Visual Rhetoric and Ethics in Marketing of Destinations

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Abstract
The purpose of this article is to discuss the visual rhetoric of advertising in the marketing of destinations and place branding. In particular, it considers the ways in which advertisements create and reinforce meanings. Attention is also given to the ethics of representing people and places. The article provides an interdisciplinary conceptual review and uses a mixed methods approach to analyze the 100% Pure New Zealand advertising campaign. The contribution of this article is to enhance the discussion about ethics in representing places, communities, people, and their culture in destination marketing and in place brand communications.

Keywords
ethics, marketing of destinations, place branding, visual rhetoric

Introduction
Visual rhetoric is related to the framing of messages (Scott 1994) and finding the method and manner for effective persuasion (McQuarrie and Mick 1996). Many authors have claimed that advertisements are a potent tool in the creation of meaning and in the shaping of cultures, identities, and behaviors (Hackley and Kitchen 1999; O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2002; Pollay 1986; Williamson 1988). Advertising crosses the conventional border of simply delivering information to consumers. Instead, advertising acts persuasively to create new needs for consumers, and to create meanings in order to justify these needs. To Borgerson and Schroeder (2002), “advertising acts as a representational system that produces meaning outside the realm of the advertised product” (p. 574). Representations construct reality and are part of the lived experience.

In the marketing of destinations and in place branding communications literature, rhetoric presents more complexity as it acts representationally for people and place. Nevertheless, representational advertising of places commonly presents a huge number of pictures and images of features, landscapes, people, and their symbols, as visual rhetoric is seen as an efficient tool to create awareness of places. Visual rhetoric should address both parts of this communication: the place on one side and consumers on the other side. The complexity resides in how to create coherent communication able to be perceived as real, genuine and truthful for both sides. The first predicament in this representation is how to identify and access the essence of a place; the second is how to present this unique essence to the target markets (consumers of tourism industry and products). In relation to place, the main problem is the risk of misrepresentation (including people) or creating or perpetuating stereotypes. From a consumer’s perspective there is a danger of fostering expectations that cannot be satisfied.

To understand a place and address the first problem of how to access its unique essence, the researcher needs to identify its social and symbolic capital. This knowledge will provide a background to address the second problem of how to create a coherent, convincing, and comprehensive rhetoric able to represent the place. Three principles must drive place branding communication: trust, ethics, and efficiency, that is, that the brand achieves its goals. The third principle is contingent on the first two and will not be dealt with here. The contribution of this article, therefore, is to discuss how visual rhetoric has been used as an instrument for creating meaning and representing the symbolic and social capital of a place and to provide an ethical framework that can inform future work in place branding communications. Our research focuses on the visual rhetoric of campaign video clips to represent the place brand imagery.

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Theoretical Framework

Place Branding and Destination Branding

Place marketing has been studied as part of the economic development for countries, regions, and cities and concerns the enhancement of a place’s position in the global marketplace (Kotler and Gertner 2002, 2004). Largely based on the need to achieve economic growth through differentiation, the scope of place marketing includes efforts to enhance industries, expand export markets, and attract outside investments. Increasing tourism and expanding the hospitality industry are clearly central to these endeavors (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005). Tourism marketing involves a combination of services (from accommodation, tourist attractions to transportation) offered in a product—which culminate in the travel experience (Perdue and Pitegoff 1990).

Destination marketing refers more specifically to the application of marketing tools to leverage the tourism experience (Gnoth 2007) and to maximize benefits for the destination (Buhalis 2000). Managing and marketing destinations requires an orchestration of a number of marketing activities, the development and promotion of services and the provision of a variety of different tourism products to deliver the travel experience. Among these marketing activities, positioning the destination and portraying the destination image to attract visitors is of major importance. The significance of destination imagery to boost tourism industry has created a shift toward branding destinations (Kavaratzis 2005). In summary, destination branding is the set of marketing tools that support branding activities not only to identify and differentiate a destination, but also to communicate a place’s image to attract tourists to experience certain features and/or characteristics of that particular destination (Blain, Levy, and Ritchie 2005).

