that's not easy to do. And you'd hear them talk about it with a great deal of pride—that they had shares of B&J's." (Old timer central employee)

"I love it. In a way it sowed the seeds for the company's acquisition but it was so true to the ideals of this company, ice cream for the people and everybody get a scoop of the action and the fact that it was Vermont only was priceless. I wish we had a mechanism now to invite people into ownership in that kind of way. That was the power of this event is that it invited people into true ownership of this company—it's about as deep a connection as you can get with your consumers." (New timer central employee)

Environment Artefacts/Eco-Pint

"That's something that we've been working on—you can recycle every part of our pint, even the plastic wrapping—the eco pint shows how we have been and will be devoted to the environment and Andrea Asch what she does—We continue to evolve—I don't think we use the eco pint anymore—that was the brown one—we use something better now—we're evolving—the company's constantly evolving to better the environment." (New timer central employee)

"I don't know a lot about it." (New timer central employee)

"I never thought too much about that—It was here for a while and then it left—when things aren't quantified as far as the impact on the environment—when you don't know that stuff as a regular consumer—you knew it was a good thing and I remember when it was first changed over—as a consumer, I was like, "What the heck?" It was one of those little things where it was like, "Ben & Jerry is doing another great thing!" (New timer central employee)

Fair Trade

"A great opportunity—I wish we could do more with them now. I don't think fair trade was around years ago. We've been able to be a pioneer with it—now we have coffee, vanilla and chocolate were added last year. We are proud to support it but we're not going to go out and toot our horn about it because it's only a certain percentage of our products." (Old timer central manager)

"Fair trade flavours, I actually had to do a feature on that recently—October is fair trade month—It's great to see that we're sourcing some of these ingredients from these places and making sure that people get a fair compensation for it—rather than other companies that are taking advantage of third world countries and get ingredients from them." (New timer central web employee)

Greyston Bakery

"Are they the ones that supply our brownies or something like that? I only heard about that from some random email—but I had never known before—so again, visibility on that must be fairly low. (New timer central employee)

"Awesome—I know they do so much—They're great—I wish more people knew about Greyston Bakery—and that's something that's been there from day one—We're constantly working with them to figure out ways in which we can expand the business and put more in our ice cream. It's a classic example of what sets up apart and how we haven't changed." (New timer central employee)

"Integral to defining our values. One of the best expressions of our values." (New timer central marketing manager)

"Greyston Bakery provides our brownies for Chocolate Fudge Brownies—they provide jobs for underprivileged youths and adults and they train them and give them the skills they need to hold a proper job—and give them the tools to go out and get a full time job--and it's another way we give back to the community—by paying a little extra for these brownies and supporting an organization that's helping underprivileged people." (New timer central marketing coordinator)

"Greyston Bakery is another one I don't know too much about. Our main interaction with them happened a while before I was here." (New timer central employee)

Central Employees Experience of Organizational Identity Themes:

Employee Empowerment

"Very, very high level of employee empowerment--We've had a Grassroots Team which was recently formed—last spring—they put together a list of concerns—ten or twelve issues of concern to them—and which were taken very seriously by the CEO and the rest of the management team—and we've done town hall meetings to discuss some of the issues that were raised and how we can help address them." (New central HR employee)

"…from when I first started until Bob CEO came—we had very good site meetings where employees were asked inputs—we'd break down into small groups and work on a situation together—maybe it was that communication was really bad—so you'd break down and try to figure out how to improve communication amongst the sites or departments. When Perry came on, there was a lot less of that—and when Unilever took over, it pretty much ended—it was, "This is how things are and if you don't like how things are you are welcome to find a job elsewhere!" Now [under Walt and Unilever] we can question something—we may not like the answer but at least we can question something. (Old timer central employee)

"I think there is less empowerment now than there was before—the idea now is to make ice cream and get it out the door—prior to the acquisition there was much more employee involvement in different activities within the company that were mission driven—certainly at the central office there has been a bit more of a resurgence of employee empowerment to participate—there is also a good strong outreach from the leadership team to get feedback from employees." (Old timer central employee)

