Challenging Advertising: The potential for environmental change through the values and institutional work of senior managers

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Abstract

The UK's legally binding net-zero targets aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; however, continuing high levels of consumption—amplified by the advertising industry's promotion of highly polluting goods and services—undermines these efforts. Industry professionals express strong concerns about advertising's environmental impact, but their underlying values, and how these values drive pro-environmental behaviours and institutional change, remain unclear.

This study addresses this research gap by exploring how senior UK advertising professionals challenge advertising practices through their values and pro-environmental behaviours. The research uses the concept of institutional work (IW) to understand their efforts to disrupt advertising norms. A critical realist approach guides the qualitative research, which involves thirty semi-structured interviews with senior advertising professionals, supplemented by secondary online data.

The findings make several contributions to the literature. Firstly, whilst senior managers express various altruistic and egoistic values, those with predominantly biospheric values show more pro-environmental behaviours in this setting, contributing to the body of literature in this regard. Those pro-environmental behaviours consist of disrupting and creating types of IW and are often used recursively, differing from descriptions in existing literature. This IW was met with significant barriers, leading to actor level consequences which at times diminished managers capacity for sustained disruption. The consideration of actor level consequences has not been fully explored in the concept of IW and is a key contribution in this area. In an attempt to maintain industry norms, powerful institutional actors engage in responsive, maintaining IW, and in doing so they valorise dual but conflicting normative ideations of the institution of advertising. They aim to resist change and avoid sanctions, however, using valorising in this way has not previously been explored in the concept of IW. Overall, the research deepens our understanding of the interplay

between individuals and institutional resistance in the advertising sector's environmental transformation.

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Acronyms

AA	Advertising Association
ANZ	Ad Net Zero
AE	Advertised Emissions
B-Corp	Benefit Corporation
CEO	Chief executive officer
CDP	Carbon Disclosure Project
CISL	Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership
COP	Conference of the Parties
CO2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalents
ESG	Environmental Social Governance
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
HFSS	High Fat, Salt, Sugar foods
ISBA	Incorporated Society of British Advertisers
IPA	Institute of Practitioners of Advertising
SBTi	Science-based targets initiative
XR	Extinction Rebellion

> **1928**
>
> *"The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Our minds are moulded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of."*

Edward Bernays, Propaganda, 1928 (Bernays, 1928)
Speaking about the role of advertising and PR in the shaping of society

> **2024**
>
> *"Many in the fossil fuel industry have been aided and abetted by advertising and PR companies – Mad Men, remember the TV series — fuelling the madness. I call on these companies to stop acting as enablers to planetary destruction. Stop taking on new fossil fuel clients, from today, and set out plans to drop your existing ones."*

António Guterres, UN Secretary General, 2024 (U.N., 2024)
Speaking about the role of advertising and PR in the breakdown of society

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Research Introduction

We currently face an unprecedented challenge of our time, the threat of anthropogenic induced climate change. In the summer of 2023, the UN Secretary General declared the end of global warming and the beginning of '*global boiling*' (U.N., 2023). To mitigate its part in the climate crisis, the UK has set legally binding net-zero goals to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 81% by 2035 (UK-Gov, 2024).

High levels of consumption are deeply embedded in our western society and are a major contributor to emissions (Kasser, 2008). To meet net zero goals, policy recommendations suggest that 60% of reductions in consumption need to come from consumers (CAST, 2023; CCC, 2023) with a reduction in high-carbon ways of living and consuming, especially around fossil fuels, aviation, and meat consumption (Moore et al., 2021; Banister, 2019). The IPCC[1] (2022) also emphasise a necessary reduction in demand, stating, '*the potential of demand-side strategies to reduce emissions is 40-70% globally by 2050*' (p505).

The advertising industry drives consumption through the promotion of sales of goods and services (Benhabib and Bisin, 2002) and scholars suggest that advertising accounts for up to one-third of each UK consumer's carbon footprint (Kite, 2023b). The institution of advertising retains core norms that dominate the perpetuation of consumption, especially around high carbon products and services. These norms are dominant in the UK sector, which is of importance due to its size and influence. The UK advertising market is the third largest in the world valued at over $41bn; it also has huge creative influence, winning more

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[1] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change (IPCC 2022)

Cannes Lions[2] awards than any other European country since 2005 (AA, 2019; A.A., 2023e). It is described as a global hub for the industry (GovUK, 2024) with the six largest advertising holding groups having offices in the UK (Publift, 2023). The UK advertising industry and its actions are therefore globally influential and closely watched by other sectors worldwide (Statista, 2022; AA, 2019; Ibis, 2021; AdWeek, 2023). Indeed, it was a UK and US advertising agency, Ogilvy and Mather, who, in 2004, coined the phrase 'carbon footprint', at the behest of its client, British Petroleum [3]. The brief was to shift the attention and responsibility for carbon production away from the oil giant and onto consumers (Doyle, 2011; Matejek and Gössling, 2014; Cherry and Sneirson, 2010; Suprans, 2021), (see Appendix 15). This work was globally influential and is now accepted as how society perceives the responsibility for carbon emissions. This demonstrates the power of advertising, to direct consumer behaviour and shift the lens of responsibility to less powerful groups.

Whilst progress around advertising restrictions in other countries has occurred, (Frost, 2022) there has been no progress on advancing regulation on advertising for highly polluting goods and services in the UK, and no signals from the UK Government to do so. Pressure, however, is mounting from within the industry. Research shows that industry professionals have exhibited strong concerns around advertising and the climate crisis, with 70% stating that they do not think the industry is doing enough to tackle the issue (IPSOS, 2024). It remains unclear however, what drives these concerns and what values motivate industry professionals to express these attitudes. Additionally, it is not clear if

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[2] Cannes Lions is an annual event for organisations working in advertising and communications and related fields. It is considered the largest gathering of the advertising and creative communications industry globally. The event sets global benchmarks for creativity across 30 award categories.

[3] British Petroleum rebranded to Beyond Petroleum for a period of time to market its environmental intentions.

these concerns motivate professionals to take tangible actions towards creating change within their institutions.

There continues to be a need to understand organisational actors concerns on these issues. Because scholars link environmental concerns to values, (Stern and Dietz, 1994) there is a need to understand what values underlie these concerns as well as what behaviours they might elicit. There has been little attention from current scholarship or academic literature on these topics, and this leads to the focus of this research, which centres on senior advertising professionals working in the UK sector; to understand their values and the ways in which these values might motivate pro-environmental behaviours that challenge the core institutional norms of promoting consumption of highly polluting goods and services.

Whilst attention has been given to pro-environmental values over the decades as the climate crisis has worsened, scholarship shows that employee level values are important to consider, (Agle and Caldwell, 1999) as well as how values motivate behaviours (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). There is however no consensus in the literature as to which types of values motivate pro-environmental behaviours and this provides an opportunity to gain a better understanding on this issue and contribute to the body of literature in this area.

Turning towards potential behaviours driven by values, this research uses the concept of Institutional Work (IW) which is derived from institutional theory to understand behaviours as types of work. IW puts individuals at the heart of institutional change and explores the ways in which employees as well as wider industry actors work to disrupt, create or maintain institutions. Whilst IW puts these actors at centre stage, current scholarship inadequately addresses the consequences to actors carrying out this work (Lawrence, 2016). This is significant, as a concept that puts individuals at the heart of action, should also consider events which may undermine further efforts. The way that IW is used, and any responsive work it elicits from industry actors are also underexamined in the literature. Finally, actors carrying out potentially disruptive IW in the advertising sector, which

operates in an institutionally embedded environment would benefit from further examination to understand the unique barriers to or enablers of their work. Scholars also call for more understanding around the outcomes of IW, (Gidley and Palmer, 2021), and change through IW (Lawrence et al., 2013; Beunen and Patterson, 2019), to which an understanding of barriers and enablers may contribute. Industry professionals at a senior level of management are chosen for this research as scholars suggest that senior employees are often the reinforcers of institutional norms as well as capable of wielding sufficient influence to drive institutional change (Banerjee, 2002; Drumwright and Murphy, 2004).

The three research questions that have been developed to address the gaps described in the literature are discussed next, in section 1.2.

1.2 Research Questions and Philosophy

The research aims to address the following three questions:

RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?

• How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

• In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?

RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

• How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

• How might potential enablers overcome these?

Research Philosophy of Critical Realism (CR)

The UK advertising industry has a public image of responsible action towards achieving net zero goals (A.A., 2020). There is, however, a general awareness that many advertising agencies continue to work with oil and gas companies. The industry also continues to produce advertisements for environmentally harmful products and services, such as SUVs[4] or activities such as frequent flying. To explore this apparent contradiction, this research employs a critical realism (CR) ontology, which seeks to find underlying causes behind observable phenomena. CR is separated into three domains, empirical, actual and real. The empirical is what might be observed and what is 'out there' in the world. For this research, what is empirically evident is the responsible image of the advertising industry, where advertising agencies and sector trade bodies assert alignment with net zero targets and promote initiatives which appear to comprehensively address emissions from the sector (A.A., 2024d). What is also empirically evident is the way in which advertising practices have the potential to promote consumption and therefore contribute to climate change. CR acknowledges this epistemic fallacy, that is, the reduction of reality to our knowledge of it (Bhaskar, 1979), which in this instance, would be two contrasting realties.

In CR, actual level events may have occurred or be occurring and may or may not be visible. The methods used to explore these layers are that of qualitative research. Through semi-structured interviews with senior managers, the study seeks to understand their experiences, values and pro-environmental behaviours in the workplace.

The real level of CR contains underlying structures, which produce generative mechanisms. These are generally unseen and likely only partially uncovered through research. To further understand these, as well as to triangulate the data from senior managers, the research turned towards accessing secondary online data.

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[4] The term SUV stands for Sports Utility Vehicle and originates from the US. The term is commonly used to describe larger, four-wheel drive vehicles. On average, SUVs consume around 20% more oil than an average medium-size non-SUV car. (IEA 2023)

Design and Methods

The research adopted a qualitative approach, undertaking thirty, hour long, semi-structured interviews with senior advertising professionals working in the UK advertising sector. The interviews were intended to gain an understanding of senior managers' concerns and values around the climate crisis in the context of their working environment. Altruistic and egoistic values were highlighted in the literature as being closely connected with pro-environmental behaviours and therefore, the data were coded according to four value types - biospheric altruism, humanistic altruism, egoistic-self and egoistic-kin. The data were also coded to the three pillars of institutional work, creating, maintaining and disrupting. This addressed research questions one and two. Research question three asked about barriers to and enablers of, managers' work and much of the data pointed to the actions of industry actors. To triangulate the findings from senior managers' interviews, a search for secondary online data was undertaken. In total, 30 online documents, videos, reports and articles were identified and analysed using content analysis to further understand any potential structures and mechanisms which might provide explanations of barriers to, and enablers of, managers' work.

1.3 Research Findings and Contributions

The research makes contributions in four areas:

Biospheric values. The findings contribute to the body of values literature to show that whilst a range of altruistic and egoistic values drive pro-environmental behaviours, those who expressed strong biospheric values reported a greater quantity of behaviours in this particular context. Those that reported egoistic-self values reported the least. These findings challenge the assumptions in the literature, according to which, it is egoistic values that frequently drive pro-environmental behaviours. The literature review had shown that interest in pro-environmental values has grown over the decades, yet understanding which types of altruistic and egoistic values were the greater drivers of pro-environmental

behaviours, and why, remained unclear. This created a space to which this study has contributed.

Whilst the literature highlighted that values can be key motivators for institutional work, the ways in which they motivate remained unclear; the findings have shown that where personal biospheric values and embedded institutional values conflict, the motivation for institutional work appears stronger. Conflicting values therefore may be pertinent to understanding how values motivate IW, again contributing in this regard.

Actor level consequences. The IW literature showed a lack of consideration in current scholarship towards actor level consequences of IW therefore presenting a gap to explore. Findings show that the consequences to actors carrying out disrupting work were significant and at times personally detrimental. This is an important and under explored element to the concept of IW. It is important to understand consequences of IW as this can present a barrier for the potential for ongoing IW as well as employee wellbeing. These findings contribute to a gap in the concept in this way and open up opportunities to explore this further.

Recursive institutional work. The findings examine the nature of institutional work in the advertising sector, an under explored context in which there is a critical need for institutional transformation. It contributes to the body of institutional work (IW) literature to show that, in this context, the ways in which individuals use IW is different to existing research. The findings show that creating work is employed to build collateral and networks with which to support future disrupting work. After this process, IW is often used in a recursive, messy, stop-start way and is potentially ongoing, perhaps necessary due to the difficult and resistant institutional background. This is a fresh perspective, in that IW is often presented as a single act in the literature or as a sequential process, moving from one type of IW to the other. This research also contributes to data in the disrupting pillar of IW, as scholars have identified this element as under examined (Leca, 2009).

Maintaining valorising institutional work. The findings contribute to the understanding of the ways in which maintaining IW is used by powerful industry actors. Those actors work to maintain their institutions and resist change by engaging in responsive maintaining work, 'valorising' in a way that is distinct from its description in existing literature - as providing public positive examples of the normative foundations of an institution. In this case, powerful industry actors valorise dual but conflicting ideations of their institution, with the aim of avoiding sanctions. Current literature has not revealed how valorising is used to maintain two opposing concepts of an institution in this way. This study therefore contributes to understanding the ways in which actors use the maintaining pillar of IW to reproduce industry norms.

Having provided an introduction to the research and a summary of its findings, the structure of the thesis is detailed in the following section, 1.4.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The focus of this research was to understand the value driven behaviours of senior managers in the advertising sector. The literature review was therefore divided between a review of the values literature, (2.0) and the institutional work (IW) literature, (3.0).

2.0. Literature Review: Values

The values literature review examined the progression of the academic understanding of pro-environmental values over the decades which moves pro-environmental values towards focusing on types of altruism. Altruistic values consist of three types: humanistic (care for others), biospheric (care for nature) and egoistic (care for self). In terms of egoistic values, the literature does not differentiate between care for self and care for children and therefore, for the purposes of this research, the category was divided into egoistic-self and egoistic-kin. This was to enable further understandings of where the main concern lies, as concern for the self is likely to be distinct from concerns for one's children.

There is no consensus in the literature as to which of these values drive pro-environmental behaviours however, there is a leaning towards egoistic values. The literature shows that values can be motivators for institutional work, but which values and the ways in which they motivate is underdeveloped. This gap led to the formation of the first research question: RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?

• How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

3.0. Literature Review: Institutional Work (IW) and Institutions

This literature review examined the concept of institutional work, as well as exploring the ways in which advertising is conceptualised as an institution. The literature reviewed showed how the institution of advertising is conceptualised as having established normative rules of the promotion of consumption and abundance (section 3.1.1). Current advertising practices continue to prove to be effective at this promotion, and the literature shows the ways in which it is effective at growing sales and markets.

Section 3.2 reviews the literature around the concept of institutional work (IW) to understand the behaviours of individuals working within advertising. IW describes twenty types of work contained within three pillars of disrupting, maintaining and creating. The literature shows that the disrupting pillar was underexamined, providing a space to contribute to this area. It also describes the ways in which IW was carried out through singular behaviours, and at times, in a sequential fashion, and was significantly lacking any consideration of consequences to actors carrying out IW. The literature also does not detail if any responsive IW was received from other industry actors. These gaps led to the formation of the second and third research questions:

RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

• In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?

RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

• How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

• How might potential enablers overcome these?

4.0. Research Strategy and Methodology

This section covers the research philosophy, research design, data collection and analysis methods. The research philosophy is that of critical realism (CR), that looks for structures which can explain observable and empirical events. This philosophy was chosen as there was an a-priori researcher understanding of existing institutional tensions which might be explained through causal mechanisms. CR seeks explanation through whatever appropriate methods are able to generate understanding of any structures or causal powers. In this way, as well as choosing a qualitative approach of interviewing thirty senior managers in the advertising sector, further secondary data collection was justified from online sources in order to provide additional avenues for explanation. These two data sets were triangulated to provide understandings around research question three, that of any potential barriers to, or enablers of managers' institutional work. The ways in which the research adopted an interpretivist approach to data analysis as well as how data quality, trustworthiness and reflexivity are also discussed in this chapter. The data for all three research questions were coded and for the third research question, content analysis was used for the secondary online data. This provided a deeper explanation of the potential barriers to, and enablers of, senior managers' work.

5.0. Values: Findings

This chapter addresses the first research question of the thesis and details data from managers as they express their concerns, values and pro-environmental behaviours around the climate crisis in the context of their work. Along with data excerpts, the findings were also summarised visually in a chart, with each managers' values set alongside their self-reported behaviours. There is no consensus in the literature regarding which values drive pro-environmental behaviours. The findings were able to show that whilst a range of values

drove pro-environmental behaviours, it was those who expressed biospheric values who showed the greater quantity of pro-environmental behaviours in this setting. Those who expressed egoistic-self values reported the least.

6.0. Institutional Work: Findings

This chapter addresses research question two and three by exploring the data from managers as they describe the types of pro-environmental behaviours undertaken. This chapter presents several findings. Whilst the literature often shows IW as being used in a sequential manner, the findings show how managers' work to create before disrupting and use IW in a recursive manner. The findings also identify a range of consequences to managers' disrupting work, which has previously not been adequately considered in the literature. The findings identify some barriers to managers' ongoing institutional work from organisational as well as institutional actors and this was further explored through secondary data research.

7.0. Barriers, Enablers and Secondary Data Findings

This chapter additionally addresses research question three. Findings from senior managers' interviews showed a range of potential barriers from institutional actors. The research also turned to secondary data of thirty online documents, news articles and videos, using content analysis to triangulate these findings. The findings show several barriers to managers' work, a significant one being the ways in which powerful industry actors work to maintain and valorise dual, but conflicting ideations of the institution of advertising, with the aim of avoiding institutional sanctions. Whilst valorising is identified in the literature, the way in which it is used by actors in this manner has not been previously identified. The findings also show enablers to managers' work, that of government regulation around advertising for highly polluting goods and services.

8.0. Discussion

This chapter discusses the research findings, how these findings answer the research questions and address the gaps identified in the literature. It draws on the retroductive

process of critical realism, whereby explanation is sought to understand what contextual conditions are needed for potential causal mechanisms to exist. The chapter concludes by discussing practical implications and the strengths and limitations to the study.

Having provided an overview of the thesis structure, the next chapter begins with the values literature review.

2.0 Literature Review: Values

Introduction

The aim of this research is to understand the values that drive pro-environmental behaviours of senior advertising professionals, and how these behaviours are understood as institutional work. It also aims to understand the barriers to, and enablers of, their work.

A review of the values literature in this chapter suggests that values can act as motivational forces associated with pro-environmental behaviours. To understand what types of pro-environmental behaviours are taken in the workplace, this research also examines the institutional work (IW) literature, which describes behaviours in three pillars of the concept of IW. These are defined as '*the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions*' (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006 p215). The research therefore draws on two domains of literature, that of values, addressed in this chapter, as well as institutional work (IW), addressed in chapter 3.0.

The structure of this chapter unfolds as follows: Section 2.1 provides an overview of literature calling for an incorporation of values into research on institutional work. Section 2.2 looks to the values literature and begins by examining the meaning and definition of values, then looks at the development of values over the decades. The development of pro-environmental values is covered in sections 2.3 – 2.4. Section 2.5 examines how values act as motivators and section 2.6 summarises with an overview of the research gaps that this study seeks to address and the respective research questions that arise from these.

2.1 Incorporating Values and Institutional work

Surveys show that advertising professionals are concerned about the climate crisis, (IPSOS, 2024) however they do not detail what these specific concerns are or what values they hold which might drive these. They also do not allow for an understanding as to how these concerns might lead to action. Addressing this gap in the literature, a number of scholars

have identified the intersection of values and institutional work (IW). For instance, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) maintain that values are key in the concept of IW and call for more research on how employees use values to create change. Leca (2009) ask why actors are called to IW and what factors support or hinder that work. Wright et al. (2017) discuss values and the resulting processes that create triggers for further work, arguing that it is important to consider actor level values in IW because without this, the '*deeply entrenched values*' of the organisation are more likely very different.

Scholars also ask about motivations around engaging in IW. Hampel et al. (2017) review the first decade of IW literature and call for more exploration as to why actors might engage in it, potentially pointing towards the role of values in these motivations. From a review of 452 articles on IW, Gidley and Palmer (2021) ask for more research on motivations or outcomes, finding these signficantly undertheorised. Scholars argue that if employees are to be brought to centre stage in IW, then consideration of their motivations would benefit from closer examination (Hwang and Colyvas, 2011). Kraatz et al. (2020) maintain a focus on values in an institutional context can enhance the understanding of institutions and their human inhabitants, but that values still '*occupy a marginal position in the contemporary literature*' (p474). These outstanding questions from the literature provide an opportunity to look at the interplay between values and IW. The following section (2.2) turns to the values literature.

2.2 Values

Definition of Values

Values are understood as a variety of preferences, obligations, desires, needs or orientations and enable people to make judgements about the world around them (Cheng and Fleischmann, 2010). In the psychology and sociology literature, the term value is used to refer to the values of individuals (Ives and Kendal, 2014) with scholars defining values as concepts and beliefs, set around desired goals, which can often surpass situations and are ordered by importance (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). This definition has been extended to

include the idea that values relate to an end state of being, that they can act as overarching guides and that there is an infinite number of values that can be identified and studied (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). Scholars have connected values to moral beliefs and describe values as guiding people towards favourable outcomes (Hemingway and Maclagan, 2004; Schwartz, 2012; Sagiv et al., 2017). Values are not necessarily always consistent or coherent at the individual level and are often '*multiple, diverse, abstract, tacit, hidden, temporary and conflicting*' (Løvaas, 2022 p1).

Schwartz (1994) finds that values act as '*a belief pertaining to desirable end states or modes of conduct that transcends specific situations, guides selection or evaluation of behaviour, people, and events, and is ordered by importance relative to other values, to form a system of value priorities*' (p20). Scholars connect these qualities of values as motivating people towards action or a precursor towards potential action (Vernon and Allport, 1931; Rokeach and Regan, 1980). The values literature find that values are an expression of personal moral beliefs and preferences, work as guides towards ways of being, and can act as motivators to action. The following section describes the development of values over the decades, establishing the importance of continued research into values, especially around topics which focus on environmental behaviours.

Values development

Values have been of interest throughout human history, from early religious texts to classical philosophers such as Socrates, Aristotle and Plato, humanity has consistently placed importance and sought to understand what values are and how they function. Concentrating on the development of modern work, the focus on values classifications originated with German scholar Eduard Spranger in 1928 who was one of the first to bring about a detailed description of people based on what they valued, which he published in his book 'Lebensformen' (translated as 'Types of Men') (Spranger, 1928). His classification was based on six value orientations (theoretical, economic, usefulness, aesthetic, social, political, religious). While Spranger's work classified people on their orientations, it was lacking in nuance and did not consider beliefs, motives or intentions. This was addressed over the

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twentieth century where a range of scholars examined values with varying focuses, (Mead, 1928; Vernon and Allport, 1931; Gorer, 1955; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Inkeles and Levinson, 1963; Hartman, 1973; Clawson and Vinson, 1978) all of whom added to the understanding of human values in various ways (Kulich and Chi, 2014).

However it was Rokeach's (1973) work in the early seventies in which values were identified and classified, with the aim of testing them. This work created a platform for all other research on values, however its limitations were potentially around its narrow focus on American western values. This limitation was addressed by Hofstede (1984) whose work was the first to undertake large scale multinational research relating to values using data from IBM. His extended research included data from fifty countries and his book, *Culture's Consequences* was one of the most cited texts in the social science citation index at that time. At a similar time Robert Inglehart's work on the European Values Study (EVS, 2024) was done to test the idea that economic and technological advances were changing the basic values of populations in developed countries. It found significant generational changes in attitudes towards values relating to religion, gender, family, politics and economic life that were occurring, especially in younger people. Interest in the surveys spread to include developing countries and the study extended into the World Values Study which was carried out in over twenty countries, six continents and continues to be ongoing (Inglehart et al., 2000).

This brief definition and overview of the development of values over the last century shows that values research continues to widen (to include more populations) as well as showing that the values of individuals and populations are subject to change and can be influenced by their social context. This awareness of generational changes in attitudes to values denotes a need for continued enquiry into values, especially around ever evolving and worsening issues such as climate change which may continue to threaten individual's core values. The following section 2.3 focuses on the development of pro-environmental values.

2.3 Development of Pro-Environmental Values

Table 1, 'Environmental Values across the decades', provides a summary of the emergence of environmental values from Kluckhohn in the early 60's to Crace and Brown in the 90's.

Kluckhohn & Strodbeck	Rokeach Survey	Schwartz & Bilsky	Schwartz & Bilsky	Brown & Crace
1961	1973	1987	1992	1996
Humanity and Natural Environment: Harmonious	World of Beauty	Prosocial Values Altruism Benevolence	Universalism Unity with nature World of beauty Social justice World at peace	Concern for Environment Concern for others Responsibility Scientific Understanding

Table 1 Environmental Values across the decades.

Themes of nature in values' scales began to emerge from Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) and their Values Orientation Theory which frames nature in terms of how humans live in relationship with it, either through mastery, harmoniously, or submissivly. A seminal event a decade later was the release of Rachel Carson's book Silent Spring (1962) which provided documented evidence of the environmental damage caused by the widespread use of DDT[5]. This, as well as the wider emerging environmental movement that it helped to create, may have been the motivation for scholars to consider environmental values in their work in this period. Rokeach (1973) mentioned earlier, formulated two sets of eighteen values, referred to as the Rokeach scale. It featured nature through the term 'World of Beauty', in sense of appreciation of the beauty of nature, but not yet in the sense of caring for it.

A focus on environmental values continued to develop during the mid-eighties (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987), perhaps due to the worsening climate crisis, which was gaining more public attention. Some environmental events such as the Montreal Protocol (1987), to promote action around ozone depletion, and the release of the Brundtland Report (1987), which introduced the concept of sustainable development, may have also highlighted the

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[5] DDT (Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) is a chemical compound originally developed as an insecticide to prevent the spread of disease among crops.

need to examine how people valued the environment. During this time, scholars incorporated more environmentally leaning values in their work. Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) detailed a prosocial category into their scales; part of fifty six values, in nine categories, the prosocial category corresponded closely to environmental issues and included values such as benevolence but also introduced altruism as a value linked to nature and the environment.

Into the late 80's there were further landmark environmental events; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC (1988) was formed and the Exxon Valdez disaster where 11 million gallons of oil spilled out into the Prince William Sound off Alaska (1989) occurred. Research showed that by 1989, a large proportion of American citizens - 79%, said they supported environmental issues (Dunlap, 2014). Into the 90's, the US Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990 (to mitigate against acid rain) was signed, and the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro took place, in which the Framework Convention on Climate Change was created, becoming the basis for all future summits and negotiations on climate change issues. Around this time, Schwartz (1992), developed a new value category, which he named Universalism which consisted of a broad range of environmental values such as protecting the environment, unity with nature, world of beauty, social justice and world at peace. This was perhaps influenced by the growing landmark environmental events of the time.

The year of 1995 saw the first of the Conference of the Parties[6], (COP), which initiated talks to reduce emissions and limit global warming. A year later, Brown and Crace (1996) were the first to specifically name 'the environment' in their Life Values Inventory. This inventory comprised of fifteen values of which four pertained to environmental considerations. Two explicitly incorporate altruism, stating 'care for the environment' and 'care for others', along with two other environmental values such as 'responsibility' and 'scientific understanding' (Brown and Crace, 1996).

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[6] The Conference of the Parties (COP) is an annual gathering between 198 countries - parties - who agree to participate in developing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) and building towards climate goals.

Whilst early values scales referred to nature in terms of its relationship and perhaps utility to humans, these later scales began to incorporate a greater number of values oriented towards care for the environment. These were articulated through altruistic values, which the next section (2.4) explores further.

2.4 Altruism

Whilst the work of Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) was some of the first to focus on altruism in the way it related to the environment, Dietz et al. (2005a) stated that the work would benefit from being *'supplemented'*, as it did not direct enough attention on this area. They found that a focus on altruism was central to arguments which link values to environmentalism. Stern (1994) had already linked environmental concerns to altruism, stating '*Environmental concern is related to egoistic, social-altruistic, and biospheric value orientations'* (Stern and Dietz, 1994 p45). Dietz et al. (2005a) confirmed this articulation of environmental issues in areas of humanistic altruism (or social altruism), biospheric altruism as well as values of self-interest. Altruism was therefore established as a core value domain in examining not only attitudes, but also how behaviours towards the environment might be considered.

In a review of how the term altruism is defined across 273 journal articles over two years, Pfattheicher et al. (2022) found five dominant terms conceptualising altruism, all of which infer non-reciprocal benefits to others, examples of which are;
'Motivation with the ultimate goal of increasing another's welfare' (Batson, 2010 p16); *'Voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another, which is not performed with the expectation of receiving external rewards'* (Eisenberg and Miller, 1987 p92); *'Costly acts that confer economic benefits on other individuals'* (Fehr and Fischbacher, 2003 p785); *'A behaviour that is costly to the actor and beneficial to the recipient or recipient.'* (West et al., 2011 p232); *'A moral norm [which] implies certain social expectations of helping others in different social contexts'* (Bykov, 2017 p808). Pfattheicher et al. (2022) stated that 'others' in this context were not limited to just humans, but also included other living beings such as

animals as well as the planet. Across these definitions of altruism are commonalities of prosocial behaviours, all of which infer positive behaviours towards others or the planet.

Altruistic values are referred to as humanistic when focused on other people and as biospheric when focusing on nature or the planet. Egoistic values denote a focus or benefit to the self. Altruistic values can be triggered when feelings of moral obligations are experienced which result in the need to carry out specific helping behaviours. Egoistic values focus on environmental issues through the way in which it affects the self, either supporting or opposing behaviours depending on the personal effect (Schwartz, 1977).

Having established that altruistic and egoistic values are relevant to understand the ways in which people value the environment, the next section, 2.4.1 looks to each of these values in detail. It explores the literature which shows how each type of altruistic and egoistic value motivate pro-environmental behaviours.

2.4.1 Biospheric Altruism

Biospheric altruism is described as care for the natural world and encompass animals and all living things (Milfont et al., 2006; Perkins, 2010). Bouman et al. (2020) research feelings of concern around climate change and the behaviours that come from this. From their study of the European Social Survey, they found that biospheric values were the most motivating value for personal action around climate change issues. In another large scale five country study, Schultz and Zelezny (1998) found that it was nature driven values that showed the greater predictor of pro-environmental behaviours. In a survey analysis of green energy programme adoption, Clark et al. (2003) reported that the main drivers of motivation to adopt green energy were biospheric concerns and then general altruistic motives with an egoistic motive ranked last. Research from Tamar et al. (2021) on students, found that it was only biospheric values that positively affected pro-environmental behaviours, with egoistic values reducing positive attitudes towards potential pro-environmental actions. Ruepert et al. (2017) looked to the professional environment and tested the effect of corporate

environmental responsibility procedures on employee behaviours; they found that those with stronger biospheric values reported a greater incidence of self-reported pro-environmental behaviours, encouraged by the corporate culture. Karp (1996) found that beneficial behaviours can be constrained by conflicting needs between individuals and others, therefore potentially leaning towards protection of oneself, but concludes that the most motivating values are biospheric ones.