Brand Image

Brands are the most powerful marketing device to communicate (de Chernatony and Riley 1998; Morgan and Pritchard 2004) a preferred image of products and services. More recently, the application of brand theory for marketing of places and destinations has been discussed extensively by academics and practitioners (Gnoth 2002; Hall 1999; Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2002; Anholt 2005b; Kotler and Gertner 2002; Papadopoulos and Heslop 2002). Indeed, brand image for places and destination is influenced by intangible and symbolic attributes, and tangible and functional attributes (Hankinson 2004). The utilitarian role of brands is primarily to identify and differentiate; however, they also have the potential to serve a much more expansive role also in their portrayal of a place’s culture (Gnoth 2007). Therefore, the functional role of place branding is not only to identify and differentiate but also to enhance and maintain cultural values. The imagery of a place brand is transmitted through many channels (i.e., products and product usage, tourists’ experiences, and word of mouth) and different media forms (i.e., advertisements, music, and movies). The content and imagery chosen to represent a brand position matters for both visitors and for residents. Visitors can be influenced to expect the experience of a place based on the image they got from the promotional information they accessed before choosing the destination, and residents are constantly shaping and nurturing the place brand with symbolic representations of their culture, their lifestyle, and habitus (Bourdieu 1986). According to Kotler and Gertner (2004), “tourism requires image making and branding grounded in the place’s reality” (p. 48). Indeed, attention should be given to the importance of what is portrayed in place branding imagery and, especially, how things are portrayed.

Visual Rhetoric

Rhetoric skills are instruments to transmit and convey meanings and enhance consumers’ perceptions (Weiman and Walter 1957). More than transmitting meanings, the rhetoric of marketing communications has the potential to influence image creation, reputation, and culture, conveying meanings symbolically and figuratively (Weiman and Walter 1957). Since classical Greece and Rome, and continuing through the Renaissance to contemporary times, visual rhetorical skills have been linked to art in order to more dramatically and powerfully communicate messages and values (Rampley 2005). According to Rampley (2005), the idea of visual rhetoric goes beyond “concepts of style, visual communication, and visual representation” (p. 135), to act as strategies of communication and representation, as rhetoric is about persuasion. Therefore, the use of visual rhetoric in advertising not only “tries to use the most effective devices for informing, reminding and persuading the target market” but also “for creating meaning or constructing an argument” (Bulmer and Buchanan-Oliver 2006, p. 55).

Largely nurtured by images and representations, in destination branding and advertising, visual rhetoric has been used as a tool to create knowledge about certain places, to provide information about people’s culture and to foster awareness in people’s minds about those places. Images provide resources to shape and enhance “our understanding of the world, the identities of people and places” (Schroeder and Borgerson 2005, p. 578). Scott (1994) suggests the need for a theory for visual rhetoric with a key premise that “pictures are not merely analogues to visual perception but symbolic artefacts constructed from the conventions of a particular culture” (p. 252). Behind the images, lies a system of beliefs and representations that tells something not only about the culture being portrayed but also about the values that underlie. Therefore, decisions about what is shown, the context within which they are represented, and their purpose...
need to be understood from a rhetorical perspective (Bulmer and Buchanan-Oliver 2006; Scott and Batra 2003; Scott and Vargas 2007; Kenney and Scott 2003).

The utilitarian function of advertising to inform consumers about products, places, and culture also contributes to a more general basis of knowledge via halo effects (Jaffe and Nebenzahl 2001; Han 1989). People often feel they learned something by observing an image of a geographic location (Schroeder and Borgerson 2005; Borgerson and Schroeder 2002). A halo effect can influence the beliefs and knowledge about a place, its people, and its culture. From this point of view, information regarding a place and a community might be organized (in the consumer’s mind) over previous knowledge and beliefs. The ideas grasped in such information might contribute to the formation of a priming image in people’s minds (Zaltman 2003). The priming image contributes to the creation of “epistemic closure,” which “leads an individual to believe that he or she knows the other’s being completely. This assumption of knowledge denies the ‘other’ status as human being and erases any possibility for human relationships” (Borgerson and Schroeder 2002, p. 571). The tendency to use stereotypes to represent people and places denies the ontological perspective of being in the context of a postmodern world by representing the place’s identity as a single stereotype.

Visual rhetoric in destination branding introduces places to people and influences what they know and believe. It can create a sense that they know places and times even though they have never visited or experienced the place (Schroeder and Borgerson 2005). In this regard, destination branding and marketing campaigns “representing group identities purport to express something true or essential about those represented” (Borgerson and Schroeder 2005, p. 31), portraying the place identity in its ontological and genuine form. According to Borgerson and Schroeder (2005), “ontology centers on notions of being or identity—including human identity—who one is and who is not, including how relationships form and function” (p. 19). The ontology and genuine aspects of a place refer to its unique attributes (Gilmore 2002; Lewicka 2008; Kotler and Gertner 2002). The distinctness of a place might not be one specific landmark, historical event, or cultural characteristic, but might be a combination of many aspects that contribute to creating an identity for the place. The concept of identity for places, nations, cities, and destinations has been discussed in different areas of social sciences such as marketing (Dinnie 2008; Anholt 2005a; Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2003), tourism (Carter, Dyer, and Sharma 2007; Gnoth 2007; Pritchard and Morgan 2001; Dredge and Jenkins 2003; Kneafsey 2000), anthropology (Woods 2006; Casey 2001a; Carter, Donald, and Squires 1993), and geography (Tilley 2006; Massey 2006). Place identity is explained as “a set of place features that guarantee the place’s distinctiveness and continuity in time” (Lewicka 2008, p. 211), or relate to the unique character of a place (Stedman 2003). Fluidity and dynamism are recognized by many authors (Kneafsey 2000; Carter, Dyer, and Sharma 2007; Massey 1993) as part of the concept of place identity and that this identity is the result of a variety of interactions and is susceptible to a number of influences. The ways these interactions are established and experienced create the peculiar habitus of each destination and are ultimately based on the symbolic and social capital of the place.

