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Kate Topshop: Celebrity Endorsement & the Lovemarks Concept in a Fashion Retail Context

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Introduction



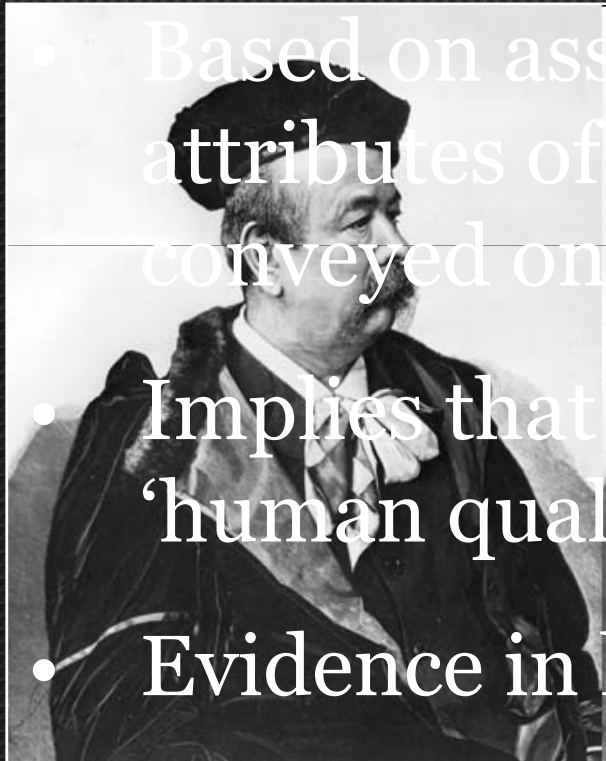
- Context and motives of the research.
...aim and objectives.
- Literature and practical background.
...methodology.
- Findings.
- Conclusions and further research.

Context and Motives

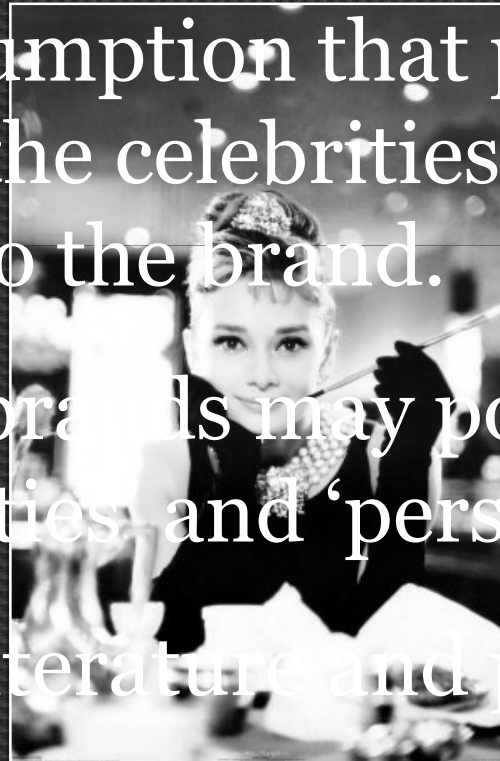


Provenance of Celebrity Endorsement:

