THE INSTASCAMS OF BIG CANDY: GREENWASHING, CORPORATE HARM & FRAUDULENT ETHICAL NARRATIVES

BY

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Abstract

Corporate social media plays a key role in obfuscating and distracting from environmental crimes perpetrated against people, animals, and the environment by corporations. A prime example of this is the chocolate industry which has continued to expand at a rapid rate despite a slew of well-documented crimes, in part due to narratives that present chocolate as an environmentally friendly, socially responsible, welfare-friendly, and nutritious consumer good. In response, this thesis will explore how the chocolate companies Mars, Nestlé, and Whittakers use ethical content in their Instagram content to construct particular narratives. It does this by employing a quantitative content analysis to quantify how frequently ethical elements are utilized, and a qualitative thematic analysis to identify and analyse the themes and narratives present within these texts. In exploring these issues this thesis employs a theoretical framework of green criminology, green-cultural criminology, and a critical perspective of food crime. It also draws extensively from the existing literature on greenwashing, media narratives, and corporate harm. Major findings include the identification of 20 different ethical elements across chocolate companies' Instagram content, with a notable predominance of 'environmental image' and 'animal welfare image', both of which were commonly used by Mars, Nestlé, and Whittakers. Other significant findings include the identification of 13 themes and 17 instances of suspected or confirmed greenwashing - seven from Mars, six from Nestlé, and four from Whittakers. These results demonstrate the use of greenwashing across the confectionary sector. Overall these findings suggest that the victimization of the environment, farmers, animals, and consumers are obscured by social media which disguises and distracts from brands' real actions. Results also suggest that greenwashing is going under-regulated - a process facilitated by the increasing sophistication of greenwash, state interests, neoliberal market forces, and the geographic distance between consumers and environmental victims.

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Chapter One – Introduction

In 2001 the International Labour Organization released the Harkin-Engel Protocol, an accord aiming to eradicate the worst forms of child labour, forced labour and human trafficking within the cocoa industry. Despite the long timeline with which to reduce these harms, the 2018 Global Slavery Index highlights that these issues are still prevalent for those within the chocolate supply chain and chocolate companies are anticipated to miss yet another upcoming eradication target by a significant margin (Fountain & Adams, 2018). Not only is the current system of chocolate production harmful to cocoa farming communities, but it is also contributing to global environmental degradation at an alarming rate. Under the current system, the chocolate industry in the United Kingdom alone is estimated to produce more than 2.1 million tonnes of greenhouse gases a year (Konstantas, Jeswani, Stamford & Azapagic, 2018), while a single bar of chocolate is estimated to take approximately 1000 litres of water to produce (Konstantas et al., 2018).

Ethical concerns around the chocolate industry are not new, with published critiques of chocolate brands dating back over a century. For example, in 2019 an article was published by the British newspaper *The Standard*, which heavily critiqued Cadbury for belonging to both The Anti-Slavery Society and the Aborigines Protection Society whilst utilizing slave labour (Hinch, 2018). However, despite a slew of modern and historical documentation outlining the various harms present in the production of chocolate and cacao, the industry is projected to reach growing profits of USD65.22 million by 2024 (MarketWatch, 2021).

As industries such as 'Big Candy' have continued to grow so have consumers' concerns about the truthfulness of companies' ethical behaviour. This was clearly demonstrated in the results of a 2009 Eurobarometer survey of more than 25,000 people, which found that 48% did not trust the environmental claims publicized by producers about their products. While in the same study 47% stated that they did not trust companies' social and environmental claims in their self-produced reports. In the food industry these concerns are compounded because forming a clear picture of the realities of the foodscape is confusing (Jin, Lin & McLeay, 2020), time-consuming (Fanzo & McLaren, 2020) and expensive. This is only further aggravated by a lack of transparency and traceability in corporate sectors. As Kashmanian (2017) notes, many companies have little knowledge of where their products originate beyond their first-degree suppliers. While survey results from the Business Continuity

Institute (2015) highlight that 72% of companies have a lack of visibility in their supply chains.

In the modern world these concerns around the trustworthiness of companies' ethical claims are set within a unique technological context. In stark contrast to the dominance of print, television and radio advertising throughout the 20th century (Peterson, 1964; Pollay, 1985), social media is one of the most common ways consumers encounter advertising in the modern-day. As of 2019, 90% of Instagram's one billion monthly users follow at least one company and 86% of American marketers use Facebook to advertise (*SproutSocial Index*, 2019).

Importantly, despite the concerns of consumers and documentation of harm in the chocolate industry, no criminological research could be located examining harmful and misleading content within the digital chocolate sector. In fact, there is generally a distinct lack of academic work critically examining the media channels that allow food corporations to generate millions of dollars in profit at the expense of the environment, farmers, animals and consumers. Furthermore, very little research of this kind has been done in the context of online advertising. This is a salient area to explore because 77% of consumers will purchase from a company they follow online over alternative brands (*SproutSocial Index*, 2019). In light of this it is clear that allowing potentially misleading content to stay on platforms such as Instagram may fund and facilitate ongoing harm.

Theoretical Frameworks, Concepts and Terms

Green Criminology

This thesis is informed by and contributes to a green criminological perspective. Green criminology is a subsection of criminology which critically examines environmental harm and the embedded structures that cause and perpetuate it - issues that have been (and remain) largely ignored within mainstream criminology (Lynch, 2019; Nurse, 2017). Studies examining crimes of chocolate producers (green or otherwise) are especially scarce. This study, therefore, contributes to a specific gap in the literature, with potential implications for the broader field of criminological inquiry. A green criminological lens suggests a particular engagement with eco-justice or the consideration of harm experienced by humans, non-human animals and the environment (White, 2008). It also "explores state failure in

environmental protection and corporate offending and environmentally harmful business practices" (Nurse, 2017, p. 1). This is an appropriate choice as there is evidence that some chocolate companies perpetuate harm against humans, animals and the environment, and that this has been allowed to continue by lax legislation and enforcement (Delmas & Burbanos, 2011).

Environmental Crime/Harm

As a term that emerged out of socio-legal definitions of corporate and organized crime in the 1970s (Halsey & White, 1998) environmental crime has traditionally been used to refer to illegal fishing, wildlife trading, logging, dumping of hazardous waste and smuggling of ozone-depleting substances (see United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, n.d). However, scholars have increasingly highlighted that this understanding of environmental crime is limited as it does not encompass all of the indirect ways that people, animals and different ecological spheres can be harmed (Lynch & Stretesky, 2003; White, 2008). As a result, this thesis employs a broader critical definition of environmental crime by Slovenian criminologist Pečar which centralizes the idea of *harm* over *legality* (and is thus interchangeably used with the term 'environmental harm'). This definition has been translated and summarised by Eman, Meško & Fields (2009, p. 578) as follows:

> "Environmental crime... is every permanent or temporary act or process
> which has a negative influence on the environment, people's health or
> natural resources, including; building, changing, abandonment and
> destruction of buildings; waste processing and elimination of waste;
> emissions into water, air or soil; transport and handling of dangerous
> substances; damaging or destructing of natural resources; reduction of
> biological diversity or reduction of natural genetic resources; and other
> activities or interventions, which put the environment at risk"

Most green criminologists work with a social harm definition of environmental crime such as this one.

Environmental Victims

In considering the full range of those who can be impacted by environmental crime this thesis primarily follows a definition provided by Williams (1996, p. 35) which argues that environmental victims are "past, present, or future generations who are injured as a consequence of change to the chemical, physical, microbiological, or psychosocial

environment, brought about by deliberate or reckless, individual or collective, human act or omission". However, in considering the eco-justice approach highlighted within the green criminology lens, injury to animals and the environment is also considered (White, 2008). Environmental victimisation is a key point of consideration as numerous scholars (e.g. Monod de Froideville, 2021; Hall, 2017; Spencer & Fitzgerald, 2013; White, 2011) have highlighted a need for the continued exploration of the experiences of environmental victims.

Green-Cultural Criminology

In addition to the general lens of green criminology, this thesis considers and pertains to a more specific theoretical framework provided by green-cultural criminology. Green-cultural criminology is a perspective that seeks to examine how environmental crime/harm is culturally and socially constructed through symbolism and narrative (Brisman & South, 2013). According to Brisman, McClanahan and South (2014, p. 480), this lens can be applied by: considering how environmental harm and crime are presented in various media forms; evaluating "constructed consumerism, commodification of nature and related market processes" and exploring ways that environmental harms are being resisted "on the streets". This study pertains to the first of these threads, as chocolate companies produce large volumes of media that have not drawn much in the way of scholarly attention to date. Signifying the need for such work in this area, Brisman and South (2013, p. 117) note "our appreciation of environmental harms and crimes [are] limited and incomplete without an understanding of the social construction of environmental harm and crime" particularly as media associated with environmental harm is "as 'real' as crime… itself". Specifically, this thesis examines the social construction of narratives designed to obfuscate harms operating in the chocolate production process. To this end, the social media platform Instagram was chosen as the site of analysis.

Food Crime

The third lens this thesis draws from is a food crime perspective. A food crime perspective seeks to research "patterns of deviance, harm and crime concerning foodstuffs and food processes, along with critically questioning events within their social systems and contexts" (Gray, 2018, p. 12). According to food crime scholars (Tourangeau & Fitzgerald, 2020; Gray, 2018; Gray & Hinch, 2015), a food crime perspective can be applied by considering acts that are 'lawful but awful', viewing legal and regulatory structures critically, highlighting instances of non-enforcement and instances where food crimes remain legal; as well as

considering harm committed by companies and the powerful, and the various groups (beyond just the consumer) this harm impacts; identifying actions that will cause harm indirectly (e.g. through climate change) and highlighting the idea that social and physical distance between actors (e.g. food producers and buyers) can perpetuate harms.

Utilising these key tenets, the term 'food crime' as it is used in this thesis will go beyond illicit food-related acts which have primarily referred to food fraud such as adulterated food, counterfeit food, food that does not comply with stated claims as well as contamination and food poisoning as a result of neglectful handling (Croall, 2013a; Croall, 2013b; Tourangeau & Fitzgerald, 2020). Instead, it employs an expanded definition that considers acts such as animal cruelty (e.g. factory farming), the exploitation of food producers (e.g. slavery), unsatisfactory trade practices (e.g. corporate monopolies) and harmful biotechnology (e.g. bioprospecting). An expanded definition of food crime also means considering the entire supply chain, with a focus on both the local and the global (Croall, 2013a). This definition allows for the centralisation of the victimisation of food producers, animals and the ecosystem within criminological research (Tourangeau & Fitzgerald, 2020). A food crime perspective is particularly important in the context of this thesis as Gray and Hinch (2015) explicitly highlight that the cocoa industry is a sector where food crime is rampant.

Greenwashing

One of the major ways that environmental victimization is obscured is through 'greenwashing' which acts as a method of distraction and obfuscation (see Lu, Yuu & Chen, 2020; Scanlan, 2017; Harris, 2015). This thesis primarily follows a definition provided by Walker and Wan (2012) who argue that greenwashing is any discrepancies between 'symbolic actions' (looking green) and 'substantive actions' (being green). Greenwashing can come in many forms including hidden trade-offs, lack of proof, vagueness, misleading labelling, the inclusion of irrelevant information and outright lying (Terrachoice, 2010). This definition of greenwashing will encompass discrepancies found relating directly to environmentalism as well as discrepancies found in practices such as social responsibility, farmer welfare, animal welfare, nutritionism and non-specific ethical claims. While a recent study has highlighted that research on corporate greenwashing from the perspective of green criminology is particularly sparse (Gacek, 2021), this thesis will demonstrate that greenwashing is a pivotal concept for a critical engagement with corporate claims of ethical environmental conduct in a neoliberal context.

Child Labour

Due to the complexities involved with child employment and its prominence within harm in the cocoa sector, 'child labour' is a notable term to define. This thesis follows the definition outlined by the International Labour Organization under the 1973 Minimum Age Convention (C138). This accord states that any work done by a child under the age of 12 is child labour; Any non 'light work'(i.e. work that will not affect the child's ability to receive an education) conducted by a child within the ages of 12-14 is child labour, whilst any 'non-regular' work (i.e. hazardous work) conducted by the 15-17 year age group is child labour.

Research Aims

Through a lens that combines green criminology, green-cultural criminology, and food crime this project will explore how food-related harms are obfuscated by media content that contains misleading ethical narratives. To this end, this thesis will focus on exploring ethical claims made by chocolate companies on the social media platform Instagram, the harms that occur in the production of chocolate and the lack of transparency in the chocolate sector. It is intended that these findings will contribute to an understanding of how harms within the transnational food industry are masked by fraudulent corporate marketing via social media.

The aforementioned aims raise the following research questions:

- How frequently do chocolate companies use 'ethical markers' such as environmentalism, social responsibility, farmer welfare, animal welfare, nutritionism and non-specific ethical claims in their marketing on Instagram?

- What types of narratives are being constructed and communicated through the use of these ethical markers?

- Where do harmful discrepancies exist between what is known about chocolate companies and the narratives they produce?

- Is corporate greenwashing going under-regulated, and if so what processes are allowing this to occur?

To answer these research questions this thesis employs content analysis and thematic analysis to analyse original data. Overall this thesis works to challenge the widely held belief that consumers can be and should be primarily responsible for governing ethical food production through their purchasing choices (Hilton 2009; Miller & Rose 2008). Instead, it shifts the focus to the misleading practices of corporations themselves as criminal endeavours while also considering the role of the state in failing to mitigate the harm involved in the food

production process. In doing so, this thesis provides the first criminological analysis of greenwashing by chocolate producers Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers and the way in which it contributes to environmental harm.

Thesis Structure

Chapter One has summarised the key harms this thesis will grapple with, alongside historical context and important modern developments. An overview of the theoretical lens and key concepts underpinning this research has also been provided. Chapter Two will review the literature that fits within the scope of this project and establish the place of this research within criminology through its discussion of food crime and green-cultural criminology. This review will draw from research conducted on advertising trends and harm in the modern foodscape. Chapter Three outlines the methodology that will be employed to generate new data on this topic and explains the rationale behind the chosen method. Chapter Four is the first results chapter, it explores the frequency of environmental markers and how these work to construct three environmental narratives. Chapter Five is the second results chapter, it demonstrates the frequency of people-centric markers and how these generate five narratives. Chapter Six is the third results chapter, it displays the frequency of animal, nutritional and non-specific markers and investigates how these build five additional narratives. Discrepancies between narratives and company actions are also highlighted in Chapters Four, Five and Six. Finally, Chapter Seven serves as a discussion and conclusion chapter whereby the results are considered alongside corporate and state under-regulation and key take-aways are noted.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

This chapter will canvass three bodies of literature. First, it considers the conceptual lenses of the perspectives of green cultural criminology and food crime, followed by an exploration of the studies developed thus far under their respective remits. The chapter then reviews the literature that considers the range of markers used to represent ethical concepts such as environmentalism, social responsibility, farmer welfare, animal welfare and organic production in advertising. In addition, this chapter explores the scope and content of food narratives in the modern foodscape. Major discrepancies between these ethical narratives and the harmful outcomes of chocolate company decision making are emphasized and the continuation of these harms are placed in the context of failing corporate and government regulations. Including these bodies of work in this review justifies the methodological approach adopted for this research, but it also signifies that these literatures are pertinent for green cultural criminological inquiry into food crimes.

Theoretical Lenses

Green-Cultural Criminology

Green cultural criminology draws together perspectives that are sensitive to image, meaning and representation within the study of environmental crime (Brisman & South, 2018). A relatively new sub-area of green criminology, its main proponents are Avi Brisman and Nigel South (2018), who introduced its tenets in their 2014 text *Green Cultural Criminology: Constructions of Environmental Harm, Consumerism and Ecocide.*

They proposed there were three areas of scholarly work that would come under the remit of green cultural criminology and help to develop the perspective. Green cultural criminology considers the meanings invested in human-environment relations and how these impact how human beings interact with the world around them. Therefore, the first of the three areas was how media and other popular cultural forms propagate and perpetuate environmental harm. Second, research could examine the processes of creating consumers who in turn demand more goods to consume, which is inherently destructive to the planet (Brisman & South, 2018). The third area of focus was attention to the practices of resistance, including how these themselves are resisted against by state agents (Brisman & South, 2018).

Scholars have responded with inquiries under the green cultural criminological banner into, for example: representations of animals (van Uhm, 2018; Goyes & Sollund, 2018; Sollund, 2019; Gacek & Jochelson, 2020); narratives and images of environmental crime, and associated methodologies (Brisman, 2017, 2019; Natali & de Narlin Budó, 2019); dominant frames of environmental crises (Brisman, 2018; Clifford & White, 2021); everyday acts of ecocide (Agnew, 2019); excessive consumption by the rich (Lynch et al, 2019); the means and politics of resistance (Weinstock, 2017; Ferrell, 2019).

The studies by Brisman (2017, 2019), Natali and de Narlin Budó (2019), and Natali, Acito Mutti and Anzoise (2020) are most relevant to my research. Brisman (2017, 2019) examines a variety of environmental narratives including those from corporate websites, attorneys, children and fictional texts. His proposition that green cultural criminology be attuned to narratives and their potential to shape future harm is especially pertinent. He argues that exploration of societal narratives can reveal how environmental harm is established and allowed to continue. While the essence of his claims support the aims of the study at hand, Brisman's work focuses on fictional narratives and does not examine them as deliberately false representations.

Natali and de Narlin Budó's (2019), and Natali et al.'s (2020) research is also pertinent to my research insofar as their focus on images. Natali and de Narlin Budó (2019, p. 722) examine how allowing environmental victims visual access to the place that their harm occurred is salient in their ability to communicate "from their point of view what they know, think and feel about the reality in which they live". Natali et al. (2020) consider how visual and sensory methods work to extract marginalized perspectives, perceptions and stories. This study, however, is focused on how harms embedded in production practices are concealed by the corporate elites through the use of visual narratives. Literature concerned with ethical advertising was thus considered to be more specific to the aims and objectives of my research (considered in more detail further below). This is in line with suggestions from White and Heckenberg (2014) who outline the interdisciplinary nature of green criminology and encourage researchers to draw on other disciplines where appropriate.

Food Crime

The notion of 'food crime' immediately conjures images of contamination like that of the Chinese milk powder scandal of 2008, that involved New Zealand dairy powerhouse Fonterra; animal abuses such as battery hens and the practice of live exports; and the marketing of pesticide loaded products as organic goods. Food crimes have occurred for as long as food has been produced on a mass scale, but it was only recently that food crime as a specific scholarly focus came about.

Gray (2018), who initiated this focus, contends that a food crime perspective has several central tenets. A food crime perspective is interdisciplinary but inherently critical in that it recognises that food production chains represent the interests of big business (in this case, Big Candy). A food crime perspective also adopts a flexible understanding of crime. Like green-cultural criminology, it includes food-related harms that have not been criminalised, some of which may even be considered so normal that consumers are oblivious to them. However, as Gray (2018) explains, a food crime perspective endorses a legalistic view of crime insofar as law is a powerful tool against some of the terrible wrongs that currently exist within food supply chains.

Studies drawing on this newly developed perspective are understandably thin, but thus far include research into: health labelling (Corallo, Latino, Menegoli, De Devitiis & Viscecchia, 2019); plant-meat products and their imaginaries (Gray, 2020); the Mafia and their organised food crimes such as counterfeiting (Rizutti, 2021); and the intersections between wealth and food safety (Fenton, 2020). None have yet considered the issue at the centre of this research: the role of misleading environmental narratives in perpetuating harms in the food supply chain. This research will therefore contribute the first of its kind to this body of work.

Ethical Markers in Corporate Advertising

Within corporate advertising many companies aim to communicate "'the good' they do for society, employees, and the environment" (Langen & Hartmann, 2016, p. 22) through textual information, imagery and labelling in their advertising. This is a process that is highlighted by Nicolosi and Korthals (2008, p. 63) who argue that the biggest challenge in food advertising is determining what kind of "images, stories, symbols and types of information" will draw consumers in. Ethical communication in particular emerged as a trend in the 1970s and began

gaining traction in the late 1990s/early 2000s, proliferating in mainstream advertising in the 2010s (Pedersen & Neergard, 2016; Gruère, 2013).

Of all the ethical concepts commandeered by corporate advertising, indicators of environmentalism are perhaps the most comprehensively explored within the literature. As Grillo, Tokarczyk and Hansen (2008) note, natural landscapes and features such as rivers and vegetation are commonly used to communicate that a product has a positive environmental impact. Since the 1990's environmental or eco-labelling has become commonplace (Pedersen & Neergard, 2006). Phrases denoting environmentalism such as "environment-friendly, 'green' [and] 'natural'" have also become oft-used descriptors (Aschemann-Witzel, Hamm, Naspetti & Zanoli, 2007, p. 97), as have references to elements of the supply chain that are "sustainable" and "certified" (Grillo et al., 2008). Advertising may also make references to a product's carbon emissions or recyclability (Grillo et al., 2008) and in recent years the colour green has been used as a primary indicator that a product is environmentally 'green' (Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013). Notably, consumers may place more emphasis on their subjective interpretation of environmental labelling rather than its actual meaning, something which can be precipitated by companies incorporating misleading environmental labelling in their advertising according to Pedersen and Neergard (2006). This idea is supported by D'Souza, Tagihan, Lamb and Peretiatko (2006) who highlight that many consumers have no knowledge or limited knowledge of different environmental labels. This is likely a result of the sheer number of eco-labels in existence - more than 500 were estimated to exist in the United States alone in 2010 (Dahl, 2010). Despite these issues academic research on how environmentalism is communicated in the *food sector* is notably absent.

As with environmentalism, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become an increasingly prominent element of company advertising (Mögele & Tropp, 2010), with 92% of Fortune 250 companies voluntarily releasing reports on their CSR activities in 2015 (KPMG, 2015). Philanthropic projects, sponsorships, volunteer opportunities, health and safety programs, environmental protection, codes of ethics and programs ensuring high standards of quality were common indicators of CSR across the websites of companies in France, the Netherlands, the United States and the United Kingdom (Maignan & Ralston, 2002). However, different elements of CSR were emphasized in different countries, for example, companies in the United States were most likely to draw on their work with philanthropy and volunteering, whilst Dutch and French companies were more likely to communicate their

actions taken to protect the environment (Maignan & Ralston, 2002). A separate study of corporate websites in Germany, highlighted that the most commonly discussed CSR activities were environmental preservation (discussed on 83% of websites), charitable organizations/donations (40%), health and safety programs (19%), sponsorships (18%), quality programs (18%) and codes of ethics (18%) (Angermuller & Schwerk, 2004). Within companies, CSR may also mean factors such as diversity in the workplace and designated days off for employees to volunteer their time in the community (Humphreys & Brown, 2008).

In addition to CSR, companies may choose to specifically highlight the welfare of farmers in the supply chain. One way this is communicated is through an emphasis on the production process and quality, this may be conveyed through descriptors such as "no child labour" or "Fairtrade" (Barham, 2002). Scholars also emphasize the importance of labelling from organizations that place importance on farmer wellbeing and aim to address global poverty (Barham, 2002; Golding, 2009). Imagery is similarly important, with Dogra (2006) highlighting that drawings of groups of farmers set against an idyllic agricultural landscapes have been used to highlight positive outcomes for farmers in fundraising campaigns. Similar imagery is used within chocolate company branding, with Golding (2006; 2009) describing how the imagery of beautifully dressed African women set against Ghanian agricultural backdrops was used by the brand Divine Chocolates to communicate positive ideas of farmer welfare (see figure 1). Within the chocolate industry, the welfare of farmers has additionally been communicated through "particular emphasis on individual suppliers' stories", more specifically those that exemplify positive outcomes (Nicholls & Opal, 2005).

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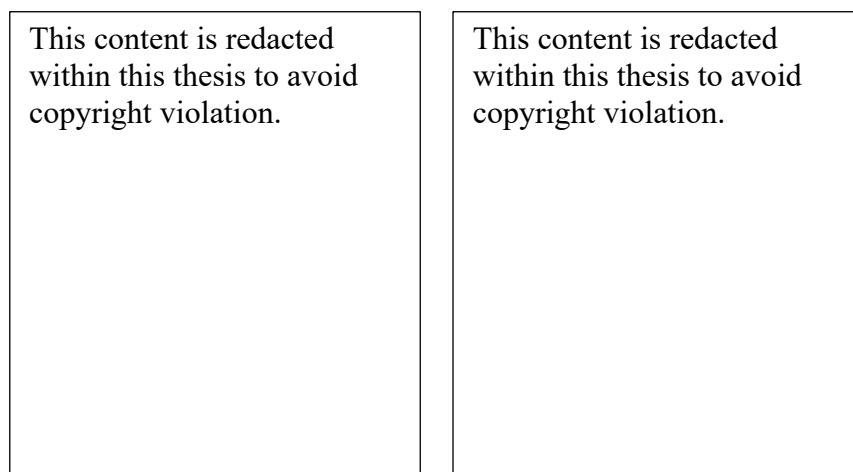
Figure 1. Examples of Divine Chocolate Advertising (Golding, 2006)

Regarding animal welfare, Roe, Murdoch & Marsden (2005) present perhaps the earliest analysis of how this concept has been communicated to consumers in the food sector. In their comparative analysis of meat and egg brands across six European countries, they emphasize that brands express animal welfare by spotlighting the term "animal welfare", making references to animal health and remarking on how the animal has lived (e.g. their ability to go outside and display natural behaviours). Similar findings were discussed by Norton (2017) who highlights that websites of American meat brands communicated animal welfare in the following ways: animal welfare claims: antibiotics, audits, commitment to welfare, education, cage free housing and policy (Norton, 2017). In addition to textual claims, a case study of Danish meat brands showcases that animal welfare is also commonly represented through depictions of animals in natural settings such as green pastures (Borkfelt, Kondrup, Röcklinsberg, Bjørkdahl & Gjerris, 2015). Outside of these studies little discussion has been given to the communication of animal welfare in the food sector. The lack of research on this topic is perhaps a manifestation of the underlying assumption that animal life (and 'livestock', in particular) is less important than human life (Moore, 2003). Thus, analyses of animal welfare communication in the food sector are a particularly important gap to fill within the literature.

Like the other ethical topics nutritionism appears to be becoming an increasingly prominent mainstay in the food sector, with the global 'health and wellness' food market being valued at USD707 billion (approx. NZD1 trillion) in 2016 and estimated to reach USD811 billion (approx. NZD1.1 trillion) by 2021 (Statista, 2018). Similar rises can be seen in particular niches, for example New Zealand's organic market which increased by 42% between 2015 and 2017 (twice as fast as non-organic products) comprising a NZD245 million dollar industry (Organics Aotearoa, 2018). Nutritious foods are often signified by the presence of labelling and on packet nutritional information (Bauer, Heinrich & Schäfer, 2013; Peters-Texeira & Badrie, 2005) such as the New Zealand Health Star Rating system (Brownbill, Braunack-Mayer & Miller, 2018). Imagery of people exercising and 'healthy' garnishes are used to communicate food is nutritious on food packaging (Gil- Pérez, Rebollar & Lidón, 2020). It is also argued that imagery of idyllic farms are used to echo stereotyped images of organic production (Johnston, Biro & MacKendrick, 2009). This interpretation is supported by Naspetti and Zanoli (2011) who highlight that in the case of organic egg advertising, drawings of idyllic farmhouses were commonly used. As with environmental markers, nutritionism was commonly signified with a natural colour scheme, with the colours blue,

green (potentially a signifier of health) and yellow (potentially a signifier of the sun) being used (Spence & Valesco, 2018; Zanoli & Naspetti, 2011).