Social and Symbolic Capital

Social capital becomes a central issue in understanding the intangible material that surrounds the relationships between people, organizations, and places. Made by social values, history, culture, and the present people’s perspectives thereof, the term social capital brings together concepts of capital in an economic sense and concepts of social attributes in an emotional one (Bourdieu 1986); the forms of social capital are related to immaterial exchanges in art, culture relationships, and experience. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) explained social capital as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p. 119). In his theory, Bourdieu prioritized three major elements: acquaintance, recognition, and length of time.

Acquaintance is enhanced by the exchanges experienced because of habitus and also by virtue of recognition among the group or community. Siisiainen (2000) notes that Bourdieu understands habitus as “an open system of dispositions constantly subjected to experiences” (p. 15). These experiences and their concomitant relationships evolve and mature over time and are cumulatively assimilated into the culture, forming part of the evolutionary habitus.

We emphasize that the strength of habitus is not only maintained for and because of the ties of people between themselves but also to the benefit of the ties connecting people and their place. These ties give meanings to a geographic space, transforming it into a place (Casey 2001a, b). To explain the distinction between place and space, Casey (2001b) takes a perspective of actions through the dynamic of relationships connecting people (as groups and as individuals) and physical space. In this regard, place is understood as “an arena of action” for “physical and historical, social and cultural” experiences (Casey 2001a, p. 683). Nevertheless, the flip side of these exchanges contributes to shaping identities and ascribing meanings (Carter, Donald, and Squires 1993) to places.

Social capital is, by nature, a resource derived from a collective phenomenon linked to a certain group (Siisiainen 2000), also to a certain place, and related to symbolic capital. The social capital “acquires a symbolic character, and is transformed into symbolic capital” (Siisiainen 2000, p. 10) based on mutual cognition and recognition. The
attributes of social capital are accessible through symbolic capital. Bourdieu (1986) explained that this is achieved through the “alchemy of consecration” (p. 250). Recognition and reproduction are possible because of the constitution of symbolism or symbolic content that is produced through exchanges. According to Bourdieu (1986), the practice of exchange transforms “the things exchanged into signs of recognition, and through the mutual recognition and recognition of group membership which it implies, re-produces the group” (p. 250). As explained by Siisiainen (2000), “the economic, cultural, and social capital becomes meaningful and socially effective only through the process of symbolic translation” (p. 12), that is, the content itself is merely a sign, the symbolism arises from what is signified (Saussure 1983).

Social capital can be seen through the lens of symbolic capital. The symbolic feature is the way humans form, organize, and talk about concepts. Symbols are a means through which people are able to order, extend, and make sense of experience and also to refine behavior (Weiman and Walter 1957). Symbolic capital as a path to understanding social capital is a powerful tool for destination branding strategies. The understanding of social capital through the symbolic one might develop or reveal unconscious attributes and constructs existing among the group or community. The destination brand is a channel to represent cultural, social, and symbolic capital of places and, therefore, should reflect and comprise part of the imagery of places. The visual rhetoric of destination brands portrays these representations and affects the perceptions of visitors, tourists, and also the self-perceptions of the people whom they purport to represent. It puts the spotlight onto how social and symbolic capital is represented through visual rhetoric and as such it has consequences for contributing to long-term systems of beliefs and meanings.

**Ethics**

The discussion of ethics in destination branding is about how campaigns engage communities’ social and symbolic capital to enhance habitus and place’s lifestyle with openness, authenticity, and sincerity. At issue is an understanding of the level of influence that marketing campaigns have in shaping place identity and how to create an ethical system of such representations. The concept of ethics in this article is applied to visual representation and rhetoric used in marketing communications to portray places. Our application of ethics is based on the discussion created by Borgerson and Schroeder (2005) that addresses the necessity for ethical protocols and procedures to underpin the visual representation of identities, people, and culture. Ethics is related to a consensual regime of truth and a moral climate in our society governing choices between right and wrong, good and bad (de Certeau 1986; Butler 2001; Cherrier 2007; Webb 2009). To de Certeau (1986), the ethical problems reside in the “distance between what is and what ought to be” (p. 199). In the representation domain, Webb (2009) understands ethics as “what is represented as the truth of being” (p. 135). These ideas are intrinsically linked to position the ontology of the people and/or place (Borgerson and Schroeder 2005). In this article, we acknowledge and understand ethics from a postmodern perspective as a plural and nonlinear concept rather than a predetermined idea (Cherrier 2007). The postmodern perspective accommodates more possibilities, expressions, and representations of a variety of “notions of being or identity—including human identity” (Borgerson and Schroeder 2005, p. 10).