"I think employees do have a lot of say in what goes on in the business—any recommendations that we make are definitely not overlooked—and I feel that in my job—the promotions aspect—I do have a lot of power to say over what is being designed and what is being approved." (New central marketing employee)

"Post acquisition there are so many new employees that they don't so much have a sense of the mission of the business—I think there is less empowerment now than there was before—the idea now is to make ice cream and get it out the door—prior to the acquisition there was much more employee involvement in different activities within the company that were mission driven.." (Old timer central employee)

Leadership

"Definitely Eric Walsh was a little bit more direct—I know a lot of people didn't get along with him but I always found him to be—he knows what he wants and he tells you how he wants it done—a lot like Ben." (Old timer central manager)

Manufacturing Culture

"We have three main plants right now that produce pints—one in Waterbury which is one of the small ones, the larger one is in St. Albans, Vermont and then we have a fairly large one that is a NAIC plant out in Henderson, Nevada—and a lot of production goes out to Nevada because it's extremely efficient to run because it's a large plant—and just the volume isn't as great as it has been because of the economic downturn—so we're producing less and we have a lot of capacity—and a lot of that is also due to Breyers' capacity being down—because we do produce some Breyers' ice cream here in Vermont and their sales have really dropped." (New timer central employee)

APPENDIX 6.6

Additional Quotes from Factory Employee Interviews

Factory Employees Experience of Ben & Jerry's Mission:

Factory Employees' Experience of Product Mission:

"And the quality—I hate to say this—I've heard that—I have no idea if this is true—we are putting less ingredients and more air—because we're being driven by economy, by a business thing—as it should be." (Old timer factory employee)

"It's improved a lot [product mission]—they have people sponsoring the ice cream and giving statements of what this product is—and they're donating profits to charities, which is really cool—and that helps out with the social statement of Ben & Jerry's, the founders, of giving back to the community." (New factory employee)

Factory Employees' Experience of Economic Mission:

"It was very value driven before the takeover and since the takeover, I think it has a slacked a little bit because it's a business and it seeks to survive." (Old timer factory employee)

Factory Employees' Experience of Social Mission:

"It really hasn't changed at all [social mission]—giving back to the communities, having sponsors for the ice cream, giving them a share of the profits.." (New factory employee)

"We've always had a social mission which is why if Ben and Jerry were going to do a business, it was going to be to make money and give back to the community and have a high quality product." (Old timer factory employee)

Factory Employees Experience of Organizational Artefacts:

Five to one salary ratio

"Five to one salary ratio—I'm not sure what it is…Back when Ben & Jerry's were founders—they said that the highest person couldn't get paid higher than this person—but I think this kind of went out the window." (New factory employee)

« They had it dead on when they did that—meaning the CEO can't make five times more than the lowest paid employee. That's a shame—that's what I meant earlier by there's a lot of cream you skim off at the top—when you start saying we're not going to pay you a shift differential for when you're on vacation—so here you have a third shift person who takes a week off—and you're not going to pay him .75 c an hour during his vacation so that the company can save 300 bucks a year on him—meanwhile you give this guy a $7 million bonus for signing and how much did you give the other guy for leaving—that's a hard one to swallow—when the directive is for me to tell my employees here's what Unilever is doing to standardize and become more competitive and here's the new CEO—if they have one share of Unilever, they're going to get the notification that they're going to get $7 million to start—and that's tough to swallow from an employee standpoint—and I believe that the way you treat your employees is directly related to your social mission—if you're not taking care of your employees then you're missing out." (New factory manager)

Ben & Jerry's Foundation

"People have told me but I've forgot—I just know that it's still going strong and pretty much hitting every base that they said that they were going to." (Factory new timer employee)

"They're not as much out in the news as they could be—and I don't know if they ever were. I don't know a lot about what they do—I know they do a lot of good things for non profits—I think their funding has dropped in terms of percentage—which is fine—they probably get more money than they did before. I don't know what they're doing and that probably speaks for itself I guess." (New factory manager)