Awareness and care for nature therefore is seen as associated with pro-environmental behaviours: DeVille et al. (2021) find that *'overall time spent in nature, regardless of the quality of environmental conditions, leads to increased perceived values ascribed to nature, which is associated with greater pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours'* (p1). The existing research across a range of situations supports biospheric values as underpinning pro-environmental behaviours as well as showing at times that general altruism motivates behaviours. The next section looks to examples of how care for others, humanistic altruism, is seen to be a driver of pro-environmental behaviours.

2.4.2 Humanistic Altruism

Humanistic altruism (also referred to as social altruism), refers to care for broader groupings of 'others' with others comprising of community, country and humanity (Warneken and Tomasello, 2009). Humanistic altruism is seen as a key value dimension explaining pro-environmental behaviour: *'the value dimension that significantly influences environmental behaviour is social altruism or safeguarding the environment to protect the welfare of other humans'* (Stets and Biga, 2003 p418). There is therefore still an element of protecting the environment in this type of altruism, but not just for the environment's sake, but because of the potential impacts on people. Stern and Dietz (1994) define *'other humans'* as community, nation-states or indeed simply all humans. Some scholars, (Gormley, 1996) also state that humanistic altruism includes caring for family members.

Humanistic altruism shows strong links to justice, this being part of care for others (Zuckerman, 1975; Wagstaff, 1998) and justice in the environmental movement is

extensively documented (Sultana, 2022). Howell (2013) questions why UK citizens have adopted lower-carbon lifestyles and find that justice and a focus on others is more of a motivator than biospheric values. Overall, there is evidence in existing research that support humanistic altruism as a driver of pro-environmental values across a variety of situations and that the term 'humanistic' encompasses all human groups including family with a strong element of justice (Snelgar, 2006). The following section looks to values which focus on the self.

2.4.3 Egoistic Values

Egoistic values are defined by Stern and Dietz (1994) as values that *'predispose people to protect aspects of the environment that affect them personally, or to oppose protection of the environment if the personal costs are perceived as high' (*p67). For this reason, egoistic values are considered when looking at types of values that drive (or hinder) pro-environmental behaviours. Milfont et al. (2006) and Clark et al. (2003) find that individuals with egoistic values regard environmental issues through the way in which it affects them personally, with Clark et al. (2003) emphasising *'awareness of consequences for oneself'* (p238). Therefore, even though these individuals are, or appear to be, concerned and considerate of the environment, it is often in the context of how it benefits the self (Schultz and Zelezny, 1998; Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002). Knez (2013) finds that those with egoistic value orientations are concerned about climate issues when they impacted their local environment.

In their study on environmental concerns and intention to use public transport, De Groot and Steg (2007) found that those that displayed egoistic values were more likely to partake in environmental behaviour: *'egoistic concerns still appeared to be the most significant predictor in this respect'* (p1831). Baldassare and Katz (1992) find that among American residents, personal risks and threats in their environment provide a better indicator of potential pro-environmental behaviours and other scholars also find egoistic values drive pro-environmental behaviours in situations around personal convenience (Levy et al., 2018);

in collectivistic behaviours and intentions to support policy as well as environmental volunteerism (Huang et al., 2022); the proximity of environmental breakdown (Lou et al., 2024) and among teaching professionals in Indonesia (Dinurrohmah et al., 2022).

Dominicis et al. (2017) found egoistic values drove environmental behaviour, but only when there was an additional non-egoistic centred benefit, such as a benefit for the environment. Stern et al's (1993) research found egoistic orientations to be the strongest leaning when reluctance towards paying more tax to protect the environment was tested, but also all three orientations were present when it came to influencing pro-environmental behaviours and intentions. Therefore it was dependent on context and circumstances as to which one was the stronger driver. Kang et al. (2024) found that among Korean students, egoistic values played a key role in willingness to take climate action, however among Finnish students it was biospheric values which were more motivating.

Marshall's (2019) research suggests that some values overlap. Their work on how value orientations influence responses to the effects of climate change on Australia's Great Barrier Reef found that among local residents, (to a portion of the reef area), those who expressed biospheric and altruistic values responded to a variety of issues on the topic. But those that expressed egoistic values elicited 'grief responses' (as in grief at the degrading state of the reef). They suggest that egoism may be associated with '*the benefits, health and wellbeing derived from a natural resource in good condition*' (p2). This suggests a care for the environment through the way in which it reflects on one's wellbeing as well as an element of proximity of that natural resource.

Hemingway and Maclagan (2004) found that motivations for acting on values from senior leaders are identified as '*psychological egoism*', defined as being focused on self-interest, and that many behaviours are driven via this type of egoism. Their behaviours might appear altruistic however, the real motive is the avoidance of guilt via good works or deeds.

Existing research shows that across a range of situations, egoistic values can drive pro-environmental behaviours, and seem motivated by how events or the environment may affect or relate to the self. Egoistic values however do not simply refer to the self. Hamilton (1964) theorised that evolutionary development extended to care for one's offspring and therefore ensuring that one's children (who carry one's genes), are protected is an essential consideration in values. Through the necessity of survival, a focus on the self, can be extended to those who share one's genes, therefore extending egoistic values to kin (Hamilton, 1964; Bykov, 2017). Gormley (1996) also discusses that debates no longer centre around the survival of the species, but rather survival of the genes, and in this way a selfish approach to this is to ensure that along with oneself, one's children are also protected. In this way, concerns for the environment and what resources will be available for that gene pool, can be drivers for environmentalism (Curry et al., 2013).

For this research, grouping together concern for oneself as well as one's children into egoistic values is potentially problematic as it does not allow for clarity of understanding as to where the concern lies. A person who expresses care and concern for their children may have different motivations and therefore display different behaviours, as opposed to an individual who only has concerns for themselves. If individuals consider acting to mitigate future outcomes for their children, then those considerations and therefore behaviours may be different to those of a person who has no children. This lack of distinction requires a more refined definition of egoistic values for the purposes of this research. Following the case put forward by Bykov (2017), this research distinguishes between egoistic values into two separate domains of 'egoistic-self' where there is a focus on the benefit to self, as well 'egoistic-kin' where there is a focus on one's children and their wellbeing. This will allow for a better understanding of the emphasis of egoistic values and how these values might drive behaviours.

Combinations of Values

There is also scholarship whereby the value orientation driving environmental behaviours is shown as consisting of two or three types of altruistic and egoistic values. For example, Stern

and Dietz (1994) found little difference between humanistic and biospheric motivations when it came to environmental behaviours in a general population sample. In a study to examine the predictive power of altruistic, egoistic and biospheric value orientations, Groot and Steg found that participants whose values showed general altruism and then biospheric altruism, acted in more environmentally friendly ways; *'the more respondents were altruistically and biospherically oriented, the more they were self-determined to act pro-environmentally'* (De Groot and Steg, 2010 p368). Milfont et al. (2006) found a mix of both egoistic and biospheric values drove pro-environmental behaviours in their study on New Zealanders from different cultural origins. Sloot et al. (2018) however found all three value orientations drove environmental behaviours and this was dependent on the focus for change and aims of each individual. Prakash et al. (2019) found that it was two areas of altruistic values (humanistic and biospheric) which drove buying behaviours of environmentally friendly packaging.

Overall, there appears to be little consensus in the existing literature as to which types of values are dominant at driving pro-environmental behaviours. Scholars find a single value type or a mix of values can drive behaviour and this is dependent on a variety of factors, across populations and situations. There is however a leaning towards egoistic values being more prominent in driving pro-environmental behaviours.

Table 2, 'Types of egoistic and altruistic values that drive pro-environmental behaviour - by scholar', provides a summary of the literature discussed in this chapter which looks at types of altruism and egoistic values that drive pro-environmental behaviours.

Egoistic values	Humanistic altruism	Biospheric altruism	Humanistic + biospheric altruism	General altruism + egoistic values + biospheric
Stern et al. (1993)	Stets and Biga (2003)	Bouman et al. (2020)	Stern & Dietz (1994)	Dominicis et al. (2017)
Knez (2016)	Wagstaff (1998)	Clark et al. (2003)	Prakash et al. (2019)	Stern et al. (1993)
Kollmuss, Agyeman (2002)	Zuckerman (1975)	DeVille et al. (2021)	De Groot and Steg (2010)	Sloot et al. (2018)
Baldassare and Katz (1992)	Snelgar (2006)	Tamar et al. (2021)		Kang (2024)
Dinurrohmah (2022)	(Howell, 2013)	Ruepert et al. (2017)		Marshall et al. (2019)
Lou et al. (2024)		Karp (1996)		
De Groot and Steg (2007)				
Levy et al. (2018)				
Huang et al. (2022)				

Table 2 Types of egoistic and altruistic values that drive pro-environmental behaviour - by scholar

The lack of clarity around which types of values drive pro-environmental behaviours provides a gap to explore further in this research. There are also questions from scholars around values and behaviour, for example, Olsson and Hysing (2012), who studied employee activism in the public sector, call for more understanding around what types of values employees use to instigate change. DeVille et al. (2021) conducted a narrative review of published articles across multiple populations to evaluate the associations between general pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours and time spent in nature. They ask that any future research on values around nature 'should also incorporate environmental sustainability, including climate activity' (p2). Hemingway and Maclagan (2004) ascribe power to employee values and theorise that organisations are the way they are due to these values and that employees 'can indeed make a difference' (p33). This research aims to add to the body of research on these issues.

2.5 Values as motivators

This section looks to further understand how values might act as motivators for pro-environmental behaviours. Both Hutcheon and Rokeach were scholars who made the link between values and behaviour. Rokeach (1973), commented *'the value concept, more than any other, should occupy a central position … values should unify the apparently diverse interests of all the sciences concerned with human behaviour'* (p3) and Hutcheon (1972) stated that values are *'operating criteria for action'* (p184).

Schwartz's (1977) moral norm activation theory provides a connection between values and behaviours. It considers values as underlying norms and finds that these norms can be used to predict altruistic behaviours. Norms are determined by two elements, awareness of consequences (AC) of a behaviour as well as and ascribed responsibility (AR) for performing a behaviour. Personal norms are triggered when threats are understood as being posed to 'others', which include humans, animals and potentially, the planet. For Schwartz (1977), altruism was influenced by the strength of that moral intensity towards taking a specific behaviour. Schwartz's norm activation theory was summarised as a model that *'predicts that an altruistic behaviour is more likely to occur when a person is both aware of the harmful consequences (AC) of his or her (potential) actions for others and when the person ascribes responsibility (AR) for these consequences to the self'* (Schultz and Zelezny, 1998 p2). In the wider environmental context, this may mean that if someone ascribes responsibility of the breakdown of the environment to humans, they may feel part of a collective responsibility to try to stop or mitigate these harms.

Dunlap and Van Liere (1978) developed the new environmental paradigm (NEP), which suggested that there was a general acceptance in society that human activity negatively affected the biosphere. Their scale was developed to measure awareness of this damage and therefore showed ascribed responsibility of environmental breakdown. Later in 2000, the NEP was one of the elements considered in Stern's (2000) value-belief-norm theory (VBN). Along with Dunlap's NEP, Stern also considered Schwartz's AR and AC, to develop the

VBN, which was intended to explain the influence of all these elements as well as values on personal norms and behaviours. He hypothesised that all these elements (ascribed responsibility and awareness of consequences, as well as personal norms and values) had influence culminating in a *'sense of obligation to take environmental actions'* (Stern, 2000, p412) therefore highlighting a role for values in driving pro-environmental behaviours. Subsequently, other scholar's research also support the theory that values are a significant factor in motivating behaviours (Vaske and Donnelly, 1999; Cheng and Fleischmann, 2010; Dietz et al., 2005b; Miles, 2015; Gatersleben et al., 2014; Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002).

2.6 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the values literature to show an increased focus on how values relate to the environment perhaps as the climate crisis has worsened and environmental concerns have become more politically and socially relevant. Altruism has developed as a key concept to understand how values motivate pro-environmental behaviours. There remains however, a lack of understanding around which types of altruistic and egoistic values are more dominant at this, providing a gap to explore further. It is against this background that the first research question of this thesis asks:

RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?
• How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

The question aims to establish which types of altruistic and/or egoistic values are expressed by senior managers in the workplace and how these motivate pro-environmental behaviours.

The next chapter discusses the literature on the concept of institutional work, through which managers self-reported behaviours can be understood.

3.0 Literature Review: Institutions and Institutional Work (IW)

Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of institutional work (IW) and provides a rationale for the selection of this particular concept for the research. The chapter unfolds as follows: section 3.1 defines the meaning of an institution, with sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 examining how the institution of advertising is conceptualised in this research as well as addressing advertising's effectiveness; the differences in types of emissions; and the role of industry actors. An understanding of all of these are essential to the context of the thesis. Section 3.2 introduces the concept of IW and 3.3 explores its three pillars, that of disrupting (3.3.1), maintaining (3.3.2) and creating (3.3.3). Each pillar contains descriptions and examples from the literature. Section 3.4 brings together the overarching tenents of the concept and the potential gaps for contribution.

3.1. Institutions

Before reviewing the literature on the concept of institutional work this section defines what is meant by the term 'institution' and how it is used in this research.

Lawrence and Phillips (2019b) state that institutions consist of conventions and shared concepts of social understanding which are subject to self-regulatory controls. This shared social understanding that defines institutions can consist of patterns, methods, and behavioural systems which denote normative rules, are self-sustaining and define a common meaning (Gurrieri et al., 2022; Coccia, 2019). Institutions therefore can be understood as social symbolic objects, which are defined by these patterns and social systems, and can be formless, examples of which might be a movement, a language or a religion. Institutions encompass '*taken for granted assumptions about the world and shared social understandings*' (Lawrence, 2021 21:48), as well as having a history and being socially constructed. How advertising is defined as an institution which aligns with this definition, is explored in the next section.

3.1.1 The Institution of Advertising

Charles H Sandage, (1972) widely held as the father of advertising education, classified advertising as an institution, defining its main component as promoting consumption: '*consumption may be at the individual or societal level or both, but there must be an abundance of consumption*' (p7). He discussed how various institutions had been assigned tasks, for instance that spirituality had been assigned to religion, and that justice assigned to the institutions of law. Advertising he said has been '*assigned the function of helping society achieve abundance*' (p6). Scholars point to advertising's capitalist leanings (Brulle and Young, 2007; Sherry, 1987) as well as describing advertising as promoting abundance and fulfilling needs and that '*the celebration of mass produced abundance steered consumers towards personal fulfilment through consumption*' (Schroeder, 1995 p77). In this way, advertising fulfils the definition of an institution through the shared social understanding of both creating abundance, as well as normalising consumption.

Through the decades, advertising has redefined what humans need, depending on what the market can provide, setting people on the path towards being consumers rather than just citizens (Brulle and Young, 2007; Alexander et al., 2022). Going back to the late 19th and early 20th century, industrialists popularised materialism through advertising, as one way to ensure a committed labour force, in that attainment of goods or a better life required individuals to work harder to earn additional resources. By encouraging a materialist ideology, they fostered a 'work more, earn more' attitude, and through the influence of advertising, a 'buy more' mentality (Ewen, 2008; Shove and Warde, 2002). In 1958, Galbraith identified this as a dependence effect, which meant that producers created and promoted the wants (not needs) of potential consumers. In his book, The Affluent Society (1958), Galbraith explained that the way these wants were promoted was through advertising; '*A new consumer product must be introduced with a suitable advertising campaign to arouse an interest in it*' (Waller, 2008 p16). Advertising promoted consumption, and that consumption in turn portrayed a social identity of success, something which was then sustained and perpetuated by social norms and behaviours (Kasser, 2018).

Once goods had been purchased, advertisers needed to find ways to encourage consumers to become dissatisfied with what they had. In his book The Hidden Persuaders, Vance Packard (1957), discusses how waiting for well-functioning, already owned cookers and cars to wear out was the producers and advertisers next obstacle. To overcome this, the concept of *'psychological obsolescence'* was born, whereby anything over a few years old became undesirable. Packard described how, by the mid to late fifties, the average American consumer had five times as many discretionary dollars compared to the 1940's. To take advantage of this surplus, merchandisers moved towards becoming 'merchants of discontent', and with the help of the advertising industry, worked towards *'the creation of dissatisfaction with the old and out-moded'*(p25). Advertising agencies took this form of psychological manipulation and continued to develop it to promote further consumption. For example, in 1955 the McCann-Erickson advertising agency created a separate motivational department tasked with promoting dissatisfaction. It contained five full time psychologists, calling them 'head shrinkers'; one advertising executive commented that this approach was commercially productive and that *'social science today has an accessible cash value to American business'* (Packard, 1957 p31).

The re-emergence of neoliberal capitalism in the 70's further facilitated the social acceptability towards accumulation and therefore embedded advertising as an unquestioned social norm. Neoliberalism is defined as the *'theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade'* (Harvey, 2007 p2). In his book, The Condition of Postmodernity, Harvey (1989) describes how advertising feeds capitalist demands and, *'directs our attention to the production of needs and wants, the mobilization of desire and fantasy, of the politics of distraction as part and parcel of the push to sustain sufficient buoyancy of demand in consumer markets, to keep capitalist production profitable'* (p61). This notion of fulfilling wants perpetuated this developed social norm; advertising was the *'carrier of cultural values'* (Pollay, 1983) and it was further supplemented by the perceptions of deserving a good life (Boulanger, 2007).

These freedoms allow widespread advertising of goods and services, whilst acting as '*an increasingly central means of governing and producing people's desires*' (Gill and Kanai, 2018 p319). Free-market capitalism is taken for granted, normalised and accepted, especially in the UK, a country which holds the rank of eighth in the world for economic freedom (Miller et al., 2022). Scholars such as Shaver (2003) acknowledge the negatives around capitalist driven advertising but also assert that in the modern day, advertising is necessary to support economies of scale, increase product knowledge as well as funding mass media. However there remains a tension between economic freedoms and the protection of society and the environment (Diesendorf et al., 2024). This tension saw the implementation of restrictions around tobacco and alcohol advertising (Casswell, 2004), as well as fast food advertising, and now the question of high levels of consumption more generally which exacerbates climate goals.

Whilst advertising revenue may have some commercial advantages, for the purposes of this thesis the institution of advertising, and the values that it holds, are conceptualised as being focused on capitalist goals and promoting consumption (Benhabib and Bisin, 2002). The institution of advertising today maintains these neoliberalist privileges, and achieves an active stability which maintains these institutional norms (Galik and Chelbi, 2021). Unsurprisingly, the values of the institution of advertising run contrary to those which are seen necessary to alleviate the climate crisis, which is opposed to this abundance creating and high levels of consumption (Pollay, 1983; Kasser, 2016).

Organisations are the structural expressions of the institutional environment in which they exist (Selznick, 1948). Lawrence and Dover (2015) define the place and context of institutions in institutional work as, '*the intersection of a geographic location, a set of meanings and values, and a material form*' (p371). For this research the institution of advertising resides in advertising agencies, the sector's trade bodies who regulate UK advertising as well as the sector specialist membership and certification bodies and the sector's press. All these organisations fit the definitions of institutions as set out in the literature. Existing research explores empirical settings of how institutional work is used, in

government, markets, health, financial and accounting, but none are found in the advertising sector (Gidley and Palmer, 2021). This provides space and opportunity to examine the institution of advertising in the UK as a background for actors' institutional work, as they challenge the neoliberalist approach to abundance and consumption creating, in the face of pressing climate breakdown.

To summarise; advertising is conceptualised as an institution, with established norms of rules of promotion of consumption and abundance. These foundational principles have persisted over time and remain evident in contemporary advertising practices. Neoliberal capitalist ideologies, which advocate for market freedom, allow for the widespread promotion of goods and services with minimal regulatory limits, despite the environmental costs associated with increased consumption. The institution of advertising remains deeply rooted in its original principles of encouraging consumption across all sectors and the existing literature offers few examples where the institution is challenged to depart from its foundational values. This presents an opportunity for contribution in this area, to understand the ways in which advertising professionals challenge the institution of advertising in the agencies in which they work, or in those which are in their professional sphere.

Having discussed the how an institution is conceptualised in this research, it is also important to understand how effective the practice of advertising is at driving consumption, and therefore emissions. As advertising effectiveness is, at times, called into question by contemporary industry actors (A.A., 2024b), it is necessary to briefly establish the function of advertising's effectiveness through the literature. The next section discusses the effectiveness of advertising practice at product, sector and market levels and explores the literature as it pertains to advertising's effects on consumption and brand perceptions.

Advertising Effectiveness

Research has shown that at product level, advertising promotes sales across a range of products and services, such as; hotel bookings (Assaf et al., 2015; Chen and Lin, 2013);

general brand and product sales (Eng and Keh, 2007; Bruce et al., 2012); increased purchases for specific products (Frick et al., 2022; Frick et al., 2021); increased sales with positive publicity (Spotts et al., 2014). In one large empirical study, the effects of online advertising through Yahoo[7] are found to be long lasting and to provide, *'statistically and economically significant impacts of advertising on sales… the total effect on revenues is estimated to be more than seven times the retailer's expenditure on advertising during the study'* (Lewis and Reiley, 2008 p3).

Advertising is also effective at growing established as well as emerging markets. Retail Economics (2021) analysed the existing bottled water market and found that *'advertising directly contributed to the sale of over c.81 million bottles of water in 2022. Put another way, it had a direct contribution of c.£39 million' (*p30). Another example of market growth in an established market is from DEFRA[8] who run a board called the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) which is funded by the UK farming community. For years it spent around £4 million annually on promoting meat and dairy products. The AHDB conducted their own research to evaluate the validity of this spend and its return on investment to market growth. Their research found that people exposed to the adverts were 11% more likely to buy meat and dairy next time they shopped (Carlile, 2024).

New market growth can be seen from the vaping sector, which is predicted to grow globally from around $15 billion in 2020 to $85 billion by 2028, a growth partly attributed to advertising and marketing spend (Berg et al., 2022). Vaping does not always cause a displacement of smoking; *'Vape advertising campaigns reduce, rather than increase, smokers' tendency to quit smoking, which is contradictory to the claims made by vaping*

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[7] Yahoo is a web services provider that offers a search engine service.

[8] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

product manufacturers' (Yang et al., 2024 p53). Research on the growth of the SUV[9] car market by the International Energy Agency[10] showed that in 2023, SUVs accounted for 48% of car sales globally. This growth over five years is impressive, from 26 million units sold worldwide in 2017 to 51 million units in 2023 (Statista, 2024). This has partly being driven by the appeal of these cars as a status symbol from *'the marketing strategies of leading automakers'* (IEA, 2023); although the quantification of how much marketing drove these sales was not detailed in this report.

Persuasive nature of advertising

Scholars discuss the persuasive power of current advertising practice; *'the impact of food marketing is a function of both exposure to the marketing message and its persuasive power'* (Boyland et al., 2022 p2). It is now well established that advertising for tobacco products promotes sales and encourages smoking, with the world health organisation[11] commenting *'direct (advertising) and indirect (promotion and sponsorship) approaches increase the likelihood of people beginning or continuing tobacco use. Such approaches also mislead the public by depicting tobacco as no different from any other legal consumer product, thereby increasing its social acceptability'* (WHO, 2020 p1). Numerous scholars find increased sales from tobacco advertising (Andrews and Franke, 1991; Rimpelä et al., 1993; Hastings and Aitken, 1995; Willemsen and de Zwart, 1999) with studies highlighting the unethical use of advertising by the tobacco industry to promote consumption of their products (Pollay, 1997). Removing advertising messages decreases the propensity to consume (Kasser, 2016; Ivanova et al., 2020) and an uplift in advertising increases consumption (Benhabib and Bisin,

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[9] The term SUV stands for Sports Utility Vehicle and originates from the US. The term is commonly used to describe larger, four-wheel drive vehicles. On average, SUVs consume around 20% more oil than an average medium-size non-SUV car. (IEA 2023)

[10] The International Energy Agency (IEA) was established in 1974 and is a Paris-based intergovernmental organization that provides policy recommendations and data analysis on the global energy sector. Its 31 member countries and 13 association countries 75% of global energy demand.

[11] The World Health Organisation - WHO - is a United Nations agency that connects nations and people to promote health and protect the vulnerable.

2002; Jung and Seldon, 1995; Halford et al., 2008; Hastings and Aitken, 1995). Aspirational driven individuals are further prone to suggestions to consume by advertising messages (Frick et al., 2021). Scholars also signal that advertising influences what society perceives to be desirable to consume (McDonald et al., 2021; Merz et al., 2023) as well as the ways in which advertising encourages a consumer mindset, embedding consumption as a *'pervasive cultural factor in our society'* (Sanne, 2002 p278).

Social acceptability

Advertising can embed positive attitudes towards brands and increase their social acceptability (Hartmann et al., 2023; Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009; Hartmann et al., 2005). Examples of this can be seen from oil and gas companies who use advertising to promote brand image and infer a greener approach to energy production and future investment (Badvertising, 2003; Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). A case study on Exxon Mobil[12] finds that the didactic framing of the Exxon adverts that extol technological solutions to consumption, greenwashes their brand and downplays issues associated with the consumption of their products (Plec and Pettenger, 2012). Instilling positive brand perceptions are seen in food consumption (Kinnucan and Venkateswaran, 1990), general brand perceptions, (Gong and Maddox, 2003), positive impressions in political advertising (Basil et al., 2013), positive brand perceptions in environmental advertising (Pancer et al., 2017) and organisational corporate responsibility (Banerjee et al., 1995).

This section has established the nature of the institution of advertising, its neo-liberalist capitalist values as well as advertising's current effectiveness in modem day practice. The following section introduces the research context and institutional background, which is key to understanding the research findings.

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[12] Exxon Mobile are 'one of the largest publicly traded petroleum and petrochemical enterprises in the world' (Exxon Mobil 2023)

3.1.2 Research Context: The UK Advertising Industry

This section looks to the research context and institutional environment necessary to understand to make sense of the findings. Yardley (2017) argues that the key advantage to qualitative research is its ability to account for 'contextual effects'. This allows for sensitivity to participants' setting and perspectives, as well as *'the socio-cultural and linguistic context of the research, and how these may influence both what participants say and how this is interpreted by the researcher'* (p1). In this way, examining the context of this research before entering the field, helps to sensitise the researcher to participants perspectives. Korstjens and Moser (2017) maintain that *'by giving your readers a 'thick description' of the participants' contexts you render their behaviour, experiences, perceptions and feelings meaningful'* (p275). Led by this, the following sections 3.1.3 to 3.1.6 explores the research context in respect to the institutional environment, the current position on advertising restrictions and the distinction between operational emissions and advertised emissions, highlighting a key aspect of senior managers' work. Furthermore, the section describes the key institutional actors in this research, that of the Advertising Association and its Ad Net Zero initiative.

3.1.3 Advertising Restrictions

At the time of writing, the UK has not implemented any restrictions on advertising for highly polluting goods and services. However, this is not the case in other countries. For example in 2022, France banned adverts for oil and gas products (Frost, 2022), which, along with pressure from activist groups, inspired action in Sao Paulo, Stockholm, Gothenburg, Bern as well as Edinburgh, Sheffield, Coventry and Cambridgeshire who also banned adverts for oil and gas products and services. Some cities also banned adverts for other carbon intensive products such as meat and dairy as well as restricting advertising for SUVs (Frost, 2022; Boffey, 2022; Korput, 2023; Badvertising, 2024; Keating, 2024). In September 2024 the Hague banned street billboard advertising for fossil fuels in Amsterdam (Brice, 2024) and many US states have also banned billboard advertising altogether (Brooks and Ebi, 2021). In

2024, Canada and Ireland put forward bills to ban fossil fuel advertising (Éireann, 2024; HOC, 2024). Finally, in 2024, the UN secretary general António Guterres called for government action, *'I urge every country to ban advertising from fossil-fuel companies'* (WEF, 2024). There is therefore precedence set, and possibilities open to governments wishing to implement restrictions or bans on highly polluting goods and services.

The next section explains the two types of emissions associated with advertising, that of operational and advertised emissions.

3.1.4 Operational and Advertised Emissions

Operational emissions refer to all the carbon emissions created from the use of buildings, staff activities such as flying as well as film production emissions, such as the making of television adverts. There are a plethora of standard business guidelines available to manage and reduce operational emissions in businesses which often require only minimal investment. Addressing emissions at this level is seen as good business practice and is generally viewed as positive and contributing to an organisation's environmental responsibility.

Many UK advertising agencies report their operational emissions in their annual reports which communicate their carbon emissions data to wider stakeholders along with other corporate disclosures such as equality and diversity, equal pay, marketing ethics (complying with advertising laws), employee volunteering and pro-bono work (Waller and Lanis, 2009). Most of the large advertising agencies in the UK report their operational emissions and have targets to aim to reduce these annually (see Appendix 6).

Advertised Emissions (AE) are different to operational emissions as they aim to measure the emissions which result from the *extra sales* which advertising creates. AE is a concept which estimates the carbon from the *'additional sales generated by advertising'* (Kite, 2023a), that is to say, sales over and above what might have already been sold and consumed. AE can

also be used to address the emissions from working with highly polluting clients such as oil and gas companies. The concept of AE was developed by an organisation called the Purpose Disruptors[13] in 2019 and presented at COP26[14] in 2021. It was then adopted by the UN's Race to Zero thereafter. The calculated annual AE produced from the UK advertising sector in 2020 was estimated at 186 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions (CO2E[15]). To be clear, this is a rough estimation which describes the emissions from sales over and above what might have already been sold, if advertising had not promoted those goods and services. Distributed across UK consumers, this quantity of emissions accounted for around 28% of a UK consumers average carbon footprint (Wise, 2021). A revised update on the research for 2022, showed an increase to 32% (Wise, 2022). The calculation for AE is not yet refined and may need to be developed further to arrive at some degree of accuracy. That being the case, the figure of AE might be considered high, and is certainly disputed by some of the trade bodies in the industry who dismiss the concept altogether.

The methodology to calculate AE has been used by Greenpeace to estimate the emissions from Swiss advertising, concluding that it amounts to 7% of the country's emissions (Greenpeace, 2023). Greenpeace also used AE to examine sector level advertising for European aviation and auto sales and estimated that advertised emissions for these sectors in one year produced similar amounts of greenhouse gasses to that of Denmark in 2019 (Greenpeace, 2022).

To demonstrate the proportionality between operational emissions from an advertising agency and the AE which result from its activities, the following example is given: The annual

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13 Purpose Disruptors is a UK-based non-profit organization that aims to transform the advertising industry to help drive sustainable behaviour and tackle climate change.

14 COP stands for Conference of the Parties which is the international meeting focusing on the climate (UNFCC 2024)

15 The 'E' stands for equivalents. CO2e represents a measure which converts the amount of other greenhouse gases to the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide with the same Global Warming Potential. This allows for different GHGs to be expressed in a common unit and easily compared.

operational emissions of the world's largest advertising holding group, WPP, across all its sites, equated to five and a half million tons of CO2E (see Appendix 10). The AE for one advert for an Audi car in 2022 equated to around five million tons of CO2e[16] (Wise, 2022). These were the estimated emissions from the uplift in sales of the new car that the advert created. These two similar amounts, demonstrate that the operational emissions of an entire global organisation annually are similar to just one advert for a new car. Whilst the exact methodology for working out AE has not been achieved, and the figures stated are likely to be estimates at best, this example does show that the proportion of operational emissions compared to AE is likely very small. There are no UK advertising agencies that currently assess or report their AE in their annual reporting, however some are starting to acknowledge its relevance (Dentsu, 2023).