Likewise, ethics seem to be a foundational principle in the conception of rhetorical attributes since the earliest developments in place branding communications (Scott 1994). As suggested earlier, the implications of ethics for marketing communications of places can be seen from two perspectives: from the place and from the visitor/consumer. For visitors, it is essential that the promises made by the promotional material are fulfilled. For the place, an ethical visual rhetoric is about authenticity and reinforcing the legitimacy and identity of the place (Borgerson and Schroeder 2002). Schroeder and Borgerson (2005) suggest that marketing campaigns representing people and identities of groups should portray and “express something true or essential about those represented” (p. 31). Thus, the ethics of visual representation should focus on the representational practices that include the cultural context in which meaning arises. The visual representation of people and place is inevitably a representation of a particular ontology. The ways in which this ontological conception of being are represented is an area of concern, where ethical considerations such as authenticity and honesty can avoid the misrepresentation of experience and the misappropriation of meaning. Based on “what we think we know about others from representations of identity” visitors create images about how to “see, treat, and understand” (Borgerson and Schroeder 2005, p. 31) the people portrayed in the communication of destination brands. What is equally important is to understand that these representations also affect how the people represented see themselves, their culture, and their place.

Adopting a more radical approach to the discussion of image ethics, Gross (1988) suggests that groups should speak for themselves (Gross 1988; Borgerson and Schroeder 2005). Indeed, this proposal suggests a strong link between ontology, ethics, and the expression of truth, which, from a postmodern perspective, might be both fragmented and experiential. Applying this idea to the realm of ethics and the representation of people and place, we emphasize the definition provided by Diprose (1991), who explains ethics as “derived from the Greek word ethos, meaning dwelling, or habitat—the place to which one returns and belongs to” (p. 61).
Methodological Approach

The theoretical framework for this research focuses on visual rhetoric and the ethical representation of social and symbolic capital in destination branding communications. The study analyzes the 100% Pure New Zealand film launched by Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) to attract international tourists. The research addresses the following questions: (1) How does visual rhetoric represent place and people’s meanings? (2) How does visual rhetoric enhance, accommodate, and deal with the ontology features of the place? (3) Is there balance in the representation of cultural values through visual rhetoric?

This qualitative research adopts an interpretivist–constructivist paradigm, relativist ontology, and subjectivist epistemology. The methodology encompasses mixed and multiple methods to benefit from the “synergistic insights” that can emerge from a combination of approaches (McQuarrie and Mick 1992; Creswell 2003). The research methods use critical visual analysis combined with in-depth interviews and content analysis. Critical visual analysis developed by Schroeder (2006) is a qualitative method for research advertising images, including films and “draws on the theory of visual consumption to show how cultural codes and representational conventions inform contemporary marketing images, infusing them with visual, historical and rhetorical presence and power” (p. 303). The method does not rely on a structural understanding of semiotics but provides researchers with an understanding “of how images embody and express cultural values and contradictions” (p. 303). The appropriate questions for this method as suggested by Schroeder (2006) include the following: “How do images strategically communicate? How do images relate to brand meaning? What are some ethical and social implications for the reliance on images in marketing communication?” (p. 304).

Research Design

The research design was organized into three stages.

Stage I. A critical visual analysis was conducted by researchers to identify dimensions and categories that would inform and frame subsequent stages of the research. The dimensions and categories were created in order to attend the purpose of research and are derived from a theoretical background (Kasparjian 1977). This study is largely based on the ideas developed by Casey (2001a, b) that a geographic space becomes a place because of the interactions and relationships connecting people to each other and to their physical space (landscape), and by Bourdieu’s belief that (1986) the density of habitus is created by the accumulation of social capital (largely shaped by heritage). From the preliminary critical visual analyses, three dimensions emerged: landscape, people, and heritage.

Each of these dimensions was further analyzed against Schroeder’s key questions and the intersections between ideas and constructs (Dimension × Questions) generated a number of more specific categories about how people and places are represented, who is represented and who is not, how they are portrayed, and how their interactions are portrayed (Borgerson and Schroeder 2005). The following categories emerged: landscape, which included (1) nature of landscape (rural, urban, or wild) and (2) type of interaction with people, and people, which included (1) interaction, (2) body language, (3) ethnicity, and (4) age. The categories within the heritage dimension are (1) historical perspectives and (2) ethnic heritage.