"There's a CAT team so there are people in the plant that get on a team and are allotted an amount of money every month to give out to different organizations—so we do that and we also do our own little projects—where we go out and do something—and then there's a big plant wide CAT project where the whole plant goes out and helps out somebody—so it gets everybody involved." (New factory employee)

Free Cone Day

"Very busy but I'm down in the fishbowl—I'm being watched by all the people that come here for free cone day." (New factory employee)

"That's a nice thing that we do and there's no change there—we still do that right." (Old timer factory manager)

« That's a busy time." (Old factory manager)

Factory Tours

"Those are going great. I've helped them the past two years during the summer—when they needed help. It was really cool touching base with the public and seeing the other side of things as well." (New factory employee)

"Certainly there's a lot more of them now because of the world population trying to crawl through our little building every day, during the summer and holidays—it's kind of like herding cattle through." (Old timer factory employee)

Political Campaigns

Julie: Political campaigns—pre acquisition there was the Peace Pops—and lately there was the American Pie campaign—what's your take on that?

New timer: I really don't have one.

Eco-pint

"Was that when the paper was brown?...I don't know." (New factory employee)

Fair Trade Flavours

"They're better because we're helping out the small town farmers with the coffee bean and the vanilla. I think they taste better than the normal flavours." (New factory employee)

"Our straight flavours, vanilla and coffee are not our biggest sellers. They're not low enough that we're going to cut them off the list but these have never been our big sellers—Our big sellers have always been Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough, Cherry Garcia…" (Old timer factory manager)

Factory Employees Experience of Organizational Identity Themes:

Employee Empowerment

"It was [hard on families]—there was a lot of divorces here. I was one of them—I spent a lot of time at work—it's hard to go home and apologize to your kids because you spent more time at work than you did at home. You did what you could do to get the job done—it wasn't unusual to work 12 or 13 hours. Back then if we knew we needed to work on a Sunday or a Monday—they would put up a sign up sheet for who wants to work—and they'd put up one sheet but they always had to add a second or a third sheet because so many people wanted to come in and let's get the job done and let's get it right. You don't see that today—if you put up a sign up sheet today, you probably wouldn't get a full sheet. Something has changed—people don't volunteer like they used to—and it's in every department, not just in production, it's everybody—For one, we're getting older—I don't want to work 12 or 13 hours anymore. Not to say that I wouldn't—you don't see that today. And it's certainly different—you go up there and the front door is locked—to get into the reception area—it's locked. It never used to be locked. »

Manufacturing Culture

"…there's also better equipment safety wise—people aren't going to throw their backs out. The safety is better. But some of it is kind of over board too—There's more of a concern about it and they try to do more towards it but sometimes it's overboard, they're trying to make it idiot proof—bring people back to common sense." (New factory employee)

"But they've been nice—they've said, "We're not laying anybody off—we're going to give everybody their forty hours." They've kept people busy." (Old timer factory employee)

Image for Central & Factory employees:

"A lot of people will associate it with Vermont—and a lot of people just don't know that we're owned by Unilever. There are a lot of people who don't have that knowledge—so it just goes unnoticed. So I don't think too much has changed in the public's eyes—as to where Ben & Jerry's stands—and by that lack of knowledge that we're owned by Unilever--so they don't really see change." (New central employee)

« I think people still look at Ben and Jerry's as one of the great companies that went over and stretched out—much like the frontiers did years ago when they came across the Midwest—Ben & Jerry's is one of those companies that stepped out and other companies have followed—and said this is how we're going to do business--and I think the company is still trying to do that and the public sees that." (Old timer factory manager)

"It's different because a lot of consumers now don't remember a world that didn't have Ben & Jerry's in it—we have employees here who were born after Ben & Jerry's opened—Their life has always been Ben & Jerry's. I still think that when consumers think about Ben & Jerry's—they think of quality and they think of trying to do good. I think we've been very good about communicating about these two messages." (Old timer central employee)

"I would say that it's the same [the public's perception of Ben & Jerry's today versus pre-acquisition]. Everywhere I go people ask me what I do and where I work and when I say, "Ben &