3.1.5 Oil and Gas Advertising

Whilst senior professionals in the advertising industry express concerns around the ways in which their industry addresses the climate crisis, a large majority of UK advertising agencies continue to work with oil and gas companies, allowing the promotion and legitimisation of their products, at a time when our global dependence on fossil fuels needs to end (Welsby et al., 2021; Grubler et al., 2018; Oreskes and Conway, 2010). The argument follows that a cessation of advertising for oil and gas companies will not discourage actual consumption, i.e. going to the filling station to refuel will happen with or without advertising (Bourn, 2024). However, the academic literature, discussed earlier in this chapter, shows that brand perceptions are facilitated by high end advertising, promoting a perception of acceptability of oil and gas use among the general public (Kinnucan and Venkateswaran, 1990; Gong and Maddox, 2003; Basil et al., 2013; Christy and Haley, 2008; Pancer et al., 2017).

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16 Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) is a metric used to include all the different global warming potential of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in one figure.

To demonstrate the scale of the influence of advertising for oil and gas products, research from Influence-Map (2021) found that collectively, twenty five oil and gas companies spent around $9 billion on over 25,000 social media adverts globally in 2020. These adverts were viewed approximately 431 million times. Influence Map stated, '*The ads promoted either the climate-friendliness of the industry, including voluntary targets, investments into renewables, and promoting fossil gas as green, or promoted an ongoing role for oil and gas in the energy mix. Crucially, many of these ads either contained misleading content or presented information that was misaligned from the science of climate change'* (Influence-Map, 2021). Clearly, a large portion of advertising for oil and gas brands is misleading. Whilst there is a UK regulatory body called the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)[17], which ensures that false claims in adverts are not permitted, creative licence continues to find ways to ensure that advertising for oil and gas majors moulds positive perceptions around the industry. In this way, the harms from advertising for these products are not just measured in actual emissions, but in the damaging way they suggest that unrestricted and continued use of oil and gas products are part of a sustainable future.

3.1.6 Role of Industry Actors, The Advertising Association and the ANZ Initiative

The UK trade body for the advertising industry is the Advertising Association (AA). The AA plays a key role in the operational, functional and cultural way in which the UK advertising industry works. Founded in 1926 it heads a triumvirate of UK bodies which include the Institute of Practitioners of Advertising (IPA) as well as the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA). The AA membership consists of seventeen trade bodies, all six of the large global advertising holding groups, as well as brands and companies that invest in advertising. See Appendix 11 for a visual map of the AA's membership.

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[17] The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent regulator of advertising across all media.

The AA state that their mandate is to mediate between their membership and government and to: *'Promote the role, rights and responsibilities of advertising and its impact on individuals, the economy and society'* as well as to *'promote the role and rights of responsible advertising – trusted, inclusive and sustainable'* (A.A., 2023b). Additionally, the AA are: *'Responsible for developing and presenting a unified view from across the entire industry to Parliament. We relay industry views to Government on a multitude of policy areas, ensuring that the needs of our disparate members are satisfied,'* (A.A., 2023d). The AA therefore play a key role in shaping the industry in the UK and have increasing reach in other countries through their Ad Net Zero initiative, discussed in the following section.

The Ad Net Zero (ANZ) Initiative

The AA formed their ANZ initiative in 2020. It contains actions in five pillars, which address operational emissions (emissions in offices and buildings, film production, media planning & buying[18], awards and events) as well as embedding sustainability into creative advertising briefs. Each of these are stated in further detail in Appendices nine. Whilst the Ad Net Zero initiative addresses *operational* emissions, it does not acknowledge *advertised* emissions or address issues around working with oil and gas clients. The AA state that their (ANZ) initiative is an example and template for other countries to follow. They state that, *'Industry bodies in other parts of the world are looking to emulate our world-leading programme. It is now live in Ireland, and we have just launched it, with DIT's backing, in the USA.'* (A.A, 2021).

This section has reviewed the contextual background of this research setting. It has shown the ways in which current advertising restrictions are applied, highlighted the differences in types of emissions, and has introduced important industry actors. All these elements present implications for senior managers conducting institutional work.

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[18] Media planning and buying is the process of determining where and when an advertising message will be delivered to an audience. Media planners purchase space on channels aimed at finding the most efficient way to communicate to their audience.

Having covered the necessary information to understand the context and background of the UK advertising industry, section 3.2 turns toward the concept of institutional work.

3.2 Institutional Work

Developed by Lawrence and Suddaby from institutional theory, specifically to address the themes of agency and change, the concept of institutional work (IW) belongs to the wider area of organisational studies (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Gidley and Palmer, 2021; Leca, 2009). IW provides a focus for understanding the interactions between individuals, organisations and institutions and how the interplay occurs. It is defined as *'the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions'* Lawrence and Suddaby (2006 p215). The tangible ways in which this work is carried out is through the three pillars of IW, that of disrupting, maintaining and creating, although Lawrence and Suddaby acknowledge there may be other instances and types of IW that they have not identified.

Neo-institutional theory asserts that institutions are comprised of normative, regulative and cultural-cognitive elements which provide stability, resilience and meaning and can take on rule like status (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). These elements can move institutions towards isomorphism, through means of 'myth and ceremony' which creates an image of rationality (Alvesson and Spicer, 2019) and above all enable legitimacy (Scott and Davis, 2007; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Once formed, institutions can be constraining, and as North (1990) puts it, *'institutions are the rules of the game'* (p3). IW suggests however, that institutions, rather than being static, achieve stability through actors' sustained work and effort (Beunen and Patterson, 2019; Lawrence and Phillips, 2019b; Garud et al., 2007) and conceptualised this way, actors shape and change institutions through their institutional work.

Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca (2009) comment that the concept of IW shows the skills and reflexivity of actors, and *'generates an understanding of institutions as constituted in the*

more and less conscious action of individual and collective actors' (Leca, 2009 p220). IW focuses on how actors' agency, traditionally taken as limited, might be revisited and reworked to understand how actors can affect their institutions. Lawrence et al. (2011) emphasise the work of Heclo (2011) and state that by actors thinking institutionally, they can adopt a viewpoint that allows them the ability to reflect and move beyond the constrains of the institution. Actors' agency was traditionally seen as being limited and was described by DiMaggio and Powell as being imprisoned in an iron cage (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). These perceptions progressed towards actors having entrepreneurial qualities and the ability to influence their organisations towards change (DiMaggio, 1988). Lawrence et al. (2009) see IW as extending institutional entrepreneurship, shifting the focus and emphasis towards how actors' behaviours affect their institutions, and the ways in which this can happen. IW is discreet from institutional entrepreneurship in that its focus is not just the grand and dramatic changes and behaviours often detailed that literature. Instead those who engage in IW use resources towards disrupting, creating new or transforming existing institutions and their behaviours involve a plethora of daily tasks and persistent adaptations; they deal with the adjustments that are needed when negative events arise (Lawrence et al., 2009; Dahlmann and Grosvold, 2017).

Lawrence and Phillips (2019a) also depict actors as caretakers and troublemakers. Caretakers work to maintain and sustain institutions and this can be done for reasons of defending existing institutions from change, or simply through the need for mundane maintenance. In this way, they are also described as '*the stabilising guardians of institutions*' (Hwang and Colyvas, 2011 p63). Troublemakers work to disrupt institutions in some way, and Lawrence and Phillips (2019a) note that troublemakers find themselves in conflict with those that aim to maintain the existing institutional status-quo. They state that *'the degree of resistance faced by an institutional troublemaker is a good an indicator of the degree of institutionalization of the arrangements they seek to disrupt'* (Lawrence and Phillips, 2019a p211). Hwang and Colyvas (2011) frame troublemakers in stronger language, calling them *destroyers of institutions'* (p63). IW incorporates the behaviours of those that work to *'cope with, keep up with, shore up, tear down, tinker with, transform, or create anew the*

institutional structures' (Lawrence et al., 2011 p53) but also addresses the conceptual paradox of institutional theory, that institutions are created and managed by human agency and therefore should be able to be transformed by them also, but often times are not (Dahlmann and Grosvold, 2017).

Some researchers propose how institutions might be transformed by actors, by framing IW as a process. Gidley and Palmer (2021) produce a process model of IW, shown in figure 1, 'Process Model of IW'.
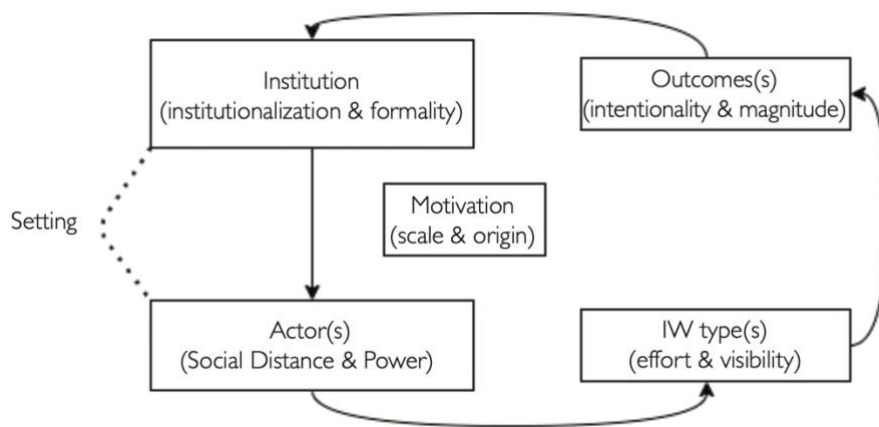
Figure 1 Process Model of IW from Gidley and Palmer 2021

Gidley and Palmer incorporate actors' power and social distance, as well as outcomes and motivations in their model. Their process suggests a sequential flow of IW, moving through types, of IW, considering efforts, and moving towards outcomes and then the effects on the institution within a particular setting. The suggestion is a movement in a sequential uncontested fashion. Gidley and Palmer's model is useful to show the ways in which they saw IW as working towards outcomes, incorporating all of these elements. They consider motivations, but not specifically values.

Beunen et al. (2017) in their study on the role of institutional work in governing for resilience, also visualise IW in a sequential way, with IW at the centre and agency and structures at either side, see figure 2 'IW by Beunen et al. (2017)'. This model incorporates pressures from contextual conditions as well as historical patterns but does not consider motivations or values. The model suggests a sequential flow of institutional work moving in one direction.
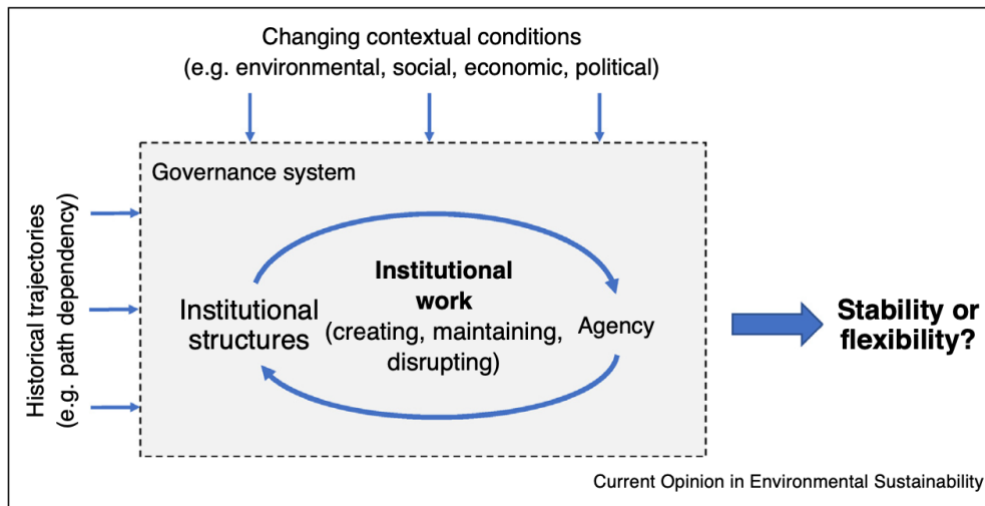
Figure 2 IW by Beunen et al. (2017)

This section has detailed an introduction to the concept of IW, which was developed from wider institutional theory and aimed at moving beyond examples of institutional entrepreneurship, to assert that actors can shape and change their institutions through their purposive everyday behaviours and work. The tangible behaviours of IW are described through its three pillars, that of disrupting maintaining and creating, although Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) state there may be other types of work yet to be identified. In this research, advertising professionals are at the centre of IW, and this thesis seeks to understand the ways in which they can work to move their institutions beyond the capitalist, consumption focused foundations as discussed in section 3.1.1. Each of the three pillars of IW are examined in more detail in the following section 3.3.

3.3 Pillars of IW

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) created the concept of institutional work with the aim of mapping out existing types of work in institutions and laying the groundwork for future studies. Taking a view of two streams from institutional theory, that of institutional change and the role of agency, they reviewed empirical studies from a fifteen year period - 1990-2005. They defined types of work into three pillars and described them in twenty categories (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Gidley and Palmer, 2021). Each of those types of work are

displayed in Table 3, 'Pillars of Institutional work' and discussed below in section 3.3.1, along with some examples from the literature.

Disrupting Institutions	Description
1.Disassociating moral foundations	Disassociating the practice, rule or technology from its moral foundation as appropriate within a specific cultural context.
2.Undermining assumptions & beliefs	Decreasing the perceived risks of innovation and differentiation by undermining core assumptions and beliefs.
3.Disconnecting sanctions	Working through state apparatus to disconnect sanctions from some sets of practices or rules.
Maintaining Institutions	Description
4.Enabling	The creation of rules that facilitate and support institutions and maintain institutional norms.
5.Policing	Ensuring compliance through enforcement, auditing and monitoring.
6.Deterring	Using coercive barriers to institutional change;
7.Valorising	Providing for public consumption positive examples that illustrates the normative foundations of an institution.
8.Demonising	Providing for public consumption negative examples that illustrates the normative foundations of an institution.
9.Embedding	Actively infusing the normative foundations of an institution into the participants' day to day routines and organizational practices.
10.Routinising	Preserving normative underpinnings through routine.
11.Mythologising	Sustaining myths regarding an institutions history.
Creating Institutions	Description
12.Advocacy	The mobilization of political and regulatory support through direct and deliberate techniques of social suasion.
13.Defining	Construction of rule systems that confer status or identity, define boundaries of membership or create status hierarchies within a field
14.Vesting	The creation of rule structures that confer property rights.
15.Constructing identities	Defining the relationship between an actor and the field in which that actor operates.
16.Changing normative assumptions	Re-making the connections between sets of practices and the moral and cultural foundations for those practices.
17.Constructing normative networks	Constructing of interorganizational connections and networks and practices.
18.Mimicry	Associating new practices with existing sets of taken-for-granted practices, technologies and rules in order to ease adoption.
19.Theorising	The development of abstract categories and the elaboration of chains of cause and effect.
20.Educating	Educating of actors in skills and knowledge necessary to support the new institution.

Table 3 Pillars of Institutional work: Adapted from Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) (pg221:230:235)

3.3.1 Disrupting Institutions

The disrupting institutions pillar of IW has three aspects to it: undermining assumptions and beliefs, disconnecting sanctions and disassociating moral foundations. Leca (2009) state that their empirical research in this area found little concrete descriptions of actors working to disrupt. Disrupting is described as *'undermining the mechanisms that lead members to comply with institutions'* (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006 p235) as well as *'disassociating the practice, rule or technology from its moral foundation; and undermining core assumptions and beliefs which stabilize institutions'* (Leca, 2009 p9). Actors who are not well serviced by the existing ways an institution works may have more motivation to disrupt its practices. The following sections look at each aspect of this pillar in more detail.

Disassociating moral foundations

Disassociating moral foundations works to disrupt the practices or rules of an institution from its moral foundations. The moral foundations of institutions can be formed from the repeated, conditional behaviours which are established as normative and become accepted as morally virtuous (Hodgson, 2006). Section 3.1.1 addressed the moral foundations of the institution of advertising, that of the promotion of abundance and consumption and therefore, disassociating would imply a move away from these assumptions. Disassociating activities counter the taken for granted existing and often historical rule-like practices of an institution which are resistant to change (Oliver, 1992). Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) maintain that in an institutional setting, it is insider managers and powerful actors which carry out disassociating work as they have the power to force regulatory and institutional bodies to address change.

The literature provides some examples of disassociating of moral foundations. Ahmadjian and Robinson (2001) discuss their deinstitutionalisation study of permanent employment in Japan, which found that older firms with embedded normative understanding of the permanency of employment were slow to change. However once challenged, this gradually shifted, and disassociating the old practices towards new flexible working ones was possible.

Girschik et al. (2020) found that tech workers were able to deinstitutionalise some of their existing practices and force companies to take a more ethical stance. These examples seem to show the disassociating practices were accepted without a great deal of contention, however at times the act of disrupting can come with counteractive moves by other actors. Maguire and Hardy (2009) for example explore disassociation in their study on DDT[19] (dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane) and found actors used new scientific findings around the harms of this chemical to attack the moral foundations of its use and work towards a ban. They also added a new dimension to the concept of disassociating moral foundations and state that actors react to external pressures of disruption by employing '*defensive institutional work*' (p169), defined as '*the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at countering disruptive institutional work*' (p169). Actors counter assertions that might highlight the need for regulation or changes to inappropriate practices. Maguire and Hardy (2009) state that this is a new concept in disrupting institutions, but that more research is required to understand it fully. Löhr et al. (2022) find examples of this counter-disruptive work in the energy transition in Germany where citizens who were against the installation of wind farms responded with defensive work aimed at retaining incumbent fossil fuel systems.

There seem to be no examples in existing research of any disrupting work in the advertising sector. Drumwright and Murphy (2004) review existing scholarship and find no evidence of advertising professionals trying to disrupt or disassociate. They found the level of concern on ethical dilemmas among advertising professionals differed among cultural backgrounds, with studies on Korean professionals reporting a higher rate of concern but not sufficient enough to affect their work or move them to action. Drumwright and Murphy stated that most in their sample of elite practitioners working within agencies are short sighted when it comes to identifying moral issues. These issues they found, might be dealt with in a legal

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[19] Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, (DDT) is a colourless, tasteless, and odourless crystalline chemical organochloride compound. It was originally developed as an insecticide but became infamous for its harmful environmental impacts and was banned in 1972 (EPA 2023) .

frame, but not in a practical one. They attribute this to moral muteness which they defined as seeing moral and ethical issues, but remaining silent, and moral myopia where issues were acknowledged but they were explained away by various excuses, a practice supported by other scholars (Bird and Waters, 1989).

Given the tensions discussed at the introduction to this thesis, as well as the way the literature describes disrupting work as at times contested and reflective of differing interests, it would seem that this type of institutional work might be pertinent to the research. There is therefore potentially space to contribute to the literature on this action in this pillar in the new setting of the institution of advertising.

Undermining assumptions and beliefs

Undermining assumptions and beliefs involves questioning the assumed patterns of practice, organisational rules, technologies or taken for granted-ness of an industry or organisation. There are often costs associated with undermining work, and disrupting in this way can be facilitated when those costs are mitigated or removed. Wicks (2001) cites an example from safety in coal mining in Canada, where a new mine was opened in an economically depressed area, and due to limited budgets, various health and safety rules were dismissed, downplayed and depicted as irrelevant. Miners were forced to accept poor health and safety conditions and unacceptable dust levels, influenced by the low employment rate in the district, combined with a culture of mining as always having been seen as dangerous. Miners therefore were unwilling to undermine these practices and this *'contributed to the institutionalisation of a harmful mindset of invulnerability that clouded individual perceptions of the inherent risks in daily work practices'* Wicks (2001 p659). Due to economic circumstances*,* miners were forced to accept the situation and instead perceived themselves as invulnerable. Change only arrived when there was a fatal explosion which necessitated changes in practice. In this way, actor level consequences are experienced, even though they did not have the chance to actually try and disrupt their institution.

Disconnecting Sanctions

The literature provides examples of disconnecting sanctions from actors working to disconnect consequences from particular sets of practices, rules or technologies. Jones (2001), provides examples of court rulings which invalidated patents on Edison's technical film production assets therefore disconnecting constraints from other actors in the market, allowing growth to occur in the early twentieth century. Leblebici et al. (1991) provides examples of how disconnecting sanctions imposed on the broadcasting ranges of local radio stations then enabled growth in the market. It opened up room for a greater number of stations, the consequence of which essentially remodelled the American radio industry after WW2. More recently, in the sharing economy, Airbnb[20] worked with government to change housing regulations to remove laws around short-term rentals and allow lettings for entire homes for ninety days a year (Zvolska et al., 2019). In this way, regulation may be pertinent to disrupting work, allowing the institution to develop beyond its existing boundary.

This section has addressed behaviours around disassociating moral foundations, undermining assumptions and disconnecting sanctions. The behaviours around disassociating of moral foundations are pertinent for this research given the context and aim of the study. There are no examples in the literature of actors working to disassociate the moral foundations of the institution of advertising, whose foundations are deeply embedded into its existence, therefore providing a space to contribute to the literature in this setting. It would seem the nature of 'disrupting' would imply some potential tensions around this action. Phillips and Lawrence (2012) pick up on this and ask for a fresh perspective on *'what organizational actors are doing, why they are doing it and with what consequences'* (p228). This is repeated by Lawrence et al (2013) who ask for the *'experience of individuals as they engage in, and are subjected to, institutional work'* and if they have *'significant but unintended consequences'* (p1029). Other scholars such as Leca (2009) state that *'some important ideas that have largely disappeared from most institutionalist discourse. One of*

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[20] Airbnb is an online market-place broker that connects property owners with those looking for short term rents, most often for holiday rentals.

these is unintended consequences' (p11). Where there has been attention to consequences in the existing literature e.g. Hampel et al. (2017) and Marti and Mair (2009), these have been around wider institutional consequences rather than consequences to actors carrying out the work. Even so, this has also been limited with Pawlak (2011) commenting that consequences have *'appeared in the form of a side remark or digression'* in the current literature (p359).

From the review of the disrupting pillar, contestation of differing interests as well as actor-level consequences and the ways in which a regulatory environment can impact IW would seem significant for this study. For a concept that puts actors at the centre stage of change, it is important to consider any potential personal consequences from actors behaviours, as well as how this affects their abilities and intentions to carry on disrupting. This provides a gap to contribute to the literature. Additionally, Leca (2009) stated there is little concrete descriptions of actors working to disrupt, with this pillar receiving less attention, again providing space to contribute.

Having explored behaviours in the disrupting pillar of IW, the following section looks to descriptions of work in the maintaining pillar.

3.3.2 Maintaining Institutions

The maintaining category of IW centres around the idea that institutions remain relevant and effective through preserving and adhering to rules, and *'reproducing existing norms and belief systems'* (Leca, 2009 p8). This is done through behaviours of embedding and routinising, enabling, policing, mythologising, deterring, valorising, and demonising to maintain existing institutional norms (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Examples of institutions which require high maintenance to function are electoral processes, in which technical work that is aimed at galvanising citizens to take part requires ongoing attention. The maintaining pillar requires work to support and recreate the social mechanisms that

ensure ongoing compliance (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Examples of work in the categories of this pillar are discussed in the following sections.

Enabling

Maintaining by enabling refers to work such as the creation of rules or roles which support and facilitate the existing institution. An example is international standard frameworks[21] which allow holders to have acknowledged authority to work in a certain way allowing *'professional agreement over boundaries, membership and behaviour'* (Greenwood et al., 2002 p62). Galvin (2002) studies institutional change in US healthcare systems and find that its often member associations which work in a regulatory way to maintain institutional norms and reproduce shared meanings and understandings on how organisations should operate.

Embedding, Routinising and Mythologising

Embedding and routinising involves reinforcing institutionalised normative foundations into the everyday routines and practices of participants. In this way, institutions are reproduced and stabilised often through repetitive practices such as training, certifications, rituals, celebrations and ceremonies. Examples of this in religious institutions whereby perceptions of gender were embedded into the institutions through rituals (Angus, 1993) or in feminist organisations where old rituals were maintained even though the roots of these had been long forgotten by newer members (Zilber, 2002). Mythologising looks to historical storytelling to preserve normative perceptions and underpinnings of institutions, examples of which are how accountants created myths around their roles to avoid having to extend their work further into their reporting process (Arora et al., 2023).

Deterring and Policing

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[21] International Organization for Standardisation provides organisations with guidelines to consistently achieve universally recognized standards.

Deterring refers to maintaining institutions via compliance and establishing barriers as well as by threats of personal or economic coercion. Deterrence is dependent on the legitimacy and authority of the entity carrying out the deterring, examples might include governments or powerful corporations. Examples are from Thornton (2002) who describe investor pressure on the publishing industry to increase profits thereby pressuring and monitoring staff, which was something entirely new in the existing culture. Another example from Holm (1995) describes how fishing rights were compromised by government who imposed new industrial fishing rules, degrading the culture of small independent operators. Policing is described as ensuring compliance via monitoring or audits and enforcing sanctions and also inducements. One example is in the film industry during the early 1900s, where Edison ensured that his key film making technologies were institutionalised through patents. In this way he was able to police and control the technologies used in the industry (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Mezias and Kuperman, 2001).

Valorising and Demonising

Valorising and demonising are described as providing public positive or negative examples of the normative foundations of an institution. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) state that these two behaviours *'represent institutional work in which actors identify and evaluate the moral status of participants in the field, both as an enactment of institutionalised beliefs and as a way of maintaining the power of those beliefs'* (p232). Valorising often promotes positive aspects of an institution, as well as norms which actors want to see flourish. Examples of valorising can be seen from the food waste movement whereby supply chain actors worked to promote the benefits of paying for food previously seen as waste (Rao et al., 2023) and the promotion of academic work and university attendance (Winn, 2013). Demonising is the opposite, examples of which can be seen during information technology changes in institutions where incumbent staff were initially resistant to new ideas and demonise the potential technology however this inevitably gives way as the requirements of progressive systems take over (Guillemette et al., 2017). Graf and Jacobsen (2021) researched installations of sustainable energy infrastructure in coal mining regions. They

describe how residents who are resistant to change, work to demonise the concept of renewable energy, clinging to their history, culture and societal norms.

This section described how the maintaining category of IW contains behaviours which enable institutions to remain relevant and effective through preserving, adhering to and reproducing existing norms. What stands out is the way maintaining work describes how actors work to evaluate and maintain moral status or beliefs which seems at odds with the behaviours in the disrupting pillar where actors work to disrupt moral foundations. This highlights the potential for tensions in IW. There are few examples described in the preceding sections of the ways in which maintaining work is used to push back at disrupting work. This opens up a potential gap to look at how types of institutional work evoke a response from other institutional actors and work in countervailing ways. Maintaining work also seems to be described as singular and undisputed processes towards an end goal, working in an uninterrupted way towards change.

The behaviours in the maintaining pillar suggest that, at times, some element of power may be necessary. The use of power to maintain institutions in IW is not well understood in the literature, for example Beunen and Patterson (2019) examine climate adaption and discuss the lack of exploration of power through IW towards change. They argue that competing perspectives on solutions to environmental governance means that configurations of power as well as knowledge begin to shape practices and policies, but this has largely been overlooked in the literature. Hinings et al. (2003) highlight the role of powerful actors who act as gatekeepers in controlling the flow of resources in their field. This type of control and enforcement in IW enables them to control *'the content of discourse and debate'* (p309) in their field and police existing institutional arrangements. They point to the role of power in maintaining institutions and ask that research focus on the ways in which power controls the dynamics of change. For this research, whilst knowledge and power are not the central focus, the way in which they are used in different types of institutional work may play a part in how tensions unfold.

Having explored behaviours in the maintaining pillar of IW, the following section looks to descriptions of work in the creating pillar.

3.3.3 Creating Institutions

The creating pillar has received the most attention from organisational scholars and builds on the notion of actors as entrepreneurs who work to create and build institutions. There are nine categories of descriptions of IW in the creating pillar. Defining, vesting and advocating are grouped together and are aimed at political work. Constructing identities, changing normative associations and constructing networks all deal with actors' belief systems. Finally mimicry, theorising and educating address the boundaries of meaning systems which might be changed or altered towards more effective institutions.

Defining, Vesting, Advocating

These three types of IW are aimed at political work to create or reconstruct property rights, rules, or boundaries. Defining relates to outlining a rule or system which denotes status or membership or hierarchy. Examples of this can be seen in ratings of organisations e.g., by outstanding, good, satisfactory, or through industry certifications (Guler et al., 2002). Vesting refers to rules that deal with allocation of property rights often given out by governments and used to reassign rights away from monopolies towards market parity. Advocacy describes the behaviours towards political support to gain resources (either material or social) to form new institutions or challenge existing ones. Examples are seen from gaining fishing rights (Holm, 1995) as well as from progress on women's rights (Clemens, 1993).

Constructing Identities

This type or IW focuses on actors and their institutions, looking at how actors either transform their identities within existing professions or construct new ones. Examples in literature are from museum staff who were asked to shift their identity from curators to

entrepreneurs (Oakes et al., 1998) as well as enabling people who recycle, to see themselves are part of a wider movement of environmentalists (Lounsbury, 2001).

Changing Normative Assumptions

Changing normative assumptions, aims to remodel practices and describes the process of *'re-making the connections between sets of practices and the moral and cultural foundations for those practices'* (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006 p224). This work is normally implemented to build new institutions either for increased revenue or competition, or better working practices (DiMaggio and Powell, 2012). One example can be seen in universities that implement for-profit governance practices in HR departments (Townley, 1997). Another example is female employees in the French advertising industry, who addressed the unspoken issue of harassment, making it less acceptable and more reportable and therefore a fairer and safer industry to work in (Thompson-Whiteside and Turnbull, 2021).

Constructing Normative Networks

Normative networks are the connections of peer groups through which activities such as evaluation and compliance might occur to provide the foundations for new practices or institutions. This work aims to change the normative assumptions which connect sets of actors and enables them to work to form new structures, at times set alongside and in addition to existing ones. Examples of this were seen in the car industry whereby actors came together to address waste from manufacturing and create new rules around managing it, therefore constructing new norms in existing institutional areas (Orsato et al., 2002).

Mimicry, Theorising and Educating

Mimicry involves associating new practices with older ones to ease adoption. Examples of this are shown when Edison tried to introduce incandescent light, he designed the new electric system to look exactly like the old one, thereby drawing on people's understanding and increasing potential acceptance and adoption (Hargadon and Douglas, 2001). The formation of Paramount Studios also undertook mimicry when they established longer

format films. They featured famous Broadway actors and overall aimed to mimic the theatre experience to shift theatre goers towards the big screen (Jones, 2001).

Theorising is the naming and constructing of new concepts which may enable the formation of new organisations or fields. Examples are found in the healthcare sector where the formation of the theory of healthcare management developed the sector (Kitchener, 2002). Educating is aimed at increasing knowledge, understanding and skills in actors which in turn is important for the development of novel practices and formation of new institutions. Examples in literature are recycling in universities, which created a culture of waste management (Lounsbury, 2001) and car manufacturing, which introduced efficiencies into the market (Woywode, 2002). Clune and O'Dwyer (2020) describe how education is used among actors with differing value frames to build dissonance towards an advocacy movement and create more productive collaborations.