Stage II. Content analysis: findings of each category inside dimensions are systematically counted. The findings are analyzed toward the opinion of interviewees.

Stage III. In-depth interviews combined with critical visual analysis: Researchers opted for a convenient or purposive sample, recruiting 13 interviewees with diverse backgrounds to conduct in-depth interviews. The interviewees were New Zealand nationals, self-identified as New Zealanders, New Zealander Europeans, Maoris, and New Zealander Pacific Islands (see Table 1).

The interviews were conducted in Dunedin, New Zealand, with duration of 30 to 50 minutes. The interviews were organized as follows: respondents were invited to watch the advertisement for the first time without any interruption. At the end of the advertisement, respondents were asked a number of open questions, such as: “What were your first impressions of the film? What is your opinion about its appeal?” After participant’s description, researchers asked a number of questions related to the findings from the previous stages listed in the research protocol (Appendix A). Parts of the advertisement were rewatched and repeated if participants requested depending on the issues under discussion. Once all questions were discussed, the advertisement was watched again without interruption and the participants were asked to reconsider their opinions in order to confirm and validate their overall impressions.

Table 1. Interviewees’ Demographic Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewer</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>New Zealander</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>New Zealander</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>New Zealander</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>NZ Maori</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>NZ Maori</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>NZ Pacific Islander</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>NZ Maori</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>NZ Maori</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>NZ Pacific Islander</td>
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Note: F = female; M = male; NZ = New Zealand.
**Advertisement: Context and Story**

The context. The 100% Pure New Zealand brand campaign managed by TNZ and based on the natural beauty of New Zealand was first launched in July 1999. The brand positioned the country as a clean, green, and pure place presenting images of pristine scenery, dramatic landscapes, and sweeping vistas. This approach targeted tourists who were looking for “a real travel” or “a real adventure trip” (Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2002, p. 339). TNZ, according to Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott (2003), aimed to “position New Zealand as a place (and indeed, an ethos) shaped by its inhabitants over time” (p. 292). The brand essence was based primarily on landscape and positioned as “New Pacific Freedom” (Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2003). In 2005, according to TNZ, the focus of the campaign’s visual rhetoric shifted from portraying people appreciating the landscapes to emphasizing people interacting with the landscape and enjoying being outdoors.

On August 2007, TNZ released a new international iteration of the advertisement of the campaign: a television advertisement with 2:23-minute film, available at www.newzealand.com and at www.youtube.com/purenewzealand. The advertisement targets international markets, and the strategy adopted in this campaign aimed to present New Zealand from a different perspective—as the youngest country in the world. The rhetoric of this version presents New Zealand as the youngest landmass on Earth and is underpinned by research from Michael King: “New Zealand was the last country in the world to be discovered and settled by Humankind”; Sir Keith Sinclair: “The last habitable land mass of any type to remain unpeopled”; and from James Belich: “It is the last island on earth to be discovered and inhabited permanently by humans.” The campaign is advertised by TNZ as a new era for the 100% Pure as an extant meaning is given to the concept of 100% Pure, which is not only “related to be 100% pure, clean and green environment, but 100% pure about who we are, and how we do things” (TNZ). Indeed, according TNZ, “the visuals brought a new focus on experience rather than on the destination. The new commercial used shots that drew the viewer into the action, rather than relying on the sweeping vistas of the early campaign advertising” (TNZ 2006).

In July 2009, the 100% Pure brand completed 10 years and TNZ launched the campaign the “Great Kiwi Invite” using the 100% Pure film on New Zealand television for the first time. The purpose of the Great Kiwi Invite was to ask New Zealanders to invite friends and family living overseas to visit the country.

The story. The advertisement, made by Peter Jackson’s world-famous Weta Workshops, represents the creation of New Zealand using the legend of Maui—an important Maori myth of creation. According to legend, Maui, a Maori warrior fished up the North Island (a giant fish) from his waka (canoe) which was the South Island. The narrative explains that New Zealand has waited until all other countries have been discovered and inhabited and is accompanied by a cover version of “Forever Young” by the New Zealand band Pluto. The narrative develops with a series of scenes of people in action in the New Zealand landscape. The scenes of people interacting with each other and with the landscape include a group of friends surfing, young friends buying fruits from an honesty box, people swimming with dolphins, a hongi (a traditional Maori greeting), children and adults doing the haka (Maori dance) and playing rugby in a paddock, a couple at the beach, a group of people hiking in the South Island, tourists practising rafting, people parasailing and snowboarding, people walking along through vineyards, and people socializing on a boat in the Auckland Harbor. Using the Maori creation myth of how New Zealand “began,” the rhetoric of the advertisement focuses on New Zealand’s independence and autonomy and gives more importance to the land itself. Avoiding the conventional history of New Zealand’s discovery by Polynesians or its colonization by the British, the emphasis has shifted from conquerors to the eruption of the land itself. The subsequent landscape is shaped into a place, and it becomes a Place because of the way people interact with it.

