

Nostalgia, Brands and Relationships: Cultural Chains of Memory

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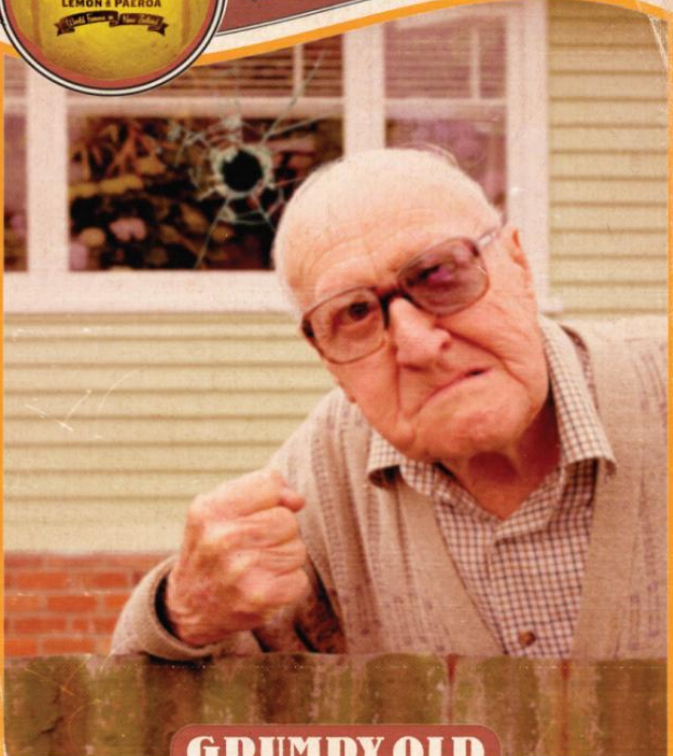
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Background

- Consumer uses of brands; brands affecting identity
- Nostalgia (Holbrook 1993; Stern 1992)
- Brand advertising, brand stories [Holden Evolution](#)
- Brand benefits and nostalgic narratives
- Consumer uses of brand nostalgia (Thompson & Tian 2008)
- Brand nostalgia and interpersonal relationships



LEGENDS OF B.Y.C.



GRUMPY OLD

Mr 'whats-his-face'

NEXT DOOR

Methodology

- Two part interview method; individual life history narratives & pair conversations
- 20 women = 10 friendship pairs
- Discussion starter using TV ads

Themes

- Community nostalgia
 - Brands as nostalgic agents that memorialize and ritualize past (actual) consumption experiences
 - Brands as repositories for collective memory
 - Strong positive responses to nostalgia

Themes

- Personal memory resources
 - Nostalgic brand narratives trigger thoughts about ways of life, values, personal identity
 - Use brand narratives to locate themselves in time and place

Themes

- Linking effects and related sense of national community facilitated by nostalgic brand narratives
 - Shared past
 - Only insiders share insight into the significance of memories
 - Nostalgia as a conversational resource
 - Collaborative memory making
 - Brands as facilitators of interpersonal relationships and sense of national identity

Discussion

- Cultural chains of memory and linkages: brand nostalgia affects individual/personal, family identity and national identity
- New insights into consumer interpersonal relationships affected by brand nostalgia
- Nostalgic narratives and imagery engender feelings of belonging within imagined national community
- Brand nostalgia preservation and re-articulation of the past, commemoration of times and places that are now considered worthy
- Brand role in refreshing the collective national memory



Implications

- Challenges for brand owners
 - Generation specific nostalgia
 - How do younger generations understand nostalgia?
- Role of brands in providing a repository for national stories of the past?
- Brand resources impact on the construction of popular memory in relation to national identity projects