This section has explored the ways in which actors might work to create and build new institutions to sit alongside of old ones. This could be through adopting new certifications, educating as well as constructing normative networks to build up new patterns of habits and norms which can co-exist with existing ones. In the same way as work in the maintaining pillar was described, creating work also seems to be described as a set of behaviours, working in an often uninterrupted and sequential way towards change.

3.4 IW Summary

This chapter began by exploring how institutions are defined, as shared concepts of social understanding which are subject to self-regulatory controls (Lawrence and Phillips, 2019b). It explored the way in which, advertising is conceptualised as an institution in which neoliberal capitalist approaches to abundance creating and consumption are deeply embedded in its foundations (Sandage, 1972). It addressed the literature around advertising effectiveness, as well as reviewing the research context for this thesis, both essential to understand the participants' setting and perspectives (Yardley, 2017).

The concept of IW was developed by Lawrence and Suddaby from institutional theory, specifically to address the themes of agency and change and provides a focus for understanding the interaction between individuals and institutions. It emerged from the belief that actors can play a central role in institutional change (Leca, 2009; Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009) and focuses on how actors agency, previously taken as limited, might be revisited and reworked to understand how actors can affect their institutions.

IW is described through three pillars. The disrupting pillar of IW has far less empirical examples that the other two pillars (Leca, 2009) providing a space to contribute to the literature. Whilst Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) maintain it is the insider managers which carry out disassociating work as they have the power to force regulatory and institutional bodies to address change, what is absent in the disrupting pillar are the consequences to those who might disrupt. This seems like a logical consideration from a concept that puts actors at centre stage, especially in work which is likely contentious. This is important, as consequences may affect the potential for ongoing disruption and further IW, as well affect employees in their role. Scholars indicate a need for a focus on general consequences of IW (Leca, 2009; Hampel et al., 2017; Lawrence et al., 2013; Phillips and Lawrence, 2012), yet a focus on personal consequences to actors carrying out the work is under explored. This provides a gap in which this research may contribute.

The maintaining pillar of IW describes behaviours around preserving, adhering to and reproducing existing institutional norms. The way valorising work is described as working to evaluate and maintain moral status or beliefs seems to be the opposite of the behaviours in the disrupting pillar where actors work to disrupt moral foundations. Existing literature does not seem to develop a direct relationship between these two behaviours or describes work between sets of actors who work to disassociate moral foundations while others maintain in response. This opens up a potential gap to look at how types of institutional work evokes a response from other institutional actors. Additionally scholars call for more attention on the ways in which power is used to control discourses and maintain institutions.

The creating pillar appears to be the most studied pillar in the literature and describes the ways in which actors work to create and build new institutions that can sit alongside old ones. The ways in which creating work supports or sits alongside of disrupting or maintaining work, or the sequences of the way IW is used are under-explored in the literature. Existing research often describes IW as being used in a sequential way towards change. This is visually represented by scholars which show a sequential flow of IW, moving from start to finish through the types of work towards an end goal. Given that IW can occur in contended ways, pushing for change, it seems unlikely that this sequential process would be present in all cases, therefore providing space to understand how the process of IW is carried out between actors. Empirical examples of IW in existing literature is underexplored *'in industries not commonly studied with IW theory, such as the creative industries'* (Gidley and Palmer, 2021 p59) therefore providing space to contribute to the IW literature in this setting.

The connection of the IW literature with values is underexplored. Scholars call for more understanding on the ways in which values might motivate IW towards creating change (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) as well as why actors are called to IW (Leca, 2009) and what are the resulting processes that create triggers for further work. This again provides a space to contribute to an understanding of the ways in which values might motivate IW in this setting.

Whilst IW literature does not focus on effectiveness, there are calls from scholars to understand what changes and outcomes might arise from this work. Lawrence et al. (2013) discuss an understanding of the relationship between outcomes in IW and how internal pressures from employees result in creating change in organisations. They also ask about the practicality of IW, calling for scholars to use IW to *'engage beyond the academic community, where it was initially developed, and connect to practical issues so that such research would increase its practical relevance'* (p1030). With reference to environmental issues, Beunen and Patterson (2019) argue that in environmental governance, it is important

to understand the potential change IW might bring and Gidley and Palmer (2021) ask for more research on outcomes, finding these significantly under-theorised.

The pillars and categories of IW provides a useful framework to interpret actors' behaviours, however a review of the literature has identified several gaps in understanding. Actor level consequences of disrupting work, and therefore barriers to this work are of interest. How IW might unfold, the interplay and sequence between disrupting, creating and maintaining types of IW, as well as the outcomes of IW are all areas and gaps with potential to explore.

Research question two of this thesis therefore asks,

'How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

•   In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?'

Research question three asks:

'What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

•   How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

•   How might potential enablers overcome these?'

Having discussed the literature review around values, IW, and the research setting and context, the following section looks to the research strategy and methodology.

4.0 Research Strategy and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research strategy and methodology. Section 4.1 outlines the three main research questions informed by the literature review. Section 4.2 encompasses the research philosophy, with section 4.2.1 addressing the research ontology of critical realism. Section 4.2.2 addresses abduction and retroduction and 4.2.3 provides a summary. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 respectively describe the research design and data collection methods and section 4.5 looks to the data analysis and coding for each of the research questions.

4.1 Research Questions

The research questions were guided by a review of literature relevant to the research aims. In this research, the values literature was reviewed to understand which types of values might drive pro-environmental behaviours. There was a lack of a clear consensus in the literature as to which types of altruistic and egoistic values were more prominent in driving pro-environmental behaviours. This led to the first research question:

RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?

• How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

To interpret managers' pro-environmental behaviours, the concept of institutional work (IW) was chosen as it puts individuals at the centre of institutional change. The literature review chapter identified the link between values and the concept of IW. Through its three pillars of disrupting, maintaining and creating, IW provides a wide range of potential behaviours through which to interpret data. Led by this, the second research question is formulated as:

RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

• In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?

The third research question arises from the literature which asks for more research around the outcomes of IW as well as the a-priori knowledge of the researcher regarding an industry that is stagnant and reluctant to acknowledge the harms of working with polluting clients. Thus the third question is formulated around the barriers as well as possible enablers that senior managers might encounter:

RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

• How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

• How might potential enablers overcome these?

These research questions and the research methods selected for data gathering are informed by the research philosophy of critical realism, which is discussed in the following section.

4.2 Research Philosophy

Philosophical clarity is important in social science research to inform the research approach and methods and to guide the interpretation of the data. The philosophical stance of this research has guided the theoretical thinking, perspectives and how knowledge has been acquired. In this section, the philosophical position of the research, that of ontological critical realism is discussed along with how this connects to the research aims and questions. Additionally, the methodological approach of abduction is discussed and how this aligns with the critical realist perspective.

4.2.1 Ontology

Ontology is the nature of reality: it defines what exists in the world, what can be known and acquired in terms of truth or reality (Crotty, 1998). Ontology can be described as being on a scale of two opposing perspectives, that of realism and idealism (Blaikie, 2007). Realist ontology, or an objective positivist, ontology, holds that there is one single reality which can be examined and understood as the actual truth. It is independent of one's own thoughts, ideas, or interpretation and can be tested – cause and effect – towards generating predictions which can then be generalised. At the opposing ends of the scale is the idealist, constructionist, and subjective ontology, which is a constructed reality, and where truth is understood through the interpretations and perceptions of actors. Explanation is understood through the way in which reality is socially constructed and there are no considerations towards causality. A visual ontological map from Moon and Blackman (2014) was used as reference throughout the preliminary formation of the philosophical stance and is found in Appendix 5.

As the overall aims of this research was to understand senior managers' values and behaviours, as well as any barriers or enablers to their work, these types of ontologies at either end of the scale were unsuitable to address this aim. A positivist approach would simply take the for-granted public perceptions of an industry aiming for the official stated Net Zero targets. A fully subjective approach, on the other hand, might not allow for the consideration of current pertinent issues within the advertising sector.

Critical realism (CR), emerging from the work of Bhaskar, Archer and others (Archer et al., 2013; Bhaskar et al., 1998), sits between these two ontologies and is better suited to addressing the research aims of this study. CR aims to '*realise an adequate realist philosophy of science*' (Danermark et al., 2019 p4), by acknowledging that there is an objective world that exists as well as there being a world that can be understood through subjective perceptions. Using these two perspectives, CR seeks to find explanation for concrete events by finding structures and causal mechanisms that are the hidden elements that drive events.

Sayer (1999) provides a useful visual for CR as seen in figure 3 'Critical Realism (Sayer, 1999 p15)'.

effect/event

mechanism

conditions (other mechanisms)
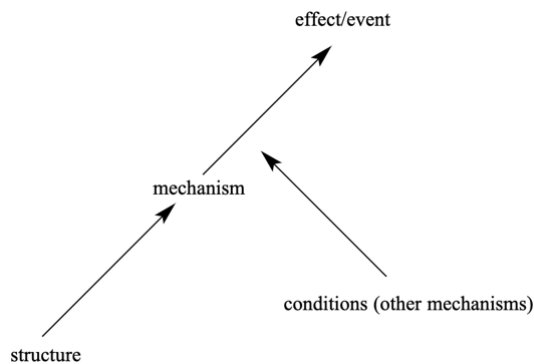
structure

Figure 3 Critical Realism (Sayer, 1999 p15)

Structures can be entities, either stand alone or interrelated; causal mechanisms are the activation of causal powers that arise from these structures which then produce effects or events which can be empirical or actual. Sayer points to additional potential conditions as other mechanisms which might also affect events.

Bhaskar et al. (1998), explains the stratified domains of CR as empirical experience, actual events and real, generative mechanisms. Empirical experience is what we might observe and within this, CR acknowledges epistemic fallacy, which refers to a reduction of reality to our knowledge of it (Bhaskar, 1979) and denies ontology beyond our language, experiment or discourse. For this research, there is a dual nature of reality, or empirical experience, that of an industry that values environmental goals, as well as one that continues to work with polluting clients. The second domain or layer of CR consists of actual events, which may have occurred or be occurring, whether observed or not. The third level, described as real, but often hidden, contains structures and generative mechanisms. These are trans-empirical and based on observations but needing interpretation, often through theory building in order to understand. Understanding the complex system of these hidden mechanisms might be difficult to fully uncover, and the critical realist may find that access to these are likely partial at best.

The application of CR in the research is presented in table 4 below, 'Critical Realism and its use in the research topic', explicating the three realms of CR and the process taken to develop understanding in each one.

Realm	Description	What is known / Attempt to Explain / Application for this research
Empirical	What we might observe / experience and what is real in the world.	Advertising agencies sustainability reports profess net zero goals and trade bodies create / promote a net zero framework. This is contrasted with what can be seen - that agencies continue to work with highly polluting clients and promote their goods and services.
Actual	Events may have occurred or be occurring whether observed or not.	Qualitative interviews with senior managers to understand their value driven institutional work. The research hopes to understand consequences and barriers as well as enablers to their work
Real (but hidden)	Causal mechanisms, trans-empirical / based on observations / needing interpretation.	What barriers exist and why? Secondary data seeks to understand any potential hidden explanations.

Table 4 Critical Realism and its use in the research topic

Philosophical assumptions can be informed by researcher perspectives and the choice of CR was driven by this researcher's a-priori understandings around the contrasting positions of actors in the advertising sector. All major agencies and holding groups publish net zero goals and the public face of UK advertising suggests that the industry is on target to meet UK sustainability parameters. This position is supported and promoted by the sector's institutions, such as its trade bodies and industry press, who maintain that the industry is decarbonising at an appropriate rate. However, as presented in section 3.1.2, many of the major advertising agencies and holding groups continue to work with highly polluting clients and there continues to be a variety of adverts aired for highly polluting goods and services. The underlying reasons for this lack of congruence remain unseen and not fully understood.

Choosing a critical realist ontology led to the methodological choice of qualitative research for its ability to *'uncover the underlying assumptions, beliefs and values'* of industry professionals and gain greater insights into potential hidden mechanisms (Azungah, 2018 p384). CR is ontologically driven and methodologically pluralistic, therefore, the ways in

which explanation is sought is through whichever means is appropriate to understand these causal mechanisms (Bygstad et al., 2016). For this research, the primary way to discover this was through qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews, which aim to understand the views of senior managers in the sector. The data from these interviews then pointed to other potential explanations and therefore, further research was required. This

took the form of searching for secondary online data. The aim was to use CR in a way that interpreted the data and brought it together to provide an explanation of reality.

Within the ontology of CR, this research adopts an interpretivist approach to data analysis. CR can be used to explain events or outcomes in social science through the researcher's understanding and interpretation of hidden mechanisms (Sayer, 1997). Whilst CR acknowledges the stratified layers of reality, it also maintains that reality is subjective and our interpretation of reality is just our 'account' of it (Moon and Blackman, 2014; Sayer, 1997). Therefore, critical realists acknowledge a realist ontology, that there is something real and out there, with a relativistic epistemology, that there are different ways of understanding knowledge, and that knowledge is fallible and partial (Stutchbury, 2022). CR considers that interpretations of knowledge must be used to reach explanations (Albert et al., 2020; Sayer, 1999). There is a call for recognition of the interdependence of ontology and epistemology in critical realism, and their mutual co-construction so that *'knowers are themselves part of the real, and because only by considering questions of socially produced and historically embedded truths can we access the real in the first place'* (Albert et al., 2020 p358). A consideration of this construction as well as incorporating the real world, is addressed by Sayer (2004) who marks a difference between construction and construls, the latter of which is a mental interpretation of the world. Once formed, construls, to a degree, become independent of the constructed, and even though they may be fallible and incomplete, they continue to exist. He provides the example of an employment contract, which is real, as well as its construls, which may be sets of ideas, but may also be more than that and involve elements of trust, loyalty and so on. In this way, what is real, as well as what is socially constructed, exists independently of researcher's knowledge, and therefore

remains aligned within a CR ontology. In effect, to reach an understanding around structures and mechanisms, the critical realist is engaged in double-hermeneutic work, interpreting and making sense of the social interpretations of others (Giddens, 1982).

4.2.2 Abduction & Retroduction

Abduction aligns with the critical realist approach that attempts to understand causal mechanisms. It denotes an inferential process which aims to hypothesise based on research evidence (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012; Earl Rinehart, 2021). Brinkmann (2014) describes abduction as '*a form of reasoning that is concerned with the relationship between a **situation** and **inquiry**. It is neither data-driven nor theory-driven, but **breakdown-driven'*** (p722)[emphasis authors own]. He describes the process as being *'driven by astonishment, mystery, and breakdowns in one's understanding'* (p720). Abduction has also been described as a discovery process which '*excited the action of thought'*, aiming to tackle empirical conundrums led by the desire to resolve doubt (Locke et al., 2008 p908).

The process of abductive analysis is recursive between theory and data that presents interesting and novel empirical phenomenon. The resulting interpretation works towards plausible new conclusions. This involves revisiting theories and ideas and creating new avenues or possible contributions (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012; Tomasella, 2022; Alvesson and Kärreman, 2007). The goal of abduction is not necessarily to arrive at a universal point of fixed knowledge, but to understand a situation by a process of continual sense making and is driven by the need for explanation in response to data. Danermark (2002) explains abduction as *'inference or thought operation, implying that a particular phenomenon or event is interpreted from a set of general ideas or concepts'* (p205).

Abduction searches for demi-regularities, which may show reproduced patterns of occurrences. For this research, to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers that senior managers perceived, a back and forth between theory and data was necessary to find explanations with the potential to provide new understandings (Dahlmann and Grosvold,

2017). Saxena (2019) provides guidance as to understanding how these explanations lead to a correct set of mechanisms, in that: the explanations are able to provide potential reasons for the events under consideration; some contextual conditions can be determined; the mechanisms can be explained in part by certain theories; and finally, explanation moves past describing *what* happened towards *how* events are likely to have happened.

Retroduction follows abduction, and seeks to understand what contextual conditions may need to be present for potential causal mechanisms to exist. Bhaskar (1979) describes retroduction as the process of understanding *'the manifest phenomena of social life, as conceptualized in the experience of the social agents concerned, to the essential relations that necessitate them'* (p32). Retroduction looks to identify what premises or assumptions must exist or be true for the observed empirical or actual that has been experienced; retroduction therefore tests the tenability of any abductive judgements (Sayer, 1997; Fletcher, 2017). It does this by employing counterfactual thinking, which is dialectic; it allows for reasoning in relation to opposites. This allows researchers the ability to understand how the outcomes of research might be different, depending on the conditions under query (Danermark et al., 2019; Meyer and Lunnay, 2013).

4.2.3 Summary

This section has addressed the ways in which the research philosophy aligns with the research questions and the understanding around how knowledge can be obtained. This research aims to understand the values and behaviours of senior managers and what enablers and barriers their institutional work encounters. The ontology of critical realism leads the research, which assumes that reality exists in layered strata and that there are possible emergent powers to be uncovered which allow for understandings of what can be observed. To acquire knowledge around this, qualitative interviews were conducted with senior leaders in the advertising industry and this was supplemented with research from online secondary data. Through this method, any potential hidden causal mechanisms which might provide explanations for what is experienced may be identified. A process of

abduction was used to move between data and theory, to enable continual sense making and provide possible explanations. Retroduction was used to understand and theorise about contextual conditions.

Having addressed the research philosophy, the following section moves onto the design of the research.

4.3 Research Design

This part of chapter four is organised as follows: Section 4.3.1 addresses the qualitative approach to the research through semi-structured interviews. Section 4.3.2 discusses the rationale for seeking additional secondary data collection and the approach to this. Section 4.3.3 describes the recruitment process for data collection and section 4.3.4 covers ethics and anonymity.

4.3.1 A Qualitative Approach

The research philosophy of critical realism accords with a qualitative approach to data collection, which allows for a process of seeking deep explanation. The study therefore undertakes semi-structured interviews with senior managers in the UK advertising sector. Quantitative approaches were excluded from consideration as a research method, as these would not allow the nuances and complexities of values, behaviours, or explanations to emerge. Additionally, because expressions of values and behaviours can be multitudinous and complex, these can more easily be understood through a qualitative method of data collection (Conner and Armitage, 1998; Tsang and Kwan, 1999; Løvaas, 2022; Edwards et al., 2014). Qualitative research acknowledges the importance of expression as well as being able to provide a range of revelatory insights (Saldaña and Omasta, 2016). A qualitative nature of enquiry also allows for sensemaking (Løvaas, 2022) and therefore, research questions began by asking '*how*', to further encourage expression and elaboration. Qualitative research *'interprets how human beings construct and attach meanings to their experiences'* (Azungah, 2018 p384) and allows for a deep and empathic understanding to emerge in a way that a quantitative, survey type approach might not accommodate.

Existing research on values has embraced both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Dietz et al. (2005a) comment that a quantitative approach has been common when researching values, and this might be because interpreting qualitative data is labour intensive. They question the effectiveness of quantitative values surveys which ask for information in a way that is limited in both time and scope, thus not allowing room for the respondent to fully think through and express their values. Support for qualitative approaches to data collection comes from Drumwright and Murphy (2004) who state that *'Field-based approaches, such as in-depth interviews, are particularly useful when the research objective is to understand tacit perceptions, beliefs, and values, especially when the researcher cannot be sure what interpretation, code, norm, affect, or rule is guiding the actors'* (p8). Løvaas (2022) extols the benefits of taking a qualitative approach to values research, stating that it '*captures the more subtle and tacit aspects of values as they relate to tension, conflict, identities, expressions, practices, work and processes'* (p3).

Once the qualitative approach had been chosen, comments from Rokeach (1973) were observed who points out that when asked, many people do not actually know or are able to express what values are important to them immediately, or how they prioritise them. Dietz et al. (2005a) also observed that values may be more fully expressed when participants are given time for reflection. This informed the interview approach and when asking questions around values, interviewees were asked to take their time to consider the question and come back to it later in the interview if needed. Often, the researcher returned to the key question of values later in the discussion in an attempt to prompt respondents to consider their answer again. Asking respondents for clarity on certain points was helpful in enabling them to further articulate or name the values that were important to them. When implicit values are held, it can be useful to use this kind of reflection process to draw out more detail (Løvaas, 2022).

A qualitative approach was also a suitable method of enquiry for the research questions around institutional work. As the literature describes a wide range of behaviours that can be described or interpreted as institutional work, it would have been difficult to use a

quantitative approach to data collection to answer this research question. Additionally, data which did not fit neatly into descriptions of institutional work may have arisen, therefore making a quantitative approach very difficult. A qualitative approach meant this issue was overcome and allowed for a rich data set of both values and behaviours to be understood. Additionally, qualitative approaches have been adopted by other scholars when looking to understand data around institutional work (Dahlmann and Grosvold, 2017).

The approach to formulating the interview questions was led by the three research questions and informed by the literature review. The questions were designed to draw out understandings on values and behaviours. The values research questions were asked in several different ways, asking what values were 'important' to them, what values they 'cared about' and in what ways their values 'aligned or didn't align with their organisations values'. The questions prompted the participant to think of their values against a background of the values of the institution of advertising, to highlight any space that might exist between these two sets of values, which then might lead onto value driven behaviours. Participants were also asked how their values aligned with their job role, as another way of understanding how they expressed their values through their work.

The interview questions around behaviours were asked in a way to elicit answers which showed value driven types of work. They were asked about the 'expression' of values in the workplace, or how they or 'enacted' these values, therefore linking their values to their behaviours. The questions around barriers and enablers were more explicit, asking directly what kinds of problems if any, managers had encountered and what they thought might overcome these issues. The interview questions which are listed in Appendix 1, were tested in pilot interviews; discussed in section 4.4.2.

Thirty semi-structured interviews were undertaken, each around an hour long, with senior managers working in UK advertising agencies. Sample size was determined by data saturation as discussed in section 4.4.4. A qualitative approach to data collection allowed for the nuances and richness of data to emerge and to find meaning in the perspectives of

participants lived experience (Silverman, 2014) as well as drawing out interesting perspectives (Denzin Norman, 1970; Azungah, 2018; Silverman, 2014). The interviews brought up interesting data which directed attention towards the nature of the 'institution' as well as to wider stakeholders. This necessitated further data gathering from secondary data sources, which is discussed in the next section, 4.3.2.

4.3.2 Secondary Data

Analysis of the interview data revealed counter-vailing forces from organisational actors (CEOs) and industry actors (the sector's trade body, the AA) around barriers to action (research question 3). Therefore, further data collection was necessary to adequately address this part of the research. The initial framing of the research problem and exploration of the research context indicated that there may be barriers to managers work, as well as a visible lack of meaningful action in the sector. The justification for further research to address this question accords with the study aims and philosophy, to find and understand potential causal mechanisms for what can be seen and observed. Data were therefore collected by looking to secondary online sources. The methodology for this part of the research (detailed in section 4.5.3) was led by themes identified through analysis of data in response to question two. Overall secondary research analysed thirty sources of online secondary data which are listed in Appendix 7.

The following section 4.3.3 addresses recruitment, ethics, and anonymity.

4.3.3 Recruitment

Eisenhardt (1989) defines the importance of the research sample in that *'the concept of a population is crucial, because the population defines the set of entities from which the research sample is to be drawn'* (p537). With focus on the advertising sector, the research pursued a purposive sampling strategy which was informed by the research aims and questions. It focused on senior employees working in advertising and media organisations. The level of 'senior' was chosen because these individuals have a certain amount of

influence over their department or the agency as a whole (Weaver et al., 1999; Graves and Sarkis, 2018; Wittneben et al., 2012; Banerjee et al., 2003; Drumwright and Murphy, 2004). Additionally, senior managers may be able to '*transcend the totalizing cognitive influence of institutions*' (Hwang and Colyvas, 2011 p62). The research assumed interviewees as the experts, and *'knowledgeable agents, namely, that people in organizations know what they are trying to do and can explain their thoughts, intentions, and behaviours'* (Gioia et al., 2013 p17). Led by this, participants for the study were chosen following the criteria in table 5 'Participant selection criteria'.

	Managers - criteria for selection	Reason for criteria
1	A level of senior management which reflected autonomy in the organisation.	This level of employee has the power and agency to make decisions in their agency (Banerjee, 2002; Hwang and Colyvas, 2011).
2	Working in advertising and media agencies in the UK / geographical focus on London.	Managers were required to have experience of working in the advertising sector in an agency (Gioia et al., 2013). London was chosen as all of the large agency holding groups have offices there.
3	Visible convictions towards advocacy for climate change.	As proven through the researcher's knowledge, or visible evidence through LinkedIn posts or articles or through newer job titles which have 'sustainability' as a hybrid. This is a necessary factor for the research to show an interest in the topic.
4	Reasonably relevant job title in either strategy, comms, business, creative, production or sustainability roles. Also, MDs and head of departments were contacted.	To ensure closeness and relevance to the topic, roles such as HR, or technical management were not chosen as these tend not to have any elements of sustainability in their remit.
5	Willing to speak honestly and openly.	This was difficult to assess on initial outreach, but essential to ensure the integrity of the research. This was ascertained through the responses – the speed and willingness and language used in replies to initial outreach via email or LinkedIn 'in-mails'.
6	Willing to give time, at least an hour for the interview.	To ensure quality of data collection, as senior managers are generally very time poor. However for those who did allocate time to be interviewed this was an additional indication of the importance of the topic to them.

Table 5: Participant selection criteria

Addressing point one in the above criteria, seniority was identified through job titles detailed on the social media platform LinkedIn. Point three notes that a visible conviction towards

advocacy for climate change was part of a purposeful sampling strategy to ensure that participants had an interest in, and experiences to share for the research. However it is acknowledged that this criteria may mean that participants chosen were ultimately not fully representative of advertising industry professionals due to this element of the selective criteria. However, to recruit and interview a much larger sample without this criteria was not possible within the resources of the research.

Initial recruitment began by concurrently carrying out research on LinkedIn as well as reaching out to professionals who were already known to the researcher and in their professional network. Introductory emails were sent, briefly addressing the topic and testing for interest. Replies were followed up with more details about the project and what would be required from participants. Once agreement was reached, the participants were sent the participant information and consent forms to review and the interview dates were secured.

Once the first few interviews were secured and underway, further recruitment by snowballing was employed, whereby referrals and recommendations of colleagues in similar roles and seniority were requested during interviews (Mason, 1996). Initially, fifty four professionals were identified as potentially fitting the research criteria as listed above. Out of that number, fifteen were discarded after further examination, as they were deemed as not quite fitting all of the criteria in table 5 above. Out of thirty nine people who were sent an initial outreach email, eighteen people replied, seven of whom were known to the researcher and eleven who were not. The remaining twelve people interviewed were snowballed from these interviewees, with a final sample size of thirty individuals in total. This is shown in table 6, 'Participants by recruitment methods'.

Method	Number
Previously known to researcher	7
LinkedIn Search	11
Snowballed (recommendations from 4 different research subjects)	12

Table 6 Participants by recruitment methods

Towards the end of the interviewing process, data saturation (further discussed in section 4.4.4) was reached. The participants were from differing agencies, which ranged from employees in the number of a few hundred to several thousands. Participants were not chosen based on their gender and the more or less equal split across the thirty people interviewed (sixteen female, fourteen male) was unintended. A breakdown of the final set of individuals interviewed is in table 7 'List of study participants', with job title, recruitment methods, gender, interview date and the person's tenure at their agency detailed. Note: some job titles were redacted to ensure anonymity.

Recruitment Method	Pseudonym	M/F	Title	Interview Date	Tenure (years)
LI Search	Betty	F	Account Director	16.06.22	5
LI Search	Bob	M	Anonymised Senior Role	15.07.22	14
Existing contact	Susan	F	Sustainability Manager	19.07.22	4
LI Search	Kay	F	Sustainability Senior Role	27.07.22	1
LI Search	Alice	F	Producer Senior Role	28.07.22	2
LI Search	Karen	F	Sustainability Senior Role	16.08.22	6
Existing contact	Rachel	F	Planning Senior Role	25.08.22	5
Existing contact	Gary	M	Sustainability Senior Role	07.09.22	3
LI Search	Annie	F	Account Director	08.09.22	4
LI Search	Joan	F	Anonymised Senior Role	13.09.22	12
Existing contact	Emily	F	Strategy Senior Role	15.09.22	9
Snowballed	Brian	M	Strategy Senior Role	23.09.22	4
Existing contact	Peter	M	Production Senior Role	07.10.22	2
LI Search	Jack	M	Anonymised Senior Role	19.10.22	6
LI Search	Rami	M	Strategy Senior Role	24.10.22	2
Snowballed	Elaine	F	Environmental Sustainability	26.10.22	6
Existing contact	Sarah	F	Strategy Senior Role	02.11.22	16
Snowballed	Leila	F	Strategy/Sustainability Senior	03.11.22	2
Snowballed	Adam	M	Strategy Senior Role	04.11.22	4
Snowballed	Robbie	M	Planning Senior Role	25.11.22	4
Snowballed	Davey	M	Producer Senior Role	13.02.23	3
Snowballed	Helena	F	Anonymised Senior Role	21.02.23	2
Snowballed	Alexander	M	Creative/Sustainability Lead	03.03.23	5
Snowballed	Susannah	F	Anonymised Senior Role	24.03.23	5
Snowballed	Claire	F	Sustainability Senior Role	30.03.23	6
Existing contact	Danny	M	Anonymised Senior Role	19.04.23	3
LI Search	Matty	M	Head Prod. & Sustainability	25.04.23	2
Snowballed	Aaron	M	Strategy Senior Role	05.05.23	3
Snowballed	Shelly	F	Anonymised Senior Role	10.05.23	6
LI Search	Richard	M	Anonymised Senior Role	12.05.23	10

Table 7 List of study participants

4.3.4 Research Ethics

The research conformed with the UEA ethics guidelines and was granted approval before the research commenced. Once a participant had agreed to take part in the research, they were sent a participant information/consent sheet (see Appendix 3) by email, which included information on the study topic, participant parameters, data management and storage, any benefits or risks involved, and anonymity. Participants were also given information on how they could withdraw from the study if they wished to; however, no one did. The form also included a consent paragraph which detailed acceptance of the interview being recorded. Participants were requested to return a signed copy; however, only two participants filled out and returned the form prior to the interview. To ensure consent was given, at the beginning of each interview the researcher asked for consent to record the session and this permission was recorded in the transcript.

Anonymity

All participants were guaranteed anonymity in line with research ethics, and this was essential to ensuring that honest and frank answers to research questions were given. Names, codes or numbers can be chosen to ensure anonymity; however, pseudonyms work well to bring the qualitative data to life and therefore, each participant was allocated a pseudonym straight after the interview and all transcribed data was allocated in that new name (Allen and Wiles, 2016). Anonymised names, along with original names, were then kept in a separate file and this was password protected.

The interview transcripts were checked for information that might be described as contextually-contingent data, (Saunders et al., 2015). This might be in the form of a seemingly innocent reference to a building where someone works, or a reference to personal origins, such as, *'my family is from X country'*, as these are potential key identifiers in what is essentially a close knit sector of the advertising ecosystem (Hintze and El Emam, 2018). Upon review of the transcripts, data of this type was redacted. When writing up the findings in section 7.2.3 Advertised Emissions (AE) and Working Groups, managers

pseudonyms were redacted. This is because there are a very small number of individuals in these industry working groups and it was thought prudent to remove all reference that might be triangulated with other statements in the thesis.