The Construction of Ethical Narratives

It is observed that "most food is sold with a story" (Friedberg, 2003, p. 4) and the use of ethical markers denoting environmentalism, social responsibility, farmer welfare, animal welfare and nutritionism culminate to form the construction of ethical storytelling within corporate advertising. Nicolosi and Korthals (2008) argue that to capture the attention of consumers, food narratives should communicate something about the positive relationship between food, the human body, the natural world and society as a whole. Outlined by Morgan (2010, p. 1853), this "alternative agrifood narrative" represents an industry-wide shift in the storytelling used to sell food, whereby aspects of the product that have a positive impact on the environment, consumers, producers and animals are emphasized (Morgan 2010; Maguire, Watson & Lang, 2017). The proliferation of terms such as 'ethical', 'organic', 'vegan' and 'local', as well as the rapid expansion of certification labelling is a result of the alternative agrifood narrative (Morgan, 2010; Grauerholz & Owens, 2015). This alternative narrative is in stark contrast to what Morgan (2010) terms the 'conventional agrifood narrative' which they highlight existed as the primary food narrative between the 1930s until the early 2000s. The conventional agrifood narrative can be characterized by its focus on fast industrialized production which generates an abundance of food at a low price. Alternative food and drink emerged as a pushback against the supply chain harms associated with this production method (Morgan 2010; Maguire et al., 2017).

In the construction of environmental narratives, scholars argue that "corporations have hijacked the agenda and discourse of environmentalists" (Welford, 2013; Dobers & Springett, 2010, p. 67), commodifying the natural environment for economic purposes (Bridge & McManus, 2000). Using a case study of the mining and forestry industry, Bridge and McManus (2000, p. 21) argue that "narratives of progress through nature subjugation" have been previously commonplace. However, in more recent years environmental markers have been used to construct a 'sustainability narrative' that communicates that natural resources can be depleted *without* damaging the integrity of the environment (Bridge & McManus, 2000). This narrative serves to frame corporate environmental damage as legitimate and regulated, with the underlying assumption that companies are only causing the 'right' amount

of damage (Bridge & McManus, 2000). The existence of this sustainability narrative is supported in later work, with Gray (2010, p. 49) arguing that narratives of environmental sustainability are abundant in the business sector because of its ability to "tantali[se] us with the prospect of a world of harmony *and* consumption". Other scholars contend that the interlinked concepts of sustainability and urbanisation are two of the most commonly used narratives in the modern foodscape (Morgan & Moragues-Faus, 2015). This is even though Brown (2015) highlights that the earth is composed of finite resources and as a result, the environment cannot be plundered indefinitely in pursuit of continued urbanisation in a way that can be considered 'sustainable'. Marketing narratives of progress and sustainability are therefore pertinent to all three of the focus areas of green cultural criminology. The insidious way that businesses utilize and reshape the sensibilities of the public to transform them into consuming products that require the extraction of resources from the earth demonstrates, in fact, the interwoven nature of their respective concerns.

In a similar vein, socially responsible ethical markers work to construct particular ethical narratives. In their examination of texts from three major organizations Feix and Philippe (2020) argue that CSR claims help to construct the following six narratives: companies and wider society are inextricably linked; companies are responsible problem-solvers who do not generate problems; companies are doing good and are working to fix any insufficiencies; companies are going through radical transformations; companies work arduously to fix the world's socio-environmental issues and are a major player in solving these issues; urgent action is required to address the world's socio-environmental issues and companies are achieving this by moving towards socially responsible goals in numerous small increments. Feix and Philippe (2020) highlight that discussion around the narratives used by CSR 'institutions' has been limited in academic research. This continues to be an issue, as beyond this paper no other scholarly work on CSR *narratives* specifically could be identified.

Unlike CSR narratives, more comprehensive research has been conducted on the narratives of farmer welfare both generally and in the food industry. In their analysis of NGO marketing, Dogra (2006) argues that indicators of farmer welfare are used to construct narratives of "deliberate positivism" about African farming communities (Dogra, 2006). Under this deliberately positive narrative agricultural workers are predominantly depicted as "self-reliant and active", with "the strength and independence of the African figure serv[ing] to communicate the brand's ethical differentiation" from other brands (Dogra, 2006, p. 163;

Golding, 2009, p. 164). In doing so the impression that transnational chocolate companies and cocoa smallholders are equal business partners and are afforded equal sharing of any benefits is engineered (Golding, 2009). This interpretation is supported by Leissle (2012), who in their analysis of Divine Chocolate marketing, adds that this type of advertising invites the consumer to see female African farmers as powerful actors within the global supply chain who always reap the benefits of working within the cocoa industry. This narrative of deliberate positivism which emphasizes the importance of the African agricultural sector stands in stark contrast to prior narratives utilized by the chocolate industry where cocoa farmers were erased from brand storytelling (Golding, 2009). This is highlighted by a senior manager within Divine Chocolate who states: "Previously, there was no talk of Africa. Chocolate did not come from Africa, it came from the corner shop… We have taken people on a very long journey" (Golding, 2009, p. 164).

The choice to capitalise on deliberately positive storytelling is similarly used in the animal welfare sphere. In particular, animal welfare markers are used to generate narratives that animals in the supply chain live their lives 'in nature' and that production is 'natural' and environmentally friendly (Borkfelt, Kondrup, Röcklinsberg, Bjørkdahl & Gjerris, 2015). In their qualitative analysis of Danish meat and dairy brands Borkfelt et al. (2015) highlight that 'livestock' are commonly constructed in imagined geographies of pleasant green pastures where they are free to express natural behaviours such as grass grazing. By extension, food originating from this livestock can also be constructed as inherently natural and healthy. This interpretation differs from earlier scholarly research which suggests that these naturalising narratives are primarily employed to normalize animals in their limited 'assigned roles' as food, pets or wildlife (Serpell, 2003). However, Borkfelt et al.'s conclusions can be considered an extension of Serpell's. As livestock continues to be normalized as the natural choice for food, it lays the foundation for other positive descriptors (for humans) to be additionally employed over time without adverse responses from the public. This practice can be thought of in terms of 'grooming' the consumer by artfully gaining their trust, which in turn affords the companies' holding that trust the legitimacy to perpetuate harm.

As with animal welfare, corporate advertising of nutritious food similarly draws upon ideas of the natural and rural in the construction of narratives. This is highlighted by several scholars who argue that the commodification of organic foods in particular represent "a

corruption or co-optation of organic ideals" from the food democracy movement[1] (Johnston, Biro & MacKendrick, 2009). As part of this, Johnston et al., (2009) argues that companies employ organic labelling to construct place-based narratives of romanticized local food production which indicates that products are separate from the nutritional hazards of transnational food production. Johnston et al., (2009) further highlight how organic markers are commonly used to construct an 'Our Story' narrative which emphasizes the humble beginnings of the founders. These forms of nutritional descriptors and imagery construct the overarching narrative that organic brands are small-scale and local, and thus their products are healthier, and different from products produced by 'faceless corporations' who don't care about 'local's' health (Johnston et al., 2009). A similar narrative has been outlined by scholars who contend that organic egg marketing often utilizes "drawings instead of pictures [photographs] to enhance the 'old fashioned' style of the packaging, and to give an image of traditional values and a 'home-made' product" (Claeys, Swinnen & Abeele, 1995 as cited in Naspetti & Zanoli, 2011, p. 256). This kind of advertising once again eschews reference to the global food supply chain. Unfortunately beyond these studies (Claeys et al., 1995; Johnston et al., 2009) little research appears to have been conducted on the type of narratives that nutritionist markers are used to construct. Furthermore, both of these papers focus on organics, highlighting a gap in the literature for an exploration of narratives by other nutritional markers such as imagery of exercise.

Discrepancies Between Ethical Narratives and the Chocolate Supply Chain

Whilst narratives in advertising centralize on producing favourable depictions of corporations, these narratives are not always representative of the ethical nature of a company's actual business operations. This is noted by Humphreys and Brown (2008, p. 405) who argue that narratives are "specific, coherent, creative re-descriptions of the world" rather than wholly factual representations. These re-descriptions are employed to promote, normalize and legitimize specific ideas and practices (Rhodes & Brown, 2005). Certainly, despite the prevalence of ethical narratives that present the chocolate industry favourably, corporate supply chains are becoming increasingly recognised as a centralized hub for some

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[1] Food democracy is a movement that advocates for equal access to food through small scale initiatives such as farmers markets and community gardens.

of the worst forms of social, physical and environmental harm (Obeng, 2015; Bartley, 2020). The cocoa industry in particular was deemed "unethical" and "unfair" by Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Chief Executive of the Ghana Cocoa Board (*Confectionary News*, 2018).

Whilst the sustainability narrative is considered one of the most pervasive narratives in the contemporary food industry, the mass production of cocoa beans across Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana has generated mass levels of environmental degradation. To increase crop productivity many farmers have switched from full shade cocoa growing to full sun monocropping, a method that quickly depletes soil nutrients (Gyau, Smoot, Diby & Kouame, 2015). As a result cocoa trees must be planted on new soil every 20-30 years to maintain high yields (Ruf, 2001). This has led to unprecedented levels of deforestation, with more than 2.3 million hectares of the Upper Guinean Forests being cleared for cocoa trees between 1988 and 2007 (Kroeger, Koenig, Thomson & Streck, 2017). This is a trend that has been further seen across other areas of Côte d'Ivoire including Bouaflé, De and Koba - all of which have been deforested as a result of encroachment by farmers of cash crops such as cocoa (United Nations Environment Programme, 2015).

Of the narratives communicated in the use of socially responsible markers, the narrative that companies are problem solvers and not problem creators is possibly the most inconsistent with the reality of the chocolate industry. For those in chocolate producing communities, chocolate companies are at the root of a large volume of problems including child labour, forced labour, human trafficking and lack of fair pay for farmers (Fountain & Adams, 2018; LeBaron & Gore, 2019; Fairtrade Foundation, 2019). Several reports contend that in this context chocolate companies have not done enough to eradicate these issues and have missed numerous deadlines to do so (Fountain & Adams, 2018; *Green America*, 2019). In light of this, narratives that chocolate companies are doing good and are major players in fixing the world's social issues fall short, as do narratives that chocolate companies are taking urgent action to address global social problems.

The deliberately positive narrative of the farming community who always benefit fairly from their work is similarly at odds with the lived experiences of those who work on the agricultural end of the cocoa supply chain. Surveys conducted in Nigeria (Obinna & Okafor, 2016), Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana (Tulane Report, 2009) highlight that child labour is commonplace within the cocoa supply chain. As of 2018, 2.1 million children are estimated

to work on cocoa farms in a manner fitting definitions of child labour (Fountain & Adams, 2018). Injuries are commonplace, with 50.6% of children working on cocoa farms in Côte d'Ivoire and 54% of children working on cocoa farms in Ghana being identified as having experienced work-related injuries[2] in 2008/2009 (Tulane Report, 2009). Instances of forced labour in the case of children have similarly been identified within the cocoa supply chain (LeBaron & Gore, 2019). The 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report (U.S. Department of States, 2019) highlights instances of children being trafficked from Cameroon, Malta, Guinea-Bissau, Croatia and Costa-Rica to work on cocoa plantations in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, the Republic of the Congo and the Togolese Republic. In addition to these human rights abuses, the average farmer will also not receive fair compensation for their labour; the typical smallholder in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire is estimated to earn only $1 per day (Fairtrade Foundation, 2019; Feed the Future, 2019). This is well below the extreme poverty line of $1.90 per day (Fairtrade Foundation, 2019).

As with farmers, animals are likely to experience far greater negative impacts from the chocolate supply chain than is suggested in chocolate advertising. While none of the companies under study are transparent regarding where the milk for their chocolate is sourced, narratives of dairy cows living out their lives in idyllic green pastures are unlikely to be representative of dairy cows in the chocolate supply chain. Research in some countries highlights that up to 75% of cows are never able to go outside (Landbrug, 2013 as cited in Borkfelt et al., 2015). Furthermore, research suggests that dairy farms are becoming increasingly characterized by technology, with the use of automated milking systems and feeders becoming commonplace (Barkema, Von Keyserling, Kastelic, Lam, Luby, LeBlanc & Keefe et al., 2015). In addition, many dairy cows suffer from painful infections such as mastitis (inflammation of the mammary gland) and digitalis dermatitis (a hoof infection that leads to lameness) (Krogshede, 2013 as cited in Borkfelt et al., 2015). Each of these points represents a contrasting image to the animal welfare orientated narratives previously discussed. Cocoa agriculture also contributes significantly to the loss of wild animals. As shown in satellite imaging of parks and reserves in West Africa, illegal deforestation to make way for cocoa has facilitated the decline of a multitude of endangered species including elephants and chimpanzees (Higonnet, Hurowitz, Cole, Armstrong & James, 2018).

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[2] Injuries include burns, wounds, cuts, muscle pains, scratches, insect bites including those caused by carrying heavy loads and operating machetes (Tulane Report, 2009).

Unlike the other ethical markers used, it is difficult to assess whether any discrepancies exist between the business operations of chocolate companies and the organic narratives of small scale farm life and humble beginnings. Little research currently exists examining which chocolate companies, if any, falsely draw on these narratives to humanize the brand and appear to be smaller scale than they are. This is likely a result of the fact that the majority of global chocolate conglomerates do not consistently carry considerable ranges of organic chocolates.

Greenwashing Regulation and Enforcement

As noted in the previous section, ethical narratives do not always align with companies actual business operations, indicating the presence of greenwash. This raises questions about what is driving instances of greenwash and whether greenwash is being regulated to an appropriate degree. While discussing greenwashing in the context of the chocolate industry would provide the best research base for this thesis, greenwashing across the food industry has unfortunately gone under-researched – a limitation also noted by Nguyen, Yang, Nguyen, Johnson & Cao (2019). As a result this section explores the literature on the regulation and drivers of greenwash in business more generally.

The near unanimous consensus across the literature is that to date greenwashing has gone largely under-regulated (e.g. Nguyen et al., 2019; Lee & Cruz, 2018; Feinstein, 2013; Delmas & Burbanos, 2011; Dahl, 2010; Alves, 2009). This is clearly illustrated in an American context by Delmas and Burbanos (2011, p. 69) who note that:

> "The FTC [Federal Trade Commission] has indeed investigated and charged companies for environmental claims under Section 5 of the FTC Act[3], but these charges have been few and far between. According to the FTC website, such environmental cases totalled 37 from 1990 to 2000, zero from 2000 to 2009, and five in 2009. Thus, despite the existence of this regulation, enforcement has been limited."

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[3] Section 5 of the FTC Act declares that "unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce… [are] unlawful" including misleading environmental marketing claims (FTC, 2021, p. 18; FTC, n.d.). Within this context 'deceptive practices' are defined as "representation, omission or practice that is likely to mislead a consumer acting reasonably in the circumstances" (FTC, 2021, p. 19).

While it is clear from this that the United States is lax in the context of enforcing greenwashing regulation, it is unclear to what extent 'stricter' countries, identified by Delmas and Burbanos (2011) as Norway, the Netherlands, Australia and France, are enforcing this type of regulation. This is because information about the enforcement of greenwashing related laws/regulations have gone largely unpublished by governments and have faced little criminological inquiry (likely precisely because access to enforcement data is inaccessible). However, working off of Delmas and Burbanos's (2011) analysis it is also clear that in addition to being ill-enforced, punishments for greenwash are also non-punitive; violating section 5 of the FTC act carries a maximum penalty of only one year in prison or a fine of USD10,000.

In considering why greenwashing is going under-regulated the literature is similarly sparse, however, several key authors propose some notable reasons. In considering the ability of corporations to contribute to environmental harm unchecked Alves (2009, p. 1) argues that "the volunteer-led CSR paradigm of the last decades has both coddled and promoted the proliferation of green spin and greenwashing". Essentially Alves (2009) notes that a social context that allows corporations to freely choose whether or not they want to engage in corporate social responsibility has been legitimised. However, as Alves argues, avoiding the creation of harm should not be a matter of choice, particularly as companies are bound to act predominantly out of their own economic interest. As a result, Alves suggests a social shift away from the optimism that all or the majority of companies will voluntarily act altruistically.

In addition to this Vos (2009) proposes that lack of greenwash regulation and enforcement is in part a consequence of a larger corporate lobbying backlash against general environmental reform. In exemplifying this process Vos (2009) points to the 1990s lobby group Citizens for the Environment, an offshoot of a right wing consumer organization (Deal, 1993). Citizens for the Environment is said to have advocated for the "strict deregulation of corporations as the solution to environmental problems" (Deal, 1993, p. 12). This is of particular note because the group received funding from General Motors, Mobil and Toyota - all companies Vos (2009, p. 678) highlights as "greenwashing corporations". In consideration of this case Vos makes the argument that in some cases governments may be convinced by the lobbying suggestions of groups who appear 'green' but in actuality support the economic interests of key players in polluting industries.

Other researchers point to the growing sophistication of greenwashing over time as a key difficulty in regulation. In making this argument Parguel and Benoît-Moreau (2014) note that current regulation is primarily designed to address 'claim greenwashing' or instances when brands make false/misleading verbal or textual claims. This is because with evidence to the contrary these claims can easily be exposed as fraudulent. In contrast however, Paraguel and Benoît-Moreau (2014, p. 1) argue that current regulation is not easily applicable to cases of 'executional greenwashing' - "a specific form of greenwashing that relies on executional elements evoking nature (e.g., an advertising photograph depicting a forest)" to "trigger ecological inferences". Unlike claim greenwashing it is not easy to regulate as it is not an instance of explicit falsehood, but rather works to indirectly imply the ethical nature of a product to the consumer.

Unfortunately, outside of these studies little research could be located that specifically examines why regulation on greenwashing remains inadequate. This feeds into the choice to explore the listed reasons and propose additional reasons for the under-regulation of greenwash later in this thesis.

Summary

In summary, this literature review has identified green-cultural criminology and food crime as the key theoretical lenses through which to conduct research on food related harms and environmental harms perpetuated and obscured by media texts. The literature has also provided a basis for considering the wide variety of different elements that may be used to communicate ethicality including nature imagery, references to philanthropy, farmers stories, health star ratings and animal welfare imagery. This review has further provided a selection of narratives and themes that should be considered in the primary data of this study including sustainability, companies as problem solvers, deliberate positivism, naturalness and romanticized local food production. In considering where discrepancies may lie between narratives and company action the literature has highlighted unstainable farming, deforestation, overuse of water, forced labour, child labour, human trafficking, low pay, poverty and animal abuse as key areas of concern. The identification of these discrepancies aligns with the consensus of researchers who suggest that greenwashing is under regulated because of a voluntary social responsibility paradigm, corporate lobbying and the growing sophistication of greenwash techniques. Gaps in the literature have also been identified.

These include the identification and exploration of: narratives in the food supply chain; social responsibility narratives; the communication of animal welfare paradoxes in the food sector; the communication of nutritional ethicality beyond organics and the lack of greenwashing regulations.

Chapter Three - Methodology

As explored in the literature review, ethical narratives addressing environmental, social and ethical action are abundant in modern food advertising. Despite this, major issues such as environmental degradation, poor treatment of farmers and animals, and negative health outcomes still exist within the chocolate supply chain. This highlights a mismatch between what some companies say and do in regards to their environmental, social and ethical action.

In consideration of these findings, this thesis aims to explore the extent to which the known harms of the chocolate industry are erased from advertising in favour of green, social and ethical messages. Exploring the frequency and content of these narratives and how they may be connected to a lack of government regulation are similarly important aims. It is intended that these research findings will contribute to an understanding of how harms within the transnational food industry may be masked and perpetuated by greenwashing. It can be described as a critical green cultural criminological analysis of food marketing narratives.

Epistemology

That being so, the research pertains to a constructionist epistemology. Constructionism holds that there is no way to observe and discover the world as it is (Crotty, 2003). Instead, the world is made up of understandings that are forged in the context of interaction between people – they are *constructed* meanings rather than objective facts. A constructionist epistemology, in turn, supports qualitative methodological inquiry. To study meanings, a researcher must explore and interpret how those meanings are made meaningful by a sample of participants and/or in the material phenomena created in social settings. While the questions of this research are mostly oriented toward interpreting meanings, they also demand inclusion of a quantitative component by way of a frequency count (as justified in the previous chapter). Thus, this thesis considers the following research questions:

- How frequently do chocolate companies use 'ethical markers' such as environmentalism, social responsibility, farmer welfare, animal welfare, nutritionism and non-specific ethical claims in their marketing on Instagram?

- What types of narratives are being constructed and communicated through the use of ethical markers?

- Where do harmful discrepancies exist between what is known about chocolate companies and the narratives they produce?

- Is corporate greenwashing going under-regulated, and if so what processes are allowing this to occur?

Based on these research questions, the purpose of this chapter is to justify and outline ideal methods for answering each of these research questions. This discussion is applied to the entire process of collecting and analysing the data including why this research design was chosen; why specific companies were selected for analysis; why Instagram was chosen as the most appropriate platform to extract data, as well as the logic behind the selected Instagram accounts and sampling methods. Definitions for each of the concepts in the coding schedule, an overview of the reliability of the data and the limitations of the selected method are also addressed

Research Design

This thesis will conduct a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative thematic analysis of Nestlé, Mars and Whittakers online advertising content by examining posts from each company's Instagram account. These choices have been informed by the wider literature on greenwashing, corporate social responsibility, the cocoa supply chain and corporate harm. Previous studies in these areas have primarily taken a mixed approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods (see Kotzab, Seuring, Müller & Reiner, 2005; Kilian & Hennigs, 2014; Siano et al., 2017; Gschoesser & Plank, 2019). This thesis will also draw from a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology as this will best address the proposed research questions that investigate both the frequency of ethical markers and the narratives they construct. Furthermore, including a quantitative element also answers a call by other criminologists (Lynch, Barrett, Stretesky & Long, 2017) to remedy the neglect of quantitative methods in green criminology.

With regards to analysis, the literature demonstrates that options are broad and highly dependent on the specific aim of the researcher and the type of medium being studied. Options here included content, discourse, visual semiotic, narrative, critical, thematic and framing analysis (See Proto, Malandrino & Supino, 2007; Plec & Pettenger, 2012; DeLuca-

Acconi, 2015; Siano et al., 2017; Andreoli, Crespo & Minciotti, 2017; Kassinis & Panayiotou, 2018; Gschoesser & Plank, 2019). A quantitative content analysis was chosen as it allowed marker frequency to be quantified - addressing the first research question. A qualitative thematic analysis was also chosen as it allowed for narratives to be identified and explored - addressing the second research question. To address the third research question, public information about each company was applied to the outcomes of the thematic analysis. Finally, to address the fourth research question, public information about how governments have constructed and enforced food media legislation are considered alongside a critical discussion of the ways that the current market has shifted the responsibility for ethical food production from corporations onto to the consumer.

Company Selection

Narrowing in on specific companies for a case study, particularly those who have previously been involved in an environmental or supply chain based scandal (for example BP, Volkswagen and Hershey) has emerged as an orthodox starting point in the study of greenwashing in the last 10 years (see Lalwani, Nunes, Chicksand & Boojihawon, 2018; Sianoa, Vollerolla, Contea & Amabile, 2017; Kassinis & Panayiotou, 2017; Plec & Pettenger, 2012). As a result, this thesis has chosen to similarly centralize its focus around three specific corporations - Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers, all of which are international companies who have been accused of contributing to environmental harm and victimization.

Mars is a significant player in the world chocolate sector, controlling 14.4% of the global market in 2016 (Statista, 2017) through the sale of products including the Mars Bar, M&M's, Snickers, Galaxy, Bounty, Twix, and Maltesers. Despite the scrutiny associated with conducting unethical practices as a global business, Mars is heavily associated with such practices. For example, in 2017 Laurel Sutherlin, a spokesman for the Rainforest Action Network (RAN) asserted that Mars (as well as Nestlé and Hershey) had failed to stop using conflict palm oil from Indonesia despite pledging to stop by 2015 (*The Guardian*, 2017). It was further argued by Sutherlin that "For too many years, Nestlé, Mars and Hershey have cherry-picked their [palm oil] targets and then moved the goalposts when they don't achieve them" (*The Guardian*, 2017).

With a sizable range of chocolates including KitKat, Aero, Smarties, Yorkies, Scorched Almonds, Rolo, Mirage, Big Turk and Milkybar Nestlé also holds a substantial share of the market at 10.2% in 2016 (Statista, 2016). However, despite this, they too have recently been accused of environmental harm, with a class action lawsuit being filed against the brand in April 2019 by consumers. As part of this lawsuit, the primary complainant Renee Walker alleged that Nestlé's use of the terms "sustainably sourced", "certified" and "supportive of farmers" was false and misleading (Walker v. Nestlé USA, Inc). These claims allegedly emerged on the basis that Nestlé had been implicated in processes of child and slave labour and their supply chain had little environmental regulation in place, facilitating the destruction of rainforests in Côte d'Ivoire (Walker v. Nestlé USA, Inc).

While not a global conglomerate like Mars or Nestlé, Whittakers was selected to provide a comparative overview of chocolate marketing from a New Zealand owned and operated company. Furthermore, this brand has also been suggested as a potential contributor to child labour. This was seen in June 2019 when the brand received backlash following the publication of a *Stuff* article which alleged that Whittakers "cannot confirm their supply chains are free of child labour", with the article further noting that Whittakers sources their sugar from Thailand. According to the 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report the sugarcane industry in Thailand is considered at high risk for labour violations (U.S Department of State, 2019). This is a finding that is supported by a 2017 report by the International Labour Organization which found that the Thai sugarcane sector utilized child labour on both smallholder farms and large commercial plantations.

Platform & Account Selection

In selecting areas for analysis, the majority of scholarly work on greenwashing acquires primary data by systematically collecting media texts produced by corporations[4] (see Plec & Pettenger, 2012; DeLuca-Acconi, 2015; Sianoa et al., 2017; Kassinis & Panayiotou, 2018; Yoo & Lee, 2018). This thesis will align with previous research by focusing on media texts as the primary element of its case study. It also will contribute to the sparse but emerging literature on corporate social media (see Gschoesser & Plank, 2019) and post-scandal corporate media (see Lyon & Montgomery, 2015). Instagram has been selected as the ideal

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[4] Media texts include press releases, print advertising, company reports, company website imagery and television advertising.

way of generating a sample because corporate Instagram pages often contain snapshots of companies' wider marketing campaigns (Russman & Svensson, 2016). Instagram also serves as a major point of contact between brands and the general public, with 90% of the one billion-plus active users on the platform following at least one business account (*SproutSocial*, 2020).