**Findings and Analysis**

**Critical Visual Analysis and Content Analysis**

Considering the dimensions and categories identified to conduct the analysis, and by using critical visual analysis and content analysis as techniques, our data demonstrated the following:

**Landscape dimension.** Considerable emphasis is given to the scenery and landscape in order to highlight the natural beauty of New Zealand. Approximately 90% of the advertisement is set outdoors amid natural, pristine, and wild scenery, serving to enhance the idea of a pure, open, and fresh environment. The representations of people, place, and ethos can be found in how people and communities interact with the surrounding space, transforming it into a place. For some of those represented, the interaction between people and landscape takes a contemplative turn, where natural beauty is to be celebrated and where the outdoors is a place to relax. For others, nature is the bountiful supplier of fresh food. Whatever the individual contexts, the advertisement focuses on people in action in nature. Attitudes toward the landscape are embedded by the cultural understanding of nature, and the interactions between people and nature are determined by their anthropological conceptualization of the natural environment. The integration of nature and culture, and the placement of nature at the core of culture, will determine people’s perceptions about nature. Consequently, these perceptions shape the human relationship with nature (Gullestrup 2006).
This understanding also tends to determine the nature of the relationships not only between people and landscape but also between people and people. It creates a habitus, according to Bourdieu’s sense of the construct. This habitus is practiced in a particular landscape or environment (and here we consider the influence of the surrounding environment as one that shapes habitus) and creates the uniqueness of the place.

The rhetoric of the advertisement presents the relationship between people and landscape in the form of an active interaction. It shows how New Zealanders transform nature into a place for recreation and enjoyment. Doing so, it not only presents Kiwis as a young, adventurous, and dynamic people but also creates an appeal to tourists, especially interactive travelers. According to TNZ, these are people who “seek out new experiences that involve interacting with nature, social and cultural environments; respect the environment, culture and values of others; are considered leaders by their peers; prefer authentic products and experiences; enjoy outdoor activity” (TNZ 2006).

Analyzing the current campaign, we recognize the evolutionary nature of the “100% Pure” idea and the preservation of the key message strategies. We also identify the readjusted rhetoric of the different representations. Showing people (New Zealanders) in action, interacting with nature, enjoying the naturalness of their lifestyle in their natural setting, the campaign’s visual rhetoric reveals the habitus that makes the relationship between community, people, and landscape distinctive and unique and a place.

**People dimension.** The representation of people and their interactions suggests friendship, sharing, enjoyment, and a strong sense of being “at home.” Connotative associations of honesty, courage, challenge, respect for culture and nature, and care for other human beings contextualize the narrative and characterize the rhetoric. Clearly, the preferred reading is a naturally beautiful country home to young, dynamic people full of attitude, open to new experiences, and with a natural disposition to do things, have fun, and be happy.

In demographic terms, the advertisement represents a predominance of NZ Europeans, 66% (24), with 16% Maoris (4), 16% Asians (4), and 2% Blacks (1). In terms of gender, there are equal numbers of males and females, and involvement in leisure and recreational activities are equitably balanced. In relation to age, people seem to be no older than 50 years, with some emphasis on active people between their 30s and 50s (see Appendix B for content analysis matrix).

Despite a predominance of New Zealand Europeans, the advertisement is embedded in Maori culture and shows positive interactions between people of diverse ethnicities. The rhetoric clearly expresses homogeneity and harmony in a natural environment where landscape and culture intertwine. In this sense, the lack of balance in ethnicity across the number of people (easily recognized by body and skin features) is compensated for by an assimilation of practices, attitudes, and ambience. However, the imbalance may be intentionally representative, given that the actual population of Maoris in New Zealand is 14.6% (Census 2006).

Nevertheless, the strongest feeling for this dimension is one of authenticity. According to documentation of the making of the advertisement, some of the people portrayed in the advertisement are doing things that they actually do in their real lives (e.g., surfing), and they are being who they really are. The fact of having people just doing things the way they do them and being who they are might provide a greater sense of reality.

**Heritage dimension.** The dimension of heritage was analyzed looking at two categories: historical perspectives and ethnic heritage. The first and second categories have a strong Maori identity. The use of the Maui legend as the initial approach to learning about New Zealand brought a sense of Maori heritage to the historical perspective. It is also reinforced in the “ethnic heritage” category with the presence of a Maori leader, who has a Moko (traditional Maori facial tattoo) on her face and who welcomes visitors with the hongi. In this regard, we can argue for a lack of British attributes as part of New Zealand’s heritage and ethnicity.