Interviews which discuss potentially distressing issues such as the impacts of climate change, requires an empathetic approach. Practical steps to support this approach were in the form of a pre-prepared 'Support Sheet' document (see Appendix 2) which listed organisations that provided help or counselling on climate anxiety and depression and these were offered where it was felt necessary. The information sheet also detailed some books and podcasts on topics around climate anxiety and stress (Watts, 2008).

This section has discussed the initial recruitment and early stages of the interview process. The next section covers data collection, pilot interviews, secondary data collection as well as data quality and reflexivity.

4.4 Data Collection

4.4.1 Qualitative Interviews

The research was cross sectional rather than longitudinal as the aims were to gain a sense of employee values and resulting behaviours at the time of the research, rather than changes over time (Spector, 2019). The interviews were conducted over a twelve month period from June 2022 to May 2023, with on average two or three interviews a month taking place. This allowed time for data transcription and immersion before moving onto the next interview.

To help with conducting the interviews, an interview guide (see Appendix 1) was developed. Interview guides enable the researcher to keep to a tested process throughout the interview, contributing to ensuring the trustworthiness of research. The approach to developing the interview guide was drawn from Kallio et al. (2016) who outline a five-step process as detailed in table 8, 'Interview Guide Design'.

Interview Guide Design
(1) Identifying the prerequisites for using semi-structured interviews.
(2) Retrieving and using previous knowledge.
(3) Formulating the preliminary semi-structured interview guide.
(4) Pilot testing the guide.
5) Presenting the complete semi-structured interview guide.

Table 8 Interview Guide Design adapted from Kallio et al. (2016)

The research guide enabled the researcher to follow a process which allowed all the criteria for the interview to be followed. The guide contained a list of the interview questions as well as prompts to ensure that the interview process went smoothly (Turner III, 2010). Step four recommends testing the guide in pilot interviews and if necessary, making any amendments; these are discussed later in this section in 4.4.2. The last stage after the pilot interviews was amending the interview guide to arrive at a final finished document.

Interviews

All interviews were conducted over video conferencing using the Microsoft Teams platform. Teams video meetings seemed to be the preferred method of meeting for the research subjects likely due to convenience as well as the new accepted cultural norm of connecting with people after the Covid-19 pandemic (Standaert et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024). As the research progressed, it was noted that many senior managers were conducting the interviews from a home office rather than a workplace and when the interviewees were located at work, they ensured that they would not be overheard. As the data revealed, sometimes managers referred to values and types of work that likely ran contrary to established institutional norms, so managers may have been nervous about discussing them in a formal office environment. Interviewees can be sensitive to research settings and this is perhaps why participants often chose a home setting for interviews (Azungah, 2018). The process of interviewing over video conferencing may have facilitated more invitation acceptances due to the confidentiality that online platforms can provide, especially when sensitive topics are discussed, as well as the convenience of meeting online. Overall conducting interviews by remote video conferencing was frictionless and convenient and

perhaps its acceptance as a normal working practice might actually be of benefit to researchers, allowing access to individuals who may be time poor or simply geographically out of reach (Oliffe et al., 2021). The interview time requested and booked with each person was an hour. Most interviews aside from one (which was 45 minutes), ran for the full hour during which all the interview questions were covered.

Transcription

The interviews were recorded and auto transcribed through the Teams software. The transcribed data was then immediately reviewed and corrections made to spelling and grammar where needed. The recorded interview was then played back whilst reading the transcription to check for accuracy and notes were added based on observations and additional understandings. The recorded interviews provided an additional benefit in that the playback element could be used anytime to return to the data.

4.4.2 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a process whereby researchers examine their pre-understandings, assumptions, biases and beliefs and the ways in which their historical, cultural and social experiences shape the research interpretation (Creswell and Miller, 2000). For this thesis, the researcher's understandings and assumptions are held in two domains: firstly, that of having worked in the advertising sector for fifteen years in various job roles in the industry, from which an in-depth of knowledge of the underlying issues and tacit norms have been derived. Secondly, from an understanding of the role advertising plays in the climate crisis. Scholars note that having a deep knowledge of a subject or research focus can produce a richer understanding of the phenomena studied (Altheide and Johnson, 1994) and Alvesson and Sandberg (2022) advise that pre-understanding of a research setting or topic can *'significantly enrich studies, from idea generation to evaluation of findings and theory'* (p396). They state that when applied in a careful and self-critical way, pre-understanding can provide an essential source of inspiration. Pre-understanding can be social-historical, rather than personally influential on the research process but it can also allow some prejudices

around reality to exist which can be used to challenge and open up further knowledge production. There is however a risk that pre-understanding can affect the interpretation of acquired knowledge (Elliott et al., 1999), and Creswell and Miller (2000) advise the use of reflexivity to manage this. They state an awareness of researchers' perspectives of their *'historical situatedness of inquiry, a situatedness based on social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender antecedents of the studied situations'* is required (p126). Led by this, the researcher used this awareness both to the benefit of the research, through understanding what issues needed addressing, as well as to understand that any interpretations needed to be reflected upon. The researcher kept notes in a diary-like format after each interview, which enabled a reflection on thoughts (Nadin and Cassell, 2006). The researcher was led by an approach that assumes the interviewees as expert knowledgeable agents (Gioia et al., 2013) rather than using the researchers pre-understanding to dominate. Also guiding reflexivity was Malterud's (2001) assertion that preconceptions and understandings are not the same as bias and that, *'the investigator should take care not to confuse knowledge intuitively present in advance, embedded in preconceptions, with knowledge emerging from inquiry of systematically obtained material'* (p484). Thus, by focusing on the interviewees' expertise, and reported accounts of their lived experiences, the researcher aimed to contextualise previous understandings of the industry and any pre-existing assumptions. In addition to this, the interview questions were tested in pilot interviews as discussed in section 4.4.3.

4.4.3 Pilot Interviews

Pilot interviews can be instructive in qualitative research, as they enable the testing of the research process to evaluate its effectiveness. The recruitment strategy, chosen methodology, research questions and the overall process, can be tested to identify any issues or problems. In some instances, they might also provide an opportunity to collect data and apply some early analysis, and perhaps allow for making adjustments when certain topics or themes seem dominant (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Ismail et al., 2018; Janghorban et al., 2014; Eisenhardt, 1989; Kistin and Silverstein, 2015; Silverman, 2014).

Some of the interview questions (listed in Appendix 1) were slightly rephrased after the pilot interviews to ensure that the questions around personal values were clearer. If the interviewee was still not able to articulate their values, then they were asked, '*Thinking of your values, why do you care about climate change?*' In other words, rather than expressly asking what values a person holds, they were asked why they care about climate change in general. This phrasing worked well and therefore was incorporated into the main interview guide.

The following reflexive account provides key learnings from four pilot interviews with senior managers. Pilot studies, and the reflexivity they bring, are crucial steps to ensuring that the research project is conducted in a seamless manner (Shakir and ur Rahman, 2022). It shows care and attention to detail towards the project, respect to participants as well as ensuring any potential mis-steps or inarticulate phrasing is addressed (Lees et al., 2022). This part of the thesis is the only part that is presented in the first person.

Pilot Interview 1 - Betty

The first pilot interview was with Betty (pseudonym), who after agreeing to take part in the research, was forwarded the university ethics consent form to fill out. This resulted in a few email exchanges where she wanted to understand the lengthy form more fully and have reassurances that the data would be anonymous. I realised that the culture of advertising and media, especially in large agencies, is very careful about signing documents and sharing information. After some reassurances she was happy to sign and return the forms. I felt that this was a key learning, and that next time I would introduce the form and explain its purpose more fully and reinforce the anonymity of the research as well as the forms contents and purpose. All this information is included in the form, but I underestimated the need to provide extra details in the covering email. It would be a shame to repeat this mistake and have a previously agreed participant withdraw at such an early stage. It was noted that Betty did the interview from her home, rather than from her workplace.

I kept in mind that during the interview, commenting positively or negatively to anything Betty said might influence subsequent responses. However, being a naturally empathetic person, I found it hard not to agree with some points. On realising this issue, I managed to check my responses and reflect on them for the following interviews. Betty did not seem to suffer with any real anxiety or tensions with regard to the climate crisis, so no real assurances on those points were needed. However, the support document that I had previously prepared, was revisited to ensure it had enough resources on it in case it was needed.

The interview questions were open enough to elicit fairly long responses, a reassuring sign that semi-structured interviews were the right choice of research method. On reflection, there were a few missed opportunities to ask for further information and seemingly obvious follow-on questions only occurred to me post interview, during data analysis. A huge learning was to slow down and try and follow up with exploratory questions on any significant topics. Betty expressed one value that was important to her and perhaps there may have been others that she wasn't able to think of immediately. This issue in research has already been noted (Rokeach, 1973) but this reminder served to amend the interview guide further to return to values questions as needed later in the interview.

These were all valuable learnings from the first pilot interview, which confirmed that the chosen method of semi-structured interviews were suitable for this research and produced interesting and relevant data. Including results from pilot studies might not be appropriate where it shows that either the methodology or tools used in the pilot were flawed or inappropriate, and therefore produced poor or thin results. In this case however, aside from a few modifications, the process went well and it seems appropriate to include the data from Betty in the research analysis (Peat et al., 2020). The learnings from the process of this first pilot were valuable and actionable and were applied in the second pilot.

Pilot Interview 2 - Bob

Bob is a senior/director level employee at a large advertising agency and he didn't have time to read the long ethics form he had been sent, so I explained it verbally and gained consent

on the recording. This made me realise that perhaps some editing of the ethics form was needed, as it is about five pages long. Without cutting out any essential information, this was done in preparation for the next pilot. It was noted that Bob did the interview from home, rather than the workplace.

During this interview, I found the interview guide still too long and difficult to read from. It needed to be in bullet points. I felt as if Bob was put off by me looking down at a document and not maintaining eye contact on the screen and perhaps it seemed as if I was distracted or not listening. The interview guide was paraphrased to make it more concise and readable for the next interview.

The first introduction questions of the interview - your role is X?, and how long have you been at the agency, were initially meant to open the conversation and begin the process of talking about them and their role. However, on further reflection and in light of the seniority of the people I'm dealing with, it perhaps appeared rude that it seemed as if I'd not done research on who they were and how long they had been at their agency. On reflection, I changed the questions to *'I see you've been at x agency in x role for x years'.*

Pilot Interview 3 - Susan
The edited and slightly reduced ethics form was sent to Susan but this was still not returned, so again verbal consent was obtained and recorded in the transcript. It was again noted that Susan was at home for the interview. I added a phrase to the values question that would make it easier to understand, *'Why do you care about climate change?'*. The response yielded a wealth of information on values from Susan. Overall, the process seemed to be coming together with interviews running smoothly and benefitting from being refined.

Pilot Interview 4 – Kay
The edited ethics form was again not returned but Kay said she had read it and verbal agreement was recorded. The edited interview guide worked well and meant that I only had to glance down once or twice, therefore maintaining eye contact during the interview which

I felt was so important. Adding another phrase to ask the values question worked well. Overall, this interview went smoothly and it seems as if all the issues had been ironed out.

Pilot Summary

After four pilot interviews, I felt that the whole interview process and the ways in which the questions were asked had been refined and streamlined. Reducing the non-essential bulk of the ethics form without losing the important information continued to make it more manageable and meant that it was read more easily. However, it was still not returned by managers so I was careful to aways get agreement on the video recording. Changing the interview guide meant it was easier to just glance down to each question whilst mostly maintaining eye contact with the interviewees. A slight change to the wording of the values question elicited more insightful responses overall.

With the pilot interviews complete, the remainder of the 26 interviews all went smoothly. The next section addresses the collection of secondary data from online sources.

4.4.4 Secondary Data Collection

During the process of data collection from the interviews, senior managers revealed counter-vailing forces from organisational actors, namely CEOs as well as the trade body, the Advertising Association (AA). The AA were contacted for an interview. However, this request went unanswered, and it was thought unlikely that the researcher would secure interviews with CEOs of major holding groups within the research time frame. According with the critical realist approach to the research, which looks for explanations for what can be experienced, the decision was made to turn towards searching for online secondary data. To arrive at a set of specific terms to guide the online searches, the data from question three around the barriers and enablers that managers experienced, was coded. This provided structure and parameters for the online search, the coding of this is discussed further in section 4.5.4. The data from managers on barriers and enablers was triangulated with the

data from secondary sources, to arrive at explanations as to why barriers might be experienced and the potential for enablers to occur.

4.4.5 Data Quality and Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, or reliability and validity in qualitative research was woven throughout the research study process from methodology, sampling, to data collection, analysis and identification of findings (Morse et al., 2002). Pratt et al. (2020) describe trustworthiness as *'the degree to which the reader can assess whether the researchers have been honest in how the research has been carried out and reasonable in the conclusions they make'* (p2). They advocate for trustworthiness over replication in qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1988) identify aspects of trustworthiness in qualitative research, that include credibility, dependability, transferability and formability. These aspects have been adopted in qualitative research to enable quality standards to be established and applied. Morse et al. (2002) translate Lincoln and Guba's aspects into actionable strategies which include *'investigator responsiveness, methodological coherence, theoretical sampling and sampling adequacy, an active analytic stance, and saturation'* (p15). Led by this, each of those five elements are considered below in relation to this research.

1. Investigator responsiveness involves the researcher's ability to understand the field of study and be sensitive and flexible in the approach to data collection. Responsiveness is needed to listen to the data and to question embedded assumptions. For example, the secondary data research found that the sector's trade body adhered to a position that advertising was ineffective at promoting consumption and only facilitated a displacement effect. This ran contrary to the researcher's understanding of how advertising works, as well as general market logics. To understand this further, the researcher turned to the academic literature to resolve the stance around advertising's effect. This is detailed in section 3.1.1. In this way, the researcher checked any existing assumptions, remained responsive to how data was presented, and turned to the literature to provide a basis for sensemaking.

2. Methodological coherence denotes that the research questions match the methods, and that as the process of research unfolds, the ontology of the research, in this case critical realism, is constantly checked. The critical realist approach assumes that phenomena and its causal impacts are formed from their environment and the theory building that arises depends on these contexts as well as the reflexivity of participants. '*A participant's perception for realism is a window to reality through which a picture of reality can be triangulated with other perceptions... that is, realism relies on multiple perceptions about a single reality*' (Healy and Perry, 2000 p125). Some of the senior managers' reality was that their CEOs and the sector's trade body, the AA, acted as a barrier to their work therefore, a turn to secondary online data sources was carried out to triangulate their perceptions with what might be found.

3. Sampling adequacy is an additional way in which trustworthiness can be checked. In this case, the sampling strategy focused on choosing research subjects who are senior expert professionals in their sector, the data from whom are likely to be well informed and of high quality from their specialist area (Marshall and Rossman, 2014).

4. An active analytic stance involves understanding the interaction between what is known and what needs to be known. Collecting and analysing the data in a similar time frame allows for an iterative play between data and the analysis, which can allow further steps to be taken towards reliability.

5. Data saturation is a consideration in trustworthiness. Looking to the literature for guidance on general sample sizes for qualitative research, Low (2019) lists a range of scholars and produces a summary across authors to demonstrate sample sizes recommended (see Appendix 4). An adequate number of interviews for qualitative analysis was found in the range of between six to fifty, with an average number being around twenty five to thirty. However, in general, there is no consensus as to the number of interviews needed for qualitative research. This research was therefore led by Braun and Clarke's (2021) advice that data sufficiency is achieved when the '*interpretative judgement related to the*

purpose and goals of the analysis' is reached' (p201) and that there are enough data to form a persuasive narrative (Creswell and Miller, 2000). After thirty interviews, there appeared to be a point of data saturation, in that similar data was being collected around values and behaviours.

4.5 Data Analysis

In this section, the approach to data coding and analysis for each research question is addressed.

Table 9 'Summary of Data collection and analysis approach', summarises the approach to data collection and analysis.

Research Question	Data collection	Data Analysis
RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours? • How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?	Qualitative interviews with senior leaders.	Data coding led by values literature but remaining open to new values / deductive + thematic analysis
RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work? • In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?	Qualitative interviews with senior leaders.	Data coding led by both institutional work literature (deductive) as well as being led by other potential reported behaviours (inductive) + thematic analysis
RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work? • How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors? • How might potential enablers overcome these?	Qualitative interviews with senior leaders, plus online secondary data research.	Data coding led by comments from managers on perceived barriers and enablers (inductive). Content analysis of the secondary online data.

Table 9 Summary of Data collection and analysis approach

The coding software chosen for the research was NVivo as this programme allows for a range of functions, such as tracking portions data coded back to its original source, thereby

allowing for contextual re-reading and closeness to the data (Sohn, 2017; Watts, 2014). NVivo also has guidance and tutorials online to help with using the software (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2011). As a backup and in case of software malfunction, the researcher mirrored the coding process in word documents (Mattimoe et al., 2021).

4.5.1 Coding RQ 1

In this section the approach to coding and analysis of data from the first research question is explored;

RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?

• How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

Coding is the process of organising elements of data which have relevance to structures or attributed significance to theory or ideas (St. Pierre and Jackson, 2014). The literature review focused on types of altruistic and egoistic values and therefore the coding was led by the descriptions of these values in the literature review. For example in humanistic altruism, social justice is described as a significant value, and therefore, any data which describes issues around social justice, and fairness was coded to humanistic altruism. Flexibility was needed to ensure that the expressed reality of participants was represented and therefore the coding remained open to other value types that may have arisen (Roberts et al., 2019; Terry and Hayfield, 2020; Saldaña and Omasta, 2016).

Table 10 'Coding of values data, RQ1', shows the coding framework along with coding descriptions, key scholars as well as example excerpts from the data collected from the interviews.

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Coding Egoist Self	Code Description	Literature for coding descriptions
Consequences to self Benefits to self	Predisposed to protect aspects of the environment that affect them personally /oppose protection of the environment if the personal costs are perceived as high. What *potentially* might happen to oneself.	Dietz et al. 2005 Hemingway and Maclagan, 2004 Stern and Dietz, 1994 Clark et al., 2003 Milfont et al., 2006 Schultz and Zelezny, 1998
Coding Egoist Kin	**Code Description**	**Literature for coding descriptions**
Focus on one's children	Ensuring that one's own offspring (who carry one's genes), are protected.	Dietz et al., 2005 Hamilton, 1964
Coding Humanistic altruism	**Code Description**	**Literature for coding descriptions**
Community /General care for humanity / Others Social justice World at peace	Refers to care for broader groupings such as community, country and humanity. Social altruism or safeguarding the environment to protect the welfare of other humans. Justice for humanity, fairness, equity, peaceful life / collective responsibility / moral obligation.	Dietz et al., 2005 Warneken and Tomasello, 2009 Stets and Biga, 2003 Brown and Crace, 1996 Schwartz, 1992 Wagstaff, 1998 Stern and Dietz, 1994 Schwartz, 1977
Coding Biospheric altruism	**Code Description**	**Literature for coding descriptions**
Universalism Protecting the environment Unity with nature World of beauty Environmental care/ Responsibility	Care for the natural world and encompass animals and all living things. Care for the environment, responsibility and 'scientific understanding', role of humans in the climate crisis.	Dietz et al., 2005a Schwartz & Bilsky, 1992 Brown and Crace, 1996

Table 10 'Coding of values data, RQ1'

The data from managers' values were coded according to a process of understanding the data through the definitions of altruistic and egoistic values. In instances where managers expressed more than one value, the first value expressed, and the one that they discussed the most, which directly answered the research question, and one which seemed to link more strongly to their reported behaviours was noted as a prominent value (Schwartz, 2012). The following value or values they expressed were noted as less prominent but still important values. On one occasion two values were mentioned as equal and these were

recorded accordingly. A review of the data did not raise any instances of doubt on this process and therefore there seemed no need to check this back with the interviewees.

The values data were presented in a table format. Whilst the use of tables to display qualitative data is critiqued by some scholars, who claim this does not represent methodological consistency (Nadin and Cassell, 2006; Jonsen et al., 2018), there are scholars that advocate for the use of visual aids to make sense of qualitative data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Miles and Huberman (1994) maintain that in qualitative research, the use of tables and visuals to represent data can help to understand social phenomena, that *'exist not only in the mind but also in the objective world and that some lawful and reasonable stable relationships are to be found about them'* (p4). The use of tables to organise and display qualitative data can therefore aid analysis as well as present findings in a way that supports succinctness and provides trustworthiness (Cloutier and Ravasi, 2020). The values data were displayed along with pseudonyms and organised by the type of prominent value expressed.

As the first research question also links values to pro-environmental behaviours in the workplace, the data from the second question around behaviours needed to be considered and brought together with the values data. How the data around pro-environmental behaviours were analysed is covered in the next section; however, in the findings section, this information was brought alongside of the values data and incorporated into a table, to provide clarity around which values drive pro-environmental behaviours. The behavioural categories and values applied in the display are shown in table 10 'Values and Behaviours Data Table Headings'.

Values expressed by manager (psydonym)			Behaviour Descriptons							
VALUE TYPE	Primary Value (●)		*Disrupting Disassociating and letter writing*	*Creating - Education through external expertise*	*Creating -Education - courses or staff training*	*Creating Networks - Green teams*	*Creating Defining - Environmental certificaitons*	*Creative Influence - Creative Briefs*	*Industry Influence - Industry groups*	*New role Influence - Job descriptions*
	Secondary Value (○)									

Table 10 Values and Behaviours Data Table Headings

Providing the data in a table form enabled sense making to understand which values drive pro-environmental behaviours in the workplace.

The next section discusses the approach to coding and presenting the data from the second research question on pro-environmental behaviors in the workplace.

4.5.2 Coding RQ 2

In this section, the approach to coding and analysis of the data from the second research question is explored;

'How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

•   In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?'

The self-reported behaviours data from senior managers were coded in two rounds. Firstly, codes were guided by the literature on the three pillars of institutional work, that of disrupting, maintaining and creating. The descriptions for these codes were taken from the literature for each type of work in each pillar (Given, 2008; Locke et al., 2022).

The data coded as disrupting showed the ways in which managers worked to question CEOs around working with highly polluting clients, therefore calling into question the moral foundations of the institution of advertising. Data coded to the creating pillar found three areas in which managers worked to create; that of educating, constructing normative networks and defining. The data related to 'educating' were separated in two; firstly, the ways in which managers brought in external educators to speak at their agency, and the courses on sustainability that they themselves attended in order to increase their knowledge. The second type of educating was where managers took the skills they had learnt and created internal training for staff. Both of these fit within the broad description of educating to support or create new institutions but differ in their practical application. The construction of normative networks followed a clear description from the literature and mainly focused on creating networks and norms between institutional practices through creating or joining internal green teams. Defining work was also clear in that managers worked towards gaining status, membership or hierarchy through certifications and standards such as B-Corp[22] or SBTi[23]. There were no data that fit the third pillar of institutional work that of maintaining institutions or any of its categories.

Some of the data did not fit within the institutional work pillar descriptions from the literature, therefore these were coded inductively. This led to a large number of codes for this set of data and therefore a second round of coding was necessary. For instance, several managers reported joining different industry working groups. These were initially coded individually, by group, for example 'AA working group' and 'ISBA sustainability group' etc. However, when it became clear that all these groups had conceptual similarities, a second

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[22] The B-Corp certification process measures a company's performance in many areas, including: supply chain and input materials, charitable giving, and employee benefits. (BCorp, 2024)

[23] The Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) is a program that helps companies and financial institutions set science-based targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (SBTi, 2024)

round of coding labelled these as 'Working Groups in the industry' as this is broadly what all those data represented (Saldaña, 2015). In this way, coding consistency was maintained and once the second round of coding had been done, the data was checked to ensure alignment, reliability and trustworthiness (Roberts et al., 2019). This was done by checking the descriptions of each working group from online sources to understand the remit, aims and goals of the group.

The coding used for pro-environmental behaviours is shown in table 11 'Coding of data on pro-environmental behaviours RQ2'.

Coding led by 3 Pillars of IW literature	Coding description from the institutional work literature	Descriptions from the data	Extent of excerpts and examples from the data	Themes consistent with IW
Institutional Work – **Disrupting** Pillar:	Disassociating moral foundations – of the institution of advertising	Created or supported letter writing initiatives to move away from highly polluting clients. Challenge the moral foundations of their institution.	Sixteen managers describe behaviours around disrupting: Some data excerpts: Leila :"I signed a letter, which went public." Helena: "I was part of a group of which wrote a letter to our to the global CEO." Peter: "What I did is I actually wrote a proposal on what I believe we could do as an agency." Alexander: "At the time I didn't tell anyone what I was doing really. I was just inviting, like trusted friends."	Disrupting - disassociating

Table 11: Coding of data on pro-environmental behaviours RQ2

Coding led by 3 Pillars of IW literature	Coding description from the institutional work literature	Descriptions from the data	Extent of excerpts and examples from the data	Themes consistent with IW
Institutional Work – **Creating** Pillar:	Educating – Of actors in skills and knowledge necessary to support the new institution.	Designed internal training for general sustainability /creative sustainability ,/comms,/production / strategy for themselves and other staff. Talks or courses from external expertise; Purpose Disruptors, Greenpeace, Extinction Rebellion, Reclaiming the Agency, Change the Brief, Albert Training, ISBA training, CISL courses.	Twenty managers spoke about educating actions: Danny :*"I was able to bring Extinction Rebellion into to do a talk… I also organised various other speakers to come into the agency to do talks…like Purpose Disruptors came in to do the Great Reset talk."* Shelly: *"So I took part in a leadership programme called Reclaiming the Agency… I think it was the first time that I kind of realized the enormity of what was happening and also understood the scale of what was required to tackle it."* Gary: *"So I did like a three month course…It's basically a lot about the themes we're talking about now actually, how do you shift values and focus within a business context and get businesses caring about this as an issue."*	Creating – educating

Table 11: Coding of data on pro-environmental behaviours RQ2 (continued)

Coding led by 3 Pillars of IW literature	Coding description from the institutional work literature	Descriptions from the data	Extent of excerpts and examples from the data	Themes consistent with IW
Institutional Work – **Creating** Pillar:	Constructing normative networks - between norms and existing institutional practices	Created, organised or joined green teams and internal initiatives to work towards creating practices and norms in the agency.	Twenty two managers spoke about constructing normative networks work: *Helena "I actually just started with like running the Green team internally at work. So it was much more kind of just grassroots."* *Annie: "So it was just very much sort of an internal initiative."* *Betty: "It deals with like sustainability for the building and the company."*	Creating – constructing normative networks
Institutional Work – **Creating** Pillar:	Defining – Outlining a rule or system which denotes status or membership or hierarchy Certifications /standards towards Climate Goals	Moved agencies towards external certifications and standards for operational emissions: B-Corp / SBTi / CDP / Ad Net Zero / Ad Green Production	Eighteen managers spoke about defining work: Joan: *"We kind of then kicked off the B-Corp journey… it's totally changed how we make decisions. It's changed the type of talent that we attract, it's pushed conversations with clients forward in a different direction."* Davey: *"I'm very happy that I've kind of, you know, spearheaded those kinds of initiatives and it's only just one step forward, but I think there's many more steps that our company needs to do."* Helena: *"We're members of Ad Net Zero. We're members of the IPA Climate Charter, Ad Green… delivering on the actions that we've committed to is another thing."*	Creating – Defining –

Table 11: Coding of data on pro-environmental behaviours RQ2 (continued)

Coding led by 3 Pillars of IW literature	Coding description from the institutional work literature	Descriptions from the data	Extent of excerpts and examples from the data	Themes consistent with IW
Institutional Work – **Creating** Pillar:	Changing creative briefs: All the ways in which creatives might try and alter or change incoming client briefs or influence staff on how they work on jobs	Influence clients approach to sustainability, or initiated discussions with clients on sustainability / or worked on a client brief with sustainability requested or courses in changing the brief	Eighteen managers spoke about changing creative briefs: Richard: *"So we've signed up to do a Change the Brief training and I've been running that internally."* Jack: *"I have been very responsible for training and upskilling other people so, we managed to convince the business to sign up to the 'Change the Brief Alliance' last year to pay for places for people across the business this year."* Bob: *"Purpose Disruptors is a good one. So, for example we signed up to use their Change The Brief platform and we've rolled it out globally, so everybody can have access to that."*	Working towards creative influence and industry influence through groups establishing a new role / function in their agency.
Institutional Work – **Creating** Pillar:	Working groups in the industry - towards either operational sustainability or advertised emissions	Influence industry by having a voice in working groups. Pushed to create more change through industry groups	Seven managers spoke about working groups: Jack: *"I am our representative on the IPA Media Futures Group, so working with the other different agencies in that sort of cross industry working group."*	Working towards creative influence and industry influence through groups establishing a new role / function in their agency.

Table 11: Coding of data on pro-environmental behaviours RQ2 (continued)

Coding led by 3 Pillars of IW literature	Coding description from the institutional work literature	Descriptions from the data	Extent of excerpts and examples from the data	Themes consistent with IW
Institutional Work – **Creating** Pillar:	Establishing new roles- Job title change Hybrid title- Transition towards sustainability in title Creating /morphing job title to work more on what is meaningful for them	Worked towards incorporating sustainability into job role and title and used this to influence clients and to work more on sustainability	Twelve managers spoke about new job titles: Emily: *"Yeah, I was the first person to have that, like, as part of my role, and it's still, I'm the only person to have it in my title and I haven't really seen anybody else like… with those kinds of roles."* Sarah: *"So I spent a lot of last year talking to our C-suite[24] and saying I think I'm really interested in this and I want to focus my attention on sustainability…and then we agreed like late last year that that would become my job."*	Working towards creative influence and industry influence through groups establishing a new role / function in their agency.
Institutional Work – **Maintaining** Pillar:	Enabling, policing, embedding routinising deterring, valorising	No data	No data	No data

Table 11: Coding of data on pro-environmental behaviours RQ2 (continued)

The inductively coded data was reviewed and checked for fit and consistency. Themes were then created to further articulate the meanings of the behaviours (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Braun and Clarke, 2023). For example where the data were coded to initial codes of 'Working Groups in the Industry', this was then themed 'Working on Creative and Industry Influence', as in effect, this was the aim of the behaviours in those groups, to have a say on how the industry moved forward on environmental issues. Where managers had reported a change of job title, they often expressed this as a way in which to pivot the focus of their work, i.e. taking on different tasks in sustainability as this is where their interests lay. They also wanted

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[24] C-suite refers to a company's executive-level leadership team. The 'C' stands for 'Chief'.

to have more influence in their agency, with client work and in the industry in general, around environmental issues. For this reason, the initial coding around job title changes were grouped into a theme around influence (Williams and Moser, 2019).

This section has addressed how the data from research questions one and two were coded and themed. The next section covers how data from research question three as well as the secondary data collection were coded.

4.5.3 Coding RQ 3 (Interview Data)

In this section the approach to the analysis of data from the third research question is explored:

What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

• How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

• How might potential enablers overcome these?