Both Nestlé and Mars operate multiple Instagram accounts and thus required a single account to be selected for analysis. The account 'Marsglobal' was selected to represent Mars in this analysis because it was the account with the highest follower count (14,900 as of July 2020), meaning it had the greatest communication reach. The account 'Nestlé' was selected to represent Nestlé as this account had the largest number of followers (245,000 as of July 2020).

Sample Overview

In theory, best practice would involve taking a census sample which would include every post published by the three accounts or a simple random sample (Riffe & Freitag, 1997). A census sample was ruled out as time restraints would not have allowed for all 1478 texts to be coded. Similarly, the large number of posts produced by Nestlé meant that using a simple random sample would have also caused time issues due to the sheer number of posts that would have had to be labelled and counted out manually.

The initial sampling method employed was a consecutive unit purposive sample whereby every post (starting from the newest) was included in the sample until the sample size was achieved. This method allowed data to be coded quickly and accurately and provided a good overview of the most recent posts (2019-2020). However, this method generated notable issues in representativeness when collecting the data[5]. As a result, the sample selection process was revised in favour of a random systematic sample whereby a random starting point was determined (using a random number generator) and each successive post chosen was at a fixed interval from the starting post. The random starting point meant that every post

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[5] For example, the initial sample from Mars spanned 13 months meaning it included June twice. This was notable because June is pride month and Mars posted considerably more LGBT directed diversity posts during this time. As a result pride content was featured in the sample about twice as much as it would have if the sample only spanned 12 months

had an equal chance of being included in this sample, while the systematic nature of this method made it more efficient than alternative options.

The initial total sample size of posts from each company was large and varied considerably (146 – 1059). As a result, a uniform sample size of 100 posts from each company was selected to ensure the sample was not dominated by any particular company. The number 100 was chosen as this provided a sizable overview of each company's Instagram content whilst considering the time constraints of one person collecting and analysing data. To generate the periodic intervals required between each post, the total number of posts for each company were divided by the desired sample size.

Coding Schedule

Each of the qualifying Instagram posts was then coded utilizing a coding schedule. This coding schedule allowed data to be gathered for a quantitative content analysis, which Holsti (1969, p. 14) defines as a technique for "making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages". Completing one coding sheet (Appendix A) for each post allowed 'ethical marker' frequencies to be numerically identified. The following ethical markers comprised the coding sheet, and were selected deductively based on concepts flagged in the literature and inductively based on observations of the data set:

Environmentalism

The environmentalism category includes elements of advertising that indicate that a brand/product has features that produce favourable outcomes for the environment or is less environmentally harmful than alternatives. This category encompasses references to air quality, water quality, waste/pollution reduction, circular waste/recyclability, maintaining forested areas, biodiversity amongst natural flora, maintenance of ecology and reduction of climate change. Environmental descriptors, environmental labelling, environmental imagery/sound/story and environmental action have been identified as ways that companies communicate environmentalism.

Environmental Descriptors are descriptions that paint a brand as environmentally friendly but do not draw from legally defined terms or official labelling/certification. Examples may include descriptions such as 'green', 'eco', 'energy-efficient, 'biodiverse' and

'environmentally conscious' or hashtags such as #ClimateAction, #PledgeForPlanet, #WaterStewardship.

Environmental Labelling are labels/symbols that indicate environmentalism using legally defined terms and official labelling or certification. Examples may include a Rainforest Alliance Certification, recycling labels, carbon emission labels and energy star ratings.

Environmental Image/Sound/Story are elements that visually, audibly or through narrative indicate environmentalism. Visually, examples may include depictions (photographs, illustrations etc.) of landscapes, trees, leaves, the sun, natural bodies of water, wind turbines, cocoa beans, recycling processes, flowers, coral, the earth, waste clean-ups or a predominantly green colour scheme (as explored by Kassinis & Panayiotou, 2018). Other examples may include depictions of issues such as pollution and deforestation being reduced or audio indicating a healthy environment such as birdsong, insect sounds or running water.

Environmental Action can be defined as the brand outlining *specific* instances of positive environmental action they have taken. Examples may include discussion of a brands shift towards a circular plastic economy, reduction in carbon emissions, beach clean-up participation or actions taken to prevent climate change.

Social Responsibility

The social responsibility category includes elements of advertising that indicate that the brand/product is beneficial for a specific demographic or community or society as a whole. In defining the scope of these demographics/communities, this category will refer to examples within chocolate consuming communities (i.e. those who purchase chocolate) rather than chocolate producing communities (i.e. farmers). This thesis chooses to exclude environmentalism from the umbrella of social responsibility on the basis that it differs in focus by prioritising the environment rather than people. Furthermore, codes used to identify environmentalism and social responsibility in previous research vary significantly (for example Maignan & Ralston, 2002 as compared to Grillo et al., 2008), making the two difficult to assess under the same category. Under this subsection workplace diversity, monetary support, volunteering and codes of ethics have been identified as ways that companies communicate social responsibility. These categories were developed based on codes by Maignan and Ralston (2002) and Angermuller and Schwerk (2004) who both examined the presence of CSR advertising on an international scale.

Diversity refers to the discussion of a brand's efforts to generate equity in opportunity and reduce discrimination as it relates to race/ethnicity, sex/gender, sexual orientation or disabilities etc. both inside and outside of the workplace. Examples of diversity may include references to advancing gender and racial equality within the workplace for women or people of colour e.g. through hashtags such as #WomenInStem and #InternationalWomansDay. Diversity may also include promoting jobs and positive working conditions to specific groups who have traditionally been afforded fewer opportunities in the workplace such as youth, working parents and those further down the supply chain (excluding farmers). Lastly this category may include support for social movements that trailblaze and promote equal treatment for minorities such as Pride and Black Lives Matter.

Monetary Support refers to a brand's discussion of its efforts to support the community through direct monetary means or through providing free resources. Examples of this may include monetary/resource donations, scholarships, grants, gifts, founding charitable foundations and funding programs within the community (Maignan & Ralston, 2002; Angermuller & Schwerk, 2004).

Volunteering refers to a brand's discussion of its staff's efforts to volunteer within the community. Examples may include discussion of paid annual leave provided for staff to volunteer (Humphreys & Brown, 2008) and depictions of staff volunteering.

Codes of Ethics refer to a brand's discussion of the steps they have taken to ensure positive and ethical conduct in all business proceedings. Examples may include references to ethical integrity, brand values and employee codes of conduct.

Farmer Welfare

The farmer welfare category indicates that the brand/product produces favourable outcomes for farmers. In this context, favourable outcomes can refer to economic, social, cultural, legal, medical and psychological effects. In defining the scope of this category, reference to those in farming communities more generally, for example, the children of farmers, have also been included. Based on the literature, welfare descriptors, welfare labelling, welfare imagery/sound/story and welfare action have been identified as ways that companies communicate farmer welfare.

Welfare Descriptors are textual descriptions that present the brand/product as having a positive impact on farmer welfare but do not draw from legally defined terms or official labelling or certification. Examples may include references to farmer equality, resilience, happiness or quality of life, for example, "helping farmers shine".

Welfare Labelling are labels/symbols that indicate farmer welfare using legally defined terms and official labelling or certification. Examples may include labels such as 'Fairtrade', 'Rainforest Alliance Certified' or 'Equal Exchange' which refer to a specific set of standards a brand must meet regarding fair working conditions for farmers.

Welfare Imagery/Sound/Story are elements that indicate farmer welfare through visual, audible or narrative means. Visual examples of welfare imagery/sound/story may include photographs, illustrations, paintings or videos of farmers that employ a deliberately positive frame (e.g. smiling, laughing or other indicators that the work is enjoyable) as outlined by Dogra (2006). Other examples may include testimony by farmers (or those who have worked closely with them) discussing how their quality of life has improved, as outlined by Golding (2006; 2008).

Welfare Action refers to a brand's discussion of the *specific* action they have undertaken to ensure that cocoa farming communities have access to necessary resources, fair compensation for their labour, good working conditions or social/political/financial backing within the industry to secure farmers rights. Examples of welfare action may include discussion of pay increases for farmers, schools being built, vaccinations being offered within the community (as outlined by Nicholls and Opal, 2005) or support for specific laws which will increase farmers quality of life.

Animal Welfare

The animal welfare category indicates the brand/product produces favourable outcomes for animals. In this context, favourable outcomes for animals are defined using three basic paradigms outlined by Borkfelt et al., (2015) which broadly include a) the health and biological welfare of the animal; b) the mental welfare of the animal and c) the environmental access of the animal (its ability to engage with its natural habitat/space and carry out natural behaviours). In defining the scope of animals that will be included in this analysis land animals, birds, insects and marine life are all included.

Welfare Descriptors are descriptions that present the brand/product as having a positive impact on animal welfare but do not draw from legally defined terms or official labelling/certification. Examples may include textual references to animals living an idealised farm life or references to animals as 'happy' or 'looked after' etc.

Welfare Labelling are labels/symbols that indicate animal welfare using legally defined terms and official labelling/certification. Examples may include labelling such as 'vegan', 'vegetarian', 'organic', 'grass fed', 'hormone free' or 'free-range', as well as

certifications such as the 'Cruelty-Free' bunny, 'Certified Humane' and the 'Global Animal Partnership'.

Welfare Imagery/Sound/Story are elements that visually, audibly or through narrative indicate animal welfare. Visually, examples may include depictions (photographs, illustrations, anthropomorphic cartoons etc.) of animals thriving in idyllic natural environments (identified by Borkfelt et al., 2015). Other examples may include stories exploring animal-friendly farming techniques, how animals are raised in idealised farm environments, or the use of positive animal noises such as birdsong. Shots of animals without environmental context are also included when the animal appears to be happy or content.

Welfare Action refers to a brand's discussion of the *specific* action they have undertaken to ensure that the welfare of animals is maintained. Examples may include discussion of animal welfare audits on farms (as discussed by Norton, 2017), financial support for endangered species charities and techniques employed to increase biodiversity and prevent habitat loss.

Nutritionism

The nutritionism category indicates that the brand/product produces favourable outcomes in regards to nutrition. Favourable outcomes refer to positive health, nourishment and growth. Nutritional labelling, nutritional descriptors and reduction descriptors have been identified as concepts that companies employ to communicate nutritionism.

Nutritional Labelling are labels/symbols that indicate nutrition using legally defined terms and official labelling/certification. Examples may include certifications such as 'Health Star Ratings' or the 'Heart Foundation Approved' tick, as well as labelling that discusses *specific* quantities of calories, energy, saturated fat, salt, sugars, protein, sodium, carbohydrates and fibre (typically under the headline 'Nutrition' or 'Nutritional Facts').

Nutritional Density Descriptors are descriptions that present the product as healthy but do not draw from legally defined terms or official labelling/certification. Examples may include descriptions such as 'healthy', 'health conscious' or 'better for you', "essential vitamins", #health, #energy and #veg (included as campaigns such as 5+ a day in New Zealand and Partnership for a Healthier America in the United States heavily emphasize the importance of vegetables for good health to consumers). Non-specific discussion of increased nutritional value such as '20% more protein' (20% more protein than what? Earlier editions of the same product? Similar products by other brands?) can also be included in this category.

Reduction Descriptors are descriptions that present the product as healthy by drawing on a discussion of the reduction or removal of 'unhealthy' ingredients. Examples may include "now with less sugar", "30% less salt", "reduced-fat", "sugar-free" etc.

Nutritional Action refers to a brand's discussion of the specific action they have undertaken to increase the availability of nutritious food. Examples may include discussion of school lunch programmes, the introduction of cheaper/free foodstuffs in impoverished areas, assembling meal kits, nutritional education programmes and steps taken to improve food security.

Ethical Not Otherwise Specified

The 'ethical not otherwise specified' category indicates that the brand/product implies ethicality in a way that does not fit into the aforementioned categories. This code was employed when a brand utilized positive language about their ethics that was not specific enough to fit into one of the existing categories. Examples include "proud to do the right thing", "support for wellbeing globally", "living our values", "nourishing wellbeing", #SocialGood, #GoodLife and #EthicalAdvertising.

General

In addition to these categories, a general coding section was included to record general data about the posts and make them identifiable later in the research process. The first category under this section was '*post identification number*', where each post was given a unique number ranging from 1-300, this category allowed for easy tracking of the number of posts coded. Following this a '*description*' section allowed for a summary of each post for fast visual identification. Finally, a '*source*' section allowed for easy tracking of the company each post originated from with Mars=1, Nestlé=2, Whittakers=3.

Quantitative Pilot

Before the main sample was coded, a pilot was performed with both the primary coder and a secondary coder. This was done by selecting the 30 most recent posts (10 from each company) and coding these individually based on a draft version of the coding schedule. From here, differences between each coder's coding were assessed and each coder presented their reasoning for their coding until one outcome could be agreed upon by both coders. The majority of the categories in the coding schedule were included inductively based on

preliminary observations as well as deductively from findings from the literature. However, the pilot highlighted a need for two added categories. The first of these was 'Nutritional Action', whilst the second was the 'Ethical Not Otherwise Specified' category. The pilot also provided an opportunity to include additional tangible examples in the coding schedule and highlighted a need for an index of potentially unclear terms and their associated categories (added into the coding schedule).The following inclusions and clarifications also emerged out of discussions and initial disagreements between the primary coder and the test coder: hashtags, emojis, descriptions and pictures should all be considered; basic research should be conducted on any label or certification if the coder is unsure which category/s it could be coded as; any image, sound, label or certification should be reasonably identifiable to the average post viewer (e.g. not considerably blurry); plans for future action should be included in action categories.

Quantitative Data & Statistical Tools

Once the quantitative data was collected it was entered into SPSS. Frequency tables were produced showing how often each marker was used overall. Frequency crosstabs showing how often each marker was used by each brand were also produced. Chi-square test and Fisher exact tests were also used.

Chi-Square Test

A chi-square test is used to test whether a significant relationship exists between two nominal variables. This test was used to assess the relationship between Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers and all ethical markers when an expected count of five or more was present (based on the recommendations of Kim, 2017). This is because chi-square tests use an approximation approach, which is best suited to larger expected counts (Kim, 2017). The alpha level used to determine significance for all chi-square tests listed was .05 based on recommendations by Kim (2017)[6].

Fisher Exact Test

A Fisher exact test is used to test whether a significant relationship exists between two categorical variables. This test was used to assess the statistical relationship between the brands and all the ethical markers when an expected count of less than five was present on

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[6] Outcomes higher than .05 meant that the null hypothesis (that there is a relationship between two variables) was accepted as this indicates there is a 95% chance of correctly concluding a relationship exists when it does.

the recommendations of Kim (2017). This is because the Fisher exact test is a more appropriate choice for smaller sample sizes as this test uses an exact approach that is more accurate for smaller samples (Kim, 2017). The significance level was also .05.

Inter-Rater Reliability

After all 300 posts in the sample were coded by the primary coder, the secondary coder from the pilot was brought back to test inter-rater reliability (IIR). In outlining a suitable scope for an IIR sample Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Bracken (2004) suggest that 10% of the total units is generally acceptable. As a result, 30 posts were selected from the total sample of 300 using a random number generator which was set to the same range as the post identification numbers (1-300). For the primary coder's IIR sample this meant retrieving the 30 coding sheets that corresponded to the random number generator's outputs as they had already been completed. The secondary coder's IIR sample was gathered by first giving the secondary coder an updated version of the coding schedule to read and explaining all changes. They were then given hyperlinks to each of the 30 selected posts (the same ones coded in the primary coder's IIR sample). After following each link and viewing the subsequent post, the secondary coder was asked to fill out a coding sheet for each one.

From here, the 30 coding sheets completed by each coder were evaluated using Cohen's kappa. This works by calculating the agreement between two raters while factoring in the probability of them agreeing by chance (McHugh, 2012). Cohen's Kappa was selected as it is considered a robust measure of IIR for nominal data (Warrens, 2015). In interpreting the results of Cohen's Kappa this thesis followed a guide presented by Landis and Koch (1977) whose system of agreement ranges from <0.00 (poor) to 1.00 (perfect). In cases where a rater gave the same answer in a category for every post a constant error was produced and Kappa could not be calculated. In these cases, a simple agreement percentage was used. Both of these figures for each marker are depicted in Table 1.

In the environmentalism category, kappa ranged from 0.672 (substantial) to 0.889 (almost perfect). In the social responsibility category two markers produced a kappa of 1.00 (perfect), while the simple agreement for the remaining markers ranged from 86.6-100%. For farmer welfare, one marker produced a kappa of 1.00 (perfect), while the simple agreement for the remaining markers ranged from 96.6-100%. In the animal welfare category, kappa ranged from 0.783 (substantial) to 0.902 (almost perfect), while the simple agreement for the

remaining two markers ranged from 93.3-96.6%. In the nutritionism category, kappa ranged from 0.651 (substantial) to 1.00 (perfect), while the simple agreement for the remaining marker was 100%. Finally, the ENOS category produced a kappa of 0.510 (moderate). These figures suggest that every marker demonstrates an acceptable level of reliability.

Table 1. Agreement and Cohen's Kappa for Each Coding Category

Category	Simple Agreement Percentage	Cohen's Kappa	Significance
Environmental Descriptor	96.6%	κ=0.889	<.001
Environmental Labelling	96.6%	κ=0.870	<.001
Environmental Image/Sound/Story	96.6%	κ=0.933	<.001
Environmental Action	90.0%	κ=0.672	<.001
Support for Diversity	100%	κ=1.000	<.001
Monetary Support	100%	κ=1.000	<.001
Volunteering	86.6%	κ=constant error	N/A
Code of Ethics	100%	κ=constant error	N/A
Farmer Welfare Descriptor	100%	κ=constant error	N/A
Farmer Welfare Labelling	96.6%	κ=constant error	N/A
Farmer Welfare Image	100%	κ=1.000	<.001
Farmer Welfare Action	96.6%	κ=constant error	N/A
Animal Welfare Descriptor	93.3%	κ=constant error	N/A
Animal Welfare Labelling	96.6%	κ= constant error	N/A
Animal Welfare Image/Sound/Story	96.6%	κ= 0.902	<.001
Animal Welfare Action	96.6%	κ= 0.783	<.001
Nutritional Labelling	100%	κ= 1.00	<.001
Nutritional Density Descriptors	96.6%	κ= 0.651	<.001
Nutritional Reduction Descriptors	100%	κ= constant error	N/A
Nutritional Action	100%	κ= 1.000	<.001
Ethical Not Otherwise Specified	83.3%	κ= 0.510	.005

Thematic Analysis

Upon the completion of the content analysis, a qualitative thematic analysis was conducted. Thematic analysis is a method that allows existing patterns to be systematically identified within a data set and then analysed and discussed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the context of thematic analysis a theme "captures something important about the data about the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set." (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). This thesis primarily follows the recommendations for thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006 & 2012) as this method, in particular, centralizes around the narrative that each theme constructs. Minor adjustments were made to ensure the method was applicable to media texts.

In alignment with the aforementioned recommendations, the first stage revolved around generating and becoming familiar with the data set. As the research scope was limited to content with ethical elements, the sample for this analysis was every text that was identified as having at least one ethical marker during the content analysis phase. The only exception to this were posts that contained only the ENOS marker, as this category was primarily comprised of short hashtags, which did not provide enough data to extract meaningful patterns. From here photographs of each post in the sample were taken and recorded. If a post involved video or multiple photos, any frame involving an ethical marker was recorded in a separate photograph. This led to 626 photographs being taken. Due to the large volume of photographs, each was split into its respective category and each category was examined for potential themes.

The second stage was the creation of the initial codes. This involved going over each photograph and noting down elements that stood out. Some codes originated solely from observations in the data set. Others originated from concepts posed in the literature, which were then identified in the data set.

The third stage revolved around looking for themes, which involved the same mix of inductive and deductive identification. At this stage, some themes were also grouped to form potential subthemes.

The fourth stage was review and refinement of the initial themes. To do this, possible themes were examined to ensure they demonstrated a consistent and logical pattern in the sample. This involved ensuring there were enough posts to construct a pattern, and ensuring that all the posts filed under each theme were relatively homogenous.

The fifth step was naming and defining each theme. This involved encapsulating the core ideas of each theme in a definition, providing examples of the theme and outlining the narrative the theme constructed.

The final step was fleshing out the analysis. This involved drawing from a constructionist perspective which relates to how "events, realities, meanings, experiences... are the effect of a range of discourses operating within society" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the context of this analysis, a constructionist lens was employed by exploring how contemporary societal context and corporate assumptions about consumer preferences work to construct specific media narratives and obscure harm.

Limitations

While this chapter has outlined what is perceived to be the best method for answering the research questions it is not without limitation. Perhaps the most notable limitation is that this method did not allow for an exhaustive list of ethical themes and thus narratives to be presented (for example in the nutritionism category the theme food democracy was noticed in the sample but not included in this thesis). The exclusion of some themes was due to the high volume of data in the thematic analysis sample and the substantial amount of analytical detail recommended by Clarke and Braun, which meant including all themes would have dramatically exceeded word limit restrictions. As a result, only two to three themes (the most distinct and pervasive ones) could be explored per coding category, meaning that other instances of either greenwashing or genuine eco-marketing used by the three companies went unexplored.

An additional limitation is that while content analysis can demonstrate the frequency of a media message, it cannot demonstrate the social impact of that message (Macnamara, 2005). As a result, the actual effect of the different markers on consumers - arguably one of the most important pieces of the puzzle - could not be explored with any validity (Newbold, Boyd-Barrett & Van Den Bulck, 2002).

The chosen method of addressing the third research question also presents some notable limitations. Namely, highlighting discrepancies between corporate action and media narratives resulted in an overreliance on often unverifiable third party information. For example, news articles may note that a company has been accused of harm by an industry professional or organization but may be unable to provide verifiable proof that harm did

indeed occur. This, however, is an issue that is difficult to avoid in this area of research as it can be particularly difficult to connect environmental harm to its origin.

Summary

To summarise, content analysis and thematic analysis were chosen as the primary methods as they best addressed research questions one and two both of which required self-collected data. Research question three was deemed best answered by applying public information about each company to any identified narratives. While research question four was considered best answered through an application of the literature on greenwashing, state interests and crimes of the powerful. Mars and Nestlé were chosen because of their status as industry giants, while Whittakers was included to explore possible differences and similarities between global and 'local' brands. The chosen accounts were selected because of their comparatively large follower counts. A systematic sampling method was adopted as it allowed for a random and representative sample while accommodating for time and 'manpower' constraints. Definitions and examples were provided for all 21 codes in the coding schedule. A quantitative pilot was conducted to create consistent guidelines for coding. Frequency tables and crosstabs were chosen as they clearly illustrate the results of the quantitative data. Chi-square and Fisher exact tests were chosen as they reveal possible industry trends as well as instances where one brand is using a marker in an unorthodox way compared to their competitors. IIR was demonstrated through Cohen's kappa and percentage agreement. Limitations were also outlined.

Chapter Four - Instagrammable Environmentalism

This chapter and the next two results chapters will follow the same structure, beginning with the results of the quantitative content analysis under the heading 'frequency'. This section will include an overview of the frequency of each marker with an explanatory discussion of the results in tables 2 and 3. Two forms of statistical analysis are employed to determine which companies are using particular markers more/less than expected compared to their counterparts. The possible reasons behind this are suggested and the implications of the discovered frequencies are explored. Within this chapter environmental descriptors, labelling, image/sound/story and action are examined under the frequency heading.

The second half of each results chapter will consist of a qualitative thematic analysis under the heading 'themes and narratives' which identifies key themes and subsequent narratives from the data set. Within these sections examples of each theme are presented, each theme's implications and audience are explored, and any recorded instance where a brand's actions are at odds with the narrative they are communicating is presented. Within this chapter, the themes 'explicit environmentalism', 'straight from the earth' and 'untouched nature' are explored.

Frequency

The purpose of this section in Chapters Four, Five and Six is to answer the following research question:

- How frequently do chocolate companies use 'ethical markers' such as environmentalism, social responsibility, farmer welfare, animal welfare and nutritionism in their marketing on Instagram?

The results for this question are presented, discussed and interpreted by drawing on the frequency data provided in tables 2 and 3.

Total Frequency

Table 2. Total Frequency and Percentage of Environmental Markers

		Count	Table N %
Environmental Descriptors	No	251	83.7%
	Yes	49	16.3%
Environmental Labelling	No	292	97.3%
	Yes	8	2.7%
Environmental Image	No	198	66.0%
	Yes	102	34.0%
Environmental Action	No	273	91.0%
	Yes	27	9.0%

As shown in table 2, out of a total sample of 300, environmentalism markers were used a total of 186 times or 62% of the time. This makes environmentalism by far the most frequently employed of the five main categories at more than double the rate of the next commonly used category (explored in Chapter Six). Environmental image/sound/story (n=102) was by far the most commonly used way for brands to show their commitments to the environment and was also the most frequently used marker across all of the 21 sub-categories, being utilized in more than a third (34%) of all media texts in the sample. The overwhelming prominence of this marker suggests that brands are heavily relying on environmental imagery to build up the prominence and strengthen the legitimacy of environmental narratives. This finding aligns with Gacek's (2020, p. 156) hypothesis that "in trying to attract new consumers and grow their base, businesses attach an aesthetic quality to their goods" - in this case, an environmentally ethical aesthetic quality. Despite being far less frequently used when compared to environmental image/sound/story, environmental descriptors (n=49) were the second most commonly used marker of the 21 sub-categories, being employed 16% of the time. This is unsurprising considering that both of these markers can be assumed to require less time, effort and money from the brand compared to environmental action or (high quality) labelling. However, interestingly, despite the investments required by brands to carry out environmental action (n=27) this marker was also fairly commonly used, coming in sixth overall. As expected because of the systematic overhaul and strict standards that may be required to engage in some labelling schemes (Prag, Lyon & Russilio, 2016), environmental labelling (n=8) was far less common than the other

markers in the environmentalism category. Despite this, environmental labelling still emerged as the most frequently used form of labelling across the entire sample.

Table 3. Frequency of Environmentalism Markers Utilized by Each Company

		Mars Count	Nestle Count	Whittaker's Count
			Company	
Environmental Descriptors	No	74	77	100
	Yes	26	23	0
Environmental Labelling	No	99	94	99
	Yes	1	6	1
Environmental Image	No	67	73	58
	Yes	33	27	42
Environmental Action	No	84	89	100
	Yes	16	11	0

Environmental Descriptors

The chi-square revealed that the relationship between brand and the use of environmental descriptors was statistically significant (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 29.612, p = <.001) with Mars (n=26) and Nestlé (n=23) being more likely than Whittakers (n=0) to employ this indicator of environmentalism in their Instagram content. The result that Mars and Nestlé used this marker far more suggests that environmental descriptors may be a more important part of the advertising toolbox for larger companies. This may be because larger companies (particularly global multinationals) are both more likely to have a greater negative environmental impact by virtue of their magnitude, and attract greater environmental scrutiny because of their prominence. As a result, larger companies may feel the need to be more proactive in rebuffing negative environmental connotations. Research demonstrates that textual environmental claims (even more so than environmental visuals) are salient in improving consumers' attitudes towards adverts and companies, as well as increasing the likelihood of purchase intention (Xue & Muralidharan, 2015). The implication of this (and the high frequency of use) is that environmental descriptors can be used as an effective form of greenwash (Walker & Wan, 2012).