Two main ideas are behind the message of the advertisement: authenticity and interaction. 100% Pure New Zealand seems to be no longer limited to a clean and green image but more concerned with presenting the notion of a pure New Zealand culture. This rhetoric presents the way people understand nature and interact with the landscape, thereby creating meanings and establishing a sense of place.

**Findings from Interviews**

Going by the same pattern of dimensions as above, we found the following:

**Landscape dimension.** There is large support for the predominance of scenes of nature and landscape instead of urban scenes. Comments such as “Our landscape is the more unique about us, there is nothing special about our urban scenes,” “This is the beautiful side of New Zealand,” and “I would prefer more scenic views” confirm the importance given to the representation of the country. There is also a strong sense that the landscape portrays the place as a land of opportunities, which also reinforces the idea of openness: “The open is for all people including visitors, a place where young and a bit older roam alongside, an ethnic blend/mix of people.” The relationship between people and landscape was considered an essential element that creates the uniqueness of a place. Even though some interviewees agreed that it is not possible to generalize the relations between people and nature and that it was a misconception “that all New Zealanders have a strong connection with landscape,” they recognized these connections as part of a greater New Zealand culture. Some explanations, such as the following, clearly articulate the significance of the relationship between.
New Zealanders and the land: “New Zealanders take landscape for granted. We had been brought up in this landscape and it is just part of what New Zealanders do naturally. Comparing it to other countries, people probably don’t have the landscape at the doorstep like we do here”; “I found New Zealanders are very good in saying this is our landscape, we are proud of our landscape, and it is an adventure place”; and “We have a great interaction with the wild and our natural surroundings”; and “The movie shows a glossy example of what New Zealanders do outdoors in the landscape.”

People dimension. Related to how people are portrayed in the advertisement and how their interactions are represented, interviewees recognized a blend of genders and ethnic mix: “There is a very good mix of ethnicities and culture, and it is the way New Zealand is now.” However, a lack of Asian and Pacific Islanders as part of New Zealand was noted. Regarding people’s attitudes, we found a consensus that New Zealanders were seen as friendly, welcoming, and relaxed. Interviewees also described themselves as “fun seeking” and “sporting fixtures” people. In particular, the genuine values of New Zealanders, or Kiwis, were represented by images of honesty boxes (at public places such as tennis courts), rugby games, and performing the Haka (Maori dance of challenge) in a country paddock.

Heritage Dimension. In general, interviewees found a “nice balance” between culture and ethnicity and believed that the use of the legend of Maui created an authentic sense of mystery and a symbolic impression of uniqueness. Although the researchers found a predominance of Maori culture and symbolism, and a concomitant lack of British heritage, none of the interviewees (and especially those of non-Maori descent) missed the absence of colonial references and suggested an increase in the use of Maori signifiers.

The triangulation to achieve validity and reliability of this research was done through in-depth interviews conducted with New Zealanders. Limitations include a recognition of the implications of using a convenience sample: the artificiality of the viewing context. The study works within a particular theoretical context, such as that provided by Bourdieu and Casey. A different theoretical framework might lead to the construction of different dimensions.

Discussion

The issues raised in this study focus on the ethics of representing people and places through the visual rhetoric of advertising campaigns. The idea of ethical representation deals with how close particular advertising campaigns come to representing a common reality (Schroeder and Borgerson 2005; Kotler and Gertner 2004). Even in a postmodern world where realities compete and are constructed through a variety of perceptions, experiences, and interpretations, there is a common ground of each culture, each people, and each place. This common ground may be found in the communal context of scapes, societal organization, beliefs, and habitus that is part of the shared identity of a certain people living in a certain place. This communal state of being might be understood as the ethos of place: an original essence that shapes (Reynolds 1993), characterizes, and creates the uniqueness of a place (Kotler and Gertner 2002). The ethos, or the ontology, of a place is largely based on the meanings of their social capital, that is, the way that relationships (between people and the environment) are established that shape the habitus and nurture the characteristics of that social capital. The implications of how the habitus is nurtured will be determined, for example, by the kind of scape (rural, urban, coastal, or alpine) that is of central importance in a certain community. In New Zealand, the landscape is an important part of the country’s culture and image. Indeed, the accessibility to nature provided through national parks and the habitus of outdoors activities are part of New Zealand culture. The symbolic capital that represents New Zealand’s social capital in the 100% Pure advertisement resides in the shared perceptions of particular signifiers. For example, the honesty box is a powerful, and consensual, signifier of a certain sense of place and a particular type of ethos. As symbolic capital, it represents an ethos that is bound with perceptions of a (mythical) time in New Zealand when people could be trusted and when crime was absent. It connotes the simplicity and natural goodness of the country and those who live and work there. By extension, it also embraced those who visited. As an ethos, it represents the values (social capital) of honesty, trust, personal and communal responsibility, and integrity in New Zealand society. While it can be argued that the advertisement portrays a romanticized vision of a bygone era, the inclusion of an honesty box to introduce New Zealand as a destination is a rhetorical decision that signifies the essence of New Zealand’s society and heritage. Importantly, in doing so, the visual rhetoric of an advertising campaign can also remind the people of the place the shared values on which their community was based. Visual rhetoric, then, enhances the ontology and ethos of the place. However, beyond what is shown about the ethos of the place is how the ethos is shown (Kenney and Scott 2003).