The data from this question were inductively coded, as managers expressed their thoughts on the barriers to their work. An inductive approach was used because there was no general pre-understanding on what barriers might exist.

The first round of coding and thematic analysis of interview data identified several barriers and one main enabler. Barriers were identified by the way in which managers discussed what hindered their work. For example, when talking about the Advertising Association (The AA), data were coded towards lack of communication, as one data excerpt (from Claire) articulated that in the industry, it was the norm for the AA to communicate their concerns to wider stakeholders. She commented:

> *"You are supposed to channel everything through them... but they're not doing anything."*

This was therefore coded as a barrier in communicating issues to the sector as well as to government.

Data were coded towards dismissing Advertised Emissions (AE), where managers explained how the AA addressed the concept. A data excerpt (from Shelly), describes the way the AA dealt with AE:

"The Advertising Association haven't really engaged with that, well they have engaged with it, but kind of gone, actually, we don't like that, we're going to do our own thing over here and you end up with, you know, 120 pages of unintelligible stuff that doesn't really make any decent recommendations at all."

Data were coded towards the conflicting membership of the AA. A data excerpt from one manager (Danny) suggests the AA's membership is conflicted:

"Just vested interests, you know, it's like, they're captured by the highest paying clients."

Data were coded towards a lack of transparency around agencies' client roster. A client roster details all the clients an agency works with and would reveal highly polluting clients. However, publishing a client roster is relatively rare in the industry and this means that many staff are unaware that their agency actually engages with oil and gas clients or other highly polluting clients. A data excerpt from one manager (Jack) shows how this affects perceptions in the industry:

"Most of our employees didn't even know we have these clients. You know they operate in shell agencies that you know, only exist to service these clients."

This was coded as a barrier to managers' work, because if large bodies of staff don't know their agency is working with polluting clients, they cannot have the opportunity to object to it.

The coding for 'enablers' centred around one main code, that of government regulation which managers named directly. Managers described this as an enabler of change, even though it was not directly related to their institutional work. They did not state any enablers that were directly related to their work, aside from one manager who discussed that along

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with government regulation, change might come from young creatives who are unwilling or refuse to work with, polluting clients.

The first round of inductive codes created six codes around barriers, and the one code as an enabler was 'regulation'. These are shown in table 12 (below), 'Coding of data on barriers and enablers RQ3'.

Barriers			
1st round of coding	2nd round of coding	Process of data coding	Excerpt examples from the data
Staff (un)awareness of oil clients	Transparency	Four managers described lack of transparency. Data were coded by identifying terms such as 'hidden away', 'under wraps' or 'buried' Lack of transparency around the client roster, lack of knowledge around which clients are being serviced were also identified. This all pointed towards a lack of transparency.	Jack on his agencies oil and gas client roster: *"They've got away with keeping it under wraps for a very, very long time"*
AA membership conflicted in serving different groups of members.	AA conflicted membership + funding	Four managers described potential 'vested interests', a conflicted membership with brands fees influencing the AA. Data were coded by identifying terms such as 'vested interests', 'funded by the advertisers' 'funded by their members' 'relying on the membership fees.'	Danny commented on the potential conflicts within the AA: *"The ad industry trade bodies like the Advertising Association and the IPA, I mean just vested interests"*
ANZ initiative criticised as not addressing advertised emissions.	ANZ initiative effectiveness	Nine managers commented on the way in which the AA and their ANZ do not acknowledge issues around advertised emissions or members working with oil and gas clients. Data were coded by identifying terms such as 'That's not something that they are pushing', and 'failing to recognise' 'a green washing exercise' 'They won't even engage' 'agency green washing'	Rami commented on the function of the initiative; *"It's literally just for an agency to say look where we're doing something around that so and so it's kind of an agency green washing itself a little bit as well."*

Advertised Emissions - AA discrediting the concept, Managers ask for more attention on it.	AA dismiss AE	Nine managers commented on the AA Working groups for AE and state the AA do not fully investigate AE and at times work to discredit it. Data were coded by identifying terms such as 'like shoot down' 'the AA haven't really engaged with that' 'on undermining that report.'	Matty commented: *"It just seems like a lot of focus is spent on undermining that report."*
AA lack of communicatio n to sector and government on issues managers care about.	AA Communica-tion	Three managers commented on the AA's lack of communication on the issues managers are concerned about. Data were coded by identifying terms such as 'they're not doing anything… that's the outlet where you go', 'a toothless monster' 'I can't see them [The AA] suggesting.'	Claire commented: *"That's the outlet where you go. Like you are supposed to channel everything through them… but they're not doing anything."*
Enablers			
Regulation, laws, rules, restrictions on advertising.	Government regulation	Sixteen managers commented that the only way to create change now would be through government restrictions/ regulations to advertising. Data were coded by identifying terms such as 'There should be a ban' 'consequently we're banning it' 'there'll be legislation' 'I think yes, government regulation.'	Danny commented: *"So the big levers, the stuff that clearly needs to happen is at government level."* Richard commented; *"I don't think that anyone's going to do that without regulatory enforcement… I think there should be a blanket ban."*
Talent refusing to work on accounts.	n/a	One manager thought a lack of creative talent willing to work with polluting clients would bring about change. As this was only one comment it was coded but not pursued.	Emily commented; *"you know young creatives will not want to work on these accounts… but it will also take probably like the legal action."*

Table 12 Coding of data on barriers and enablers RQ3

4.5.4 Coding RQ3 (Secondary Data)

As the research was underpinned by a critical realist ontology, further explanation around managers' expressed barriers, which seem to reflect institutional forces was sought, in order to explore structures and mechanisms for the observed phenomenon. This enabled the

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research to turn to secondary data collection, with the aim of triangulating senior managers data around barriers and enablers (Fletcher, 2017; Lawson, 2001).

The process for this part of the research is described in section 4.4.3. To lead the online search, the data from managers' interviews on barriers and enablers was coded to provide a set of search terms. For example, for 'transparency', the data from senior managers indicated that their agencies did not discuss their oil and gas clients publicly. The online search term formed was *'(agency name) +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel'*, to search for evidence of oil and gas clients on sustainability reports. The secondary research also considered managers' descriptions of push backs from their CEOs as a barrier and suggestions of potential ties with polluting clients. This led to a formation of the search term, *'UK Advertising agency +CEO's +polluting brands'.*

The coding for the secondary research is shown in table 13 'Coding to develop search terms for secondary data online research'.

Coded data - managers interviews RQ3	Code description and notes	Secondary research enquiry	*Secondary research search term to enter into search engine*
CEO's and push back	CEOs pushing back on stopping the climate work with oil and gas clients.	*Managers explain push backs from CEOs but are not clear why. A-priori suggest potential ties with polluting clients. Do CEOs have ties to polluting clients?*	*UK Advertising agency +CEO's +oil and gas* *UK Advertising agency +CEO's +polluting brands* *UK Advertising agency +CEO's +polluting clients*
Transparency	Oil and gas clients in advertising agencies.	*Managers discuss lack of transparency, and that staff are not aware. Is there data on oil and gas clients in the six main agency publications?*	*WPP +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel* *Omnicom +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel* *Publicis +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel* *IPG +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel* *Dentsu +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel* *Havas +sustainability reports +oil gas fossil fuel*

Table 13 Coding to develop search terms for secondary data online research

Coded data - managers interviews RQ3	Code description and notes	Secondary research enquiry	*Secondary research search term to enter into search engine*
The AA	Funding of membership, members work with oil and gas clients.	*How is the AA funded? What is its membership profile?*	*Advertising Association +Funding Advertising Association +Membership*
The AA	Managers say ANZ initiative does not consider AE.	*Does ANZ consider or include AE and if not, why not?*	*Advertising Association +Ad Net Zero*
The AA	AA does not support AE, dismissed AE, alternatives to AE, working groups and how they address AE.	*Does AA support AE? What is their response to it, and why? Do the AA dismiss AE?*	*Advertising Association +advertised emissions* *<u>**Additional Search Term added**</u> Advertising Association +displacement effect Advertising Association +substitution of sales*
The AA	Managers consider that the AA fails to communicate concern of membership to government.	*How does the AA communicate to Government, on what topics and what does it say?*	*Advertising Association +communications Advertising Association +government*
Government Regulation	Managers consider regulation necessary .	*Where does pressure for regulation come from? Does the AA push for advertising regulation?*	*Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK*

Table 14 Coding to develop search terms for secondary data online research (continued)

Once the codes for the online search were formed, the process for the online search followed these three stages:

1. Where search terms were looking for data which also mentioned the Advertising Association, the search term was paired with a plus (+) symbol to ensure the inclusion of any mention of the AA as well as the AA's website data (Joachims, 2002).

2. Due to time constraints as well as the likely volume of data that would be found, search results were limited to results found on the first two pages that Google returned.

Google search engine often returns the most relevant data in these first pages (Almukhtar et al., 2021; Gordon and Pathak, 1999)

3.   From those two first pages of results, only original webpages were chosen for analysis; any pages that re-reported the same data (e.g., news reports which reiterated information) were discarded to avoid duplication.

During the process of the search, it was noted that the AA introduced a new term or concept to describe the effect of advertising and called it 'the displacement effect'. To understand this term and its significance, a search term called *'Advertising Association +displacement effect'* was added, and data around this was collected to further understand the term and its meaning and application.

The results of the secondary data search identified thirty relevant data sources, consisting of online documents, reports, videos, news articles, blog posts and freedom of information data. A full breakdown of all thirty of these sources are shown in Appendix 7. Content analysis was then used to analyse these, and this is discussed in the next section.

4.5.5 Content Analysis

To interpret the results of the data from the online searches, content analysis was chosen. Content analysis is a method by which documents in written form, as well as news media, blogs, adverts, reports, videos, photographs or any type of media that has 'content' can be analysed (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Assarroudi et al., 2018; Hurst, 2023). Content analysis focuses on the contextual meanings, taking into account explicit or inferred meanings and can be used by taking pieces of data that reveal concepts and understandings around the phenomenon under study (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Content analysis can consist of sorting text into codes, sorting into related categories, identifying patterns of behaviours, similarities or differences to reveal shared meanings and understandings (Kleinheksel et al., 2020). This analysis might not just be within one piece of

text, but potentially across texts to gain an understanding of patterns, or recurring ideas to gain sense of meanings. The results of the secondary research and resulting content analysis aimed to find data that would allow for further understanding around senior managers' data about barriers as well as enablers to change. In addition, content analysis was used to discover any potential mechanism's that might explain why senior managers behaviours in the workplace seemed, in their view, ineffective.

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) advise on three potential approaches to content analysis. Conventional analysis applies code categories directly taken from the data; summative analysis uses counting and comparisons of keywords from the data; directed analysis begins with either theory or a relevant set of research findings to guide initial coding, and further codes can then be derived from the data. As the content analyses for this research was led by codes taken from senior managers data, the latter approach, that of directed analysis was chosen for the content analysis approach. Drawing on Assarroudi et al. (2018 p47), the following six steps were taken and adapted to the online research and are shown in table 14, 'Steps taken in content analysis'.

Steps for content analysis
(1) Preparation of data + definition of the unit of analysis.
(2) Development of categories and the coding scheme + test.
(3) 1st round of coding the whole text.
(4) Assessment of the coding's consistency.
(5) Move towards themes.
(6) Draw conclusions and report the methods and findings.

Table 14 Steps taken in content analysis adapted from Assarroudi (2018)

Two examples of the coding and content analysis for sections 7.4.5 and 7.4.7. are shown in appendices 16 and 17.

This chapter has set out the methodological strategy and approach to the research, the research philosophy, design, data collection and analysis. The following chapters five through to seven, present the findings of the research.

5.0 RQ 1 Values Findings

Introduction

This findings chapter addresses the first research question:

RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?

• How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

To do so, it draws on interviews with senior managers, and as detailed in section 4.5.1, the data were coded according towards four types of values, humanistic altruism where the focus is care for humanity and others and often justice for other people; biocentric altruism, where the focus is on care and concern for nature, animals and the planet; egoistic values were divided into two parts, egoistic-self, where a focus is on the self and egoistic-kin, where the focus is on care and concern for one's children. The data were coded to show the first value expressed as a prominent value and then subsequent values expressed as less prominent but important values. The literature review in chapter two found that whilst all types of altruistic and egoistic values are shown to be motivators for pro-environmental behaviours, there remains a lack of understanding around which types of values are more dominant at this, providing a gap to explore further.

The findings in sections 5.1 to 5.5 detail data extracts from senior managers expressing their values across biospheric values (5.1), humanistic values (5.2), egoistic values (5.3), egoistic-kin values (5.4) and egoistic-self values (5.5). Section 5.6 provides a summary and visual of all of the values expressed (table 16). Section 5.7 brings together senior managers' values and their reported pro-environmental behaviours (as detailed in chapter 6) in one visual.

5.1 Biospheric Values

The following section details some exemplary extracts from the research which are illustrative of biospheric values, and the ways in which managers express how important these values are to them. These values are often not stand alone and coexist with other values such as humanistic and egoistic-kin values.

Jack was extremely committed to environmental causes in the workplace. He was raised in an urban environment yet his connection to nature was important to him, as well as how it connected to human health. He describes growing up in nature:

> *"So from an early age I think I've always been taught by my parents and growing up, you know, in the natural world, is precious to, you know, value the health of the planet because it's important to our health. So my mum and dad were both very you know proactive in in teaching us that, although we grew up in a big city… being in the garden and growing our own food and preparing it and using it, you know as a basis for our health is always very important to me."*

For Shelly, biospheric values were most important to her and she also describes how this was likely nurtured by growing up with a connection to nature:

> *"I grew up in a time when we were probably bit more connected to nature and so, you know, we didn't have a huge house, but my parents had a back garden and they grew their own vegetables and I would spend a lot of time outdoors in nature."*

Peter was very passionate about the climate issue, and consistently showed he prioritised this in the working environment, pushing for change via all avenues available to him. The biospheric values he expressed were rooted in his upbringing. His biospheric values were important to him, aside from care for his children which came first:

> *"You know, the natural world has been so much a part of my life growing up and it's definitely the thing that I value, second, to my children… honestly and openly speaking,*

I care more about nature than I do about people... I've been exposed to growing up with big game around me and just beautiful, beautiful natural environments. And so, it was easy for me to escape to those places and I think that's what, you know, it's just so much a part of my DNA."

His care for the environment also extended to justice, but for the earth rather than for people:

"And the reason for that is that, you know, we're in the Anthropocene and climate change is a human caused condition so from the way that I think humans have done this to ourselves whereas nature has had this done to it... and that is why I am more concerned about how I can help nature recover, I think, how I can help nature survive and recover, than I can about people."

Many managers talked about a close connection with nature, and the ways in which this made them feel that care for the environment was important to them. Susannah was highly active in terms of pro-environmental behaviours and reported a connection with nature which was central to her values:

"Reconnecting with nature is probably the other side of it in terms of just how precious nature is, you know I don't go on holidays where I go walking around shopping malls in Dubai, I generally go on holidays where I swim in the sea or I am in nature. So, for me again that sort of connection to the land and the connection to the environment is critical and I think to my own mental well-being and how I feel about my very short time on this planet."

Claire's prominent values revolved around concern for her children but a connection to nature came a close second:

"What are we? Not to get too existential, but I don't know what we are if we're not connected to the land."

For Susan, growing up in a natural environment was something she took for granted. It was only when she stepped outside of this and into the working environment, that she even realised the connection she had with nature:

"Being brought up with you know, within the countryside, I don't think it was actually until I moved to London and I realised that not everyone sort of cares as much about nature or felt so like in tune with nature as I did. I really realised that I had this like connection to it. So, I think it starts with nature really for me."

For Emily, biospheric values were also a secondary value but being connected to nature was still important to her:

"It's a connection to people and nature and the connection to your place within the world, your connection to everything around you."

Helena also commented on a connection to nature and others:

"I think I have felt like I have like just a connection to nature and everyone and everything, really. It just feels like it's not separate from me."

She became acutely aware of this connection when she saw the abuse of nature and the degradation of the natural environment when she was visiting Asia:

"And maybe it was also seeing it was probably the first time when I was in Asia that I sort of saw you know just rubbish on beaches and I guess the impact of extreme weather a bit more just kind of those things sort of became a bit more real."

Like Helena, Gary also witnessed the scale of pollution on beaches and was particularly impacted by the amount of plastic:

"I went and saw beaches and there was a lot of plastic, so plastic pollution was my kind of way in, which wasn't... I mean, it's linked obviously to climate change but I was seeing the physical side of that plastic pollution and that was my hook. That was my

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way into thinking about this a lot more. And I decided while I was away, when I get back to the UK, I'm gonna get a lot more involved in anti-plastic pollution and advocacy."

Joan described the connection to nature in a different way, in that she took comfort from interacting with it:

"I take a huge amount of comfort and energy and inspiration from nature and I suppose I know that I will be a different person if I don't get to be in nature in the way that I am at the moment."

This section of data show biospheric values as a prominent expressed value but also co-existing alongside of humanistic and egoist-kin values. None of these managers expressed any egoistic-self values. The source of biospheric values ranged from growing up in wild places to people who grew up in an urban environment but were immersed in nature perhaps just in their back garden, therefore growing up with nature in some way seemed to provide this long term connection. Other articulations from the data are natures importance to health and well-being. There was also a sense of concern that as the environment degrades, this connection may be lost and witnessing some form of environmental degradation crystallised biospheric values for some, although there is less data around this point.

The following section focuses on those managers who expressed mainly humanistic altruism.

5.2 Humanistic Values

Humanistic altruism focuses on concerns for society and other humans. Some managers who expressed humanistic values also expressed secondary values of biospheric and egoistic-kin. For others (Leila, Betty and Richard) humanistic values were a stand-alone value, although it might be the case that they had other values which they didn't articulate at the time.

Leila had a very strong personal focus on justice which had been with her since she was young. Influenced by her multi-racial background, she had been exposed to prejudice directed at family members. She inferred a connection between how advertising also exacerbated injustices through a worsening climate:

> "The world's unfair. How do we change that? How do we realise that all of these systems from colonisation to patriarchy, all of the you know, the big ones are being tackled and broken down and all that stuff. My own personal values have just like been stand up if you see something going wrong, help out if you can and try to combat the bystander effect, which I think you know the majority of people are doing the biggest bystander effect right now when it comes to climate change… Umm, so yeah, it's like justice and fairness and …yeah, I don't know. It's like you got like one shot to live. I have a very nihilistic attitude of like we're here for a short time, might as well be a good time."

Susannah, Gary, and Shelly all reported humanistic values as secondary to biospheric ones but see them as intricately connected to the climate issue and how it is unjust to some people in society. Susannah commented on fairness, justice and how this motivated her:

> "I'm triggered by stuff that I see as unfair and I think the thing that probably really is very obvious to me is the unfairness of climate change at a global level and at a local level. Even if you look at the fuel poverty in the UK. So it's something that really does trigger me to my core in terms of the injustice of it all and something that I can't be passive about."

Gary also commented about fairness and justice:

> "I think realising that inequality and realising that unfairness and injustice is incredibly important."

Shelly made the connection between social and climate justice, and how these became increasingly important for her:

> "It just seemed to me incredibly unfair that this was happening and it was going to have an impact on people's lives… particularly as I've sort of learned more about sustainability in this space and kind of learned more about the connection between climate justice and social justice and how the two are really sort of interweaved and that's become a much more important element for me too."

Richard felt that inequality was important yet lacking attention:

> "The most severe effects of climate change being felt worst by the poorest parts of society in the world and that widening of inequality is one of the things that spurs me. It's a worry for future generations more than us. But I feel like it's something that's not getting the focus and attention it requires."

Rachel expressed her humanistic values through concern for her family and friends:

> "I'm probably at the stage where I fear most for the health and the sort of mental well-being of those I know and love as a very sort of primary concern. I guess this feeling of security that life just should kind of get better and easier as you progress through it, that that would be shattered by the sort of precarity of it and I guess there's a lot of sorts of ideas about good living that, you know that would be lost."

Emily also stressed that she worried about people she loved:

> "It's a connection to people and nature and the connection to your place within the world, your connection to everything around you… I think it takes away that sense of safety, security, happiness, it takes away people that you love."

Managers who expressed mainly humanistic values expressed strong concerns around fairness, social justice as well as concerns in general for friends and family. The focus on the

social justice value orientation accords with the literature. None of the managers who expressed humanistic values as their prominent value, expressed egoistic-self values. The secondary values were a range of care for nature or for children.

5.3 Egoistic Values

In the literature, egoistic values are described as concern for oneself as well as concern for one's children, however they are not differentiated. In this study, where the focus is the climate crisis and the drivers of action, it was important to see concern for oneself as distinct from concern for one's children to understand the nuances of this value area. In the next two sections, egoistic values are divided into egoistic-kin (care for one's children) and egoistic-self (care for self, and only valuing or supporting behaviours which benefit the self).

5.4 Egoistic-Kin

Jack expressed concerns for his child and a future world she will grow up in:

> "This is no longer about me, it's about my daughter… my heart is now basically outside of my chest, you know, in her… it's about my family, it's about the world she's going to grow up in, I want to do everything I can to set her up for success."

Danny's egoistic-kin values encompassed not simply his own children but everyone's. In this sense, there is a strong overlap between egoistic-kin and humanistic values:

> "It's literally everything. And so, you know, I've got kids, but you know, not just for my kids, everyone's kids."

What motivates Claire's pro-environmental behaviours is her preoccupation with her children's future and well-being:

> "It's a very simple answer for me. I care about it because I have children and I think about their future all the time."

Karen's main expressed value was concern for her family, but also a focus on herself and her career needs:

> "I have a family and it's super important for me to ensure that the planet is left in the same shape that I have found it, if not better. But also, from a professional standpoint. That's why I'm focused on this in the professional space."

Whilst concern for her children seemed to be her main motivator, Karen, also spoke about her preference for leadership:

> "I think I probably have a complicated set of personal values; I think you know I have always desired to be a leader and to be autonomous and that way, and the sense of needing to be the decision maker has always been embedded in who I am as a person."

Karen's values meant that she was concerned about her children, but also highly ambitious for change in her role and seemed to enjoy professional satisfaction for pushing the agenda on this topic. It's not clear if this benefit to her career pushes her values towards egoistic-self orientation, or if this just reflects her ambition to lead which might be discreet from egoistic-self values.

For Sarah, concern for the security and safety of her children, were a significant driver for her pro-environmental behaviours. She worried about how she was going to protect her children if society was no longer safe:

> "This all kind of started for me when I had very young children and I can remember almost in my head going god what if something happened and I had to try and get out of London like how on earth do you flee a city with young children? And it was just this fear of like oh my god how am I'm going to take care of my kids if something really bad happens... I fear a lack of safety."

Unlike others, who had concerns for their children's *future*, Sarah was imagining a here and now scenario – she was the only one to have thoughts about the climate crisis in the present rather than as a future event and was very much focused on the safety aspect for her children.

Matty, Alexander, Alice and Robbie reported their children's future was the most salient concern in relation to the climate crisis:

Matty said his motivations were for his daughters future:

> *"I think it's definitely... I found myself caring a lot more since having a daughter... what's it gonna be like when she's eighty or when she's even thirty... that's probably my main motivation at the moment."*

Alexander's concerns were around overconsumption and its effects on the planet, he wanted to be able show accountability to his children in the future:

> *"I have kids. I remember when I sat at my desk and I was just thinking, hold on a minute, all this consumption is outrageous... I've got children, so I can, like, look them in the eye and say I tried, and if it didn't work, at least I've tried."*

Alexander was envisaging their 'future' in the context of climate change, and also in the way his future feelings of accountability and avoidance of guilt might be considered.

Alice uses the term 'leave behind', an awareness of the legacy one leaves one's children but also the next generation, and the responsibility, even culpability, for that future:

> *"Since I've had children particularly, I think I've become more aware, and care more in terms of what impact we're all having on the planet and what we're leaving behind for our kids."*

Robbie was explicit about his concerns for the future of his children:

> *"I think when you see it through the lens of your children or whatever and there's a degree of, oh, it's a bit warmer, it's nice... don't be fooled by that and it's gonna be really difficult and it's getting more difficult by the years and you really worry for what the future holds for them and their children."*

Robbie was the only person to refer to his children's children, a far off distant time frame.

Managers who express egoistic-kin values express care and worry for their children but tend to focus on future scenarios rather than the here and now, other than Sarah, whose focus was on her ability to look after her children in the near term should any effects from climate change manifest. Managers also express an avoidance of potential guilt and culpability by saying that they had tried to create change. None of the managers who expressed egoistic-kin values expressed any focus or concern on egoistic-self values. The next section looks to egoistic-self values expressed by managers.

5.5 Egoistic-Self

This section looks at the findings where managers expressed egoistic-self values as a prominent value, which is a focus on oneself and one's well-being as well as supporting behaviours that benefit the self and avoiding ones which do not.

Brian described his values as originating from his working environment. He started thinking of sustainability when a client requested it. He acknowledges that his personal life may need to 'catch up' with his work life:

> *"Maybe, oddly, it actually started with a professional event rather than the other way around and if anything, one of the things I'm very conscious of at the moment is probably the way I'm more engaged in this sort of topic professionally than I am personally and probably need to sort out my personal life a bit more. Not that I'm wilfully neglectful of it, but I think the balance isn't there so the professional one came first, because I just happened to work on an account… I think there's a gap. I think I'm quite conscious of the personal having to sort of catch up a little bit."*

His focus on sustainability had been driven by a client's needs rather than his own values. Asked if he now felt conflicted when working with other clients who might not have such a keen focus on sustainability, he responded that it was not a problem for him:

> *"I don't particularly feel it from a personal perspective. Not particularly had that scenario as yet."*

Brian did however describe how having children and his concern for their security had changed his perceptions and priorities, therefore showing an overlap with egoistic-kin values:

"I would say, and this is one that I definitely didn't have until having a child, are security and safety to contentment and happiness, to hope and positivity, somewhere in all of that, it's probably a mix of all of those things. That comes from sort of wanting her to be able to live a happy and free life I guess."

Brian therefore shows overlapping values; however the sense was that his self-reported pro-environmental behaviours seemed to be driven by requests from clients and in this way benefit his career. He mentioned that his professional career had developed since being asked to work on that initial environmental project:

'So it's developed, it's developed significantly over that time professionally."

When asked if he introduces climate issues with new clients, he responded:

"I don't have like a good, you know, quantitatively, a sense of this, but qualitatively my sense is that it's not coming up as often as you might think in the conversations that we're having with clients and where it is, it's probably client driven."

Rami's main value was concern for security. Whilst he mentions 'communities' which might infer humanistic values, the sense was that he was concerned for his own welfare and how the breakdown of society might threaten this:

"In the past couple of years in particular, like, the difference feels very stark, that things are actually changing before our eyes… I feel like when things do get ugly with climate change, it'll be certain communities that probably suffer the most and suffer first… you know there have been wars fought over much smaller things than access to water. Are we gonna have access to a lot of the things that maybe our generation has grown up as kind of standard and taken for granted?"

His environmental values and behaviours seemed to have developed from client requests to work on creative adverts that had an environmental leaning. He was keen to see how popular the creative work was:

"We launched a campaign and I'm eager to see how it's going to land in the real world and in the industry."

Rami's values were centred around his wellbeing as well as references to 'certain communities' however, his career benefitted from working on adverts with an environmental message.

Aaron's focus was primarily on his career and work, and he explained his viewpoint on seeing people in an un-altruistic way. He described an experience as a child:

"I kind of realised that actually being able to step outside of yourself is a kind of superpower, and probably why I've ended up as a [job description deleted] in advertising… I just kind of have always liked imagining other people's lives, like in a very non-altruistic way."

Aaron did make a comment about becoming a father but did not seem to strongly relate this to his increased concern for environmental issues. This might be because he very much saw advertising as part of the solution to the climate issue, and perhaps had a different perspective to his work, he commented:

"It's actually hugely influential and advertising is like probably one of the key in my view, one of the key kind of actors in that space, really."

Aaron did at first see advertising as exacerbating the climate issue, but then changed his view and thought it was influential in helping bring about change in society. In this way he was able to work without feeling conflicted as well as work on a variety of client briefs and this brought the benefits of feeling as if he was contributing in some way.

Annie and Davey expressed egoistic values, but not as they related to the workplace but more focused on their future. Annie also expressed humanistic altruism through a concern for her family and humanity:

"My future, but also for the future of my future family and, but also not even just my future family, just for humanity itself."

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Davey was concerned about the future and his own security and was also mindful of younger people who would be dealing with the consequences that climate breakdown might bring:

"So I think for me it was more just kind of like out of fear for the future because at the end of the day it's the young people, the ones that have to like, you know, bear the burden of how the world is in the next few decades or so."

Overall, managers who expressed egoistic-self values, discussed how these values were triggered by client work that had an environmental focus. Some also expressed concern for their future security but also had some overlapping concerns for humanity and children. It's to be acknowledged that perhaps for some, discussing values in a professional setting may mean they foreground their working values, and are perhaps influenced by professional values and norms in some way. However none of these managers discussed biospheric values, care for the environment, at any point which is notable.

5.6 Values Summary

This chapter presented the values types that senior managers expressed. The findings show that managers express their values over a range of types of altruistic and egoistic values. As discussed in the methodology, to provide clarity to qualitative data, the managers stated values are also presented in a visual format in table 15, 'Values expressed by managers by type'.

Values expressed by manager (psydonym)

	◉ Primary Value	
VALUE TYPE	○ Secondary Value	

BIOSPHERIC VALUES

Psudonym	Egoistic Self	Egoistic Kin	Humanistic	Biospheric
Danny		○	○	●
Jack		○		●
Susannah			○	●
Helena			○	●
Joan				●
Susan				●
Peter		●		●
Gary			○	●
Shelly			○	●

HUMANISTIC VALUES

Psudonym	Egoistic Self	Egoistic Kin	Humanistic	Biospheric
Leila			●	
Rachel			●	○
Emily			●	○
Richard			●	
Betty			●	
Elaine			●	○
Adam		○	●	

EGOISTIC-KIN VALUES

Psudonym	Egoistic Self	Egoistic Kin	Humanistic	Biospheric
Claire		●		○
Karen		●		
Kay		●	○	
Sarah		●	○	
Matty		●		
Alexander		●		
Alice		●		○
Robbie		●		

EGOISTIC-SELF VALUES

Psudonym	Egoistic Self	Egoistic Kin	Humanistic	Biospheric
Annie	●		○	
Davey	●		○	
Bob	●			
Brian	●	○		
Rami	●			
Aaron	●	○		

Table 15 Values expressed by managers by type

The dark circles in table 16 represent the main values expressed by managers; the lighter grey circles represent secondary values, mentioned later, or ones which had importance, but less prominence.

How the findings address the research question

The first research question of this thesis asks how senior managers express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours and how these values relate to the institutional work they engage in. The findings show that managers express values across all four types of altruistic and egoistic values. What seems significant is that those that express predominately biospheric, humanistic and egoistic-kin values rarely focus on the self or refer to worries or cares for their own wellbeing or career. Of the managers that expressed egoistic-self values, some also expressed care for children or humanity but mainly seemed to look at their values in terms of their work and career. None of these managers referred to biospheric values. This suggests that values which focus on nature and those that focus

on the ego are distant to each other. The ways in which these values drive sustainability focused behaviours is examined in the next section 5.7.