Environmental Labelling

The Fisher exact test revealed that the relationship between brand and the use of environmental labelling was not significant, with no brand in our sample being statistically more likely to employ this form of environmentalism (p= .157). As anticipated across the sample environmental labelling was not commonly used by any of the brands - Mars (n=0), Nestlé (n=6), Whittakers (n=1). This may be because access to some third party environmental labelling is restricted and requires brands to make changes across their supply chains (e.g. the Rainforest Alliance). It can be inferred that a lack of environmental labelling may demonstrate an unwillingness on the part of a brand to make certain types of impactful environmental change. In terms of label frequency, Nestlé incorporated mentions of 100% recyclable/reusable packaging in three posts, organic labelling on product packaging in one post and a commitment to certification from the Independent Alliance for Water Stewardship by 2025 in one post. Whittakers shared the Rainforest Alliance certification symbol in one post and Mars mentioned certification associated with sustainability in one post.

Environmental Image/Sound/Story

The chi-square test revealed that the relationship between brand and the use of environmental image/sounds/story was not significant, with no brand in our sample being statistically more likely to employ this form of environmentalism in their Instagram content (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 5.080, p = .079). Across the sample environmental image/sound/story was commonly used by every brand - Mars (n=33), Nestlé (n=27), Whittakers (n=42). These results further suggest that environmental image/sound/story may be a frequently used element in marketing within the chocolate sector in general. This is significant because research suggests that environmental images positively affect consumer attitudes towards companies, perceptions of companies' substantive environmental action and purchase intention (Xue, 2014; Schmuck, Matthes, Naderer & Beaufort, 2018). Researchers hypothesize that this is because consumers receive emotional benefits from viewing environmental imagery, perhaps as a result of environmental evolutionary preferences (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009; Xue & Muralidharan, 2015; Schmuck, et al., 2018). This suggests that environmental image can be a powerful form of greenwash (because it potentially strikes right at the heart of psychological and evolutionary predispositions) when the 'green talk' does not match the 'green walk'. In considering the elements present the most commonly used environmental

images/sounds/stories[7] were trees (n=56), leaves (n=39), water (n=25), mountains/hills/volcanoes (n=21), cocoa beans (n=15) and flowers (n=15). Less commonly used environmental images/sounds/stories included planet Earth (n=10), the sun (n=9), predominant green colour schemes (n=9), wind turbines (n=5), coral reefs (n=3), shots of waste clean-ups (n=2), recycling processes (n=2) and birdsong (n=2).

Environmental Action

The chi-square test revealed that the relationship between brand and the use of environmental action was significant (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 16.361, p = <.001) with Mars (n=16) and Nestlé (n=11) being significantly more likely to employ this form of environmentalism than Whittakers (n=0). This may be because multinational corporations with diverse product ranges are likely to bring in significantly more profit than national brands or brands with limited product ranges. High profits (as well as the additional 'manpower' in larger companies) allow for reinvestment into environmental action measures that can bolster environmental appearance. This is significant because research in the food sector indicates brands may be able to 'lure' in new customers from competitor brands by publicizing the environmental action they have undertaken (Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet & Kralji, 2010). However, if a brand's advertised action is not consistent with general company practice then this can be considered greenwash.

Themes and Narratives

The purpose of the themes and narratives section in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 is to answer the following research questions:

- What types of themes and narratives are being constructed and communicated through the use of ethical markers?
- Where do harmful discrepancies exist between what is known about the chocolate companies and the narratives they produce?

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[7] Note: the frequency of each environmental image/sound/story (n=213) does not align with the frequency of posts identified as exhibiting this ethical marker (n=101) as many posts would incorporate these elements in combination.

The results for both of these questions are presented, discussed and interpreted. To do this, this section draws on the results of the thematic analysis method outlined in Chapter Three and cross-references these results with public information regarding each company.

Before diving into these results it is important to note some additional limitations. Most notably, even though there may not be any recorded examples of brands' actions going against the narratives they construct, this does not necessarily mean they do not exist. Instances of environmental harm are not something that is likely to be advertised by any brand, and attempts to identify and expose environmental harm may be costly or resource intensive for third party groups (including the judicial system, the media, and environmental/human rights organizations). Furthermore, the size of the company under analysis should be considered here; any instances of harm by Mars and Nestlé are more likely to be discovered and disseminated because these are both major global brands. In contrast, Whittakers is a smaller brand that appears to sell primarily within New Zealand, meaning the company is less likely to catch the attention and ire of environmental watchdogs even if the brand is engaging in instances of harm.

Explicit Environmentalism

Perhaps the most easily identifiable theme within the data set was explicit environmentalism. This theme, used by Mars and Nestlé, involved direct discussions of ways that companies are reducing actions that are harmful to the environment and/or adopting new habits that are beneficial to the environment. This was communicated through three sub-themes - 'traditional environmentalism', 'environmental innovation' and 'help us help the environment'.

Traditional environmentalism includes conventional methods (e.g. used for many years and across many industries) that brands have adopted to improve their environmental footprint. Figure 2 is a strong example of traditional environmentalism, with wind energy being one of the most common elements of this sub-theme throughout the data set. Another way traditional environmentalism was commonly shown was through discussion of greenhouse gas reductions as seen in figure 3. As anticipated because of the association with environmentalism, many of the examples within this theme also utilized green and/or blue.

This content is redacted within this thesis to avoid copyright violation. This content is available on the company's Instagram page at the time of submission, through the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/B8ojj_1l-p1/	This content is redacted within this thesis to avoid copyright violation. This content is available on the company's Instagram page at the time of submission, through the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/B_QmaPAJx2C/

Figure 2. 100% Renewable Energy
(Nestlé, 2020*a*)

Figure 3. Reduce GHG Emissions
(Mars, 2020*a*)

Whilst traditional methods were the most commonly depicted, Mars and Nestlé also posted new/experimental/original methods of addressing environmental problems. For example, in figure 4 Mars discusses the debut of their 'coral reef spiders' - hexagonal steel frames coated in coral that can be used to restore marine environments. Whilst in regards to agriculture, Nestlé is likely to be considered a pioneer (at least in the context of multinational corporations) in repurposing tea waste as fertiliser, as shown in figure 5.

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Figure 4. Coral Reef Restoration
(Mars, 2019*a*)

Figure 5. Tea Fertiliser
(Nestlé, 2018*a*)

The final way that Mars depicted explicit environmentalism was through calling on the consumer to 'do their part' by 'help[ing] us help the environment'. For example, figure 6 employs casual and cheerful cartoons to instruct consumers to "say yes! to recycling waste" (Mars, 2019*b*). In the same post, consumers are also asked to "say yes! to…" driving less, unplugging electronics, repurposing old clothing etc. (Mars, 2019*b*). In figure 7 Mars again focuses on the consumer, asking them to engage in environmentally conscious habits for Earth Day.

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Figure 6. Say Yes to Recycling
(Mars, 2019*b*)

Figure 7. Earth Day
(Mars, 2019)

By incorporating explicit environmentalism (and never discussing corporate environmental harm), Mars and Nestlé are constructing the narrative that companies are a protective factor against environmental issues and not a cause. In considering the body of research on environmental themes from the last 30 years, this finding is unsurprising. Peterson (1991) identified what Hansen (2002, p. 501) summarises as "explicit environmental or ecological message" as a theme within American televisual advertising as far back as the 1970s. Certainly, brands have good reason to want to be seen as green, with research showing that positive environmental brand image increases consumer purchase intention (Ahmad & Thyagaraj, 2015). Shin and Ki (2019) demonstrate that failing to appear green damages a

company's reputation, image and perceived legitimacy, thereby limiting its customer base and subsequent profits.

Furthermore, in drawing on this narrative, companies can specifically target 'green consumers' - consumers who selectively purchase products that are environmentally friendly because of a sense of obligation to the environment (Mansvelt & Robbins, 2010), as well as those who 'do what they can' to be environmentally conscious. Explicit environmentalism is likely to be salient to both groups for a wide range of reasons including wanting to maintain the environment so they don't experience the negative effects environmental degradation will bring, for the health and safety of future and current generations, for the protection of ecosystems and wildlife, and for reasons relating to recreation, cultural or personal significance, and beauty. By buying into the environmental protection narrative consumers can feel good about their environmental impact and believe they are upholding community ethics that emphasize the health of the planet. However, Gacek (2020, p. 156) importantly notes that through corporate employment of this strategy "you as a consumer become individually responsible for saving the planet, instead of questioning the social and (eco)systemic issues and corporate interests at play that led up to this point." This is problematic as companies hold far more power than individuals and have the ability to generate far greater impacts than individual consumers and as a result should incur greater responsibility.

In highlighting discrepancies, while these brands have in some ways contributed positively to the environment there are numerous instances in which Nestlé and Mars have contributed to environmental harm. As recently as the 27th of April 2021 sources note that Nestlé had received notice of a drafted cease and desist order from California state officials requesting the company withdraw from illegally over-siphoning water from the San Bernardino National Forest (*The Guardian*, 2021; EcoWatch, 2021). The order is in response to allegations that Nestlé withdrew 58 million gallons of water from the area in 2021, more than 25 times the 2.3 million gallons the brand could fairly claim (Ecowatch, 2021). The order is also associated with claims that the brand "desiccated" Strawberry Creek (a principal watercourse in the area) and its natural ecosystem (*The Guardian*, 2021). Additionally, Nestlé and Mars have both been named as part of the top 10 corporate waste polluters in the Break Free from Plastic global audits every year from 2018-2020. The extent of this issue is depicted in table 4 which shows steadily increasing amounts of Mars and Nestle branded plastics being found by

volunteers in the audit every year (despite project scope significantly decreasing in 2020). In consideration of these points, it is clear that Nestlé and Mars *are* a cause of some environmental issues and this illustrates a chasm between their narrative of environmental protection and their substantive actions. This suggests that this narrative is being used as a form of greenwash.

Table 4. Results from the Break Free From Plastic Global Audit Report (2018, 2019, 2020)

Year	Total Project Scope	Waste Attributed to Nestlé	Waste Attributed to Mars
2018	187,851 plastics collected across 42 countries with the help of nearly 10,000 volunteers	2,952 plastics across at least 10 countries (the exact number of countries not listed)	At least 100 plastics across at least ten countries (the exact number of countries and plastics not listed)
2019	476,423 plastics collected across 51 countries with the help of 72,451 volunteers	4,846 plastics across 31 countries	543 plastics across 20 countries
2020	346,494 plastics collected across 55 countries with the help of 14,734 volunteers	8,633 plastics across 37 countries	678 plastics across 32 countries

Straight from the Earth

Environmentalism was more subtly evoked in the data set through the portrayal of picturesque food agriculture locations. Within the Instagram posts of all the brands, this translated to imagery of large expanses of pastoral greenery or thriving yields, often set against crop appropriate weather. Some examples of this theme include figure 8 where a romanticized illustration of an orange orchard is set against a background of lush green hills on a warm summer's day. The fruit presented is free of any bruising, and is shown as having perfectly ripe skin. While the 1930s American advertising aesthetic provides an additional contextual layer by harkening back to a time where produce was more likely to be from local farms and easier to get straight from the earth. Figure 9 illustrates a man plucking a cacao pod straight from the tree. The remaining examples give the consumer a pleasant peek behind the curtain of crop rearing - a photograph of a thriving coffee plant nursery is shown in figure 10, while a snap of a cacao tree orchard burgeoning with ripened pods is shown in figure 11.

Drawing on yet another crop type, figures 12 and 13 depict shots of luxuriant rice fields that stretch expansively across the shot.

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Figure 8. Orange Orchard
(Whittakers, 2017*a*)

Figure 9. Man and Cacao Tree
(Whittakers, 2017*b*)

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Figure 10. Coffee Nursery
(Nestlé, 2018*b*)

Figure 11. Cacao Trees
(Mars, 2017*a*)

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Figure 12. Rice Field
(Mars, 2018*a*)

Figure 13. Sustainable in a Generation
(Mars, 2018*a*)

Through drawing on straight from the earth theming companies are constructing the narrative that their food is fresh, natural and grown respectfully and sustainably. The captions accompanying some of these images further back up the existence of this narrative, for example "Coffee seeds *carefully* grow 6 months in the Nescafe Plan nurseries before distributing to the farmers… #Planet… *#GrownRespectfully* [emphasis added]… #sharedvalue" (Nestlé, 2018*b*), "From beans to bar, here's how we turn *fresh* cacao into our *deliciously* smooth chocolate [emphasis added]" (Whittakers, 2017*b*) and "we gave food industry influencers a look behind the scenes at a local rice farm and showed them we're leading in *sustainability*… #CSR… *#Sustainability* [emphasis added]" (Mars, 2017*a*). This theme appears to have the closest link with a theme identified by Williamson (1978) who raises the idea of 'nature as pastoral setting'. However, while Williamson identifies a similar interweaving of farming and nature in advertising, their rendition is linked more closely to animal husbandry. Furthermore, Williamson's notion of this theme suggests nature as a place of relaxation, whilst the posts in this sample suggest nature as the site of work and production.

The use of this narrative makes sense as companies have good reason to want their food to be seen as natural, fresh and grown respectfully. Research suggests that processed food (less fresh and natural) is considered less safe and less nutritious by consumers (Lee, Lusk, Mirosa & Oey, 2014). While other researchers demonstrate that consumers prefer food that has

limited manipulation (e.g. food that is straight from the earth) and are critical of food that has been highly processed (Verbeke, PérezCueto, Barcellos, Krystallis & Grunert, 2010). Additionally, one 2012 study of 4,000 people across eight countries concluded that perceived naturalness increased motivation to buy, while almost 75% of consumers closely linked the concepts of 'natural' with 'healthy' in the context of food (GoodMills Innovation Study, 2012 as cited in Román, Sánchez-Siles & Siegrist, 2017).

In drawing on this narrative, companies can specifically target a wide variety of consumers including those focused on taste, health, safety, and the environment, as these are the elements that are associated with freshness by consumers (Jin, Li & Li, 2017; Wu, Chang, Teng & Lai, 2017). Fresh/natural food is adept at generating favourable perceptions of taste, this is because produce is understood as being in its best state while still alive (e.g. still on the tree). Once picked, important factors in taste including flavour, texture and smell will steadily decline in quality as the product continues to sit until spoil. Fresh/natural food is perceived as better from a health perspective, with Bearth, Cousin and Siegrest (2014) outlining that some consumers consider unnatural food additives unhealthy and a risk to public health. Fresh food is also likely to be considered positively from a safety perspective, as stale and old food has an increased risk of food poisoning. For the environmentally conscious, agricultural imagery that appears similar to the natural environment (e.g. lush greenery, limited urbanisation) may be particularly alluring as it implies that agriculture is not destroying the land but rather keeping it close to its original state. The grown respectfully/sustainably themed captioning that Mars and Nestlé both use further encourage this interpretation. This is because these captions suggest that the brands aim to leave the land in a better state than they found it, by incorporating environmentalism into their growing strategy. In consideration of these factors, companies appear to be drawing on the assumption that consumers will view fresh food more favourably than processed food. As a result, they take pains to show ingredients in their unprocessed forms.

This narrative, used by Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers, is interesting because it is inherently at odds with many of the products they produce. While the brands may include ingredients that are fresh at the time of making their foods, it appears that none of the brands sells 'fresh food' - e.g. food that is not preserved, tinned, frozen, boiled, combined or processed. This makes their patterned use of fresh from the earth imagery misleading. However, unlike some of the misleading content in other sections, this portrayal is far less serious. This is because

the approximate freshness of any food can be differentiated by the consumer upon purchase. While the brands may draw on images of cacao, coffee beans, oranges and rice straight from the earth to advertise products, consumers are always aware that the processed and packaged chocolate, coffee and rice they are buying is not freshly plucked from the orchard or field. Regarding natural food Rozin (2005) notes that genetic engineering is associated with a large drop in perceived naturalness by consumers. This is notable because two of the brands under consideration have alleged or confirmed links to genetically modified organisms (GMO). Mars (n.d.*a*) outlines their use of GMOs on their website, and a 2018 federal lawsuit alleges that Nestlé sells dairy products produced from cows who had been fed GMO grain (*CBS News*, 2018). Thus in regard to the 'natural' narrative, it can be concluded that Mars and Nestlé's imagery is likely misleading the consumer. However, it is currently unclear whether this is harmful; while a report by the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification highlighted that there are "potential social, ecological and economic risks created by genetically modified foods that require closer criminological scrutiny" (Walters, 2006, p. 247) GM foods are generally considered safe by the World Health Organization (2014).

As a result, it is unclear whether this act is inherently harmful even though it may be considered greenwashing. Some discrepancies have also been found in regard to the grown respectfully/sustainably element. For example, an October 2019 article by the *Washington Post* highlights that Mars had not switched to 100% sustainably farmed cocoa despite committing to 10 years prior. This, they imply has accelerated rates of deforestation (*Washington Post*, 2019). Similarly, Nestlé's own 2020 sustainability report (p. 2 & 4) notes that 10% of their purchased "forest-risk commodities"[8] were not confirmed deforestation-free. Deforestation concerns were particularly high for palm oil, with 30% of the brand's purchased oil not being confirmed deforestation-free (Nestlé, 2020). Some Whittakers products appear to do better on this front due to the brand's recent switch to Rainforest Alliance certification which prohibits deforestation under the Sustainable Agriculture Standard (Rainforest Alliance, 2020). Unfortunately, however, a majority of Whittakers products do not appear to be Rainforest Alliance certified (Whittakers, n.d.). These findings suggest that each of these brands are using this narrative as a form of greenwash to some extent.

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[8] Forest-risk commodities include "palm oil, pulp and paper, soya, meat and sugar" (Nestlé, 2020).

Untouched Nature

Whilst environmentalism was commonly evoked through idyllic agricultural images, there was also a pattern of images that emphasized nature that appeared largely untouched and unsullied by human development. Present within the Instagram posts of Nestlé and Whittakers, this translated to expanses of non-agricultural plant life, clean waterways, clear skies and other uninterrupted natural features such as mountains and volcanoes. This theme can be seen in figure 14 which depicts a clear river with the surrounding landscape of hills, rocks and trees looking naturally intact. Consumers are afforded a similar view in figure 15 with a tranquil first-person shot overlooking a picturesque Lake Geneva, complete with a cup of Nespresso. Figure 16 presents a bar of chocolate superimposed over a bucolic shot of the New Zealand moorlands. Figure 17 displays a coat made from burlap sacks against a natural backdrop consisting of a waterfall, stream, native flax plants and moss.

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Figure 14. River
(Nestlé, 2018*c*)

Figure 15. Lake Geneva
(Nestlé, 2018*d*)

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Figure 16. Chocolate against Landscape
(Whittakers, 2017*c*)

Figure 17. Woman and Waterfall
(Whittakers, 2017*d*)

By making untouched nature a consistent pattern in their feeds chocolate brands can construct two interweaving narratives. The first narrative is that the environment remains not only unsullied by food companies but in a picture-perfect state. This is because patterned depictions of untouched nature suggest that there are areas in which corporations have not encroached. The second narrative is that through purchasing the product consumers can get a taste of tranquillity and relaxation. This is because untouched nature suggests a calm and restful environment, contrasting the hustle and bustle of growing urbanisation. The identification of this theme provides a present-day example of a concept explored by Williams (1983, p. 223) who argues that "one of the most powerful uses of nature, since the late 18th century, has been a selective sense of goodness and innocence. Nature has meant the 'countryside', the 'unspoiled places', plants and creatures other than man".

Companies have a vested interest in making their land footprint appear limited, and their foods appear to be associated with tranquillity. Research demonstrates that advertisements that promote relaxation improve customer satisfaction and experience (Huang & Hsu, 2010; Loueriro, Almeida & Rita, 2013) and findings from Pham, Hung and Gorn (2011) illustrate that relaxation increases consumers' willingness to pay. While there does not appear to be any research exploring the impact of corporate land use on consumers, it is fair to assume that greater land-use requirements are likely to correlate to greater negative environmental impact

as these areas must be cleared. This is a factor which is likely to unfavourably affect informed consumers' perceptions of company legitimacy (Shin & Ki, 2019).

In drawing on these narratives, companies can specifically target two types of consumers - those who are seeking relaxation and those who are environmentally conscious. Drawing on reversal theory[9] O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2004) argue that at different times all consumers will show a preference for ads that relax them. This is notable because research has found that being exposed to representations of nature can generate similar positive (i.e. relaxing) emotions as experiencing nature in person (Hartman and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009). This is where the straight from the earth and untouched nature themes differ, in the former the viewer is always reminded of the work that is being carried out behind the food production curtain. Conversely, untouched nature provides the viewer with a sense of rest - recontextualising nature not as a place of agricultural labour but as a place "where one could go to renew oneself and escape the alienating effects of city life" (Wall as cited in Hansen, 2002, p. 502). Images of unspoilt land also work to soothe the environmentally-conscious consumer because they imply that corporations are not taking over the world with agricultural plots, offices and factories, on the contrary, there is plenty of unspoiled land left. Furthermore, as Hansen (2002, p. 503) notes it is easy to see how "in a world of… mass produced goods, artificiality and a wasteful throw away production mentality, there [is] plenty of scope for advertisers to invoke… interpretations of nature as un-spoilt, genuine, authentic, spiritual, enchanted and traditional". Certainly, unspoiled nature appears to stand as the ultimate dichotomy to the idea of mass produced corporate waste.

In considering where discrepancies might lie between the use of this narrative we can again draw on statistics from the Break Free From Plastic Global Audit Reports (2018, 2019, 2020) which identified a total of 16,431 pieces of Nestlé plastic waste that had been dumped into marine environments and found in 37 different countries. These findings are most certainly at odds with the narrative that Nestlé has left nature largely untouched. On the contrary, waste originating from their company appears to have migrated widely within the natural environment - particularly within waterways, something which their examples (e.g. figure 14, 15 and 16) were quick to depict as clean and untouched. These findings imply that

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[9] Reversal theory is a phenomenological theory which argues that "Consumers seek excitement and avoid boredom or, alternatively, seek to avoid anxiety and experience relaxation. If bored, people seek excitement and, if anxious, seek relaxation" (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2004).

environmentally conscious consumers may be seduced into believing that waterways remain unaffected by Nestlé when this is not the case – an instance of greenwash. More positively, Whittakers does not appear to be implicated in any known instances of environmental sullying suggesting that their use of this narrative is not greenwashing.

Summary

The quantitative data indicated that environmentalism was the most frequent type of ethical content within the sample of Instagram posts. Comparisons between environmental marker frequencies indicated that environmental image/sound/story was the most common way that environmentalism was communicated. Environmental descriptors were the second most frequently used, while action and labelling were less frequently used coming in third and fourth respectively. Comparing across companies Mars and Nestlé employed environmental markers more frequently than Whittakers. As part of this Mars and Nestlé employed environmental descriptors and action significantly more often than Whittakers. Environmental labelling was utilized at statistically similar rates across companies, being infrequently used by each brand. Environmental image/sound/story was also used at statistically similar frequencies by each corporation, but was very commonly used by all companies.

Within the qualitative data, three major themes were identified. First, 'explicit environmentalism' (utilized by Mars and Nestlé) built up the narrative that companies do not contribute to environmental harm but are instead a key protective factor against it. However, numerous actions that go against this were identified including Nestlé illegally draining water in California, and both Mars and Nestlé being identified as major contributors to marine plastic pollution. The second identified theme - 'straight from the earth' (utilized by all three brands) constructed the narrative that corporate ingredients are fresh, natural and grown respectfully/sustainably. Both the fresh and natural elements of the narrative were identified as misleading due to the predominance of processed food and GM crops, however, these factors are considered unlikely to generate significant harm. Discrepancies were also identified in the grown respectfully/sustainably narratives with all three brands appearing to have contributed to deforestation. The final identified theme was 'untouched nature' (used by Nestlé and Whittakers) which served to create the narrative that the environment is untarnished by corporate brands. However, data from the Break Free From Plastic Global

Audit once again shows this to be untrue in the case of Nestle. In considering the overall results, this chapter outlines six instances of suspected or confirmed greenwashing. Two of these coming from Mars, three of these coming from Nestlé and one of these coming from Whittakers. These results suggest consistent use of environmentally focused narratives as a greenwashing tool.

Chapter Five - Companies for the People

Following the format laid out in Chapter Four, the frequency section of this chapter will examine the social responsibility and farmer welfare markers - support for diversity, monetary support, volunteering, code of ethics, farmer welfare descriptors, labelling, image/story and action. It will do this by drawing on the results from table 5 and 6. Under the themes and narrative section the themes 'inclusivity', 'disaster time good Samaritans', 'cultural origins', 'improved livelihood of farmers' and 'understated ethicality' are analysed and explored.

Frequency

Total Frequency

Overall, social responsibility markers were used 59 times and farmer welfare markers were employed 32 times. This resulted in the people-centric markers being used a total of 91 times across the total sample of 300, or 30.3% of the time. Support for diversity (n=37) was by far the most commonly used way for brands to show their commitments to people. The increased prevalence of this marker aligns with current research on diversity in advertising which suggests that brands are more likely to acquire new customers and keep existing consumers by focusing on equality among different groups. For example, a 2014 Google Consumer survey found that 54% of consumers under the age of 34 stated that they were more likely to buy from a brand that centralized equality over similar brands who did not (Snyder, 2014). Similarly, 45% of consumers in this age bracket stated they were more likely to do repeat business with a brand that was LGBT friendly compared to those that were not or had no stance (Snyder, 2014). As a result, brands have a vested interest in constructing the appearance of diversity on Instagram where the under 34 demographic in particular can be reached. Monetary support (n=11) and volunteering (n=10) also appeared occasionally, although to a far lesser extent than diversity. Research suggests that these are also favourable to brand image, with Koehn and Ueng (2010) arguing that donations are a good way to generate a positive public image at a low cost (relative to the amount the company makes in profit). Interestingly (because of the comparatively small financial and time investment it requires), examples of codes of ethics (n=1) were the least likely people-centred marker to be used. Regarding farming related content, farmer welfare images (n=9) and farmer welfare descriptors (n=9) also appeared occasionally. The former aligns with research that finds that

images of farmers with positive facial expressions in advertising increased trust and improved perceptions of food quality for some but not all consumers (Seo & Kang, 2020). This may explain why this marker is used but only at an occasional rate. In considering farmer welfare descriptors, no research could be found exploring the content or frequency of this within advertising. As expected because of the suspected financial investment of a large-scale system overhaul as well as its geographical disconnect with those buying chocolate, farmer welfare action (n=6) and farmer welfare labelling (n=8) were some of the least used markers in this category. This is concerning because evidence of action and welfare labelling suggests the brand is actually 'doing something' for farmers. Certainly, any brand can employ farmer welfare imagery or descriptors in their advertising, but not every brand can demonstrate positive action or the ability to at least meet the minimum standard for third party labelling.