Jerry's"—I get the same response and have gotten the same response since I started here…" (Old central manager)

"…overall I don't think a lot of people make the connection between Ben & Jerry's and Unilever." (Old timer central manager)

"I never knew as a consumer before I came here that Ben & Jerry's was part of Unilever—it's not on our packaging…" (New central employee)

"…I've found out with certain products because I'm looking now more than I used to—and it's like, Oh wow, Unilever owns Ragu—but you don't know that—there's the little U on there but you don't know—it's still projected as its product. And Ben & Jerry's as the overall is still projected as Ben & Jerry's—I know on the tour they do mention Unilever but they spin it in a good light." (New factory employee)

"I think it's varied—I never knew as a consumer before I came here that Ben & Jerry's was part of Unilever—it's not on our packaging--maybe more locally folks in Vermont it was a bigger deal—but having lived in another state, I never knew." (New central employee)

APPENDIX 6.7

Poem written by Robert Holland, Jr. to complete his application as future C.E.O of Ben & Jerry's (1995)

Time, Values and Ice Cream (a) by Robert Holland Jr.
Born before the baby boom
as war drums raged cross distant waters -- way
beyond my family's lore since our 1600's coming to this far off
land called America.
T'was a simple time, as I grew tall.
Shucks! Uncle Sam really wanted you (so the poster said) -- pride
in work, parades and proms, company picnics 'tween eve'ns spent
with "Suspense," "The Shadow," and everybody's "Our Miss Brooks."
Good ole days in the summertime, indeed! ... in
America.
Yet, some nostalgia stayed 'yond one's grasp,
like Sullivans,
the ice cream place on Main -- swivel stools, cozy booths, and
sweet, sweet smells with no sitting place for all of some of us.
Could only dream such humble pleasure. Sometimes, dear 'Merica,
of thee I simply hum.
Much, so much has changed in twenty springs. Sputnik
no longer beeps so loud;
Bay of Pigs, Vietnam and contentions in Chicago ...
come and gone ...
All that noise almost drowning out "One small step for a man..."
and "... Willie, time to say goodbye to baseball."
Confusing place, this melodious mix,
called America.
Now I sit by eyeing distant twilight,
Engineer and MBA,
smiling wide on M.L.K.'s day,
CEO of Cherry Garcia and Peace Pops' fountain --
having not forgotten the forbidden seats of Sullivans',
with miles to go before we sleep ...
and time left yet to get there.
Only in America!

APPENDIX 6.8

Product Packaging Evolution

Period I: 1978-1994

Founders' Era: Two Real Guys

1987 Packaging:

Period II: 1994-1999

Professional Managers Era

Packaging Renovation 1998:

Period III: The Acquisition (1999)

2001 Flavour « Concession Obsession »--not exactly social mission oriented

Period IV: 1999-2004

Post Acquisition Phase I

2003 Organic Flavours Launch:

2004: Fossil Fuel—Flavour to raise awareness towards global warming:

Period V: 2005-2009
Post Acquisition Phase II

2006: American Pie to raise awareness to Federal Budget allocation

2006: Fair Trade flavours Europe

**2007: Partnerships with Stephen Colbert & Willie Nelson:**

Progressive Values with Stephen Colbert
Fun Festivities with Singer Willie Nelson

Post Acquisition Phase III? Back on the cutting edge

Ben & Jerry's celebrates the beginning of the freedom to marry for gay and lesbian couples in Vermont with the symbolic renaming of its well-known ice cream flavour "Chubby Hubby" to "Hubby Hubby."

"The impact of an M&A on a target firm: A Socially Responsible Organizational Identity Perspective"

ABSTRACT

Relatively small, entrepreneurial sized firms with a "Socially Responsible Organizational Identity" are being acquired by multinationals at a growing pace. Recent deals include the purchase of the Body Shop by L'Oreal, Stonyfield Farm by Groupe Danone, and Ben & Jerry's by Unilever. I postulate that a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity is a valuable, rare and tacit resource (Barney, 1986; 1991) which multinationals want to capture through M&A. While the impact of an M&A on stakeholder practices of both target and acquiring firms has been researched from a quantitative perspective (Waddock & Graves, 2006), there are no studies on the phenomenon from an organizational identity perspective, and more particularly from a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity Perspective.