5.7 Values and Behaviours Summary

To fully address the first research question as to how values drive pro-environmental behaviours, the values data was set alongside of managers reported pro-environmental behaviours data, which was taken from chapter six. These data are displayed in table 16 'Managers Values and pro-environmental behaviours'.

Values expressed by manager (psydonym) — VALUE TYPE: ● Primary Value, ○ Secondary Value

Behaviour Descriptons
1. Disrupting Disassociating and letter writing
2. Creating - Education through external expertise
3. Creating -Education - courses or staff training
4. Creating Networks - Green teams
5. Creating Defining - Environmental certificaitons
6. Creative Influence - Creative Briefs
7. Industry Influence - Industry groups
8. New role Influence - Job descriptions

Psudonym	Egoistic Self	Egoistic Kin	Humanistic	Biospheric	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Danny		○	○	●	■	■	■	■	■		■	
Jack		○		●	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
Susannah			○	●	■	■	■	■	■	■		■
Helena			○	●	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Joan				●	■	■	■	■	■			■
Susan				●	■	■	■	■	■			
Peter		●		●	■	■	■		■	■		■
Gary			○	●	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Shelly			○	●	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Leila			●		■	■	■	■	■	■		
Rachel			●	○	■	■	■	■	■			
Emily			●	○		■	■	■	■			■
Richard			●		■		■		■			
Betty			●			■						
Elaine			●	○		■			■			
Adam		○	●		■			■				
Claire		●		○	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Karen		●			■	■	■					
Kay		●	○			■	■		■			
Sarah		●	○			■		■				
Matty		●				■	■		■		■	
Alexander		●			■		■		■			
Alice		●		○		■						
Robbie		●			■							
Annie	●		○				■	■				
Davey	●		○				■	■				
Bob	●									■	■	■
Brian	●	○						■			■	
Rami	●									■		
Aaron	●	○				■						

Table 16 Managers Values and pro-environmental behaviours'

The rationale behind presenting data in this way is to enable sense making of the data and identify potential trends and patterns. Table 16 displays two data sets. The values data in table 15 is replicated, and set alongside of managers reported pro-environmental values, further explored in chapter six. The data squares on the right hand side represent the reported behaviours which correspond to the titles in each column. Arranging the data this way shows that a greater quantity of reported behaviours sit at the top of the table, aligning with biospheric values. Those in the middle of the table, who report humanistic or egoistic-kin values, report a similar, yet fewer quantity of behaviours than those who express biospheric values. At the bottom of the table, those who express egoistic-kin values report the least quantity of pro-environmental behaviours.

How the findings address the research question

Whilst the values summary in table 15 partially answers the first part of the first research question, the values and behaviours data together answer it fully. The findings show that those who express strong biospheric values report a greater number of pro-environmental behaviours in the workplace in this particular setting and those who express egoistic-self values, the least.

The literature review did not arrive at a consensus as to which types of values drive pro-environmental behaviours, however there was a leaning towards egoistic values, across a range of settings, providing a space to contribute to understanding on this issue. This research shows that in this small sample of senior managers, against this institutional background, a range of values were expressed which led to pro-environmental behaviours; however it was those who expressed predominately strong biospheric values that reported the greater quantity of pro-environmental behaviours. Where managers reported predominately egoistic-self values, they reported somewhat less pro-environmental activity and seemed less motivated to become involved in pro-environmental behaviours. Whilst managers expressed a range of values which were overlapping, a strong concern for nature as well as a connection to it seemed to be the motivating factors when understanding what

values drive pro-environmental behaviours in this workplace. A discussion of these findings are further explored in chapter eight.

The following chapter six addresses the findings from the second research question and looks in more detail at senior managers behaviours.

6.0 RQ 2 Institutional Work Findings

Introduction

This findings chapter addresses the second research question:

RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

•   In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?

To do so, it draws on interviews with senior managers, and as detailed in section 4.5.2, the data were coded according to the three pillars of institutional work (IW), disrupting, maintaining and creating and open to other types of work which might not fit neatly into those pillars.

The literature review in chapter three examined the types of behaviours that are described as institutional work and identified key research gaps. There is little data on the direct consequences to actors carrying out disrupting work. The ways in which IW is used, the sequences as well as any responsive work is not adequately addressed in the literature, providing space to contribute in this way. Out of the three pillars of IW there are far fewer empirical examples of the disrupting pillar compared to the other two pillars (Leca, 2009) and none in the advertising sector, an industry with a strong institutional background (Gidley and Palmer, 2021).

Section 6.1 explores the ways in which managers attempt to disrupt within their agencies towards moving away from servicing fossil fuel clients and the consequences they encounter. Behaviours in the creating pillar are discussed in section 6.2, which is further sub-divided into three sections. Section 6.2.1 show how managers used educating for their own personal development as well as to motivate the wider body of staff. Section 6.2.2 look to how managers worked to construct normative networks such as green teams and committees. Section 6.2.3 examine how managers use defining work to obtain environmental

certifications on behalf of their organisations to push the sustainability agenda. Section 6.2.4 details data which is grouped together under the theme of 'influence' in which managers worked to have influence through creative training programmes; through job title changes which enabled managers to publicly signal to the industry their increased capacity and role; and through sitting on industry working groups so as to be in a position to guide the narrative on how sustainability is managed in the sector. Finally section 6.2.5 summarises these sections with 6.3 providing an overall summary of the chapter.

The analysis of the data did not find references to behaviours that could be categorised as examples of work in the maintaining pillar.

6.1 Disrupting Pillar

This section presents findings under the 'disrupting' category within the concept of IW, detailing behaviours aimed at challenging and disassociating the moral foundations of the institution by undermining institutional practices or rules. Managers expressed concerns regarding their organisations' continued collaboration with clients known for high levels of pollution, particularly in the oil and gas sectors. Managers highlighted the escalating climate crisis and the significant role that these clients play in exacerbating the problem. The data show that managers either initiated or joined mainly discursive activities, addressed to the very highest level of management (C-suite), asking for the issue to be acknowledged and addressed.

The following section consists of data excerpts in which managers describe their activities as well as at times, the consequences of this disrupting work.

Danny was part of an existing climate working group/committee. However, it focused only on basic operational emissions and failed to address the issues around working with polluting clients. He reviewed what his agency had published online around the organisations' climate activity and thought it inadequate:

"The stuff they had online about what the agencies approach to sustainability was not very good, to be honest...I said we should declare a climate emergency."

As a result, Danny wrote a letter to the global CEO. He went back to the working group and asked them to back it. The letter asked the C-suite to tackle issues around the agencies involvement in the climate emergency and also discussed issues around working with oil and gas clients:

"I had this committee vote on that document. So, I had like something like 99% of people said yes, we back this document. It went to the CEO."

The letter was unsuccessful, and the response from the CEO, fairly extreme:

"The CEO closed it down so like it got a really negative reaction. They basically b*llocked the head of this ESG group... and yeah, so that document, yeah, it was sh*t on from the CEO and I've actually kept an e-mail which they sent to the head of this ESG group which said, 'pull back on the climate work'. You know, there's a lot of good noises made and a lot of good intentions, but you know the kind of... as I'm sure you know, the big dilemma for the ad industry... the dilemma is the kind of juxtaposition is they can do all this wonderful operational stuff about footprint but you know... the big thing is the advertised emissions."

Danny was deeply troubled by the response they received from their CEO, seeing it as anti-democratic:

"I felt like they were kind of stamping out a democratic group within the organization... and so, you have these different stakeholders in the agency and on the one hand there were these signals about, yeah, we're doing this. And then on the other hand no dialogue. Just shut down and made people feel very uncomfortable."

Danny discussed how his agency was publicly seen to be leading on climate change but at the same time they were servicing fossil fuel clients. He thought about discussing this publicly, to draw attention to his agency's activities, but also discussed the potential consequences for him as an employee if he did this:

"Yeah, it would have had consequences to me, probably serious consequences around job, I would say."

Other behaviours such as putting up social media posts on LinkedIn about the climate emergency in general, had been censored by senior management. Nonetheless, Danny retained the sense that remaining an insider gave him a degree of agency:

"My presence in the business is enabling me to keep the pressure up like you know, like as I intend this year to raise it again. I want us to push for all this stuff and you know, make it uncomfortable for certain people."

Peter wanted the agency he worked for to account for the climate crisis and rethink their approach to working with polluting clients:

"I just said to them like this is something that as a network agency we have to look at. We can't pretend that this isn't happening... climate change is real. It's not going away; we are part of a supply chain."

In a bid to influence their approach, he wrote a letter to his organisation's C-suite but was ignored. He then turned to creative ways to communicate with them, producing a short film about the climate crisis that he sent to his senior management:

"I did the first edit, submitted to them for their review and just never heard back from them. And then, you know, followed up with them and I couldn't get an answer from any of them. They just wouldn't engage with me at all about it."

The continued lack of response led him to turn to a colleague that he perceived as perhaps having more traction and less likely to be ignored:

"Eventually I went to the head of production and I spoke to her and I said to her, look, I don't know what to do anymore because I've done this and I just, I can't even get them to say anything I just can't get them to engage with me at all. And she tried to follow it up and she came back and she just said they are not engaging with her about it either. So obviously they'd made a decision. It turns out later I found out that they were actually talking to a potential client who would have been a very controversial

client for climate change and that's why I believe, and I've never had this confirmed, but that's why I believe they just buried the whole thing. They didn't want to take a stance that could come back and bite them, you know, in terms of winning new clients."

This moral ambiguity demonstrated by his agency was difficult to accept:

"They never won the client in the end, but at the time, it became very clear to me that that was what was going on is that they just weren't prepared to jeopardise either existing client relations or you know, potential new client relations for taking a stance on climate change. And the more I realised it, the more it rubbed me up the wrong way, because I just thought to myself this is a global crisis... and for them to adopt that attitude is just completely unacceptable to me."

Peter wrote another proposal:

"I sent that to the C-suite and again, just crickets. They just absolutely refuse to engage with me about it."

Peter persisted and sent the same proposal to the global level of management:

"So when I went over their heads to the global team about climate change, I think that was the straw that broke the camel's back. I went to the global leadership and I send them the same proposal."

Peter's efforts remained unsuccessful. Neither his letters, film making, or proposals achieved the results he had hoped for. Then, after the last letter, he was made redundant. In his view, this was a direct consequence of his disrupting work.

"I was retrenched... and I'm absolutely certain it's because of the work that I was doing."

Aside from the practical consequences of becoming unemployed, there were also consequences for Peter's mental health:

"Yeah, I mean, I.. on a personal level, I ended up in a very, very, very dark place. After that, it took me probably at least six months to recover. I was just in a really, really bad place."

Alexander said that working in an agency that continued to engage with fossil fuel clients represented a significant clash with his values. To align himself more with his values, he started to attend external climate events. He said that he didn't feel he could do this publicly or let senior management know about it, as he was too concerned about the threat to his job security, (a point which other colleagues warned him about). He did, however, invite a few trusted colleagues:

"At the time I didn't tell anyone what I was doing really. I was just inviting, like trusted friends within, you know, the working environment saying you should come to this. But I wasn't standing up in Huddle saying, oh, by the way, I'm organising a climate crisis summit. When I was doing the Climate Crisis stuff, I was worried I was going to lose my job because we've got a big oil giant as a client, you know, and I told someone about it and they were like, 'Christ, don't lose your job', you know, like, freaking out."

Alexander recognised the particular psychological challenge of holding pro-environmental values in the advertising sector:

"Lots of people can't open their minds to what it is they're doing because that then creates huge psychological issues like, you know… what am I doing with my life? You know, like, I'm just selling loads of plastic, whatever you know. And I think that and I understand that's scary. And I think that's one of the other barriers is the deeper psychology behind changing your mind and coming to terms with what's required."

Jack was keen for his agency to go beyond simply addressing their operational emissions. He wanted to highlight the problems of working for highly polluting clients and the existential crisis brought about by one's job being essentially about promoting consumption of highly polluting goods:

"I'm not alone in the advertising industry, where you sort of have a bit of an existential crisis and you go look, I'm responsible for selling crap to people who don't really need it and driving consumerism... so there's that whole other like ethical existential thing that I think most progressive people in the industry probably have at some point."

He described how he felt about his role which seemed to reflect responsibility and complicity:

"We are complicit at the moment as the advertising industry... we are complicit in the delay. We target politicians and financial decision makers to make them think that fossil fuel clients are part of the solution, like, that's in the briefs. You know over the last yeah, I would say five or six years in particular it's become more and more clear to me that there's probably nothing more important than this issue, it's time critical."

Jack was one of a group of senior individuals who crafted a letter to senior leadership to address working with polluting clients. It gathered a significant amount of support across staff in many differing agencies within the same holding group, gathering hundreds of signatures:

"Over the last few months there has been an open letter amongst the group employees that's currently got over 800 signatures, asking [the group] to transition away from these [fossil fuel] clients. I have a feeling there are other similar things going around some of the other agencies."

At the same time, Jack also wrote another letter, a closed private letter to the group's management, this time from a small number of senior people with very similar content. The overall response to the letter with hundreds of signatures from the C-suite referred to policy but also invited individuals to follow their conscience:

"They sent out a memo detailing some of the new policies that we've got around clients. And it's very early days but a lot of it is basically bull sh*t and you know, only applies for new clients not existing clients, which is pointless if you've got [X fossil fuel clients] anyway, you're not going to go out and get others. But there are some, yeah, there's some good points in there, so they've now said it... it was a sort of an unspoken rule before, but it's now in writing in policy, that any employee who is asked to work

on an account that doesn't fit their personal, religious or moral values can ask to remove themselves from that account."

"They've also put guardrails in place for new business clients. There's this like climate framework that clients have to sort of checklist, they have to pass before we consider going for the business which I will believe when I see it - and how stringent that is I'd be surprised. And then yes, as I said, you know this applies to new clients, but not necessarily incumbent clients... given the extremely long length of some of these relationships and we've been [oil and gas company's] agency of record for over 50 years like they're not gonna go down easily."

In the following months Jacks agency re-pitched for contract renewals with existing fossil fuel clients, which was reported widely in the industry media. This was something that he feared might happen and rendered the 'climate framework' meaningless as he had predicted. Jack said he planned to carry on with his environmental work but mentioned that his social media accounts were being monitored for any specific posts that discussed climate change in general. He was invariably asked to remove these by senior management. He did not describe concrete ways in which he might carry on the work but did mention that he would be keeping his 'head down'. His view of the agency was that it would only engage with the issues raised by staff if company finances were seriously threatened:

"I don't know how much [agency name] truly care about that until it hits their stock price."

Helena spoke of her role in her agency with regards to the climate crisis. She had been part of an internal agency sustainability group that had written a letter to the CEO challenging the agency's continuing relationship with oil and gas clients:

"I was part of a group which wrote a letter to our global CEO to basically say, you know, we're not comfortable with the fact that we're still supporting fossil fuel clients. Can we have a conversation about it?"

Before Helena signed the letter, she showed it to her manager; it was clear that signing the letter would have consequences for Helena:

> "She basically said I don't think you should put your name on it, and that kind of opened up, it basically escalated and opened up a conversation with some senior people in the business. It didn't go very well."

After discussions with these senior people, Helena did not sign the letter and decided not to take any further action. She was reluctant to elaborate on this but did talk about how conflicted she felt in her role:

> "As I said, it didn't go down very well. So, it's not something that I've pushed since…if I'm being completely honest, I still don't think it's [advertising] probably the place for me. It's very conflicting even with my title being [redacted]. Yeah, it still feels a bit jarring… I just think my values and my kind of understanding of the level of change that needs to happen within society is so far removed from what the role that I'm doing really entails… I do kind of flip between ohh gosh shall I just quit and go and work on the Greenpeace warrior ship but then I think… I don't know, is it good to be making small changes in a bad industry where there's lots of good people, right? It's a bit of a.. it's a kind of constant battle."

Although Robbie signed a letter widely circulated in his organisation, asking for a re-evaluation of working with polluting clients, he expressed a degree of anxiety about taking this action and how safe it would be for him to do so:

> "I guess you know from a personal point of view… I wasn't really quite sure whether, you know, what's the sort of safety in numbers… I mean being really honest, it was ohh god… it's like its money or morals really."

Claire was able to contribute to moving her agency towards some operational net zero goals but had less success on tackling the issues around working with oil and gas clients. Her management made it clear that the agency would not be reconsidering their client portfolio:

"We had the CEO come over from America, they flew over to make it known that when the net zero strategy went through, it will not have any impact on their client profiles whatsoever."

Claire's response was to engage directly with her oil and gas clients and work with them in an educative role to encourage them to think about reducing extraction. However, despite her efforts to promote the benefits of a green transition, she found that she was being used to help greenwash existing activities around oil and gas extraction:

"So rather than educating them against it, we were literally educating and navigating them through the PR disaster... it got to the point where I really didn't think that... I got really scared actually, that what we were doing was so misaligned with where I started there."

To her dismay, she realised that her work was being used in the wrong way, enabling polluting clients to spin positive PR and get around climate goals, rather than addressing them:

"At that point when someone rang me up saying ohh, they really want to have a sustainability person in the room, that for me was just like, no, you know... that's crisis comms, isn't it? So we had taken all the knowledge we gained on the upcoming expectations around Net Zero and what would come, and we literally gave them a head start to navigate that."

While Claire was well aware of the conflict between her values and her work, it was when she realised that she would not be able to create change, that disillusionment set in:

"We're meant to be aggravated. None of us got into this job to feel comfortable. It's not comfortable any second of any day. So if you're feeling comfortable, you're doing something wrong... and I had a really big crisis with that too, and thought, well, maybe you can work in this industry and somehow use the handprint or the brain print as people wanted to see it, to move consumers in the right direction. I think that's incredibly naïve, and that's when it suddenly became very clear to me... I was not just part of an organisation; I was part of an industry that was having a massive

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identity crisis and a recognition that we were just as bad as the oil companies and anyone that was extracting. In fact, our jobs were literally predicated on taking the stuff out."

Eventually, unable to endure the conflict of working for an agency that was helping oil and gas clients to greenwash, Claire said she handed in her notice:

"I mean, I don't know how you go to bed at night feeling your conscious is clear."

In a similar way to Claire, Gary came to realise that his agency was using his professional expertise in a way that did not align with his values:

"I thought, god, I'm using that [influence] at the moment to make money for the business but what do I… what does that stand for? What's the real purpose of that? What is my purpose? So it got me asking a lot of sort of more existential questions, which were all driven by you know, my personal values."

Gary said that he felt unable to comment publicly on LinkedIn about climate issues. He was frustrated by what he called 'traditional thinkers' in his organisation, referring to the C-suite, who allowed operational changes to a point and then would not engage with the bigger issue of contributing to emissions through promoting consumption. He stated that he was looking for a position outside of the advertising sector. A few months after the interview, he left his organisation.

With the focus on values, managers spoke of the alignment – or lack of it – between their values and the values and practices of their organisation. The extent to which managers felt that they had agency within their organisation, through which they could enact their values, was clearly central for many managers. Rachel had pushed for a reduction in engaging with polluting clients but found she had no say. She therefore declared that she wouldn't work on these clients. But this gesture was not enough for her to feel sufficient alignment between her values and those of the organisation. Eventually, she made the decision to leave and go and work in a smaller more ethical agency:

"I began to understand more deeply how ineffectual I was being with my values and my mission working from the place that I was working from, like as a representative of an advertising agency trying to advise on issues of sustainability... my voice had no value."

Leila described her time working in the US, and was aware that any activities to confront her advertising agency regarding oil and gas clients had potential consequences for her job security:

"I was on a visa in the US and doing this work while on a visa, thinking about if I lose my job, I'm gonna get deported. It was not great for me and my mental health."

The wake-up call came upon returning to the UK and finding a position within a new agency that she realised also had oil and gas clients:

"And that really started a journey of like, holy sh*t, we work with a ton of oil clients. We need to figure this out... and we're doing their advertising and we're like, forwarding them social license."

At the time of interviewing, Leila had engaged in letter writing but the outcomes and consequences of her disrupting work is not known.

Karen worked to petition her C-suite to move away from existing polluting clients. However, as discussed by other managers, concerns about profits overrode her organisation's willingness to change:

"It's quite clear, right, in terms of we're working with [an oil and gas client] who's a bit of an offender. And on top of that, you know, the science is clear in terms of the damage that oil companies have caused. They [C-suite], have financial decisions which are in numbers that they need to hit on a quarterly basis... and then here I come and I'm the person who's trying to give a different sense or help us balance the idea of people planet and profit at the same time and constantly having to build those narratives and the, you know, the business case... I have seen executives that often

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rolled their eyes when I have suggested maybe we need to re-evaluate our relationships with oil companies. The reality is that you know, who declines 100 million of revenue that's coming into your business without major impacts happening?"

Of all the managers, Karen was unique in finding the challenge of moving her agency away from highly polluting clients invigorating. At the same time, there were limits to her commitment. Even though her values did not fully align with her organisation's values, she said she would draw the line at any hint of climate denial:

"I'll definitely stay so that I can keep fighting that fight. But if it did come to, you know, there are just straight up climate deniers in this situation. If we became one of those, and my values and beliefs were not aligned to the organisation, then I would absolutely leave that space."

An example of effective disrupting work with positive outcomes was Joan. She held the position of managing director of an independent agency[25] and had arrived at the point where she thought a full- scale transition needed to happen in the company:

"I said right, I think we have to totally rethink about our business model and we need to start being much more forward-looking and preparing ourselves for the fact that the world is gonna have to, I believe, eventually get to the point where it's working in a different way and it can't just be about profit. And I'm uncomfortable with it just being about profit all the time. And there is another way. And so I proposed B-Corp as a direction to move in."

Through engaging with the C-suite, she was able to push for operational changes that addressed climate issues. Then she succeeded in persuading her agency to sign industry pledges that agreed not to work with any potential fossil fuel clients, therefore declining potential future profit. Joan thought that her seniority was a major factor in her success:

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[25] An independent agency is one which is not owned by any of the six global holding groups.

"Being that I'm a managing director obviously like I said, I'm lucky in the sense of I do get to affect the direction that the business goes. And I do get to have high level conversations with you know, shareholders and the people that own us and the CEO. I think the difference is having somebody senior drive the commitment to kind of push that through in the first instance."

However, given that all managers interviewed for this research held senior positions, it is worth considering other factors that might have contributed to Joan's success. The obvious factor is that the agency did not at the time have any oil or gas clients, so in making this commitment, the agency did not stand to lose any existing revenue. Joan herself acknowledged this:

'I think it's very difficult for some of the big holding companies to give up some of their client accounts because their business is probably based on disproportional income that comes from certain sectors."

Other managers describe similar discursive disrupting behaviours, driven by their values, and some further data excerpts of this are featured in the coding section 4.5.2.

Disrupting work had consequences for many managers but the risks for some were outweighed by the knowledge that they had at least spoken out. As Leila put it, her disrupting work had raised the issue with her agency and in a way inferred her conscience was clear:

"They can no longer deny or say they're unaware of the impacts of working with fossil fuel clients."

While for many managers, writing or signing a letter was a specific disrupting activity, many engaged in disruption through dialogue. For example, Susannah tried to drive home to her CEO through one to one conversations, how unethical their oil and gas clients were:

"How many of our clients have been taken to court for causing death and destruction in multiple countries? None of them, apart from this sector."

She explained that even though her CEO agreed with her, his power was limited, and that many leaders were expected to maintain the status-quo:

> "He didn't see himself as a CEO being able to disrupt... I think fighting comes down to the lack of power so many of our senior leaders actually have. In terms of the multiple stakeholders, the holding company, the shareholders, the actual risk involved of being a disruptor... I don't see many leaders empowered to make radical changes and supported to make radical changes. They're expected to do exactly what's come before them and maintain and tweak around the edges."

Adam described how difficult it was to disrupt the narrative, given the rationales people found to justify their work:

> "I think there is soft climate concern amongst most people and a degree of conflicted-ness about the work we do which, I wouldn't overstate because the people that work on it, find lots of ways to rationalise it... it's a slightly fruitless thing to kind of start talking about like, you're not gonna win points for running around saying, let's sack this client... the reason to keep working with fossil fuel companies is solely revenue."

Shelly expressed her concerns around her agency continuing to work with oil and gas clients and she made it clear to senior management that she wouldn't work on briefs for those clients. She expressed some trepidation regarding the consequences:

> "You know, I am at a point in my career where I still felt quite nervous, weirdly, about saying it, but I felt that I, you know, in the role that I do, I felt that I had the license and the agency to say no, I don't want to work on this."

She expressed the intense conflict that she felt and how unsure she was of the way forward for her career:

> "Do I just kind of go, I can't do this anymore because the tension is too much and it's too at odds with, you know, how I want my career to go in terms of the impact that I have on the world and should I just step away and move into something else? Or you

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know is there more impact that can be achieved by staying here and doing what I can

to make a difference?"

6.1.1 Disrupting Summary

Managers' behaviours were categorised as disrupting as they aimed to disassociate the moral foundations of their agencies, that of putting profit from oil and gas and other highly polluting clients before urgent climate needs. For these managers, the advertising industry's continued engagement with oil and gas clients was deeply problematic. They felt both complicit and compromised, driving them to disruptive behaviours. The most common was letter writing and those that wrote letters individually or in a small group were either ignored or received a negative response. In some cases, managers were told in no uncertain terms to stop any further action of this nature. Peter, for example, was convinced that his disrupting behaviours had contributed to him being made redundant: as far as he could see, there seemed to be no obvious commercial reason as to why his role would be retrenched. Other managers were told to disengage from climate work. They became aware that their social media profiles were being monitored and sometimes perceived implicit threats to their job security.

Letters that were signed by large groups of staff were more likely to be considered. However, any measures that were introduced or concessions made, were largely perceived by managers as tokenistic, in that they did not apply to the existing client base. Some managers were able to have one-on-one conversations with their CEOs or their senior leadership team directly. One manager was discouraged from signing any letters while others received no feedback at all. Only one manager who was involved in an agency that did not have any existing oil and gas clients, was able to gain support for future guidelines around working with polluting clients. But perhaps their success was mainly because there were no existing problematic clients to retire, and therefore no existing revenue to lose.

The findings show a range of actor level consequences to disrupting work, from severe to modest to none at all. However, aside from direct consequences in the form of job loss

concerns, the data suggest that there are indirect consequences for mental and physical well-being when one feels an acute dissonance between one's personal values and one's role in an organisation. Many discussed the discomfort that they felt. Although some felt they wanted to keep 'fighting', some also felt that their work was 'ineffective' and their role had no meaningful purpose. This highlights potential barriers to IW which is further addressed in research question three. Table 17 'Summary of the consequences experienced by managers', summarises the findings of this chapter.

Pseudonym	Actor level Consequences	Data Extract
Peter	Made redundant; he was sure it was because of his climate work.	*I ended up in a very, very, very dark place. After that, it took me probably at least six months to recover.*
Danny	Perceived threat of job loss, couldn't speak out because of potential consequences, continued despite conflicting values.	*Probably serious consequences around job, I would say.*
Helena	Implied threat of job loss; wouldn't discuss potential consequences.	*As I said, didn't go down very well. So, it's not something that I've pushed since.*
Jack	Perceived threat of job loss continued in role despite conflicting values.	*I'm not alone in the advertising industry, where you sort of have a bit of an existential crisis.*
Alexander	Continued in role despite conflicting values and worries around job loss.	*When I was doing the Climate Crisis stuff, I was worried I was going to lose my job.*
Shelly	Continued in role despite conflicting values and concerns.	*Should I just step away and move into something else?*
Rachel	Conflicted values. Handed in notice and left her role.	*I began to understand more deeply how ineffectual I was being with my values.*
Claire	Conflicted values. Also handed in notice and left her role.	*It's not comfortable any second of any day.*
Gary	Conflicted values. Again, handed in notice and left his role.	*What is my purpose?*
Karen	Stayed in job but described it as a 'fight'.	*I'll definitely stay so that I can keep fighting that fight.*
Susannah	Stayed in job but described it as a 'fight'.	*I think fighting comes down to the lack of power so many of our senior leaders actually have.*
Leila	Continued in role despite conflicting values and concerns.	*They can no longer deny or say they're unaware of the impacts.*
Robbie	Stayed in role but remained conflicted.	*It's like its money or morals really.*
Joan	No consequences as such as she was able to move her agency towards her values.	*I'm lucky in the sense of I do get to affect the direction that the business goes.*

Table 17 Summary of the consequences experienced by managers

The next section looks to behaviours whose descriptions were coded to the creating pillar of IW.

6.2 Creating Pillar

Behaviours coded as belonging to the creating pillar of IW, included educating, constructing normative networks and defining. Behaviours that did not fit entirely within the three pillars, were coded inductively as 'Working towards Creative and Industry Influence'.

6.2.1 Educating

Educating addresses the boundaries of meaning systems which might be changed or altered towards more effective institutions. It is aimed at increasing knowledge, understandings and skills that actors can use towards the development of novel practices and formation of new institutions. Managers reported behaviours around education in different ways. The most common was to bring in organisations such as Extinction Rebellion[26]. To increase their own knowledge, managers also signed up to external sustainability and leadership courses. Some managers set up internal staff courses related to their particular area, such as integrating sustainability into strategy or creativity. Managers described the ways in which educating helped or motivated them and other staff and this seemed to be an ongoing process for most.

External Speakers

Joan described the impact on her CEO from hosting a session from Extinction Rebellion (XR) involving role play. Prior to the session, her CEO had not engaged in the climate conversation but by making the realities of climate change salient through the session, the effect on her CEO was significant:

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[26] Extinction Rebellion (XR) is a global environmental movement that uses nonviolent civil disobedience to pressure governments to act on climate change, biodiversity loss, and social and ecological collapse

"In the Extinction Rebellion presentation, they came in and there was sort of an imagining of what [climate change] would be like... that certainly moved her [CEO] into, you know, a more of an activist space, because it suddenly became real."

Danny had brought a range of speakers into his agency to motivate staff regarding the climate issue, including Extinction Rebellion. He describes the way in which the talk from them helped him to persuade his agency to declare a climate emergency as a business:

"So it was not long after the XR stuff that went on in London and you know like after that... I said we should declare a climate emergency in the building... we were allowed to bring that to the table."

Courses for staff

External sustainability courses were mentioned by several managers. Such courses were not just informative but empowered them. Susannah described the course on sustainability that she attended as transformative:

"So I did the course, it was exhilarating. Disturbing. I just felt so reinvigorated by it, just like the learning and dedicating and really investing in myself. But like literally every day, every article or every paper that I read, it just became for me, it just became so obvious that, this was the future, like there was no option about this."

Alexander also attended a course about sustainability, after which he was able to incorporate the description of 'sustainability' into his main title to describe this additional focus of his job role:

"I did the Cambridge Sustainability Business Management course... it's a crash course in what businesses, financial institutions and governments should do broadly... so I did that and then off the back of that I just said, look, can you check, can I obviously I haven't had discussions about promotion, can you just change my title? And they

just said yes, of course, because I've been doing it so that was where that came from and then it obviously just sets you on a clearer path as well."

Helen's experience of a business sustainability course inspired her to create a new role for herself in her organisation:

"I did a course, a business sustainability management course, and then kind of like made myself the other official sustainability champion in the company."