Table 5. Total Frequency and Percentage of Social Responsibility and Farmer Welfare Markers

		Count	Table N %
Support for Diversity	No	263	87.7%
	Yes	37	12.3%
Monetary Support	No	289	96.3%
	Yes	11	3.7%
Volunteering	No	290	96.7%
	Yes	10	3.3%
Code of Ethics	No	299	99.7%
	Yes	1	0.3%
Farmer Welfare Descriptors	No	291	97.0%
	Yes	9	3.0%
Farmer Welfare Labelling	No	292	97.3%
	Yes	8	2.7%
Farmer Welfare Image	No	291	97.0%
	Yes	9	3.0%
Farmer Welfare Action	No	294	98.0%
	Yes	6	2.0%

Table 6. Frequency of Social Responsibility and Farmer Welfare Markers Utilized by Each Company

		Company		
		Mars Count	Nestle Count	Whittaker's Count
Support for Diversity	No	80	83	100
	Yes	20	17	0
Monetary Support	No	92	99	98
	Yes	8	1	2
Volunteering	No	91	99	100
	Yes	9	1	0
Code of Ethics	No	99	100	100
	Yes	1	0	0
Farmer Welfare Descriptors	No	94	97	100
	Yes	6	3	0
Farmer Welfare Labelling	No	100	100	92
	Yes	0	0	8
Farmer Welfare Image	No	94	99	98
	Yes	6	1	2
Farmer Welfare Action	No	94	100	100
	Yes	6	0	0

Support for Diversity

The chi-square test revealed that the relationship between brand and use of diversity was statistically significant (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 21.519, p = <.001). Mars (n=20) and Nestlé (n=17) were statistically more likely than Whittakers (n=0) to utilize this indicator of social responsibility. The result that Mars and Nestlé used this marker far more suggests that diversity may be an element displayed more by larger companies. This may be because larger companies may face greater scrutiny surrounding the demographic breakdown of their employees, particularly if certain groups appear to be consistently favoured over others (for example all senior leadership positions in a company being held by men). Research demonstrates that racial diversity is important in improving perceptions and recall of advertisements and raises purchase intention for those who can relate to the advertised characters (DelVecchio & Goodstein, 2004). Other research within a fitness context showed that racial, gender identity and sexual orientation diversity within adverts made viewers believe that the company was more diverse and inclusive (Cunningham & Melton, 2014). This suggests that diversity can be used as an effective form of greenwash if companies do

not take steps to become more diverse as a company. Interestingly, Mars and Nestlé predominantly drew upon different themes under the umbrella of diversity. Mars emphasized diversity regarding gender, particularly women (n=13), the LGBT community (n=3), race (n=2), equality for those throughout the supply chain (n=2) and equal opportunity for working parents (n=2). Meanwhile, Nestlé emphasized diversity in the context of job opportunities for youth (n=12), women/gender equality (n=4), the LGBT community (n=1), multiculturalism (n=1) and noted their diversity without further context once.

Monetary Support

The Fisher exact test revealed that the relationship between brand and monetary support was statistically significant (p=.048) with Mars (n=8) being more likely than either Nestlé (n=1) or Whittakers (n=2) to use this indicator of social responsibility. It is unclear why Mars would be more likely than Nestlé to advertise monetary support, particularly as Nestlé appears to generate higher total revenue (*Forbes,* 2020; Statista, n.d.). However, it makes sense that Mars would utilize this marker more often than Whittakers as it is likely that Whittakers does not have the profit margins to generate sizable donations (e.g. in the millions like Mars). Additionally, corporate philanthropy is not embedded in the New Zealand way of life the same way it is overseas, with Simpson and Lambert (n.d.) finding that business philanthropy was low compared to very high levels of individual philanthropy within New Zealand. Interestingly, whilst donations are typically a positive action, the existence of monetary support in this sample may suggest something more sinister. In their examination of 3,008 Chinese family-owned companies, Du (2014) found a significant positive correlation between environmental misconduct and 'corporate philanthropic giving'. This is a concept which is also highlighted by Freudenberg and Alario (2007) who argue that brands evade consumer ire and build legitimacy primarily through misdirection, i.e. by purposefully diverting attention away from negative business practice toward positive action. In combination, Du (2014), Freudenberg and Alario's (2007) findings suggest that Mars could be using philanthropy as a way to distract from their negative environmental impact.

Volunteering

The Fisher exact test revealed that the relationship between brand and volunteering was highly statistically significant (p=<.001). Mars (n=9) was significantly more likely than either Nestlé (n=1) or Whittakers (n=0) to use this indicator of social responsibility. It is unclear why exactly Mars, in particular, utilized this marker more, however, these results in

conjunction with the diversity and monetary donations results build the picture that Mars, in particular, is actively attempting to build a socially responsible image. Whilst, in contrast, Nestlé and Whittakers do not appear to be aiming for this image. Research in the UK (Muthuri, Matten & Moon, 2009) and Australia (Plewa, Conduit, Quester & Johnson, 2015) demonstrates that consumer knowledge of corporate volunteering improved brand image and generated social capital for the brand, leading to greater consumer loyalty and intention to 'spread the word' about a brand. This implies that volunteering can expand company reach, something that may be problematic if companies' are engaging in harmful activities elsewhere in their business practices.

Code of Ethics

The Fisher exact test revealed that the relationship between brand and code of ethics was not significant, with no brand being statistically more likely to employ this form of social responsibility (p=1.000). Notably, this was one of the least used ethical indicators across the entire sample with only one brand - Mars (n=1) utilising this indicator and neither Nestlé (n=0) or Whittakers (n=0) utilising this indicator at all. It can be inferred from this that codes of ethics are not a key concern when it comes to greenwashing for either consumers or academics, at least as of 2021.

Farmer Welfare Descriptors

The Fisher exact test revealed that the relationship between brand and farmer welfare descriptors was statistically significant (p=.046). With Mars (n= 6) utilising this indicator of farmer welfare significantly more than Whittakers (n=0) and Nestlé (n=3) who landed in the middle on an overall expected count of three. The continued prominence of Mars within social responsibility and farmer welfare markers suggests the brand is taking a human-centric approach to their advertising. Unfortunately, no research appears to be conducted on the impact of concepts akin to a farmer welfare descriptor on consumers. However, it can be assumed that farmer welfare descriptors would likely have a neutral or positive impact on the consumer. This suggests that farmer welfare descriptors may be an effective form of greenwashing, although more research is needed in this area.

Farmer Welfare Labelling

The Fisher exact test revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between farmer welfare labelling and brands in the sample (p=.109). Whittakers (n=7) incorporated

this form of farmer welfare indicator statistically more often, utilising the Fairtrade Alliance symbol on their packaging six times (in older posts) and the Rainforest Alliance on their packaging once (in a newer post). Across the sample, farmer welfare labelling was not used at all by Mars (n=0) or Nestlé (n=0). The variation in use aligns with research conducted on socially responsible labelling which has found that labels can have various impacts on consumers. While Hustvedt and Bernard (2010) found that labour-related labelling increased consumers' willingness to pay for products, other researchers demonstrate that consumers can be sceptical of this type of information, especially when labels are unfamiliar (Hoek, Rolling & Holdsworth, 2013). This suggests that while (reputable) farmer welfare labelling is a more reliable way to demonstrate real changes for farmers (i.e. not greenwashing), some brands appear unwilling to commit to it, perhaps because research is divided on the monetary benefit for the company.

Farmer Welfare Image/Story

The Fisher exact test revealed that there was no statistically significant relationship between farmer image/story and brands in the sample (p=.157), with no brand using this marker significantly more. Surprisingly, across the sample farmer image/story was not commonly used by any of the brands with Mars (n=6) using farmer welfare image slightly more than Nestlé (n=1) and Whittakers (n=2) who both used this marker very infrequently. Unfortunately little research has been conducted on consumer reactions towards farmer welfare image/story and of the existing literature none appears to relate directly to cocoa farmers. This makes it difficult to assess why brands have chosen to use this marker in such a limited capacity and how effective this marker is as a greenwashing tool. Subsequently, the implications of these results are difficult to determine at this point.

Farmer Welfare Action

The Fisher exact test revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between brand and farmer welfare action (p=.004). Mars (n=6) was significantly more likely to use this indicator of farmer welfare than either Nestlé (n=0) or Whittakers (n=0). In consideration of the fact that Mars has had a higher frequency of markers in all the people related categories (with the exception of farmer welfare labelling) this comes as no surprise. Their use of farmer welfare action adds additional evidence to suggest that Mars is crafting a human orientated account on Instagram. As with farmer welfare image/story, there does not appear to be any research examining consumer perceptions of and reactions to corporate

farmer welfare action, making it difficult to assess any benefits incorporating this marker is likely to have for the brand. Importantly, however, the low frequency use of this marker suggests that brands may not be participating in farmer welfare action (if they are, why not share?). Additionally rates of greenwashing for this marker can be hypothesized to be similarly low as each of the brands are utilising this marker infrequently or not at all.

Themes and Narratives

Inclusivity

In displaying social responsibility Mars and Nestlé both showed a strong pattern of inclusivity for groups who are likely to have experienced disadvantage in society more generally and in the workplace more specifically. For example, in figure 18 Nestlé provides a shot of a rainbow flag - this is an easily recognisable symbol for LGBT+ rights, created by Gilbert Baker, an artist and gay rights advocate. From the additional context in the picture we can see that a Nestlé employee is at a Pride Parade. In figure 19 Mars references racial inclusivity by utilising the phrase "#SameOnTheInside" (Mars, 2018*b*) with a representation of multi-coloured M&M's. Applying the metaphor to humans with the additional help of the context of the caption which references Martin Luther King Day, Mars is presenting the idea that people of all skin colours are of equal value. In regard to gender equality figure 20 provides a peek inside the Mars offices where women report equal opportunities to men in the workplace, with an emphasis on women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields. Restructuring of workplace culture to provide equal access to career opportunities for parents (and mothers in particular) is additionally outlined in figure 21. Whilst the concept of providing career opportunities to youth who may find it difficult to break into the workforce in many fields is heavily emphasized by Nestlé in figure 22.

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Figure 18. LGBT+ Equality
(Nestlé, 2020*b*)

Figure 19. #SameOnTheInside
(Mars, 2018*b*)

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Figure 20. Woman of Mars.
(Mars, 2018*c*)

Figure 21. Takes a Village
(Mars, 2019*d*)

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Figure 22. Nestlé Youth
(Nestlé, 2019*a*)

Through providing a broad spectrum of inclusionary content Mars and Nestlé are constructing the narrative that their companies care for consumers from all walks of life. This is because depiction of a wide range of people suggests that everyone, even and especially those who belong to groups that have historically faced discrimination by companies (as consumers and employees) are welcome and celebrated. This goes beyond pure diversity and suggests an additional layer of purposeful inclusion of those who have been marginalized both in society in general and within the corporate world. Whilst inclusivity does not appear to have been specifically identified as a *theme* within advertising in the literature, researchers particularly within the last five years have focused heavily on different forms of inclusivity within advertising (see Pounders, 2018; O'Neill & McDonald, 2018; Sobande, 2019; Ciszeck & Pounders, 2019). Interestingly however, research does not appear to have been conducted on social inclusivity depictions within food advertising specifically, making its finding here a new contribution to the literature.

For companies there are some benefits for appearing inclusive. For example, research shows that young (of particular predominance on Instagram) and educated demographics are likely to hold egalitarian values and respond positively to LGBT inclusive advertising (Read, Van Driel & Potter, 2018). This is supported by earlier research that finds that a growing number of consumers are beginning to value LGBT inclusive content (Snyder, 2015). In light of these

findings Read et al., (2018) conclude that more and more consumers are going to be drawn to support brands who appear authentically inclusive over brands who are not. In consideration of this brands have a vested interest in being perceived as aware of discrimination and critical of social and civil inequalities.

In drawing on this narrative companies' can also target a wide range of consumers as both of these brands' models of inclusion are extremely broad. As a result, it is likely that a consumer coming across these Instagram feeds will identify as being at least one of the following: a woman, a parent, a young adult/teenager, LGBT+, or a person who has experienced racism (particularly people of colour). This allows most viewers to self-identify with those they are seeing within both brand's Instagram feeds. Inclusivity content within advertising can also be particularly salient to those who have felt unsupported or discriminated against because of some aspect of their identity, as inclusion in advertising can help to rebuild a positive self-image. For example, interview research by Pounders and Mabry-Flynn (2019, p. 1369) of the inclusion of plus-sized models within advertising generated favourable responses by some respondents who felt these adverts facilitated "accepting yourself, loving yourself, and being secure with who you are". These are findings that could likely be applied to the other groups identified within our sample as well.

Additionally, this type of advertising is likely a response to the social context of the 2010s as a time that has borne numerous social movements that have paved the way for the mainstream critical discussion of harm experienced by groups in society. One major example of this is the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement which has highlighted systemic and everyday instances of racism and harm against African Americans. Another is the #MeToo movement which lifted the curtain on (among other things) the sexual mistreatment of women within the workplace, particularly as it relates to gaining and retaining employment. In light of this modern social context, brands are likely to assume that showing support for racial equality and equality for women within the workplace is something that will be of strong importance to consumers. Certainly, the BLM movement is estimated to be one of the largest in-person social movements of all time with an estimated 15-26 million people participating in BLM protests in 2020 (*New York Times*, 2020). Similarly, twelve million posts using the hashtag #MeToo were posted on Facebook alone during the first 24 hours of the movement (*CNN*, 2017). According to Mamuric's (2019, p. 318) analysis #MeToo has generated renewed interest for advertisers in various sectors in generating adverts that work

to empower women - something they term "femvertising". Certainly, advertising that meets this criterion pops up numerous times within our sample. In addition to more modern movements, brands appear to have drawn inspirations from inclusivity focused social movements and celebrations which have demonstrated longevity over time. For example, posts supporting the LGBT+ community crop up during months when Pride parades (an event originating from the 1970s) are being celebrated. Posts celebrating women in the workplace appear to be additionally drawing on social and cultural mechanisms that have been identified and criticised by the second and third wave feminism movement. For example, how women, and mothers in particular, are passed over for leadership positions (the glass ceiling) and young girls are socially discouraged from pursuing STEM careers. Young people are likely to have been highlighted specifically as a result of the younger leaning demographic of Instagram (Statista, 2021).

Positively, neither Mars nor Nestlé appears to be implicated in actions that would indicate that the brands have been or are non-inclusive of employees and consumers. This was true regarding race, culture, gender, working parents, youth and LGBT identity, with no information being found suggesting exclusion of any of these groups by any of the brands. On the contrary, both Mars and Nestlé received the highest possible score on the Corporate Equality Index in 2021 (Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2021). Both have also attempted to reduce harm for LGBT communities by contacting Tennessee Governor Bill Lee in an attempt to dissuade him from passing anti-LGBT adoption and anti-trans healthcare legislation in 2020 (*Reuters*, 2020). These findings suggest that brands are *not* using inclusivity as a greenwashing tactic and are at the very least not constructing a narrative that opposes their actions.

Disaster Time Good Samaritans

Another theme that social responsibility posts were used to construct was that of brands (Mars and to a lesser extent Whittaker's) as saviours during times of natural and social catastrophe. This manifested in depictions of volunteer work, donations and fundraising during events such as natural disasters and pandemics. In older posts, this popped up primarily in regard to the impact of natural disasters on the human population. For example figure 23 references the Australian bushfires and Whittakers donations to various charities trying to reduce the negative impact of the fires including The Red Cross, The New South Wales Rural Fire Service, WIRES Wildlife Rescue, The Australian Salvation Army, and the

Country Fire Authority. Similarly, figure 24 discusses Hurricane Maria alongside a photograph of volunteers/workers from one of Mars's subsidiary companies - Banfield Pet Hospital working as aid within Puerto Rico. Whilst from 2020 onwards this theme instead manifested in references to the global pandemic COVID-19. For example, figure 25 provides an eight slide long post on the groups Mars has helped throughout the pandemic - including "vulnerable communities", "retailers", "shoppers", "frontline workers" and "healthcare heroes" (Mars, 2020*b*). Figure 26 similarly discusses the specific amount that Mars has earmarked to support those affected by the disease.

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Figure 23. Australian Wildfire
(Whittakers, 2020*a*)

Figure 24. Hurricane Maria
(Mars, 2017*b*)

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Figure 25. COVID-19
(Mars, 2020*b*)

Figure 26. COVID-19 Donation
(Mars, 2020*c*)

Through drawing on disaster time good Samaritan theming in their content, Mars and (to a far lesser extent) Whittakers are constructing the narrative that they are saviours when it comes to disaster. This is because the depiction of major monetary and resource donations, and widespread volunteering in a disaster context suggests a major positive impact on disaster outcomes for those impacted. Whilst it is unclear how often companies, in general, utilize this as a theme in their media content, one paper identified that 84% of Fortune 100 companies engaged in natural disaster-related social responsibility efforts (Johnson, Connolly & Carter, 2011). This suggests that if companies are open regarding their disaster relief efforts (which seems likely) this may be a commonplace theme within brand media content. Additionally, researchers leading one narrative analysis of media content in the hospitality industry during COVID-19 highlighted that companies commonly used 'assertive tactics' (openly sharing favourable information about performance) to "convey the character of businesses as credible and responsible during COVID-19" (Im, Kim & Miao, 2021, p. 1). This tactic appears to be an effective one, as other researchers have demonstrated that hospitality companies who engaged in social responsibility efforts during COVID-19 saw their stock returns increase after as little as five days (Qiu, Jiang, Liu, Chen & Yuan, 2021).

In using this narrative companies can appeal to consumers by drawing on what is important to them in the moment. Large scale disasters are one social event that demands near omnipresent media coverage within the country they occur in, with coverage often additionally spilling over into other countries or on a global scale. As a result, whether people have been personally impacted or not the disaster is likely to be at the forefront of mind for anyone with access to a television, newspaper, radio or online news site. Thus by utilising this narrative companies can be seen to be addressing a problem being experienced and witnessed by many in a real hands-on way.

While it is clear that Mars, in particular, has generously provided both aid and donations to reduce harm during disaster time, some information suggests the brand may be implicated in the origin of several natural disasters. Mars has never been directly implicated in a specific natural disaster, however, it is possible that some company practices could have indirectly facilitated natural disasters in Indonesia. Research suggests that deforestation magnifies the likelihood and severity of floods, particularly in developing nations (Bradshaw, Sodhi, Peh & Brook, 2007; Bruijnzeel, 2004). More specifically, in examination models produced by

Bradshaw et al., (2007) the authors predicted that flood likelihood increased 4-28% when 10% of forest cover was lost. It is hypothesized that this is because tree canopies help intercept rainfall, with evaporation from trees reducing groundwater runoff, and plant life additionally facilitating superior water infiltration into the soil (Bradshaw et al., 2007; Clark, 1987). With major losses to large areas of forest, these mechanisms are reduced leading to an increased risk of flooding. Additional research in Indonesia shows that growing palm oil developments in the area are linked to increased flood (likely in part because of this proposed mechanism), and increased droughts in dry seasons in part due to the increased year round water needs of oil palms (Merten, Roll, Tarigan, Holscher & Hein, 2017). This is significant because sources suggest that Mars has purchased palm oil for its products from suppliers in Indonesia (*Mongabay*, 2018). Furthermore, while Mars argued that their palm oil is "deforestation-free" as of the 6th of October, 2020, the Rainforest Action Network (RAN, 2020, p. 3 & 9) rebuff this claim stating that Mars ended "deforestation in production areas where forests were long ago cleared to make way for industrial plantations" and that Mars's claim was "little more than greenwash". While being able to prove that Mars has contributed to flooding and drought in Indonesia as a result of mass buying of palm oil is beyond the scope and ability of this research, it is at the very least a point of consideration. If this is the case Mars's narrative that they are disaster time saviours may only be half the story. If this is the case their narrative is misleading. Positively, no evidence was encountered to suggest that Whittakers has been in any way linked to natural disasters, particularly as the company has not used palm oil in their chocolate at any point according to their website (n.d.).

Cultural Origins

In displaying farmer welfare Mars exhibited a strong pattern of referencing the cultural origins of relevant farming communities. This manifested in images of people from farming communities wearing, engaging with or shot alongside cultural iconographies such as specific textiles, architecture, flora and activities. One example of this is figure 27 which depicts a group of women from a cocoa growing community in a West African style of dress involving brightly coloured hand loomed materials, a wide array of patterns, abstract embroidery, beaded necklaces and tied head scarves. The women are additionally posed against the backdrop of a modest albeit inviting mud building bordered by lush natural bush. Figure 28 depicts a woman and child, each also dressed in West African textiles and jewellery. Figure 29 shows a group of women in the midst of a dance, giving the viewer a sense of being in the

midst of local festivities and invited into the community's goings-on. The cultural origins theme can further be noted in figure 30 which depicts rice farmers from India. Here, five women are shown in a more traditionally Indian style of dress with brightly patterned saris, head coverings and bangles. These farmers are notably contrasted by a Mars ambassador who is photographed in a t-shirt, cargo pants and sneakers which are far more neutral in both colour and pattern.

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Figure 27. Tomorrow Starts Today
(Mars, 2020*d*)

Figure 28. Woman and Child
(Mars, 2020*d*)

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Figure 29. Dancing Women
(Mars, 2020*d*)

Figure 30. Rice Farmers
(Mars, 2017*c*)

By utilising farmer welfare imagery to express cultural origins, Mars constructs the narrative that they champion indigenous culture. This is because the brand depicts a range of imagery, beyond the American and European cultural vantage point that typically dominates media production, implying a sense of the same inclusivity narrative noted in the social responsibility sample. However, this narrative differs because of its framing. Unlike the inclusivity narrative which seeks to show consumers a reflection of themselves, those from farming communities in the Global South are unlikely to see these advertisements, indicating that this narrative is designed with the consumer in mind. In acknowledgement of this point and the fact that this narrative affords the consumer a pleasurable peek into a 'different world' that is tranquil yet simultaneously exciting because of its cultural and aesthetic differences, the narrative reads more like a tourism campaign. As noted by Phillips, Taylor, Narain and Chandler (2017, p. 1) this type of media which "exoticises the 'other'" is designed for the gaze of the western 'tourist' (consumer) and works to enforce untrue colonial discourses - such as people of the Global South being happy to work and share their lives for the Western consumer, even while living in abject poverty.

Certainly, brands appear to have a vested interest in communicating an inclusionary narrative with a 'tourism spin', as research suggests that consumers are often escapism motivated (Labrecque, Krishen & Grzeskowiak, 2011). Thus, media that allows these groups to "create fantasies or constructed 'unrealities'" encourages brand loyalty from these groups (Labrecque et al., 2011). Additionally, interview research suggests that some consumers will seek out foods they view as 'exotic' because they view them as more exciting (May, 1996). Thus, in essence, this narrative of 'championing the indigenous' is actually a means for the consumer to engage in a "pleasurable consumption of the exotic" (Wright, 2004, p. 674). This is a phenomenon identified by Wright (2004) who argued that coffee advertising by Cafedirect encouraged viewers to consume the lives and landscapes involved in the production of coffee beans.

In employing this narrative brands may be drawing on the assumption that the consumer craves escape from the stresses of daily life. This is a corporate strategy highlighted by Labrecque et al., (2011) who argues that the process of buying and using products forms an experience that facilitates consumers ability to temporarily disconnect from monotonous reality. This is because viewer oriented media is aspirational for the consumer, and thus engaging as it constitutes a "resistance to everyday life" (Labrecque et al., 2011; Chaplin,

1999; Cohen & Taylor, 1992, p. 233). Certainly, imagery of inviting agrarian village communities seem a far cry from the experience (and problems) of urban living such as traffic, pollution, lack of meaningful connection with nature and people, and induction into the hustle economy (Thieme, 2018). Interestingly, this is a connection that has been identified in chocolate advertising before, with Golding (2006, p. 16) noting the following in their analysis of Divine Chocolate:

> "Consumers are invited to consume the landscape, an exotic landscape of warm sunshine and tropical palms, an authentic landscape, far removed from the "machines and high-pressured corporate world that characterise the 21st century" (Wright, 2004: 674). The ads thus provide consumers with a sense of escapism which fulfils their yearnings for commodities with cultural and sensory ties (Daviron & Ponte, 2005)"

Whilst these depictions may feel rejuvenating for the western urban and suburban consumer, several researchers suggest this practice is harmful. Certainly, the implications of utilising a narrative that is built on the commodification of indigenous cultures by dominant cultures is complex. For example, Hooks (1992) suggests that this kind of "imperialist nostalgia takes the form of re-enacting and re-ritualizing in different ways the imperialist, colonising journey as narrative fantasy of power and desire, of seduction by the Other". In contrast however, authors such as Frow (1997, p. 138 as cited in Jackson, 1998) and Jackson (1998) argue that commodification can be both "enabling and productive as well as… limiting and destructive". However, in the case of Mars's texts, the outcome seems unfavourable for those depicted in the adverts. In these examples an American company is drawing on indigenous African and Asian cultural aesthetics for the company's monetary benefit, whilst those within these communities survive on extremely limited incomes (Fairtrade Foundation, 2019). In this case, corporate commodification appears more akin to cultural plundering.

Furthermore, while using indigenous cultural aesthetics to curate their feed, Mars has been accused of causing additional harm to indigenous communities. On October 8th 2020 the Rainforest Action Network (RAN, 2020) issued a statement declaring that Mars's failure to eradicate deforestation was intrinsically linked to the harm of local communities and indigenous people in Indonesia and Malaysia. This is a result of corporate logging and agricultural production in both areas, which were used to source palm oil (RAN, 2020). As part of this Forest Program Director Robin Averbeck states that the brand did not prioritise helping indigenous people secure the rights to their land, leaving them and their natural

resources vulnerable to exploitation (RAN, 2020). These industry and scholarly findings highlight discrepancies in the narrative of Mars championing indigenous culture, ultimately suggesting that this narrative is being used as a form of greenwash.

Improved Livelihood of Farmers

In displaying farmer welfare Mars and Nestlé clearly exhibited the theme of improving the livelihood of farmers. Two sub themes fell under this general category including access to opportunity and intentional positivity. Intentional positivity refers to the purposeful depictions of farmers as joyful as they farm and go about their daily life. Interestingly, there was a notable difference between those in offices who were typically depicted with neutral closed mouth smiles, as compared to farming communities who were more often shown with broad open mouth smiles. This concept has been raised in the literature several times with McCarthy, Touboulic and Matthews (2018) identifying 'the happy farmer' as a theme in the advertising of major food giant Unilever. As well as Dogra (2007) who identified a 'deliberate positivism' in images of "people of the [global] south" used by NGO's. One example of intentional positivity is figure 31 which discusses Nestlé's support for "local suppliers and their families" (Nestlé, 2018*e*) while depicting two people with wide smiles tending to a plant. Figure 32 shows two people who are part of Nestlé's youth agripreneurship program in Ecuador laughing and smiling while tending to the earth. Figure 33 depicts a woman and child from a cocoa growing community smiling at each other, while figure 34 shows a Mars ambassador alongside a (mostly) smiling group of rice farmers.

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Figure 31. Cocoa Plan
(Nestlé, 2018*e*)

Figure 32. Ecuadorian Agripreneurship
(Nestlé, 2018*f*)

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Figure 33. Woman and Child
(Mars, 2020*d*)

Figure 34. Rice Farmers
(Mars, 2017*c*)

Access to opportunity was identified as posts that centralized on improved educational prospects (e.g. learning to read, or being able to pursue higher education) and career prospects (e.g. improving income or experience, or being able to start one's own business). Two particularly vivid examples of this are figure 35 and figure 36 which both detail a 10 million dollar investment by Mars into "unlock[ing] opportunities for women at every level of business - in our offices, factories and through our supply chain" (Mars, 2020*d*). Figure 37 similarly outlines Mars's support[10] for over 100,000 students across 800 villages, with the pictured example being the funding of a school in India where mint farmers reside. Figure 38 outlines Mars's Sustainable in a Generation plan which aims to empower those in their supply chain.