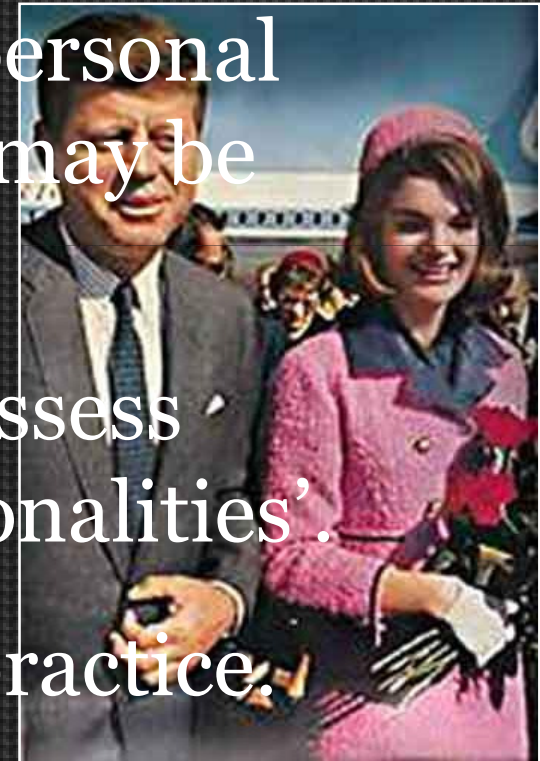
- Based on assumption that personal attributes of the celebrities may be conveyed onto the brand.
- Implies that brands may possess ‘human qualities’ and ‘personalities’.
- Evidence in literature and practice.



Charles Frederick Worth



Audrey Hepburn for
Chanel



Jackie Kennedy for
Givenchy

Context and Motives



- Is ‘the brand’ an obsolete concept?
- Roberts (2005):
 - ‘Emotion ‘is the component determining brand strength and power.
 - Powerful brands become “a loved part of customers’ lives”.



Aim and Objectives



- Explore Lovemarks in context of another marketing concept:
 - What emotions does Topshop evoke – is it a Lovemark?
 - What emotions does Kate Moss evoke – is she a Lovemark?
 - What salience and fit is there between Kate Moss and Topshop?
 - Is the Lovemark concept a useful means of planning celebrity endorsement?

Literature



Celebrity Endorsement:

- McCracken '89
- Erdogan '99
- Kamins '90
- Kamins & Gupta '94
- Tripp et al '94
- Hunter & Davidson '08

Successful endorsement demands connection of personal attributes of the celebrity with those of the brand:

- **Attractiveness**
- **Credibility**
- **Expertise**
- **Lifestyle**
- **Social success**
- **Reputation...**

Literature



Emotion & personality in branding:

- Fournier '98
- Richins '97
- Laros & Steenkamp '05
- Aaker '04
- Otnes '97
- Horn & Gurel '77
- Carroll '08

Consumers interpret brands emotionally and attribute personal qualities to them;

Especially the case in consumption of highly symbolic goods;

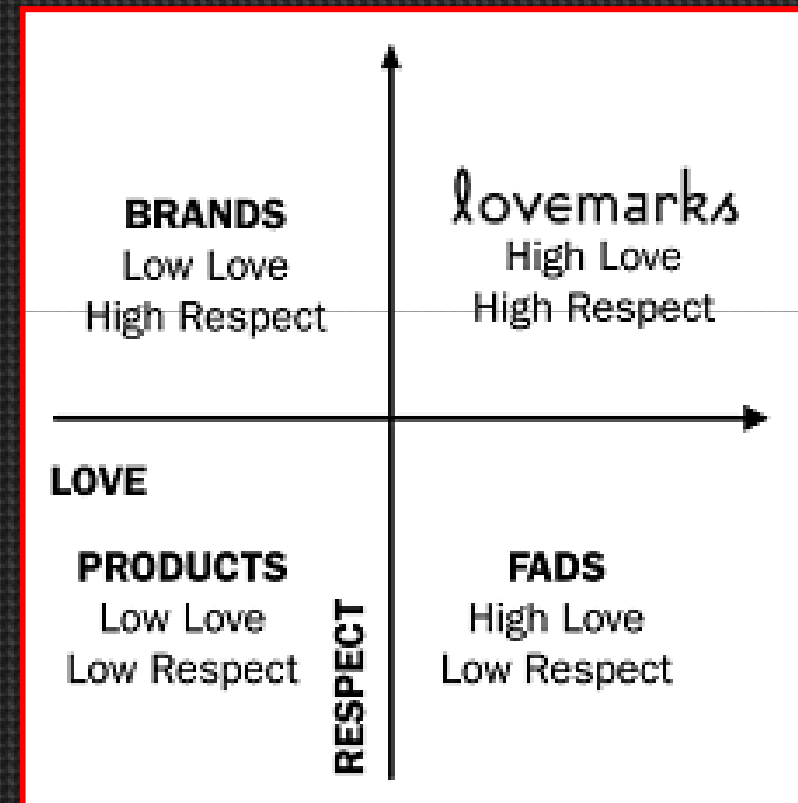
Contemporary brand management makes tangible differentiation difficult.