This dissertation undertakes the case study of the acquisition of CSR pioneer Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream by Unilever to understand how the acquisition may have impacted the Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) of Ben & Jerry's and more particularly, which factors contribute to the resilience of a firm's SROI. Drawing from the CSR and organizational identity literatures, I propose a new Socially Responsible Organizational Identity (SROI) model which articulates three elements: top managerial discourse, visible manifestations of a firm's social responsibility actions and finally, organizational members' perceptions of their firm's social responsibility.

The first part of this dissertation takes a more 'objective' approach using a longitudinal content analysis of the evolution of managerial discourse ("projected identity") and organizational artefacts ("manifested identity"). Findings from this section reveal that the shift away from a founders' led firm to a professionally led business has had more impact on the company's Projected and Manifested Identity then the acquisition itself. The second part of this study takes a more subjective and interpretative lens to assess members' perceptions of their organization. The findings from this last section reveal that there are multiple perspectives on what constitutes the nature and content of a Socially Responsible Organizational Identity, thus bringing into question the notion of a monolithic organizational identity.

Keywords: Organizational identity, corporate social responsibility, mergers and acquisitions, resource based view of the firm, managerial discourse, CSR pioneers.

"L'impact d'une fusion-acquisition sur une entreprise cible: étude de l'évolution d'une identité organisationnelle socialement responsable"

RESUME

De plus en plus d'entreprises de taille moyenne à Identité Organisationnelle Socialement Responsable (IOSR) ont été récemment acquises par des multinationales. Ce phénomène est notamment illustré par les achats de Body Shop par L'Oréal, de Stonyfield Farm par le Groupe Danone et de Ben & Jerry's par Unilever. Cette thèse part du postulat que l'IOSR est une ressource précieuse, rare et tacite (Barney, 1986; 1991) que les multinationales souhaitent capter par le biais de fusions-acquisitions. Si l'impact d'une fusion-acquisition sur les pratiques des parties prenantes des entreprises cibles et acquéreuses a été étudié d'un point de vue quantitatif (Waddock & Graves, 2006), il n'existe en revanche aucune étude sur le phénomène du point de vue de l'identité organisationnelle, et plus particulièrement du point de vue de l'IOSR.

La partie empirique de la thèse prend appui sur l'étude du cas de l'acquisition de la firme Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, pionnier en matière de RSE par la multinationale Unilever. L'ambition est de comprendre l'impact de cette acquisition sur l'IOSR de Ben & Jerry's, et plus particulièrement, les facteurs qui peuvent contribuent à la résilience de l'IOSR d'une entreprise. En partant de la littérature sur la responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise et l'identité organisationnelle, il est proposé un nouveau modèle de l'IOSR qui articule trois éléments : le discours managérial, les manifestations et actions visibles de l'entreprise en matière de responsabilité sociale et, enfin, les perceptions des membres de l'organisation de la responsabilité sociale de leur entreprise.

La première partie s'appuie sur une approche plus «objective» en procédant à une analyse longitudinale de l'évolution du discours managérial («identité projetée») et des artefacts organisationnels («identité manifestée"). Les résultats de cette partie montrent que le départ des fondateurs des fonctions dirigeantes de l'entreprise et l'arrivée de managers professionnels ont eu plus d'impact sur les Identités Projetée et Manifestée de l'entreprise que l'acquisition elle-même. La deuxième partie de l'étude adopte une perspective plus subjective et interprétative pour appréhender les perceptions des salariés de leur organisation. Les résultats de cette partie révèlent qu'il existe de multiples perspectives sur ce qui constitue la nature et le contenu d'une IOSR, remettant ainsi en question la notion d'une identité monolithique de l'organisation.

Mots clés : Identité organisationnelle, responsabilité sociale de l'entreprise, fusions et acquisitions, théorie des ressources de la firme, discours managérial, entreprise pionnière en RSE, entreprise socialement responsable.