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[10] It should be noted that many of the examples within this category are vague as to how each person is aided and to what extent; for example funding books at a student's school, and fully funding a student's education across several years of study may both qualify as educational support but to vastly different extents.

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Figure 35. Unlocking Opportunities
(Mars, 2020*d*)

Figure 36. $10m Expansion
(Mars, 2020*d*)

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Figure 37. Wrigley Foundation
(Mars, 2018*d*)

Figure 38. Increasing Incomes
(Mars, 2017*d*)

Through centralising the improved livelihood of farmers theme, Mars and Nestlé are building the narrative that farmers are the primary benefactors of cocoa trade. This is because only the benefits farmers receive are ever highlighted, never what the company receives from these business arrangements. While it is likely too much to expect that brands advertise themselves as the primary benefactors of the cocoa trade it is interesting that neither brand ever alludes to mutual benefit. As a result, content is framed as though companies are providing a helping

hand to struggling farmers out of the goodness of their own hearts and not because of the profit to be made from chocolate sales.

For companies there are benefits for appearing to contribute positively to farmer welfare. For example, one group of researchers conclude from their survey on 'willingness to pay' for fair labour certification that consumers "value the better treatment of workers in the agricultural sector" (Drichoutis, Vassilopoulos, Lusk & Nayga, 2017, p. 455). Similarly, focus group research conducted by Howard (2005) revealed that participants wanted to see workers in the food supply chain receive higher incomes, protection from agricultural chemicals, proper access to education, medical care, appropriate working hours and suitable housing. Numerical figures suggest that demand for these products is growing, with numbers from Statista (2019) revealing that revenue for Fairtrade products have steadily increased from EUR830m (approx. NZD1.4b) in 2004 to EUR9.8b (approx. NZD16.6b) in 2018.

Rise in demand is likely a result of the social context surrounding farmer treatment in the last two decades. In particular the introduction of the Harkin-Engel Protocol in 2001 shined an international spotlight on the existence of issues such as child labour, forced labour and human trafficking within the cocoa industry. Since then issues within the chocolate sector such as child labour and poverty have become more widely publicized in the mainstream media. For example, since 2001 major news outlets such as *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times,* the *Los Angeles Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* have all published expose articles about the corporate mistreatment of cocoa farmers. In New Zealand, major domestic news outlets including *Stuff* and the *New Zealand Herald* have followed suit. As a result, companies may be drawing on the assumption that consumers need exposure to positive representations of farmers to avoid associating chocolate with negative emotions such as sadness, anger and guilt. In doing so the narrative of farmers as the primary benefactors of cocoa appeals to the "well-to-do Northern consumer" because it functions as a "feel good conscience cleanser" (Hudson & Hudson, 2003, p. 423). Here the consumer may be seduced into believing that the symbolic actions shown are a reflection of the general state of farmer life in the cocoa industry and that all/the majority of farmers are fairly compensated. Certainly, this narrative suggests that problems farmers face are either solved, or well on their way to being solved.

Both brands appear to encourage this interpretation from consumers by imbuing a number of their posts with a sense of authenticity and legitimacy through use of candid photography/videography[11], for example figures 31, 32, 33 and 37. Incorporating candid media makes it appear as though the brand is just capturing the normal 'un-staged' everyday life of farmers. Thus, posting these images may be interpreted as proof of the thriving members of the supply chain by uncritical consumers, despite the fact that depictions of a few select farmers is not a representative overview. Furthermore, these posts are yet another example of the "voiceless but empowered farmer" identified by McCarthy et al., (2018, p. 609). It is fair to assume that farming communities are not involved in the production and media side of the content created about them - certainly, only one post that utilized this theme actually used the voice of someone from a farming community. However, even in this case the highly disparate power relations between corporations and farmers determine that only positive comments from farmers will be heard by consumers as the corporation holds the power of deciding what information reaches those in cocoa buying communities. Thus, in all of the posts consumers gain access to only the positive outside gaze of western corporations rather than farmers themselves.

While Nestlé and Mars have contributed towards improving opportunities through things such as education and monetary contributions, it is clear that farmers are not the primary benefactors of the chocolate trade. For one thing, companies bring in massive amounts of money by selling chocolate and other goods. In 2020 alone, Mars generated USD37 billion in revenue (approx. NZD56.35 billion) according to *Forbes*, while Nestlé generated CHF84.34 billion in revenue (approx. NZD128.4 billion) according to Statista (n.d.). While not all of this is pure profit, a sizeable chunk of it is for Nestlé who generated CHF14.2 billion in profit (approx. NZD22.17 billion)[12] according to their 2020 full year report.

Additionally, a 2019 article by *The Washington Post* revealed that representatives for neither Mars nor Nestlé could guarantee that their chocolate making process did not involve child labour. This is in spite of the fact that both brands signed the Harkin-Engel Protocol which outlined a deadline of July 2005 for the eradication of the worst forms of child labour (*The Washington Post*, 2019). A major reason for this is the lack of traceability within the

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[11] Candid photography/videography refers to media in which the subjects do not appear to have been staged or posed.

[12] Public information about Mars's 2020 profits could not be located.

corporate chocolate supply chain, with Mars being able to trace only 24% of its cocoa, and Nestlé only 49% of its cocoa back to specific farms in 2019[13] (*The Washington Post*, 2019). Meanwhile in 2020, Nestlé retracted their use of Fairtrade certification for their range of UK KitKats, which the Fairtrade Foundation indicated would negatively impact farmers in the following statement:

> "The farmers have been trading their way out of grinding poverty thanks to a commitment from Nestlé to buy Fairtrade over these past 10 years. Nestlé withdrawing their support will have a huge impact. Farmers asked very clearly for Nestlé to continue sourcing from them on Fairtrade terms. Nestlé has said they're willing to source from them, but not on Fairtrade terms." (*The Independent*, 2020, p. 4).

The switch was estimated to result in a net loss of GBP1.6m (approx. NZD3.1m) for 27,000 smallholder producers in Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji and Malawi (Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, 2020). Similar issues were uncovered for Mars in 2020 with cocoa regulators alleging that the brand had changed its buying patterns in an attempt to avoid paying premium prices which would increase farmer wages, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (2020). This is despite the fact that cocoa farmers are already estimated to earn only 6% of the price of a bar of chocolate on average (Fairtrade Foundation, n.d.). Unfortunately, no public figures could be located on the average income of cocoa farmers who supply Nestlé and Mars with cocoa beans. Each of these instances exemplify major issues in transparency for both brands and suggest that income is unacceptably low. These findings are ultimately at odds with the narrative that farmers are the primary benefactors of the cocoa trade, which suggests that this narrative is being utilized as a form of greenwash by both Nestlé and Mars.

Understated Ethicality

One particularly interesting theme that emerged from farmer welfare markers in Whittakers marketing was understated ethicality. Here, more substantial references to ethical production (particularly ethical labour labels) were included in posts, however, they were more often than not placed in the background or zoomed out from in photographs, and blurry or cut out of frame during videos. Furthermore, this labelling more often than not went unremarked upon by the brand and was not further emphasized by text or imagery. This is in contrast to

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[13] No information is available on whether these percentages have changed in the last two years.

many of the other themes where ethical elements were explicitly emphasized as a way of communicating company action.

Some examples of this theme include figure 39, a video which features a Fairtrade symbol in the final frame. The post does not reference farmers but instead depicts dancers from the Royal New Zealand Ballet and an example of New Zealand scenery. Figure 40 features a Rainforest Alliance label so it might be expected that the brand would utilize the opportunity to present something related to farmers. However, the video goes on to show the chocolate block being artistically repurposed as a typewriter for World Book Day. Figure 41 depicts one type of chocolate (the creamy milk block in the middle) with a Fairtrade label, alongside nine other chocolate blocks without. The ethical label goes unremarked upon and the post instead revolves around celebrating Matariki[14]. While the final example figure 42 depicts the Fairtrade symbol but primarily focuses on celebrating St. Patrick's day.

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Figure 39. Chocolate and Scenery
(Whittakers, 2017*c*)

Figure 40. Creamy Milk
(Whittakers, 2020*b*)

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[14] Matariki is a New Zealand holiday signifying Māori New Year.

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Figure 41. Chocolate Selection
(Whittakers, 2018*a*)

Figure 42. Dark Ghana Chocolate
(Whittakers, 2017*e*)

On the face of it, by relying on the understated ethicality theme, Whittakers appears to forgo the opportunity to capitalise on an ethical narrative. However, the understated nature of their content actually helps build an ethical narrative through a *lack* of emphasis on the concept of farmer welfare, which signifies that ethical production is standard/normal for the brand. In doing so Whittakers can construct the narrative that high standards for farmer welfare are (and always have been) the norm in their supply chains and as a result aren't even worth commenting on. This is favourable for the brand because consumers like products more, and are willing to pay more for them when farmer welfare is demonstrated, for example through labelling (Schouteten, Gellynck, Slabbinck, 2021). Thus brands have a vested interest in appearing as though farmer welfare is consistently a key consideration for the company.

The corporate decision to present farmer welfare in an understated manner is likely a result of the social context surrounding ethical marketing in the last decade. Researchers suggest that in recent years ethical claims in advertising have accelerated (Kim & Lyon, 2014). Certainly, research demonstrates that ethical marketing has permeated an expansive list of sectors including household items (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013), vehicles (Fitzgerald & Spencer, 2020) and tourism (Butler, 2018). At the same time consumers have become more and more sceptical about the authenticity of these claims (Kim & Lyon, 2014). Interviews conducted by Richardson-Greenfield and La Ferle (2021, p. 208) suggest this is a major concern for professionals in the modern advertising landscape with all 34 of their interviewees agreeing

that consumers would likely be "resentful and punitive" towards a brand caught engaging in deceptive advertising. Additional extracted quotes indicated that advertising professionals perceive online consumers as more educated and willing to criticise if false claims and puffery are identified in the contemporary marketplace (Richardson-Greenfield & La Ferle, 2021). While others said they believed that engaging in these practices would ruin trust between brands and consumers, and "leave a really sour taste in their [consumers] mouths" (Richardson-Greenfield & La Ferle, 2021, p. 208).

Notably however, failure to communicate corporate ecological and social action, a phenomenon known as 'brownwashing', is correlated with lower financial performance (Testa, Miroshnychenko, Barotini & Frey, 2017; Kim & Lyon, 2014). Thus, in the modern era, brands must retain their social 'license to operate'[15] by either greenwashing or communicating evidence of their substantive social and environmental actions (Kim & Lyons, 2014). As a result perceptive brands will walk the line between greenwashing and brownwashing - communicating an 'understated ethicality'. In utilising this narrative, brands can appeal to consumers that are fed up with an oversaturated inauthentic ethical marketplace (a fraudulent moral economy). Certainly, brands who use a few legitimate-looking references to farmer welfare, such as labelling, have the potential to come across as far more authentic, especially when compared with brands who spam consumers with ostentatious assurances of farmer welfare in every post through imagery and descriptors.

Notably, however, while Whittakers has contributed favourably towards farmer welfare (with the documented use of certification over the past 11 years), consistent farmer welfare is not necessarily the norm for the brand. For one thing, Fairtrade certification does not appear to have ever been used across the full portfolio of Whittakers products. An example of this can be seen in figure 36 (chocolate selection image) which depicts ten chocolate flavours, with only the creamy milk flavour sporting the Fairtrade symbol. In 2020 Whittakers switched from Fairtrade to Rainforest Alliance Certification, which also does not appear to have been extended across the brand's full range of chocolate. Furthermore, this switch garnered critique from industry leaders such as Geoff White (CEO of Trade Aid) who was quoted in a *Stuff* (2020) article as stating:

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[15] A social 'license to operate' is the capability for organizations to continue their work because society has deemed them a legitimate force who will not generate large amounts of social or environmental harm (Sustainable Business Council, n.d.).

> "Rainforest Alliance has much lower standards than Fairtrade. There is no minimum price, no farmer ownership of standards, and no collective bargaining for workers. Reports of forced labour and child labour on Rainforest Alliance certified cocoa farms are commonplace… It's a lower bar… It's much easier for a company to operate under the Rainforest Alliance than it is within the Fairtrade system."

A drop in farmer welfare standards through this switch makes sense as the Rainforest Alliance was formed primarily as a response to environmental issues, unlike Fairtrade which was specifically formed as a way to lift up marginalized farmers from the Global South (Bethge, 2014). However, no peer reviewed research could be located on whether Fairtrade or the Rainforest Alliance actually generate better outcomes for farmers, making it difficult to quantify the impact of this switch. Importantly however, research does suggest that Rainforest Alliance certification produces better outcomes for farmers (namely through better working conditions) than no certification at all. As does Fairtrade which increases farmers' access to credit, helps stabilise income and bolsters community development (Anderson, Booth & Sushil, 2014; Nelson & Pound, 2009).

Importantly, however, consumers should not be lulled into thinking that certification alone guarantees perfect supply chain conditions for farmers. Even Fairtrade, which is widely considered the current gold standard of certification programs (Podhorsky, 2015; Nelson & Pound, 2009) has received both praise and critique for its method. Perhaps the biggest argument against Fairtrade is that farmers often receive only a small percentage of the extra cost that consumers are charged for buying Fairtrade products. For example, Griffiths (2011) states that in the case of one British coffee group only 1% of the extra price incurred by consumers was passed on to the exporter. Furthermore, Booth and Whetstone (2007, p. 35) argue that because of demand (or lack thereof) Fairtrade can only ever benefit a small portion of producers and "not necessarily the poorest ones". In consideration of these points it is clear that while the role of labelling is important in reducing some of the harms encountered by farmers, it does not guarantee a perfect system and limitations to these certifications mean that harm is still incurred. In light of this, consumers are encouraged to consider labelling such as Fairtrade as a step towards ethical trade and additionally push for more transparent data from individual companies regarding exactly how much exporters and farmers are receiving.

Summary

The quantitative data indicated that overall social responsibility was the fourth most frequently used category, while farmer welfare was the least frequently used type of ethical content overall. Comparisons between marker frequency revealed that support for diversity was by far the most commonly used people centric marker. Monetary support, volunteering and farmer welfare descriptors and image/story came in at second, third and joint fourth respectively but were used far less than support for diversity. Farmer welfare labelling, farmer welfare action and codes of ethics were infrequently used.

Comparisons across brands revealed that monetary support, code of ethics, farmer welfare labelling, and farmer welfare actions were used infrequently by every company. Mars and Nestlé utilized diversity at an elevated rate. Whilst, Mars utilized volunteering, farmer welfare descriptors and farmer welfare action significantly more than the other brands.

Within the people centric qualitative data, five major themes were identified. First, 'inclusivity' (used by Mars and Nestlé) built up the narrative that companies support a diverse range of people, particularly those who have historically faced elevated levels of discrimination. Positively, no information suggesting that Mars and Nestlé are non-inclusive was uncovered. Furthermore, their high position on the Corporate Equality Index and their willingness to use their economic power to push for LGBT+ equality in legislation suggests that this narrative is not a form of greenwash. The second identified theme - 'disaster time good Samaritans' (used by Mars and Whittakers) constructed the narrative that chocolate brands are saviours during disaster time. Whilst no evidence was uncovered to suggest that this is untrue in the case of Whittakers, some circumstantial evidence indirectly links Mars's use of palm oil from Indonesia to an increased incidence and severity of natural disasters in the area. The third identified theme 'cultural origins' (used by Mars) constructed the narrative that the brand advocates for indigenous culture. However, scholarship highlights the harm of producing media for the gaze of the western tourist (consumer) and the industry group RAN allege generations of harm for indigenous groups in Malaysia and Indonesia as a result of industry practice. The fourth identified theme was the 'improved livelihood of farmers' (used by Mars and Nestlé) which constructed the narrative that farmers are the only benefactors of the cocoa trade. This was easily disproved by public information on corporate revenue and profit which revealed that Mars and Nestlé are billion dollar beneficiaries from chocolate supply. Additionally, information that both brands have made moves to lower the (already

unacceptably low) compensation paid to farmers, and cannot trace the origin of all of their cocoa highlight this narrative as a concerning form of greenwash. The final identified theme was understated ethicality (used by Whittakers) which established the narrative that farmer welfare is normal for the brand. Notably however, the brands limited implementation of labour certifications and recent switch to a certification deemed less favourable by industry professionals calls this narrative into question. In considering the overall results, this chapter outlines five instances of suspected or confirmed greenwashing. Three of these come from Mars, one of these comes from Nestlé and one of these comes from Whittakers. These results suggest consistent use of people centric narratives as a greenwashing tool.

Chapter Six – The Social Construction of Animals, Nutrition & Vague Ethics

Following the format laid out in Chapter Four, the frequency section of this chapter will examine the animal and nutrition focused markers - animal welfare descriptors, labelling, image/sound/story and action, and nutritional labelling, action, density descriptors and reduction descriptors. Ethical not otherwise specified (ENOS) is also included in this section. It will do this by drawing on the results from table 7 and 8. Under the themes and narratives section the themes 'animal altruism', 'corporate integration', 'kiwiana', 'healthier kids', 'integrative wellness' and 'food security' are analysed and explored. A thematic analysis of the ENOS data was not included because this data set primarily consisted of hashtags which did not provide a rich enough source to extract and discuss meaningful patterns.

Frequency

Total Frequency

As noted in table 7 animal welfare markers were used 82 times, nutritionism markers were employed 42 times and ethical not otherwise specified markers (ENOS) were used 62 times. This resulted in the non-people/environment centred markers being used a total of 186 times across the sample of 300, or 62% of the time. ENOS (n=62) which suggests general commitment to morality, was by far the most commonly used in this section and was the third most common of the 21 sub-categories. Under the umbrella of food and animals, animal welfare images (n=47) were the most commonly used and were the fourth most frequently used marker of the 21 sub-categories. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted on why brands utilize animal imagery. However, the prominence of this marker may be attributed to the fact that "animals in advertisements [are hypothesized to] inspire good feelings about the advertisement and the brand" (Lancendorfer, Atkin & Reece, 2006, p. 390). Following on from this, nutritional density descriptors (n=30 or 10% of the time) were also relatively commonly used. However, this marker was used at a reduced frequency than might be expected based on recent research from the UK which found that health claims appeared in 24.8% of televisual food adverts of which 58.3% of those were for non-core foods (Whalen, Harrold, Child, Halford and Boyland, 2018). This suggests that chocolate brands may be less inclined to use health claims, perhaps because these claims may be

associated with a reduction in flavour. Animal welfare descriptors (n=17) and animal welfare action (n=16) were also used occasionally. This finding was initially surprising as previous researchers such as Evan and Miele (2012, p. 309) have argued that "everyday food vocabularies" primarily work to "disguise the animal origins of foods", while animal welfare descriptors in the context of food inherently work to expose the animal connection. However, upon review of the texts it was noted that neither of these markers were used in relation to agricultural animals, seeming to affirm Evan and Miele's (2012) argument. Through this, positive associations between the brand and animal welfare (for non-'food' animals) are hypothesized to be formed by the consumer (Evan & Miele, 2020). Nutritional action (n=9) was used relatively little, perhaps based on corporate assumptions that this type of action will be unimportant to the consumer, however no research has been conducted examining consumers reactions to corporate nutritional action. As anticipated due to the system wide overhauls required in order to be approved for certifications, both animal welfare labelling (n=2) and nutritional labelling (n=3) were very infrequently depicted. This is additionally unsurprising as Nestle[16] (2013) argues that brands have resisted the introduction of nutritional labelling. Animal welfare labelling would also require specific reference to animals involved in the process of constructing a particular food and thus remind the consumer of their unfavourable animal origin. Interestingly, given the widely viewed perceptions of chocolate as an unhealthy food, no examples of nutritional reduction markers (n=0) were found across the sample.

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[16] No relation to the brand.

Table 7. Total Frequency and Percentage of Animal Welfare, Nutritionism and ENOS Markers

		Count	Table N %
Animal Welfare Descriptors	No	283	94.3%
	Yes	17	5.7%
Animal Welfare Labelling	No	298	99.3%
	Yes	2	0.7%
Animal Welfare Image	No	253	84.3%
	Yes	47	15.7%
Animal Welfare Action	No	284	94.7%
	Yes	16	5.3%
Nutritional Labelling	No	297	99.0%
	Yes	3	1.0%
Nutritional Density Descriptors	No	270	90.0%
	Yes	30	10.0%
Reduction Descriptors	No	300	100.0%
	Yes	0	0.0%
Nutritional Action	No	291	97.0%
	Yes	9	3.0%
Ethical Not Otherwise Specified	No	238	79.3%
	Yes	62	20.7%

Table 8. Frequency of Animal Welfare, Nutritionism and ENOS Markers Utilized by Each Company

		Company		
		Mars Count	Nestlé Count	Whittaker's Count
Animal Welfare Descriptors	Not Present	88	95	100
	Present	12	5	0
Animal Welfare Labelling	Not Present	100	99	98
	Present	0	1	2
Animal Welfare Image	Not Present	84	89	84
	Present	16	11	16
Animal Welfare Action	Not Present	89	96	99
	Present	11	4	1
Nutritional Labelling	Not Present	99	98	100
	Present	1	2	0
Nutritional Density Descriptors	Not Present	92	78	100
	Present	8	22	0
Reduction Descriptors	Not Present	100	100	100
	Present	0	0	0
Nutritional Action	Not Present	96	95	100
	Present	4	5	0
Ethical Not Otherwise Specified	Not Present	92	46	100
	Present	8	54	0

Animal Welfare Descriptors

The chi-square test revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between brand and animal welfare descriptors (X^2, (2, N = 300) = 13.594, p = <.001). Mars (n=12) was significantly more likely than Whittakers (n=0) to use this indicator of animal welfare, whilst Nestlé (n=5) landed in the middle near the expected count of 5.7. These results correlate to the products sold by each brand. Mars and Nestlé both own a variety of pet care brands while Whittakers does not. These findings suggest that animal welfare descriptors are not typically present in chocolate advertising, and are only present to such a degree in this sample because of the chosen brands relevant product portfolios.

Animal Welfare Labelling

The Fisher exact test revealed that there was no significant trend between brand and animal welfare labelling, with no company being statistically more likely to employ this indicator of animal welfare (p=1.000). Across the sample, animal welfare labelling was not commonly used by any brand with Whittakers (n=2) and Nestlé (n=1) using it infrequently and Mars (n=0) not using it at all. This outcome suggests that it is common for chocolate companies to forgo animal welfare labelling; however, a greater number of brands are needed to confirm this. This is concerning because labelling suggests that a brand is actually 'doing something' for animals. The frequency of animal welfare labelling was especially low, being the lowest of all labelling types across the total sample. This suggests the presence of speciesism or the idea that humans place the animal kingdom on a hierarchy where humans are superior and non-human animals are inherently inferior. Certainly, the lack of animal labelling in this sample aligns with assertions from speciesist criminologists that the hegemonic mistreatment of non-human animals is commonplace practice in institutions, such as those involved in food production (Moore, 2013; Nurse & Wyatt, 2020; Beirne & South, 2013).

Animal Welfare Image/Sound/Story

The chi-square test revealed that there was no significant relationship between brand and animal welfare image/sound/story (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 1.867, p = .393). Across the sample animal welfare image/sound/story was commonly used by all of the brands - with Mars (n=16) and Whittakers (n=16) using it the most and Nestlé (n=11) using it fairly frequently as well. This suggests that this marker may be a commonly used in chocolate advertising. The consistent use of this marker by all the brands is likely a result of the aforementioned 'cute

factor' of animals and the positive feelings they induce in advertising (Lancendorfer et al., 2006).

Animal Welfare Action

The chi-square test revealed that there was a highly statistically significant relationship between brand and animal welfare action (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 10.431, p = .005). Mars (n=11) was significantly more likely to use this indicator of animal welfare than Whittakers (n=1), with Nestlé (n=4) coming in close to the expected count of 5.3. As with animal welfare descriptors these outcomes align with the products sold by each brand - with Mars owning the most pet care brands (and having the highest frequency of animal welfare action), Nestlé owning two pet care brands (and having a moderate frequency of action) and Whittakers not owning any pet care brands (and having a limited frequency of action). These findings suggest that animal welfare action may not be something that is typically present in chocolate advertising, and is instead an outcome of two of the brands selected being associated with pet care.

Nutritional Labelling

The Fisher exact test revealed that there was no significant relationship between brand and nutritional labelling (p = .776). Across the sample nutritional labelling was not commonly used by any of the brands with Nestlé (n=2) and Mars (n=1) using it infrequently and Whittakers (n=0) not using it at all. This suggests that nutritional labelling may not be a commonly used marker within the chocolate industry in general. The lack of nutritional labelling in chocolate advertising is unsurprising. Prominent nutritional labels work to help people make educated choices regarding the food they eat (e.g. by allowing them to track macronutrients, sugar content etc.), making 'eating healthy simpler' (Prathiraja & Ariawardana, 2003). However, when a product is unhealthy brands are likely to want to steer away from emphasizing this information, as healthfulness is an important consideration in consumer purchasing behaviour (Temesi, Bacso, Grunert & Lakner, 2019). These findings suggest that nutritional labelling is not currently a key concern when it comes to greenwashing for consumers or academics.

Nutritional Density Descriptors

The chi-square test revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between brand and nutritional descriptors (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 27.556, p = <.001). Nestlé (n=22) used

this indicator of nutritionism significantly more than Whittakers (n=0), with Mars (n=8) coming in close to the expected count of 10. The high frequency use of this marker by Nestlé can primarily be attributed to the fact that unlike the other brands, Nestlé runs a school education program that focuses heavily on nutrition. Thus, they have a reason to reference nutritional density descriptors such as 'healthy' - particularly as the name of their program is 'Nestlé For Healthier Kids'. Both Nestlé and Mars may also utilize this theme because global corporations in particular have a reputation of contributing to obesity (Pettigrew, Tarabaskina, Roberts, Quester, Chapman & Miller, 2013; Powell, 2018). Thus, these brands may be particularly motivated to try and rebuff this image. In contrast, Whittakers as a national brand with a comparatively small product range may not face the same pressures to frame their products as healthy. These results suggest that nutritional density descriptors may be at greater risk of being used as a greenwashing tool by larger companies.

Nutritional Reduction Descriptors

No companies utilized this ethical marker, as a result no tests were able to be conducted to determine any sort of relationship. The fact that none of the companies utilized this even once suggests that nutritional reduction descriptors are an element that is not commonly used in the chocolate advertising sector. The lack of nutritional reduction descriptors also suggests that trying to make chocolate products appear healthier is not a primary goal of any of the brands under examination. This is likely because consumers commonly associate reductions in ingredients viewed as unhealthy (e.g. sugar, salt and fat) with a reduction in taste expectations (Liem, Aydin & Zandstra, 2012). Research by Steinhauser, Janssen and Hamm (2019) further confirms this by finding that consumers preferred taste claims over nutritional claims when purchasing milk chocolate. At any rate, these findings suggest that nutritional reduction descriptors should not be considered a key concern when it comes to greenwashing in chocolate advertising.