Lovemarks



- Roberts '05
- Cooper & Pawle '06

	<u>PRIMARY</u>	<u>SECONDARY</u>
<u>EMOTION</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joy • Sorrow • Anger • Fear • Surprise • Disgust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love • Guilt • Shame • Pride • Envy • Jealousy



Applied Background



TOPSHOP

- Flagship brand of Arcadia Group Ltd:
 - £1,898m sales (2009)
- Favourite store of 16-34 y/o UK females:
 - Mintel (2009)
- Most successful and high profile of UK fast-fashion retailers and a powerful influencer of UK high-street trends.

Applied Ba



Methodology



- Five focus groups:
 - Six 16-34 y/o female participants each.
- Discussion structured according to research aims and key issues in literature:
 - Impressions of Topshop.
 - Feelings toward Kate Moss.
 - Perspectives on branding and celebrity endorsement in fashion industry.

Findings - Topshop



- Majority of respondents identified Topshop as a 'fad' or 'brand'...
...only 22% positioned Topshop as a Lovemark!

Positive emotions:

- Admiration.
- Reputation.
- (pleasant!) Surprise.
- Joy.
- Pride.

Negative emotions:

- Disgust.
- Hatred.
- Envy.
- Disillusionment.
- Guilt.

Findings – Kate Moss



- Vast majority of respondents nominated Kate Moss as a 'brand'

<u>Topshop</u>	<u>Topshop AND Kate Moss</u>	<u>Kate Moss</u>
Guilt Joy <i>Hate</i> Fear	Shame Surprise Envy Love Pride Jealousy Sorrow Anger Disgust	<i>Cynicism</i> <i>Humour</i> <i>Annoyance</i>

Findings



<u>Theme</u>	<u>Context</u>
Skinny	Topshop sizes are small; Kate Moss collection even smaller; Moss set 'waif look' & skinny-jean trends.
Price	Topshop is affordable / expensive; Moss collection is too expensive; Moss associated with expensive brands.
Fashion	Topshop is fashionable; some clothes are 'too cool'; Moss has recognisable style but it may be 'fake'; Topshop & Moss connected to music scene and world of fashion/showbiz celebrities..
Bad Role Model	Moss (<i>was</i>) a drug-user; Moss contributes to female body-image concerns; Topshop & Moss dictate fashion & cultural agenda.
Good Role Model	Moss is a successful businesswoman; she is a confident single woman; she recovered from a drugs scandal; Topshop makes fashion accessible.
Endorsement	Topshop & Moss mutually beneficial; Moss's style fits Topshop's style; supermodel image benefits Topshop.

Conclusions



- Lovemarks a superficial 'theory' and tool...
- ..but emotional response is important in defining consumer perceptions of brands.
- Perceptions of celebrity personalities affect opinion of their collaborations.
- Negative emotions potential outweigh positive emotions in a group setting.
- Secondary emotions and rationality may have more power than anticipated.
- Subjective and personal nature of emotion and branding.

Conclusions



- Topshop is NOT a Lovemark – although it is ‘loved’.
- Kate Moss is NOT a Lovemark – can any person?
- Kate Moss & Topshop evoke similar positive & negative emotions – there appears to be salience.
- Utility of Lovemarks concept may be in identifying salience between emotions felt for brand and celebrity.

Further Research



- Replicate study to other instances of celebrity endorsement.
- Explore comparative power of positive and negative emotions.
- Compare emotional responses to brands across product categories, nationalities and genders.

Thank You, I love you all.