The idea of a place as a destination is usually related to its tourist appeal, and this is consciously framed by the visual rhetoric of its representation in advertising communications. However, the destination is always part of the place, which, by extension, shares the same ethos of the place. Creating a visual rhetoric to characterize a destination as an introduction and invitation to a target audience should require a sustainability of appeal that depends on the degree of authenticity experienced by visitors. We believe the marketing and branding of destinations should identify and enhance the ethos of the place with representations that are authentic and equitable. Therefore, based on the analysis combined with the theories that frame this research, we suggest some ethical principles to condition the visual rhetoric of the marketing of destinations and place brands: (1) represent the place’s ethos...
based on the perceived reality of a place’s social capital, (2) frame representations that identify and celebrate traditions, lifestyle, and cultural manifestations of relationships between people and place, (3) avoid deliberate misrepresentations, (4) create a balance in the representation of cultures comprising a mosaic of heritages and ethnicities, and (5) recognize that the ethos of a place is represented not just by its content but also by its form.

Conclusions and Implications

The marketing of destinations and place branding communications play a role beyond simply generating awareness and encouraging tourism experiences. The rhetoric of visual advertising campaigns not only reinforces the identity and uniqueness of destinations but also reassures the people, habitus, values, and symbols of their own culture, thus preserving the ethos—“state of being” of the place. The theoretic contribution of this study is to enhance the discussion of ethics of visual rhetoric in destination marketing and branding, suggesting five principles to consider when developing advertising campaigns. Moreover, the study creates awareness about the importance of the visual rhetoric of destination branding. Analyzing the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign, we discussed the importance of visual rhetoric related to the choice of attributes and characteristics that represent a people and a place and, specifically, how these attributes nominally represent the perspectives of those being portrayed. Hence, we recommend the participation of these people in the discussion of destination branding campaigns to authenticate and enlighten the representation of a place’s ethos as a fair and ethical representation.

We believe there is a need for a theory of visual rhetoric that is more concerned with ideological and ethical matters than with systemic and operational issues. The 100% Pure campaign has been broadcast in New Zealand since August 2009, as part of the Great Kiwi Invite campaign, allowing New Zealanders to see how they are represented overseas. Future research could explore the influence of this campaign on the behavior of New Zealanders toward tourists and toward the enhancement of their sense of place. Future streams of research have now been identified and include the use of projective techniques to anticipate the visualization of place; the use of different triangulation techniques, for example, longitudinal studies; and the use of different visual contexts.

Appendix A

Protocol of Research: In-depth Interview Questions

1. What were your first impressions of the film? / What is your opinion about its appeal?
2. Do you think the interactions between people and nature are well represented in this film? True to your experience of NZers’ behavior in general?
3. Which scenery can represent NZ better for you? (Nature/rural/urban)
4. How do you feel about this idea of New Zealand being the youngest country? And the youthful people?
5. Are you comfortable with the image of NZ being predominantly related to nature and wild scenery? Or would rather prefer more urban scenes?
6. Do you think the relationship between people is well represented in the film?
7. What kind of attitudes of New Zealanders you can recognize in this film? Can you name the ones you remember?
9. What do you think about the historical perspective adopted in the film?
10. Do you miss anything about NZ heritage in the film?
11. Do you feel there is a balance of NZ cultural values in this film?
12. In your opinion, what is the main message of the film about NZ and New Zealanders?

Appendix B

Protocol of Research: Content Analysis Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of landscape</td>
<td>People with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild/natural: 2:10 min (about 90%)</td>
<td>Friendly, happy, honest, young, courageous, care, challenging, fun, respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural: 0:20 sec (about 8%)</td>
<td>Group enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban: 0:03 sec (about 2%)</td>
<td>Legend of Maui</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
Appendix B (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Landscape</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Heritage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of landscape</td>
<td>Interaction with others</td>
<td>Historical perspectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities that involve outdoors, such as surfing, diving, kayaking, yachting, tramping, climbing, skiing, biking, paragliding</td>
<td>Moko</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>White: 24</td>
<td>Up to 50s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori: 4</td>
<td>Asian: 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black: 1</td>
<td>Other: 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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