Nutritional Action

The Fisher exact test revealed that there was no relationship between brand and nutritional action, with no company in our sample being statistically more likely to employ this form of nutritionism (p=.083). Across the sample, nutritional action was not commonly used by any of the brands, with Nestlé (n=5) and Mars (n=4) using it infrequently and Whittakers (n=0) not using it at all. This suggests that nutritional action may not be commonly utilized within chocolate industry advertising in general. There does not appear to be any research examining

consumer perceptions of and reactions to nutritional action, making it difficult to assess why brands would choose to avoid using this marker. However, it can be hypothesized that brands may be hesitant to focus on increasing the availability of nutritious food as it is a task that may require considerable investment in time, money and resources. As a result, these findings suggest that chocolate brands may only engage in nutritional action in a limited capacity.

Ethical Not Otherwise Specified

The chi-square test revealed that there was a significant relationship between brand and the ethical not otherwise specified variable (X^2 (2, N = 300) = 103.65, p = <.001). Nestlé (n=46) was significantly more likely to use this indicator of ethical business practice than either Mars (n=8) or Whittakers (n=0), both of which were far below the expected count of 20.7. Interestingly, ENOS was the least substantive of the markers, with most examples of this in the sample being one to two word hashtags. Nestlé's heavy use of this marker is interesting because research suggests that consumers are likely to perceive vague claims sceptically and by extension view them as a greenwashing attempt by the brand (Peattie & Crane, 2005; Imkamp, 2000; Tonner, 2000). Hoek, Roling and Holdsworth (2013) hypothesize that brands may utilize vague claims in the hope that consumers will simply accept them and view the brand more favourably than competitor brands. These opposing expected outcomes may work to explain the wide variance in use across each of the brands. Importantly, the non-quantifiable nature of ENOS and the prominent use of it by some brands raise it as a potentially widespread method of greenwashing. This makes ENOS an important topic of consideration for future research.

Themes and Narratives

Animal Altruism

Animal welfare was directly alluded to in the data set through animal altruism by all of the brands, though primarily by Mars. Here, animal altruism was interpreted into three distinct sub themes - mutual affection, animal aid and long term animal preservation. As a subtheme mutual affection can be identified as posts where fondness was expressed between animals and people. This was conveyed through close proximity, physical touch, eye contact the appearance of both parties being happy/relaxed, as well as descriptions of endearment for each other. As anticipated (because of greater barriers to accessibility) shots forming the mutual affection subtheme in this data set were only of people (employees) and pets - not

wild/agricultural animals. Figure 43 is one notable example of this, with an employee holding a dog in a loose embrace on their lap, with both maintaining eye contact. In this scene the dog looks relaxed and the employee is smiling, contributing to a sense of mutual affection. Figure 37 similarly displays an employee who is holding a dog in an embrace, with both looking forward cheerfully. This theme is also presented in other posts such as one stating "100% of dogs love when their humans bring them to work. 93% of people surveyed agreed that having a pet in the workplace improves morale" (Mars, 2017*j*).

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Figure 43. Employee and Dog   *Figure 44. Santa and Dog*
(Mars, 2017*e*)   (Mars, 2017*f*)

The second subtheme was animal aid - posts that showed and discussed brand efforts to help animals. This could include education efforts, monetary/resource donations, veterinary efforts and other volunteer/paid work to help animals. Figure 45 is a notable example of this, with the caption discussing the efforts of the Banfield Pet Hospital (a subsidiary company owned by Mars) and the Banfield Foundation in helping pets in need after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico. While figure 46 discusses animal aid efforts including an education campaign at local schools (pictured) and participation in a beach clean-up to aid marine life. Captions of other posts further solidify the existence of this sub theme such as the following from Mars - "Last year alone, we logged more than 100,000 volunteer hours in the UK, positively impacting… more than 100,000 animals" (Mars, 2019*g*).

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Figure 45. Banfield Volunteers
(Mars, 2017*g*)

Figure 46. Animal Education
(Mars, 2017*h*)

The final way animal altruism was shown was through long-term animal preservation. This sub theme can be defined as discussion and depiction of efforts in conservation including presence at summits and the development of long term projects. This can be seen in figure 47 which depicts Mars's involvement in the Lion's Share Fund, an organization that has worked on projects including the digitization of reserve ranger's technology to reduce elephant poaching (Mars, n.d.*b*). In figure 48 long term animal preservation is also directly discussed with Mars's presence at The Economists' Ocean Summit, where they discussed their installation of 18,000 coral spiders to improve the future of underwater ecosystems. Interestingly, examples within this theme only referenced wild animals such as marine life, insects and rainforest animals - not pets or agricultural animals.

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Figure 47. Sustainable Development
(Mars, 2018*e*)

Figure 48. Ocean Summit
(Mars, 2019*e*)

Some of the key tenets of these sub themes have been identified by previous researchers. For example, in their examination of animal-focused television commercials, Lerner and Kalof (1999) identify the theme of 'animals as loved ones'. A different group of researchers identify the themes "opportunity to be altruistic and nurturant" and "opportunity for companionship, caring, comfort, and/or calmness" within their thematic analysis of companion animals (Holbrook, Stephens, Day, Holbrook & Strazar, 2001). Through centralising the animal altruism theme these brands (particularly Mars), are constructing the narrative that animals are only ever positively affected by the existence of multinational food corporations. This is because only instances of animal welfare are ever depicted, never instances of animal harm.

Nestlé and Mars likely draw on this narrative because in addition to selling chocolate they also sell pet care products; these are sold under the brands Purina and Friskies, and Pedigree, Royal Canin, Whiskas, IAMS, Nutro, Dreamies, Sheba, Cesar, Temptations, Eukanuba, Greenies and Aquarian respectively. Brands of course have a vested interest in employing positive narratives involving animals in their advertising as the "accepted belief is that animals in advertisements inspire good feelings about the advertisement and the brand" (Lancendorfer, Atkin & Reece, 2006, p. 390).

Based on this it can be hypothesized that this narrative may be highly appealing to animal lovers and pet owners. Certainly, the latter of these groups comprise a large proportion of the population - with one report finding that 64% of New Zealand households own at least one companion animal in 2020 (Companion Animals NZ, 2020). For animal lovers and pet owners, images of mutual affection between pets and people are likely to be particularly salient for these groups because it encourages self-identification, allowing them to recall positive memories with animals they have interacted with. Additionally, for this type of consumer, animals may also be viewed as a symbolic extension of the self (Jyrinki & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2006). 'Self-extension' consumers may choose to purchase food from a brand who appears to positively impact animals as it can be seen as a way for them to reaffirm their own identity. This is because choosing an animal loving brand over a competitor is a way for consumers to tangibly demonstrate their love for animals to themselves and others through their buying habits.

By far the most interesting revelation to come from the animal altruism subset was almost the complete lack of reference to agricultural animals. In fact throughout the entire 300 post sample, cows were only depicted twice. This is notable because most chocolate products contain milk. Surprisingly however, within this sample, cats and dogs predominate, whilst even lions, fish, birds and insects are mentioned in an altruistic sense on several occasions. This suggests that companies may be purposefully excluding cows in their chocolate advertising. This could be the result of a phenomenon raised by Schröder and McEachern (2004, p. 168) who argue that as *citizens* many people feel strongly about animal welfare, however, as *consumers* many will "avoid the cognitive connection with the live animal" and continue to purchase products associated with animal harm. By effectively erasing any connection to cows and milk, companies are subtly directing consumers away from considering the conditions experienced by dairy cattle, thereby, facilitating this process.

In addition, there are also recorded instances of both Nestlé and Mars contributing to animal harm. Referencing the Break Free From Plastic movement discussed in Chapter Six, it is known that Mars and Nestlé are major contributors to marine plastic waste. This is notable because research shows that marine waste is a major threat to underwater mammals, fish, turtles and birds because of the possibility of entanglement, and ingestion (Gall & Thompson, 2015). In consideration of harm against farm animals Nestlé and Mars have also shown to be contributors. In 2019, regarding eggs, Mars (n.d.*c*, p. 1) admitted on their website that only "52% of the volume covered by [their] commitment is cage free". While on their website Nestlé (2017*a*, p. 3) has posted their goal "to use only cage-free eggs for all of our food products globally by 2025" suggesting that much of their eggs are still sourced from caged hens. As of 2021 EggTrack (a cage-free egg reporting tool) classifies both Nestlé and Mars as making "slow progress" in the eradication of eggs sourced from cage hens. The existence of caged eggs (and by extension the existence of caged hens) is a violation of several integral parts of animal welfare including the ability to go outside, have access to space and engage in natural behaviours (Veissier, Butterworth, Bock & Roe, 2008; Roe, Murdoch and Marsden, 2005). Nestlé (2017*b*, p. 1) has also listed their commitments towards a "higher standards of welfare for broiler chickens by 2024" - a largely paradoxical statement considering that broiler chickens are bred specifically to be killed for their meat. In regard to dairy cows, a small statement on Mars's (n.d.*d*, p. 9) website emphasizes their commitments to "protect animal welfare", however they do not specify how this is being achieved beyond becoming a

member of The Dairy Working Group (TDWG).[17] Similar transparency issues were present in the case of Whittakers - beyond the claims on their website that milk is sourced from New Zealand little is known about the dairy cows within their supply chains. However, investigation of the New Zealand dairy industry has revealed instances of animal cruelty according to the animal welfare group SAFE (*Stuff*, 2015), making it imperative that Whittakers is transparent about their milk sourcing. Both of these instances exemplify a major issue in transparency for both Mars and Whittakers. Nestlé does better on the transparency front - in 2019 they published a list of their 'Tier 1[18] dairy ingredient suppliers' which lists the supplier company and location – a positive step in the right direction. Negatively however, the non-profit organization Animal Outlook has alleged following a 2019 investigation that widespread abuse of cows took place at a factory farm that was used to supply milk to Nestlé. Following the incident Animal Outlook stated that the brand claimed to have promptly cut ties with the farm but refused to address the systemic issue of animal harm within the food industry. In comparing outcomes from the 2020 Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare Report by Amos, Sullivan and Williams (p. 7) Mars received the second lowest ranking - that farm animal welfare was "on the business agenda but [there was] limited evidence of implementation". While Nestlé scored better, receiving the second highest ranking by demonstrating that farm animal welfare was "integral to business strategy". In consideration of each of these points, it is clear that Mars and Nestlé appear to be implicated in animal harm, while Whittakers may be potentially implicated. This suggests that each of the brands is potentially using the positive impact on animals narrative as a form of greenwash.

Corporate Integration

A major theme that was used by all the brands was corporate integration. Corporate integration can be defined as the consistent incorporation of animals into key elements of the business in order to create an association between animals and the brand. This can be split into two sub themes - branding integration and office integration. Branding integration involved the integration of animals into elements such as company logos, branding and advertising such as photographs, videos, 3D art pieces and illustrations. This is exemplified in

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[17] Notably, no specific information could be found discussing exactly what TDWG (or Mars alone) does to promote dairy cow welfare.

[18] Tier 1 typically refers to the suppliers that are directly affiliated with a company. Tier 2 refers to suppliers of Tier 1 suppliers, with each successive tier continuing up the supply chain.

figure 49 which depicts the Nesquik bunny on a flavoured milk canister. Similarly, figure 50 depicts a butterfly in a stop motion short. Figure 51 features the Nestlé logo which consists of a parent bird feeding its hatchlings.

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Figure 49. Nesquik Bunny
(Nestlé, 2018*g*)

Figure 50. Chocolate Butterfly
(Whittakers, 2019*a*)

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Figure 51. Nestlé Ramadan
(Nestlé, 2018*h*)

In the office integration subtheme animals were further merged with the brand by being shown as being physically and symbolically present within office spaces (many of which

were noted to have an open to animals policy), being brought along on destination projects and being shown within employees' homes as part of social media content. For example in figure 52 a small dog is shown in pride of place on an employee's desk. While in figure 53 another dog is depicted in an eight picture spread throughout the office. The existence of this theme is also clear within the captions accompanying these posts, for example "Thank you to all those who celebrated how #PetsWorkAtWork with us. Here's some of our fellow pets making workplaces brighter and better around the world… keep bringing them to work with you" (Mars, 2019*f*). This theme is also clear in multiple hashtags such as #DogsAtWork, #PetsOfMars and #Petfriendly.

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Figure 52. Employee and Dog
(Mars, 2019*f*)

Figure 53. Dog in the Office
(Mars, 2017*e*)

Through centralising the corporate integration theme Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers are each constructing the narrative that their brand/products are synonymous with particular attributes. This is a concept which has previously been identified by Lerner and Kalof (1999) who note the use of animals as symbols of specific traits or origins. The theoretical underpinnings of this concept have been explored further by Lloyd and Woodside (2013, p. 20) who argue that

> "animal characters transfer meanings onto brands. The integration of animal symbols in brand communications serves to activate and to connect archetypal associations automatically in consumers' minds, thereby enabling them to activate the cultural schema that the brand represents."

A cultural schema is the everchanging way in which a group of people broadly organize information and connect two or more pieces of information (Garro, 2000). This creates a web of images, perceptions and memories that many people have access to (Garro, 2000). For example, many people associate hearts with love - a connection that is continually reinforced through cultural holidays such as Valentine's Day. Thus, by associating something unfamiliar with a familiar concept already present within the cultural schema consumers can better contextualise what a brand is offering to provide.

This process of using an animal to interweave a particular trait can be seen across each of the examples shown above. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is figure 49 where the 'Nesquik bunny' is used to reinforce how fast it is to make Nestlé's flavoured milk. This works as symbolism because rabbits are quick and agile - an idea which has become embedded in common knowledge through pop culture representations of fast rabbits such as 'the white rabbit' who is always ahead of Alice in *Alice and Wonderland* and rapid rabbit from the Looney Toons. The use of a brightly coloured anthropomorphic rabbit also helps reinforce that the product is targeted towards children, being an animal that is commonly present in children's media - as is the case in the previous two examples.

In figure 50, the Whittakers butterfly works to communicate the idea of product freshness. This works because in the video the butterfly is shown emerging from its chrysalis revealing a fresh new self. Additionally the butterfly's close connection with nature in the video further references the idea of 'untouched nature' and its connotations of freshness (explored in Chapter Four). In figure 51, Nestlé's logo communicates the idea of the brand as nurturing. This works because parent birds in particular expend a large amount of time caring for their young through building of nests and effort spent finding, catching and pre-digesting food. Through interweaving this attribute into the pinnacle icon of their brand, Nestlé can suggest that they are nurturing their consumers by dutifully providing access to food.

In figures 52 and 53, Mars's use of dogs in the office works to communicate relatability, imbuing their brand with a sense of attainability. This works because dogs are one of the most common household pets, with 34% of New Zealand households owning a dog according to a 2020 Companion Animals NZ survey. Thus these images feel representative of the type of images that may be photographed in the home. Each of these images also work to reinforce

the idea that Mars are animal lovers who are willing to integrate man's best friend into all areas of life.

Through centralising the corporate integration theme Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers are each constructing the narrative that their brand/products are synonymous with particular traits. Unlike the other narratives explored, the narrative that a brand/product is synonymous with a particular trait is largely open ended. This means that there is an endless possibility of particular traits that could be implied. This makes it particularly difficult to establish an exhaustive list of discrepancies. However, as is noted in the 'straight from the earth' section of Chapter Five the freshness connection from Whittakers is misleading because Whittakers does not sell 'fresh' products. For the same reason the use of animal imagery to indicate freshness in figure 50 is also misleading, however the harm here is once again non-existent. Similarly, as noted in the 'animal altruism' section of this chapter, the narrative that animals are only positively affected by multinationals is misleading because Mars is linked to the victimization of agricultural and marine animals. For the same reason the use of animal imagery to frame the brand as animal lovers in figures 52 and 53 is also somewhat misleading. These identified discrepancies suggest that corporate integration has potential for being used as greenwash.

Kiwiana

Animal welfare imagery was commonly used by Whittakers to incorporate the idea of national identity into their advertising. This is achieved through the inclusion of kiwiana - particular pop culture and heritage based icons that hold particular significance for New Zealanders. This includes New Zealand based plant life, animal life, representations of Māori culture, as well as products that were mass produced within the country throughout the 20th century (Sands & Beverland, 2011). One notable example of this theme is figure 54 which publicizes Whittakers Creamy milk chocolate kiwi[19], a product which earmarks 20 cents per purchase to "saving our national icon" (Whittakers, 2017*f*). Figure 55 similarly depicts a kiwi in its natural habitat - the New Zealand bush, which is represented with rivers, mountains and plant life.

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[19] Kiwis are a native bird and widely considered to be the national icon of New Zealand (Department of Conservation, n.d.). New Zealanders are often also colloquially referred to as 'kiwis'.

The last two examples (figures 54 and 55) introduce native and naturalised animals such as kiwis, tuataras, tuis, fantails, cows and bees as part of a motif-ed branding design that is used in their packaging. These animals are shown in conjunction with other cultural icons such as kowhai trees, pōhutukawa flowers, nikau palms and ferns (all native plant life), as well as korus (a spiral shape representing a fern), the beehive (the New Zealand parliament building), koruru (Māori face masks - which have been historically displayed outside Wharenui or meeting houses), farming landscape imagery and what can safely assumed to be a flat white (a coffee originating in Australasia). Across this theme gold colouring is commonly present. This is perhaps because of its association with the luxurious metal, which in this context serves to communicate the specialness of the chocolate, as well as purity of the New Zealand identity.

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Figure 54. 20c Kiwi
(Whittakers, 2017*f*)

Figure 55. Wild Kiwi
(Whittakers, 2017*g*)

Through weaving kiwiana into both their product packaging and their Instagram posts Whittakers can construct the narrative that they are a true local kiwi brand. This is because kiwiana is a concept that is uniquely kiwi and the same symbols are likely to have little significance outside of New Zealand. The use of the local brand narrative has been identified by Johnston, Biro and MacKendrick (2009, p. 519) who's analysis of organic brands identified four companies that "provide a romanticized description of a specific locality where the company began… on a specific farm, in a particular rural region of the United

States, or a humble store located in a certain city or town… with an emphasis on the small-scale nature of the operation." The identification of the local narrative in a New Zealand setting adds to their assessment, which focuses solely on local Americana.

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Figure 56. Paopao
(Whittakers, 2018*b*)

Figure 57. Artisan Squares
(Whittakers, 2018*c*)

Corporate use of this narrative is interesting however, because previous research has demonstrated that consumers prefer globally accessible symbols over uniquely local ones (Alden, Steenkamp & Batra, 2006). These findings are supported by Xie, Batra and Peng (2015) who found that brands that appear global are perceived as more prestigious and better quality compared to their local aesthetic counterparts. These factors, they show, correlate with higher levels of consumer trust and brand affect. However, in the case of Whittakers the opposite is true, despite drawing heavily on local symbols Whittakers has won the Reader's Digest's title of the 'most trusted brand in New Zealand' ten years in a row (2012-2021). Thus, counter to previous research, by merging its brand identity with important parts of New Zealand culture, ecology and heritage, Whittakers has become something of a trusted symbol of nationhood in its own right. It is possible that this represents a recent shift in consumer preferences. For example, Chapter Four demonstrated that environmentalism is becoming increasingly important to consumers. Eating 'local' is one way that consumers embed these values in the buying process as less carbon dioxide is being emitted through reductions in transport distance. Furthermore, in 2020 the New Zealand government launched a 'buy local to support local' campaign in response to multiple COVID-19 lockdowns which left many

local businesses struggling. In doing so consumers were encouraged to purchase from New Zealand brands over global ones.

Either way, in drawing on this narrative, Whittakers is appealing to a major demographic - the New Zealand consumer base. As with the traits discussed within the corporate integration section, kiwiana works to appeal to New Zealanders because it is part of a shared cultural schema[20]. Kiwiana is particularly embedded in the New Zealand cultural schema because it draws on symbols New Zealanders are commonly exposed to. For example many New Zealanders have memories of seeing roadside cows on cross country drives and kiwi bird conservation efforts are abundant in schools, museums and the media. Meanwhile Māori symbols are a staple at local maraes[21] and flora such as ferns and palms are commonplace in gardens and parks. By incorporating the local brand narrative Whittakers is drawing on the assumption that New Zealand consumers will be more likely to purchase from 'local' brands that share a cultural memory, over 'faceless' global competitors. This narrative is interesting because cacao is not commercially grown in New Zealand. As a result, key chocolate components such as cocoa butter, solids and liquor are imported from overseas. Importantly however, the brand does not attempt to obscure this fact to bolster their local narrative. For example in figure 56 the brand clearly lists the Samoan origin of the cocoa on the packaging, and further emphasizes these origins through crafting a chocolate paopao[22]. Similarly, in figures 39 and 42 the brand emphasizes that cacao beans have been sourced from Ghana. This goes against results found by Johnston et al., (2009, p. 525) who state that the local narrative "constructs a sense of food's origins that is largely divorced from material, social, and ecological considerations" and encourages obscuration of "the real ensemble of ecological and social relations underlying the commodity".

In consideration of these factors, it appears that while Whittakers has drawn heavily on the local narrative, they do not attempt to obscure the geographic origins of their ingredients like other brands have done. Through both visual and textual elements on their Instagram posts consumers are made aware that key elements are sourced internationally. These findings suggest that Whittakers are not using kiwiana as a greenwashing tactic.

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[20] A cultural schema is a web of images, perceptions and memories that many people have access to (Garro, 2000).

[21] A marae is a sacred Māori meeting house often used for social purposes.

[22] A paopao is a small samoan canoe.

Healthier Kids

Nutritionism was commonly evoked throughout Nestlé's data set through a focus on healthier kids. Within the Instagram posts this translated to suggestions for improving children's nutrition - usually accompanied by videos of children/parents implementing these tips, as well as discussions of actions taken by the brand to further this goal. Some notable examples of this theme include figure 58 which highlights Nestlé For Healthier Kids - a school programme which "aims to raise nutrition and health knowledge and promote physical activity with school-age children around the world" (Nestlé, n.d.*b*, p. 1). Figure 59 links to a list of ways to get kids cooking, alongside a photograph of a child in a chef's hat. The last two examples introduce the role of parents - a photograph of a father and son in the midst of cooking is shown alongside tips for parents in figure 60. Figure 61 is a video from a father giving suggestions on how to navigate introducing healthy food options to kids. Across this theme a mixture of bright colours and simplistic graphics including smiley faces, googly eyed food creations (as seen in the examples) and others such as cartoon lions and plants (not pictured) are intentionally utilized by the brand to further emphasize that these posts relate to children.

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Figure 58. 27.2 Million Kids.
(Nestlé, 2020*c*)

Figure 59. Child in Chef Hat
(Nestlé, 2020*d*)

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Figure 60. Simple Tasks.
(Nestlé, 2020*e*)

Figure 61. Food Tricks
(Nestlé, 2020*f*)

Examples can further be seen in the captions of several posts for example "Henri-Pierre from Nestlé Global has a top tip for *encouraging kids to make healthier dinner time decisions*. Discover our tips and tricks for parents looking to nudge their *children toward a healthier lifestyle… #HealthierKids"* (Nestlé, 2020*f*) and "We believe that *nutrition* is *key* to ensure a *child's healthy development*… in 2019 through our Nestlé for *Healthier Kids* initiative we reached 27.2 million children around the world… *#HealthierKids*" (Nestlé, 2020*c*).

Through centralising the healthier kids theme throughout their posts Nestlé constructs the narrative that kids will be healthier if the brand is incorporated into their lives. This is because Nestlé frames itself as a health leader on both the macro - through international health and nutrition education programs, and on the micro - through extending advice to individual households. This narrative appears to link most closely to a phenomenon identified by Roberts and Pettigrew (2007) who note a pattern of 'exaggerated health claims' in food advertising aimed at children. However, this analysis differs, as the posts in this sample advertise to parents rather than children.

Companies have a vested interest in promoting the idea that they contribute favourably to children's health. Research demonstrates that parents prioritise 'nutritional value', with 48% of parents in a study by Spungin (2004) identifying this as a factor when buying food for the family. Russell, Worsley and Liem (2014) note that more than 90% of their sample of 371

parents considered health/nutrition/freshness/quality to be 'moderately' or 'very' important in the context of children's snack food. Thus in drawing on this narrative, companies can specifically appeal to parents, who as a group are particularly cognizant of the nutritional value of food. More generally the healthier kid's theme is likely important to parents because it mirrors back the healthful outcomes they hope to see in their children. While the narrative that kids will be healthier with Nestlé products is appealing because it suggests that parents can have the best of both worlds in that tasty, practical and cost-effective products can also be healthy.

In appealing to parents further Nestlé imbues many of the 'healthier kids' posts with an overtone of empathy for the challenging scenarios parents may encounter in the context of food. To this end, Nestlé never engages in parent shaming but rather provides potential options for addressing food-related problems (for example, figures 55 and 56). Thus, they provide a small dose of practical support and emotional reassurance. The brand's use of this narrative suggests the company is making the assumption that parents want to prioritise health over other potential selling points such as convenience, cost and taste which aligns with what much of the literature suggests.

Nestle's use of this narrative is also likely linked to the fact that in recent years global food corporations (and their methods of advertising) have been accused of being a major contributing factor to the worldwide child obesity epidemic (Pettigrew, Tarabashkina, Roberts, Quester, Chapman & Miller, 2013; Powell, 2018). This is a perception that brands likely will not want to be associated with and are attempting to shake off by actively demonstrating their actions to the contrary. This is where the advertising of kids health programs comes in, as the implementation of these programs is likely to suggest to the viewer that Nestlé is facilitating health on an international scale. Certainly, research suggests that Nestlé's healthier kids program will perform favourably in New Zealand, with one report scoring Nestlé 75% on the "comprehensiveness and transparency of their commitments related to obesity prevention and population nutrition" (Vandevijvere, Kasture, Sacks, Robinson, Mackay & Swinburn, 2018, p. 11).

Notably, however, research demonstrates that while parents want to purchase healthy food for their families, other factors such as cost and taste preferences tend to sway actual purchase outcomes (Maubach, Hoek & McCreanor, 2009). This feeds into the discrepancies identified

between the 'healthier kids with Nestlé' narrative and the firm's substantive actions. Most notably, while it appears that Nestlé has contributed positively towards nutritional education, some information suggests that a diet high in Nestlé products will lead to unfavourable health outcomes for children. According to the *Financial Times* (2021, p. 1) one presentation disseminated amongst Nestlé executives revealed that 63% of the brand's foodstuffs[23] did not "meet the recognised definition of health". In this context the recognised definition of health was a rating of 3.5 or above in the Australian Health Star Rating system (*Financial Times*, 2021), which gives "demerit points for 'negative' content (total kilojoules, saturated fat, total sugar and sodium) and bonus points for 'positive' content (fruit, nut, vegetable, legume, protein and fibre)" (Lawrence, Pollard, Vigden & Woods, 2019, p. 2). Of particular concern in Nestlé's portfolio were the confectionary/ice cream, and beverages categories of which 99% and 96% respectively could not be considered healthy under the health stars definition (*Financial Times*, 2021). Examples of unhealthy products extended to those marketed primarily to kids such as Nesquik strawberry milk which was deemed a "perfect breakfast to get kids ready for the day" by the brand despite containing 14g of sugar in a 14g serving (*Financial Times*, 2021, p. 14); a figure which equates to 56% of the daily limit recommended by both the New Zealand Heart Foundation and the American Heart Association for 2-18 year olds in a single drink. Information such as this is concerning because diets high in the 'negative' content is correlated with unfavourable health outcomes. These include poor oral health, and childhood obesity, the latter of which has been correlated with numerous cardiac, respiratory, gastrointestinal, neurological, vascular and musculoskeletal disorders (Dooley, Moultrie, Sites & Crawford, 2017; Wen, Ling, Qian, Qi, Ming, Jun, Fa et al., 2012; Choudhary, Donnelly, Racadio & Strife, 2006). Furthermore the aforementioned study by Vandevijvere et al., (2018, p. 26) scored Nestlé a low 14/100 on its "commitment to address the availability and affordability of healthy products relative to their 'less healthy' counterparts". These findings are thus, ultimately at odds with the narrative that kids will be healthier if the brand is incorporated into their lives, which suggests that this narrative is being utilized as a form of greenwash.

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[23] Baby formula, specialized medical food, coffee, pet products and pure coffee were not included in these figures.

Integrative Wellness

Expanding on the scope of nutritionism, the way nutritionism was coded for (particularly the words health and healthy) generated a pattern of posts that referenced beyond food by addressing multiple additional routes to health. Within the Instagram posts this integrative wellness theme translated to visual and textual discussions of fitness, medical care, mental wellbeing, posture and work/life balance. This theme was predominantly utilized by Nestlé and to a lesser extent Mars.

Some notable examples of this theme include figure 62 which publicizes workplace amenities including on site kitchens that employees have access to with the caption "#MarsFood is *making it easier for Associates* to lead a *healthier life* by providing access to *on-site kitchens, fitness facilities, nutritional education* and *healthy on-site meals*! *#Employee Perks #LoveMyJob* [my emphasis]" (Mars, 2017*i*). The concept of fitness was incorporated in figure 63 through a photograph of gym facilities that are implied to be part of one of Nestlé's office complexes. Figure 64 includes a shot of one of Nestlé's company doctors, with each of the wellness benefits that they provide being listed in the caption as follows "Good Life means *active Lifestyle* to us… Meet Dr. Afroza Amin… Whenever we feel a bit under the weather, she's the one who cast her spell to *cure us*. She also takes regular *Wellness sessions* on *Healthy Eating*, *Right sitting posture* and *First aid Awareness* sessions for our Nestlé employees… *#HealthyLifestyle* [sic, my emphasis]" (2018*j*, Nestlé). While figure 65 is a collection of photographs taken by an employee on a weekend trip to the Swiss Alps. This post includes additional references to physical activity: "Saturday's mood for perfect *outdoor activity*… #Nestlé*HealthScience*… #AlpMountains *#Hiking* [my emphasis]" (2018*k*, Nestlé). It also suggests that the employee experiences a good work/life balance as they are able to get time away from the office to do the things they enjoy.

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Figure 62. Cafeteria
(Mars, 2017*i*)

Figure 63. Gym
(Nestlé, 2018*i*)

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Figure 64. Dr. Afroza
(Nestlé, 2018*j*)

Figure 65. Saturday Hike
(Nestlé, 2018*k*)

Through incorporating the integrative wellness theme Nestlé and Mars are constructing the narrative that they provide holistic wellness for employees. This is because these brand's health related posts reference a myriad of amenities, perks and working conditions that will contribute favourably to the overall health and wellbeing of their workers. In contrast any unfavourable company related health outcomes are never disclosed on the media account. This narrative is interesting because it diverges in audience from each of the other themes outlined in this thesis in that it is not targeted towards consumers. In contrast, the primary

target audience for this set of posts appears to be current and future employees. Here Nestlé and Mars may be drawing on the assumption that workers at other companies are likely to feel like their work life balance is compromised, with stress and long days spent sitting at a desk leading to health issues and an inability to do the things they enjoy. This is a fair assumption as labour is a commodity under the capitalist mode of production and as a result companies are likely to put profit before the wellbeing of employees (Bryson, Clark, Freeman & Green, 2016).

As a result, posts outlining the wide array of benefits available is the kind of information that is particularly salient for those who are unhappy in their current workplace. Thus, by occasionally incorporating this theme into their feed (but not taking the primary focus away from their consumers across their feed as a whole) companies are more likely to attract new employees. In addition to attracting new workers, it is possible that brands may use this tactic to retain the employees the already have. Certainly, one group of researchers note that factors such as greater work/life balance indirectly increase employees commitment to their work (Kim, 2014).

Furthermore, the existence of employee directed media raises the possibility that greenwash could be used not just to attract consumers, but also to attract and retain employees. This is an argument that has only just begun to garner in depth attention by scholars in the last year (see Tahir, Athar & Afzal, 2020). However, the limited research on this topic indicates that much like many consumers do not want to buy from a company implicated in environmental harm (Gildea, 1994), many *workers* also do not want to work for a company who is known to have contributed to environmental victimization. This is explored by Tahir et al., (2020) who argue that in the context of increasing pressure from employees for companies to be environmentally friendly some companies may employ greenwashing tactics to avoid substantive action. Certainly, brands have a vested interest in looking ethical to employees and jobseekers - researchers demonstrate that these groups respond favourably to employers engaging in socially responsible action (Evans, Goodman & Davis, 2011; Carmeli, Gilat & Waldman, 2007). In a similar vein, employees being reminded about the favourable amenities available could hypothetically dissuade them from becoming whistle-blowers if they uncover instances of environmental harm. Certainly, the consistent stream of reminders about 'how good company employees have it' can serve to remind employees that going against the company will result in a loss of these things. In these instances, employees will likely feel

uncomfortable with the idea of leaving a job with lots of company benefits for a job that may not have as many.

Identifying where discrepancies may lie in the integrative wellness narrative is difficult as it relies on disclosure from past and current employees. However, company reviews from the website Glassdoor (which has also been used by other scholars such as Gadgil & Sockin, 2020) helps to shed some light into overall employee satisfaction. Glassdoor (n.d.*a*) data suggests that employees tend to view Nestlé favourably, with 5000 plus employee reviews generating an overall rating of 4.1 out of 5. In presenting the overall trends of reviews, Glassdoor suggests that a "good working environment" and "good benefits" were common comments made about the company. Glassdoor (n.d.*b*) data about Mars suggested that employees also tended to view them favourably, with over 2000 employee reviews forming an overall rating of 4.2 out of 5. In noting overarching trends Glassdoor suggests that "great benefits" and "great people" were common comments made in reviews. In addition to Glassdoor data, Mars has also been placed on the 'World's Best Workplaces' list by Great Place To Work for eight years running. Thus, it appears that Mars and Nestlé do contribute positively towards the holistic wellbeing of their employees. As a result it does not appear that this narrative is being used by chocolate companies as a greenwashing tactic.

Summary

The quantitative data indicated that over the entire sample animal welfare was the second most frequently used and nutritionism was the fifth most frequently used of the ethical categories. ENOS was the third most common. Comparisons between animal, nutrition and ENOS marker frequency revealed that ENOS was the most frequently employed, while animal welfare image and nutritional density descriptors were also relatively frequently used coming in at second and third respectively. To a lesser degree animal welfare descriptors, animal welfare action and nutritional action were also used coming in at fourth, fifth and sixth respectively. Relative to the rest, animal welfare labelling and nutritional labelling were used infrequently at joint seventh, and nutritional reduction descriptors were not used. Comparisons between brands revealed that animal welfare labelling, animal welfare image, nutritional labelling, nutritional reduction descriptors and nutritional action were used infrequently by every company. Mars utilized animal welfare descriptors and animal welfare

action at an elevated rate. Nestle utilized nutritional descriptors and nutritional action statistically more than other brands.

Within the qualitative animals and nutrition data five major themes were identified. First, animal altruism (used by all of the brands) constructed the narrative that animals are only positively impacted by chocolate brands. Research however, suggested that Nestlé and Mars have contributed towards marine life harm via plastic waste. Investigation of available farm animal information revealed that Mars and Nestlé contributed towards harm through their continued use of caged hens. A near total lack of transparency from Whittakers and Mars in this context was also raised as a key concern. The second identified theme, corporate integration (used by all the brands) built up the narrative that the brand/product are synonymous with particular traits. While the high volume of different traits present did not allow for discrepancies to be identified from all posts, Whittakers association with freshness, and Mars's association with animal lovers were identified as misleading here. This was because of reasons already covered in the 'straight from the earth' and 'animal altruism' sections. The third identified theme was kiwiana which constructed the narrative that Whittakers is a true local kiwi brand. This form of narrative was identified as not being misleading as the cocoa bean origin was almost always clearly referenced. The fourth identified theme, healthier kids (used by Nestlé) constructed the narrative that kids are healthier with Nestlés involvement. Research however revealed that the majority of Nestlé's food portfolio can be considered unhealthy and thus eating high volumes of their food may facilitate poor oral health and childhood obesity. The fifth identified theme, integrative wellness (used by Nestlé and Mars) established the narrative that major food brands contribute positively toward the holistic health and wellbeing of employees. Positively, this appeared to align with the average employee's experiences with the company so no discrepancies were noted. In considering the overall results, this chapter outlines six instances of suspected or confirmed greenwashing. Two of these come from Mars, two of these come from Nestlé and two of these come from Whittakers. These results suggest consistent use of animal and nutrition focused narratives as a greenwashing tool.

Chapter Seven - Discussion & Conclusion

The fraudulent marketing messages used by chocolate companies to reassure eco-conscious consumers that their purchasing practices are ethically sound confirms Brisman and South's (2013) contention that the study of the social construction of environmental harm is integral to understanding its scope. It also demonstrates that food fraud crimes extend across the vast expanse of the foodscape from the processes of production to the consumer. Chapters Four, Five and Six demonstrated that a wide range of ethical elements are employed in Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers marketing narratives via Instagram. These chapters additionally demonstrated that these elements are used to construct misleading narratives that obscure the reality of environmental harm. The extended discussion section of this chapter examines whether these instances of greenwashing have been regulated by the state, and proposes reasons for greenwashing going systemically unchecked in the modern justice system. From here avenues of future research are explored and a final summary of the key points of this thesis are provided.

Discussion

Despite greenwashing narratives being identified in content by Mars, Nestlé and Whittakers, it appears that these brands have faced little state-mandated notice or consequence for false or deceptive advertising. The only case of this that could be located involved Eukanuba - a pet food subsidiary under Mars Petcare. In 2016 Eukanuba was accused of false advertising on television adverts, in print and online by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC, 2016, p. 1) for claiming that their dog food "could increase the longevity of dogs... lifespan [by] 30 percent or more". Despite this Mars were able to avoid litigation by agreeing to desist from making misleading and unproven claims about the health benefits of pet food as part of a settlement deal with the FTC (FTC, 2016).

The fact that only one formal case of greenwashing relating to these companies has been raised (despite the results of this thesis demonstrating that greenwashing is more frequent) suggests that corporate greenwashing is systematically flying under the radar. In response, this section proposes a combination of corporate, state, market and societal forces that together facilitate conditions for greenwashing going under-regulated.

Perhaps one of the most obvious reasons for the under-regulation of greenwashing is that greenwashing is inherently a process designed to confuse and distract while appearing legitimate. This is a process noted by Gacek (2020) who proposes the existence of a 'legitimacy-aesthetic nexus' or the idea that there is a link between a brand giving off an ethical appearance and appearing 'above board' to the consumer. Certainly, research suggests that the application of an ethical aesthetic to a product or brand facilitates consumer belief that the brand or product is more ethical. For example, in their study of parents food purchasing decisions Abrams, Evans and Duff (2015, p. 20) note that

> "Parents were easily led to believe the product was healthier based on visuals of fruit, more realistic pictures, health claims, cross-branding with healthier foods, and visuals suggesting the product is more natural. While parents recognized that the health claims and some visuals may not truly mean the food is healthier, they agreed that they rarely think beyond their initial impression."

Similar findings are noted by Parguel, Benoît-Moreau & Russell (2015) who show that the use of an environmentally friendly aesthetic on web pages led consumers to view the brand's ecological image more favourably. In their analysis, Paraguel et al., (2015) refer to this process of using an aesthetic to evoke a particular quality in a misleading way as 'executional greenwashing'. Executional greenwash is of particular concern because it subverts expectations about greenwashing because it is subtle (as it relies on our associations) and is therefore difficult to identify as outright false or deceptive. For example, environmentally destructive companies may use the knowledge that consumers associate the colour green with environmentalism to their advantage by incorporating it on their media content for an eco-aesthetic. While this may mislead consumers, can it really be claimed that the use of a colour is fraudulent? Examples such as this illustrate how it would be difficult to regulate cases of executional greenwashing. This is concerning in the context of the results of this thesis because ethical imagery was particularly predominant. This pattern was so pervasive that image was the most frequently used marker in every category where it was listed as an option[24]. These findings suggest that at least for the companies this thesis explored, executional greenwashing is not only a harder form to regulate (Paraguel et al., 2015) but may also be the most common because of the predominant use of visual associations to ethicality. According to Kassinis (2018) instances such as these merely illustrate the evolving sophistication of greenwashing.

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[24]Image was an option in the Environmentalism, Farmer Welfare and Animal Welfare categories.

Beyond being practically difficult to regulate the use of the intentional integration of the legitimacy-aesthetic nexus also "masks over serious contemplation of corporations' practices of production… and conceals social and (eco)systemic issues that capitalism (green or otherwise) creates" (Gacek, p. 151). As a result, consumers simply may not think to consider brands' unsavoury actions when they are constantly bombarded with media explicitly reminding them of or implicitly alluding to a brand's positive actions.

This ties into the fact that harm and victimization are likely to be transferred to areas where they can remain as 'unseen' as possible. One such example of this was listed in Chapter Five which outlined how Swiss company Nestlé's abandonment of Fairtrade certification led to harm for farmers in Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji and Malawi. While the case was publicized because of its connection to the Fairtrade Foundation (a UK organization), limited information about victimization emerged directly from the affected farmers. This may be due to a wide range of reasons including the physical and social distance that cocoa producers have from buying communities and fear of retaliation (e.g. being identified and blacklisted as suppliers). As well as the limited access to means of transnational communication (e.g. online platforms) and the limited ability to amplify these stories when they are able to be published. This example also typifies the fact that environmental harm tends to be experienced by those with limited power and is often transnational in nature (White, 2011). The combination of each of these factors means that "Harm can be externalised from producers and consumers in ways that make it disappear from their sight and oversight" (White, 2011, p. 15). Certainly, the results of this thesis suggest that brands may encourage this in cases where consumers are likely to be physically and socially distant from environmental victims. As demonstrated in Chapter Five the farmer welfare category was the least used category overall - perhaps because chocolate brands do not want to encourage consumers to consider farmer welfare frequently. A similar phenomenon was outlined in Chapter Six, where animal welfare imagery was the fourth most commonly used marker overall but cows were almost never depicted in this imagery. In general, this is surprising as cows are perhaps the animal with the strongest link to chocolate production because of the common inclusion of milk. However, in the context of discouraging consumers from thinking about eco-systemic issues in the supply chain by avoiding their depiction, this choice is not surprising at all.

While the aforementioned strategies may be used to discourage investigation into these issues, a reactive way that corporations may evade legal consequences is through strategic

corporate ignorance. According to McGoey (2019) strategic corporate ignorance is the observed pattern of powerful people and institutions circumventing consequences (and responsibility) for harm through claims that they were not aware that harm was occurring. By employing this as a strategy in instances where environmental harm has been exposed brands can argue that the discrepancies found in their media content were not purposeful, they simply weren't aware that harm was occurring. This poses similar issues in regulation as it is difficult to establish who (if anyone) in a company of potentially thousands of people was aware of or facilitated any given instance of harm. This is something that many brands take advantage of, with McGoey (2019) arguing that companies "thrive on strategic ignorance and the deliberate exploitation of uncertainty". While this did not appear to be the case for Whittakers or Mars who did not seem to make many statements responding to scandal, this is a strategy that Nestlé does appear to occasionally employ. For example, in 2020 an investigative documentary alleged that Nespresso's suppliers used child labour in Guatemala (*Dispatches*, Channel 4, 2020). This goes in direct conflict with the narrative of farmers being the primary benefactors of the food trade. However, in responding to the situation Nestlé's chief executive gave the following statement: "We have immediately stopped purchases of coffee from all farms in the region and we will not resume purchases until we are able to investigate and be assured that child labour is not being used" (Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, 2020, p. 8). The implied message here is that the brand did not know about any instances of child labour or they would have stopped using suppliers in the region sooner. Thus by extension, it can be implied that the brands use of the 'farmers as primary benefactors' narrative was not an intentional greenwash but rather a testament to the fact that they themselves were unaware.

In addition to corporate forces, the current system of government regulation may also be generating conditions where greenwashing can thrive. New digital media platforms have proliferated at a rapid rate, however, regulation has been slow to catch up, with a review of content regulation in New Zealand taking 13 years to get off the ground according to Internal Affairs Minister Jan Tinetti (*Newsroom*, 2021). Tinetti additionally noted that the state has "six different frameworks… that regulate the media or content in New Zealand. Most of these systems were developed in the 1980s or 1990s or suited those times" (*Newsroom*, 2021, p. 9). The fact that current content legislation was not designed with digital forms of communication in mind presents major issues in its applicability to digital media. To date the

few major amendments to regulation with Instagram in mind do little to address the problem of corporate greenwashing outlined in this thesis.

While the swift introduction of tailored regulation would be a step in the right direction in keeping some instances of greenwashing in check, the transnational nature of media may also make enforcing regulation difficult. For example, most if not all of Mars and Nestlé's Instagram content is produced and posted overseas by international media teams and disseminated to a global audience. Due to limitations in jurisdiction, it is unlikely that the New Zealand government would have grounds to carry out proceedings against either of these companies based on their Instagram content even if their content was found to be misleading (especially if regulation is laxer in the location of the poster). This is an issue in the context of New Zealand because Mars's and Nestlé's content is still easily accessible to New Zealand Instagram users and their products are still widely available in New Zealand supermarkets to consumers. Thus, a consumer may be tricked into purchasing a product under false pretences in a way that the state is unable to regulate.

Another reason that greenwashing may go under-regulated is that laws are theorised to be differentially enforced against those with power and those without (Wilson & Braithwaite, 1978). According to Wilson and Braithwaite (1978) states are apt to heavily police the 'crimes of the powerless' even when risk of harm is limited (i.e. drug use and prostitution). In contrast governments are less prone to heavily policing 'crimes of the powerful' (e.g. corporate crime). This can be seen in the fact that enforcement for corporate crime to date has primarily been reactive, meaning that the state has not taken it upon themselves to identify instances of this type of crime (Friedrichs, 2010). This is a major issue as corporate crimes often go unreported (Burns & Lynch, 2004) as these acts are less likely to be 'seen', and victims may not know (or be able to prove) the source of their harm. The lack of policing in this area may be attributed to several additional reasons. First, investigating instances of corporate crime can require a considerable amount of resources that prosecutors may not have (Cullen, Cavender, Maakestad & Benson, 2006). Second, courts must often shoulder the burden of proof - something which is difficult given the complexities of corporate crime (Burns, 2015). Third, those in power (e.g. an executive in a company) are in a better position to influence legislation in the first place. This is due to the 'revolving door' (Ross, 2017) - a term used to describe the act of someone moving from a powerful position in government to a powerful position in a corporation and vice versa. This process means that powerful actors

can implement laws that will be favourable for business. Furthermore, governments have a vested interest in allowing companies to operate uninterrupted. This is because successful companies can contribute larger amounts of money in corporate income tax, which is necessary to fund state-led projects, institutions and infrastructure. For global companies, amounts paid in company income tax can extend into the billions. According to their taxation webpage, Nestlé's (n.d.*a*) total global tax contribution was CHF13.9 billion (approx. NZD21.4 billion) in 2020. This represents large sums of money that are consistently being channelled into government budgets.

Perhaps one of the more insidious ways that greenwashing has slipped by unchecked relates to the structure of the current food landscape which is primarily controlled by neoliberal forces. The presence of neoliberalism in the food sector is demonstrated with the prioritization of market forces, the removal of government subsidies (O'Brien, 2014) and limited interference from government beyond food safety. This system can in some ways be favourable, for example, by providing consumers with greater amounts of food choice. It also means that consumers have a say in which products continue to get produced by 'voting with their dollars'. The flip side to this, however, is that this process responsibilizes the consumer by placing the onus on them to make the ethical choice. However, knowing exactly what the ethical choice is, is difficult - for consumers forming a clear picture of food choices is confusing (Jin, Lin & McLeay, 2020), time-consuming (Fanzo & McLaren, 2020) and expensive. This is only made more difficult by misleading advertising and a lack of transparency from companies. Furthermore, the same abundance of choice that initially appeared favourable makes it difficult to stay informed. In a single supermarket trip a consumer can encounter thousands of products from hundreds of brands, that each employ a unique blend of labels, images and descriptors. To vote with their dollar in an informed way, the consumer must become an expert on all of these. While this is a process some individuals may feel willing to undertake, it cannot reasonably be expected that all will be able or willing to do so. Furthermore, unlike the state, consumers do not have the authority to demand and receive information about supply chains. The vast majority of individuals will also not have anywhere near the same access to money and 'manpower' as the state to investigate company actions - a factor that was identified by Fitzgerald and Spencer (2020) in their analysis of the Dieselgate emissions scandal.

Overall, the results of this thesis indicate that greater enforcement and regulation is needed from the state in policing greenwashing carried out by chocolate companies. Particularly, as corporations do not appear to be adequately self-regulating when it comes to greenwashing - thereby demonstrating the oxymoron that self-regulation is in a neoliberal capitalist society. In considering why greenwashing has gone systemically under-regulated within the chocolate industry, this discussion has raised the following reasons: corporate exploitation of the legitimacy-aesthetic nexus (executional greenwashing) in social media content; physical and social distance between environmental victims and those buying chocolate; strategic corporate ignorance; state interests; lack of relevant regulation; differential enforcement of crimes of the powerful and the powerless, and neo-liberal market forces.

Future Research

This thesis has demonstrated that ethical elements are diverse and commonplace and the narratives that these elements are used to construct are often at odds with company actions. Unfortunately, however, collecting primary data about the meanings consumers make of corporate social media is beyond the scope of this thesis, thereby missing a crucial part of the puzzle. While predictions of consumer reactions to certain lone elements have been extrapolated and applied from other studies, consumers are unlikely to experience Instagram feeds in this fragmented way in real life. Therefore, it is recommended that future research focus on consumer responses to corporate social media. In particular, the following research questions are proposed as potential areas for future study: what narratives do consumers perceive as being present in corporate Instagram content? What inferences do consumers make about company actions based on these narratives? Are consumers aware of discrepancies between company actions and the narratives they are able to identify? And, does that awareness shift their purchasing behaviours?

Furthermore, this thesis has focused solely on Instagram, however, Instagram is only one element of a multifaceted media strategy. Large corporations are likely to use a wide range of media channels to advertise on including corporate websites, Facebook, television, radio and magazines etc. For now, it is unclear whether these various channels are used to distribute a wide range of fragmented narratives or whether they are used in a holistic way that reinforces consistent overarching narratives. Thus researching holistic media strategy is likely to

continue to shed light on the ways companies attempt to appeal to consumers through reference to ethicality.

Another topic of future research that should be prioritised are examinations of specific companies' supply chains (in the context of environmental harm). While some important research has been conducted on harm from the cocoa sector more generally (see Tulane University's 2011-2018 survey reports on child and forced labour) the literature has been slow in linking survey outcomes to specific companies supply chains.

Lastly, this thesis is the only study that could be located to explore a concept akin to ENOS. While it is clear that thematic analysis is not the best way to interpret this marker, this marker was identified as the second most frequently used after environmentalism. As a result, it is suggested that references to ethicality that are not linked to a specific topic should be included in future assessments of greenwashing.

This research has demonstrated, then, that the food crime perspective must expand its working definition further to consider the narratives, modes and platforms through which potential consumers encounter foodstuffs as they make their purchasing decisions, and in particular, account for the ways in which responsibility for wrongdoing is pushed along the food production chain toward individual consumers. Identifying and unpacking state and corporate responsibility will be challenging in an open global marketplace, amidst the entangled ideas and exchanges that saturate contemporary media assemblages. Forging links between the food crime perspective and green cultural criminology will be critical at this junction. Such links in turn will extend and enrich the focus of green cultural criminology. Narratives and symbols proliferate across the ways food is grown, produced, marketed and regulated, and because everyone eats, everyone is a potential victim or offender (or both, where overall responsibility for ethical food production has been inappropriately placed on individual consumers).

Summary & Conclusion

The primary objective of this thesis was to investigate how chocolate companies used social media content to distract from corporate harm. This objective emerged from the observed incongruence between the wider literature on food crime which demonstrated the existence of

serious harm in the chocolate supply chain, and the wider literature on food media which highlighted the recurrent use of ethical narratives in the modern foodscape.

The quantitative results demonstrated that environmentalism, ENOS and animal welfare were the most frequently employed categories in ethically presenting advertising. While environmental images, ENOS, environmental descriptors and animal welfare imagery were the most frequently used ethical markers.

From the sample of posts using ethical markers, the qualitative results outlined the existence of 13 distinct narratives. In considering discrepancies related to these narratives, this thesis outlined 17 instances of suspected or confirmed greenwashing. Seven of these came from Mars, six of these came from Nestlé and four of these came from Whittakers, thereby demonstrating the existence of greenwashing across the local and global chocolate sector. These findings suggest that corporate harm to the environment, farmers, buying communities, and animals is being obfuscated by media which disguises and distracts from brands' negative substantive actions.

It is additionally clear that greenwashing in the chocolate sector has gone severely under-regulated. Thus, for now, the forces surrounding the food sector determine that the responsibility must inappropriately fall on the consumer to conduct thorough research before purchase to avoid becoming unwitting co-offenders in food-related crime.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Coding Sheet

Post Identification Number:			
General		Description	**Complete Info**
		Source (1= Mars, 2= Nestle, 3= Whittaker's)	
		Date	
			Tick all that are present
		Environmentalism	
Ethical Markers		Environmental Descriptors	
		Environmental Labelling	
		Environmental Image/Sound/Story	
		Environmental Action	
		Social Responsibility	
		Support for Diversity	
		Monetary Support	
		Volunteering	
		Code of Ethics	
		Farmer Welfare	
		Welfare Descriptors	
		Welfare Labelling	
		Welfare Image/Story	
		Welfare Action	
		Animal Welfare	
		Welfare Descriptors	
		Welfare Labelling	
		Welfare Image/Sound/Story	
		Welfare Action	
		Nutritionism	
		Nutritional Labelling	
		Nutritional Density Descriptors	
		Reduction Descriptors	
		Nutritional Action	
		Ethical Not Otherwise Specified	