Shelly attended a course that was explicitly about empowerment, entitled 'Reclaiming the Agency'. She explained how she was inspired to set up a group of representatives from different agencies, believing that collectively, they could have more of an impact than individually:

"And so I was learning more, feeling a bit more empowered to actually kind of take that next step into how we could take this into a broader conversation… so I jointly set up a group called [redacted], so that brings together representatives from all of the agencies, the media agencies that sit within [redacted], and we really came together and started to think about how we could work together to accelerate this within our agencies because we knew that if we all try to do it individually, we probably wouldn't get a lot of traction but if we all came together and came up with a plan and an approach to ways that we could start to embed this into our work, that we'd get a lot more leverage with our leaders."

Gary spoke about how the course he attended, the CISL[27] course at Cambridge, had expanded his knowledge. Recognising the value of this new knowledge, his CEO asked him to steer the organisation's ESG[28] strategy;

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[27] CISL, (Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership) runs a course that teaches sustainability topics for those in leadership roles.

[28] ESG stands for Environmental, Social and Governance. These are terms which address sustainability in an organisation.

"That [course] gave me a bit more sort of actual knowledge as opposed to kind of a lot of views that I had, you know, and that was useful. And then on the back of that, I started to talk about what's the company's role in this and then he [his CEO] basically said why didn't you have a crack at trying to craft our ESG strategy?"

According to Matty, the AdGreen [29] training, which he took, is now given to all new employees starting at his agency.

"Everybody has done the AdGreen training and every new start in the business now has done it, which is great. I've had some general training and we've had some free training through AdGreen as a sort of company... the company paid for me to do that, that was generally quite helpful."

It seems that managers used educational behaviours to increase their knowledge, to motivate and empower themselves, as well as their staff. Bringing in external speakers and experts, as well as attending specialist courses, gave them a deeper understanding of climate issues and helped motivate them towards further climate action. Armed with new knowledge and expertise, they were able to develop their environmental awareness and at times modify their roles or job titles within the organisation. Examples of job title changes, promoted by educating work in this section also has overlaps with data coded towards 'Influence' in section 6.2.4. All of the work described in educating seemed to be used to build foundations or collateral for new groups or new roles.

6.2.2 Constructing Normative Networks

Work in this pillar is defined in the literature as the formation of connections in peer groups, through which activities such as evaluation and compliance might occur to provide the foundations for new practices or institutions (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). This work aims

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[29] AdGreen is a UK-based organization that helps the advertising industry reduce the environmental impact of its filmed productions.

to change the normative assumptions that connect sets of actors and enables them to work to form new structures, at times set alongside and in addition to, existing ones. One way in which managers worked to highlight the issues around sustainability in their agency was by taking part in existing or creating new green teams. While these may not have always been as successful or effective as managers had hoped, these teams did contribute to shifting the ongoing narrative towards new practices around operational sustainability and act as a foundation for further, possibly disrupting types of work.

For Helena, creating a green team at work was a starting point that helped her to see the role of the advertising industry in climate issues:

> *"From that realized, oh, actually there's so much connection between everything we're doing in our jobs and the climate crisis."*

The green team Shelly set up in her agency attracted passionate volunteers who wanted to take meaningful action. She sees their role as helping people to make small personal behaviour changes such as saving energy and recycling as a foundation for broader institutional action:

> *"We used to do a load of stuff here, and that's kind of all fizzled away. I think it would be good to kind of bring it back, reenergise it so I set up a green team internally within the agency…and brought together a load of really amazing, passionate volunteers who wanted to kind of accelerate the work that we were doing in this space, so yeah, probably around 2016 / 2017 when I personally started taking kind of action and bringing this into my work. And then we've developed it out from there. So it's more about helping people understand how they could behave more sustainably in the building, things like saving energy, things like getting people to recycle more. I mean, we hadn't even kind of thought about the next stage of that at that point, which was how do we take this more broadly into our work. But as we got more involved in that, we started thinking about things like the climate and the carbon impact of media."*

Annie's experience of setting up a green team was not so positive. Enthusiasm among staff quickly waned:

> "Yeah so I was actually part of the team that created or set up a committee called [redacted], which … one of the things that struck me was initially we got loads of traction of people being like, yay, I wanna join in and then very quickly or just as quickly, people would drop off and there was suddenly maybe just five of us left in this. So and that kind of struck me as I think sometimes I struggle to understand like, why don't people care about this as much as I do."

Joan was somewhat sceptical about green teams in the advertising industry. For her they were important to a point but with little real power to make significant changes:

> "I think a lot of agencies have, like green teams and sometimes they feel, you know, as if it's sort of just lip service. Quite often they're quite junior members of staff who, you know, haven't really got the opportunity to make much change outside of having recycling day or, you know, raising money for charity. And it's not being mean about what they do because they do play an important role in a lot of businesses."

Similarly, Danny spoke about the existing green team in his agency as being 'well-intentioned' but a bit 'lame':

> "They had a committee and a kind of an employee ESG group Yeah. Which met once a month, I think. And just, you know, try to do little awareness raising initiatives in the building, very well-intentioned, a little bit lame. But like, you know they'll say, hey, what should we do for Earth Day?"

He did, however, make use of this group to help raise issues that were more important to him, such as working with oil and gas clients:

> "So there was already a sort of forum where I could go and make suggestions."

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In this way, even though the data show that he didn't necessarily feel the focus on issues such as recycling were important to him, this existing group was leveraged to address change at a higher level.

The data show that while building these kinds of networks may not always seem effective, they can provide the foundation for new practices. At times, managers used these groups as an initial network which provided the basis for tackling broader issues.

6.2.3 Defining

In the IW framework, 'defining' in the creating pillar involves a rule or system which denotes status, membership or hierarchy (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Examples in the advertising industry include sustainability status through reporting on standards of climate goals. Initiatives that infer this status through membership include B-Corp, SBTi, CDP reporting and Ad Net Zero (see glossary for descriptions). Using environmental standards to define status or membership of an agency, was an action that several managers in this study referred to and seemed to be an ongoing, at times lengthy process. However, there was widespread concern and disillusionment due to the focus being limited to operational sustainability while ignoring issues around working with polluting clients or from advertised emissions. Despite this limitation, Joan described how beneficial working towards B-Corp had been for her organisation:

> *"We kind of then kicked off the B-Corp journey, and I can honestly say over the last two years, we've changed in every area of our business because of that. And it has given people almost the permission to have the conversations that they want to have or to bring up some of those things that I think like I said, people feel in their personal lives but kind of don't bring up in the work situation and you know, we've still got a long way to go. It's not like you achieve certification and you know you kind of rub your hands together and say, Oh well done us, that's it."*

Adam refers to his views and others like him, who are more sceptical about certifications. Referring specifically to the SBTi process, Adam intimated that it failed to address the work advertisers do for oil and gas companies:

> "We've done the SBTi process I think only because we get scope questions, and all of us who are more, I don't know, more the activist end of climate have always been a bit sceptical of that... we still work with [oil and gas company]."

Danny also had experience of the SBTi programme and welcomed the impact of the initiative which was to focus on decarbonising the operational side:

> "But you know that it's being taken seriously, like there's a proper plan being put in place to decarbonise the operational side of the business and you know SBTi and like, you know stuff that wasn't there, it wasn't even on the radar... it's now properly getting addressed."

For an international agency like Bob's, B-Corp status was problematic because part of the requirement for membership is that the organisation must make changes to their Articles of Association[30] to include mission-aligned legal language. This means that legally, directors have to consider the interests of all stakeholders, not just shareholders, when making business decisions. This is often the reason why very large corporations or holding groups do not achieve B-Corp status. Bob commented:

> "We have talked about it and we might actually do it, but it's really complicated for us because of the international thing."

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[30] A company's Articles of Association are a set of documents that defines its purpose and states the regulations that will govern it. The articles typically detail how directors will be hired and how financial records will be handled. CGL 2023

Matty stated that he was 'relieved' to be working towards gaining B-Corp status for his agency. He also worked on contributing to CDP disclosures, which are a set of disclosures on environmental issues that denote progress on annual sustainability targets:

> "[B-Corp]..It's good…that was something that we were thinking about for about three years… really happy, relieved it's happened a couple of months ago… the CDP reports - we've been doing that for the last three or four years."

Defining work through certifications is complex and due to the variety of different standards applied it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of these processes. Nonetheless, managers generally saw value in engaging with these processes and bringing into awareness the need for the advertising industry to work towards certain environmental goals. These certifications have integrity and are valuable at reporting organisational types of emissions and could possibly be seen as building the foundations of a strong environmental ethos of an agency, and therefore one which might move towards incorporating advertised emissions.

6.2.4 Influence

Some of the interview data did not easily fit the IW pillars. These data were coded under the theme 'Working towards Creative and Industry Influence'. The theme is sub divided into three categories. Firstly, managers joined industry-wide working groups on sustainability in order to have a voice and opinion on the industry's effect on climate change. Secondly, managers engaged in behaviours that functioned towards them having some form of creative influence, either through promoting sustainability in creative departments or by working directly to influence client briefs. There is a degree of overlap with the 'educating' pillar, as in some instances, managers took 'Change the Brief'[31] courses to enable them to do this work and roll it out internally. Changing or creating a new job title was the third way

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[31] Change The Brief is an on-demand and face to face learning programme and community offering insights and expert advice on how we can adapt our work to promote more sustainable choices and behaviours in line with a net-zero world.

in which managers worked to gain more influence. At first it would seem that manages might take this action as a way of changing their identities, however the further articulation of this action was really to have influence and a more prominent voice on sustainability issues. These new job titles were often hybrid titles, such as Head of Strategy and Sustainability or Head of Production and Sustainability.

A significant theme to emerge was concerns about Advertised Emissions and the extent to which their own organisations were tackling this in relation to polluting clients. Related to this, was the extent to which managers saw their agency as complicit with green washing. They therefore sought wider forums in order to tackle this at a broader level, by asking questions and ultimately changing norms by aiming to shift the narrative.

Working Groups - Industry Influence

(Note: Some managers are not referred to even by their pseudonym, to prevent potential identification, as some of the groups mentioned here have a small number of members.)

The two main working groups that managers referred to were the Ad Net Zero (ANZ) initiative which sits under the umbrella of the Advertising Association (AA), and one from the Institute of Practitioners of Advertising (IPA).

One senior manager spoke about wanting to have more of a say on how advertised emissions – one of the topics of interest to the group - were considered in the industry, which he was able to do through the AA's ANZ group.

> *"I sit on this Ad Net Zero working group and I can ask difficult questions and I do you know…"*

Another senior manager was also in the ANZ working group, but his belief in being able to have influence, fluctuated:

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"I'm on the steering group for the Ad Net Zero initiative, which is obviously headed up by the Advertising Association and my sort of feeling, my sort of take of it at the moment, does change up and down in terms of like, how cynical I am about it or how optimistic I am about it."

Even though these managers felt their ability to create change through these working groups was limited, another manager felt it was becoming a central part of the profession and a way to have a greater influence on the way sustainability is managed in the industry:

"And then that led me into like the IPA and I found out committees and then I found out about Ad Net Zero… by hook or by crook over a few years it's become a much more central part of a potentially, even, you know, the entirety of the theme of professional work now."

Gary spoke about an in-house group his agency developed, which debated issues around sustainability and helped the agency as a whole arrive at ethical decision making:

"It's an ethics group… and so we've kind of gone for having very regular discussions about the projects we're involved in and the good and bad of each of those. And one of our great takeaways from it is there's actually not that many clear red lines out there. So a good example is probably tobacco, where we've managed to go, that's a red line, another might be sort of [the] weapons [industry]."

Overall the way managers felt about the effectiveness of these industry groups varied, however it did seem as if some groups proved useful to have some kind of industry influence or indeed influence over internal agency decisions.

Creative Influence

Creative influence was mainly enacted through setting up creative training for staff (thus overlapping with the educational theme) and through writing creative sustainability briefs.

The theme of influence was often articulated as 'making a difference'. Leila spoke about how she was designing a course around advising staff on how to manage creative briefs so as to avoid greenwashing:

> *"And that sort of been my focus of like, we're currently writing a '[redacted] training programme', so like OK, say your clients are giving you an environmental claim, how do you make sure you're not greenwashing? Agencies are the first victims of greenwashing when it comes to, like, their clients. Like, we believe that their product is eco-friendly. And so, we agree to sell it. Or maybe you believe it enough, like, maybe sometimes there's a bit of scepticism in the back of your mind".*

Similarly, Susannah wanted to put creative training in place for staff, so they could understand how to challenge environmental claims:

> *"On their websites, they're [clients] saying they're gonna hit net zero in 2050... and I'm not a scientist, so therefore I believe that that website statement is true... what I'm trying to do is get the resource in place to then roll out this training."*

Rami said he enjoyed working on creative sustainability briefs when they came in, and said he was happy putting his skills to more meaningful work, though he expressed some reservations about whether or not the work that he did created any effect:

> *"I feel like I'm in a better place now and actually creating work and putting work out into the world that could make a difference, but you also kind of feel how much of a difference is this really gonna make and you just kind of have to wait and see and keep trying, I think."*

Robbie, who also worked on creative sustainability briefs, was sceptical about how much difference these briefs made, feeling that any meaningful behaviour change would only come about through other types of system change:

"I think as lovely as the world of advertising is, it's actually a pretty blunt tool and fairly ineffective tool… I know we have to say we're amazing at behaviour change but bigger behaviour change will come from the systems change that we haven't seen."

Jack spoke about the Change The Brief training; he thought training staff in this was really important but indicated that it didn't reach board level:

"So, in my mind that's like that's a key part of it, so training, it has been a big one… I would say this year has been basically doing a lot of the groundwork starting a lot of the conversations, but it has not been at board level it's been very much educating the broader employee workforce."

In relation to Change The Brief training, Bob expressed disappointment that take up was slow both within his agency and also more widely in the industry:

"So that cost us, you know, a reasonable amount of money in the grand scheme of things, it's not very much, but it's still, you know, substantial. But I know that that has been actively pushed in some agencies and others have not talked… you know, they've just not done anything with it."

Overall, there were mixed reasons for engaging in work which helped with creative influence, but it seemed to be led by an understanding that more training for creative staff was needed around the climate crisis as well as ways to understand and challenge environmental claims from clients.

Establishing new roles

Another way that managers sought to influence their organisations was by changing their titles in part or in whole, or to create entirely new roles that signal a shift towards sustainability and allow for more influence. Whilst establishing new roles might seem to fit into descriptions of constructing identities, the motivation here is to enable managers to

work towards having influence through the new role or title change, rather than creating a new identity for its own sake.

Jack made the case for a change of title to a hybrid one which would reflect his increasing interest on the company's sustainability agenda. A title change would enable him to have influence and to advise clients;

> *"I said, I would like to be the person in the UK who advises our clients on what that means for their marketing what that means for their audience strategy. What that means for their advertising from an emissions point of view et cetera."*

Gary was working on his company's ESG strategy and wanted this incorporated into his title, alongside his existing role:

> *"So what we talked about is what my job title should be, should it be head of [redacted] and Responsible Business…?'*

Joan felt that supplementing her title with an environmental description enabled her to have influence on what her agency was doing around issues of sustainability. Significantly, Joan also refers to 'accountability' in terms of the environmental impact of her company and how she might incorporate this into her role:

> *"We felt by adding that to my title, there was somebody internally and externally accountable for what we were saying we were doing."*

Wanting to 'bridge the gap' between the climate crisis and what could be done in her organisation, Helena was able to change not simply her title but her remit:

> *"There's so much connection between everything we're doing in our jobs and the climate crisis. How could I bridge that gap? And then yeah, eventually managed to make it my job."*

Susan's increasing interest in the climate agenda meant that she had been able to get 'sustainability' built into her title and somewhat into her role. She said that the job title enabled her to have more influence around sustainability issues:

"I've come into it, you know, in this role within [agency name redacted] and transitioned into the role, so you know… I guess because of my role and status of being sustainability manager, you know it definitely helps people take you seriously and drive change, you know, maybe whether it's through a supply chain or whatever."

Bob wanted more scope to influence his agency at a global level so in addition to a title change, he broadened the remit of the role:

"I wanted this new role and its global, so I've got it. So not only is it sort of structured… you get individual agencies and then you get regional groups and then you get the global group. So what I'm doing at the moment is global… so you know the scope for change is way bigger."

Susannah's title change reflected the fact that she was already juggling both roles. She eventually moved into sustainability full time after her senior manager said she needed more time:

"After a few - months of still doing my current role and sort of trying to shoehorn it in and by the end of the year he was like we need you to have time to dedicate to this and then that's when I moved into it."

Emily spoke about her title change from 'Strategist' to 'Strategy and Sustainability'. It gave her licence to talk about sustainability with clients:

"It's kind of been made up as we've gone along to kind of match the work that I've been focusing on and the type of clients projects that they put me on and so yeah, so it does sometimes feel like it's a little bit separate to what everybody else is doing you know you can find yourself trying to burst bubbles a lot."

Sarah describes the way in which she argued for a change to be made to her job title, to reflect the focus on sustainability and signal the importance of sustainability in the organisation's overall strategy:

> *"The change of job title came out of a really informal conversation with my manager, where I kind of went, I'm introducing myself as a strategy director and then I go into the fact that I focus on sustainability… it would just be easier if I could be Head of Sustainability. And then people get what I do. And so it was a mixture of kind of the role changing itself, but then the job title was just more of a signalling thing. It was just much simpler like I have a job title that says what it does on the tin".*

This section demonstrates how managers altered, changed or created new job roles and titles to have more influence over sustainability within their agency and to signal to external clients that sustainability was a major concern and value in their agency.

6.2.5 Creating Summary

In the creating pillar, three types of behaviours were coded: educating, constructing normative networks and defining. Managers used education to bring in external speakers to motivate and educate staff, to increase awareness of the climate crisis and the industry's relationship to it, perhaps to build momentum for change or communicate their concerns through other channels. Managers also sought education for themselves, particularly, courses on sustainability, to advance their skills and knowledge and at time to facilitate a job title or role change. Managers also constructed normative networks through forming or joining green teams. Whilst there were mixed views about how effective these groups or teams were, as they only addressed operational types of emissions they did at times act as foundations for disrupting work.

The findings also showed that managers engaged in defining work through certifications, with the aim of moving their organisations further towards sustainability, specifically around

carbon reporting. Again, whilst some managers were aware these initiatives did not address the issues of engaging with polluting clients, or advertised emissions, they were still considered valuable in drawing attention to the need for the advertising industry to be accountable in the climate agenda.

Some data did not neatly fit into the three pillars of IW, which suggests that IW is more complex from the actor perspective than prior research has suggested. These data were inductively coded under the theme of 'Influence', in that managers engaged in certain behaviours so as to have influence over their agency or industry. They sought influence through sitting on industry working groups to guide the narrative on how sustainability is managed in the sector. They sought to influence the creative input of their agency through setting up specific training programmes around working on client briefs. Lastly, they sought to influence their agency and client briefs through job title changes that publicly signalled the importance of sustainability and accountability for emissions. All these types of IW were described as taking place over a period of time, often building collateral towards disrupting work, but were often ongoing and needed continued effort to sustain.

The following section summarises the key findings of this chapter and discusses the contribution of the findings to current IW research.

6.3 IW Findings Summary

This chapter has discussed managers' pro-environmental behaviours that can be seen as belonging to the disrupting and creating pillars of IW. Behaviours in the disrupting pillar were directed at questioning the ongoing servicing of oil and gas clients, as well as other polluting clients. The findings show that with a few exceptions, the attempts to disrupt were brought consequences to the managers themselves.

Behaviours identified in the creating pillar were educating, constructing normative networks and defining. An additional set of behaviours were categorised as working towards having

'influence'. All these types of IW were described as ongoing over a period of time. Creating types of work seemed to be used to build collateral toward disrupting types of work, and then again back to creating through further education for themselves, staff, or job title changes as well as working over periods of time towards certifications.

These findings contribute to existing IW research in two areas:

Actor level consequences

There is a lack of attention in scholarship to actor level consequences of IW (Lawrence et al., 2013; Leca, 2009; Pawlak, 2011; Phillips and Lawrence, 2012; Hampel et al., 2017) which presents a gap in the literature. These findings have contributed to that gap by gaining more understanding as to the range of consequences suffered by managers as they work to disrupt their institution. The findings have shown that suffering actor level consequences of disrupting work has the potential to serve as a barrier to any further IW. Barriers to IW are further explored through research question three.

Recursive IW

In current research, IW tends to be presented simplistically as a one off action, often in a sequential process towards an end goal. Yet these findings show that the process of IW does not occur in this way. For example, managers often carry out creating work, building new practices and institutions, before aiming to disrupt. Disrupting comes with consequences, and therefore managers go back to creating types of work with which to build more collateral with which to disrupt. Creating work also contained actions that do not fit into existing descriptions from the literature, and this work was themed towards 'influence'. These additional types of work indicate more complexity than the existing pillars and their dimensions describe. Overall IW is found to be as a recursive, messy, stop-start process of behaviours across these pillars and behaviours described.

How the findings address the research question

The second research question of this thesis asks how can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work and in what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences? The findings show that senior managers carried out various types of disrupting and creating institutional work, but not any maintaining work. This lack of maintaining is likely due to managers aiming to create new or modify their existing institutions. Managers employed recursive IW that involved creating new institutions and building up resources before moving towards disrupting work. The disrupting work aimed to disassociate the moral foundations of their institution, and brought about various actor level consequences, perhaps due to the strong institutional background of the setting.

A discussion of these findings is further explored in chapter eight. The following chapter seven addresses the findings from the third research question, which looks at the ways in which managers experience and articulate the barriers to their institutional work.

7.0 RQ 3 Barriers: Findings

Introduction

This findings chapter addresses the third research question:

RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

•   How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

•   How might potential enablers overcome these?

To do so, it draws on interviews with senior managers; as detailed in section 4.5.3, the data were coded inductively, as managers expressed their thoughts on the barriers to their work. Furthermore, a turn to secondary online data was sought to triangulate the findings from senior managers interviews in line with the critical realist ontology. The process of content analysis is detailed in section 4.5.4.

Section 7.1 details the lack of transparency of agencies' polluting clients which is seen as a barrier to managers' efforts to raise awareness and disrupt. Sections 7.2 describes data that show within the sector, membership bodies such as the Advertising Association (AA), and its initiative, Ad Net Zero (ANZ), should, according to managers, provide leadership. Section 7.2.1 addresses the AA's funding and membership structure and 7.2.2 looks to the way the ANZ initiative omits issues around advertised emissions (AE). Section 7.2.3 addresses the AA's working group on advertised emissions (AE), and 7.2.4 examines the way the AA communicate managers' concerns to the wider sector. Section 7.3 addresses managers expressed opinions on the enablers to their work, that of government action. Section 7.4 followed these themes and turned towards secondary online data to triangulate the findings. The chapter concludes with a summary in section 7.5 and how these contribute to the literature.

7.1 Lack of Transparency

According to Richard, the lack of transparency of which kinds of clients advertising agencies engage with is an institutional norm:

> *"It's not a tremendously transparent industry as a whole, you know, across the broad scope of kind of, you know, different sectors advertising is not very transparent and media is the least transparent part of it."*

In addition, the complex structure of agencies with regards to client portfolios, means that staff may have no idea that their agency has polluting clients. Richard also commented:

> *"I mean what's interesting is you know, when I looked into who does Shells' media planning and buying for instance in the UK and found it to be split across two agencies... friends that I have working at those agencies had no idea that it was being done".*

Other managers discuss the ways in which polluting clients are kept out of the eyeline of most employees. In Jack's agency, a discreet team services the polluting clients:

> *"Most of our employees didn't even know we have these clients. You know they operate in shell agencies that you know, only exist to service these clients. So, you know, I think there's a lot of education... they've [the agency] got away with keeping it under wraps for a very, very long time."*

In Danny's organisation, the team that works with polluting clients is physically out of site, 'buried' on the top floor of a large building:

> *"You know, buried in one of the floors up top, there's a design company that works for [oil and gas company name], for instance".*

As shown section 6.1, a major area that managers would like to influence and disrupt, is in regard to working with polluting clients. The lack of transparency is therefore seen as a

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barrier to managers' work to raise awareness around engaging with oil and gas clients and the potential climate impacts of this. If the majority of staff are unaware that their agency has these polluting clients, it may be more difficult for managers to create the connection between their agency's work and the climate crisis. In addition, the lack of transparency may mean that most staff do not see a problem and as such, do not see a necessity to support or take part in activities that managers in this study have created, such as climate talks, networks or letter signing.

7.2 The Advertising Association (AA) as a barrier

The AA is an important actor in the industry, being head of a triumvirate of trade bodies. Its membership is constituted of seventeen membership bodies, all six global advertising holding groups as well as other advertising agencies, and many large brand advertisers (more details in Appendix 11,13). In this chapter, managers discuss four ways in which, rather than providing leadership, the AA (along with the other trade bodies that sit within the AA) represent a barrier to any significant change in the industry. These consist of funding and membership, the Ad Net Zero (ANZ) initiative, working groups on Advertised Emissions (AE) and communication with the UK Government.

7.2.1 Funding and membership of the AA

For Danny, it is the funding from different members of the AA that means it is unable to function effectively or is potentially conflicted. Danny refers to the 'vested interests' of the AA membership, by which he likely means the brands which are AA members. The 'elephant in the room' is that the AA won't discuss disengagement with oil and gas clients.

> "The ad industry trade bodies like the Advertising Association and the IPA, I mean just vested interests, you know, it's like, they're captured by the highest paying clients you know, I've sat in those Net Zero meetings and they won't address any of the elephants in the room, which is the client base you know, they don't want to sack off fossil fuel clients and they don't want to put additional pressure on high carbon clients."

Matty discussed memberships his agency had, e.g. BIMA[32], along with AA membership. He points out the way that the AA operates, by lobbying government and working towards securing funding:

> *"We are also a member of BIMA and I think they have some really, like helpful guides and things. But I don't think they're lobbying government in the same way that actually the Ad Association is. There's a lot of the correspondence or communication with Ad Net Zero, it's almost like a marketing campaign for the UK advertising industry and making sure they're getting funding, making sure they're being seen in the right conversations rather than actually being concerned with decarbonisation."*

Jack was sceptical of the AA's ability to provide any kind of leadership in the industry, pointing out that AA is after all funded by advertisers, and in his view, fossil fuel clients:

> *"You know that they're [the AA] funded by the advertisers and I'm sure various fossil fuel clients have paid them a lot of money... umm to keep them sweet and whenever I've spoken to anyone either on or off the record as soon as you venture into territories about which clients we should or shouldn't work for they absolutely do not have a point of view or won't have a point of view. So, yeah, I'm frustrated by the AAs lack of spine basically on putting their foot down and advising on the most pressing issue for our industry. I truly believe these relationships are the most important issue for our industry at the moment... I have no faith that the AA will do anything about this."*

For Richard, the funding structure whereby the AA is funded by brands as well as agencies, means that any radical shifts will be resisted or even undermined:

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[32] The British Interactive Media Association (BIMA) is a not-for-profit industry body representing the digital industry in the United Kingdom

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> *"And I think you know, back to my point about the funding structures and the need for those bodies to be funded by their members means that it's never... no one's going to take the radical leap because you know, they just cut the funding."*

At the heart of the funding structure is membership fees. If fossil fuel clients are demonised, both brands as well as advertising agencies who service fossil fuel clients may leave the Association. Joan discusses the salience of membership fees at the IPA, which sits within the AA, she also mentions ANZ:

> *"You know people are paying their [IPA] membership fees because they're relying on the membership fees and that's exactly the same for Ad Net Zero. I don't think that they [the trade bodies] are comfortable with change, and I think that they're trying to minimize the change that happens."*

The AA's membership profile and the way in which it represents big brand advertisers as well as advertising agencies, potentially creates a conflict for the AA. It may mean that they are reluctant to address advertised emissions (AE), as doing so would likely alienate the brand membership or even the very senior leadership in advertising agencies, who may advocate for unrestricted advertising. This manifests as a barrier for senior managers attempting to gain an acknowledgement of AE or disrupt and challenge the advertising industry's ties with polluting clients.

7.2.2 Ad Net Zero (ANZ) Initiative

The AA formed their ANZ initiative in 2020. It has five pillars, which address sustainability in general office and building operations, film production, media planning & buying, awards and events, and behaviour change in advertising briefs (see Appendix 9 for a full breakdown of pillars). Its limitation is that it has yet to include advertised emissions (AE). Moreover, some ANZ members continue to work with oil and gas majors. While acknowledging its limitations, Rachel believes that ANZ provides an important foundation in terms of promoting sustainability, although it has its limitations:

"I think Ad Net Zero is a really important and sort of foundational new infrastructure almost for the industry to have in place and be able to work towards. I also think it's a very small step of a very big journey that needs to be taken and you know, one of the stages within our Net Zero, promoting more sustainable lifestyles kind of scratches the surface of what we've been talking about."

In Karen's view however, as a very senior leader in an agency, the work of the AA and its ANZ initiative is undermined by its lack of involvement in addressing the work that advertising agencies do for oil and gas companies. In her view, both the ANZ and the AA, appear unwilling to even acknowledge the impact that oil and gas companies have on climate change:

"They [the AA] have not touched the conversation around, for example, evaluating your clients and moving away from, for example, big oil clients. That's not something that they are pushing. So, I highly doubt these industry bodies are ever going to influence client decisions or start to even set out that precedent in any way, shape or form. I think they're worried to even acknowledge the fact that the work we do with high emitting clients is detrimental to the world. They won't even acknowledge that in that way. There's a huge gaping hole there as well, right in terms of moving away from high emitting clients. There is a gaping hole to shining a light on our involvement with brands. And that's because of the way the Ad Net Zero Committee is formed. I don't think they will ever be someone who shines a light in that space."

Matty's view of the ANZ initiative was deep scepticism, and that it was not comprehensive enough to reach any net zero goals:

"It's not actually a Net Zero plan, there's no detail in there… to be honest, we are debating whether to stay on there a supporter… and struggling to kind of find a reason to stay on board and give it my time at this present moment in time, so I don't feel very optimistic that it's kind of giving the answers we need. They won't even engage in the conversation either."

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Matty also discussed how the sentiments in the industry, especially in smaller agencies, thought the ANZ initiative was slow and not delivering on targets:

> "I was speaking to [another industry professional] at an event… he was saying, you know, he was telling me that just pretty much every member he was speaking to, the kind of smaller, more independent agencies, they're getting pretty fed up with the kind of the slow progress within the Ad Association."

Rami discussed the ANZ initiative, highlighting its lack of substance, and potentially showing how its well-intentioned activities can result in greenwashing:

> "Ad Net Zero and the team behind it, I don't know how genuine, how successful any of it is… I think in some cases, people just look at it as another set of awards or another category of something to be won and boxes to tick and stuff to put into creds decks for a new business or uh, you know, I mean, I know for a fact there are people who got phone calls or emails and stuff from new business leads saying hey, which of your accounts can we, we really want to submit something for this Ad Net Zero awards, umm, you know… what can we put forward? Even though none of it really is kind of worthy of it. It's literally just for an agency to say look we're doing something around that and so it's kind of an agency green washing itself a little bit as well. That's not the case where I'm at right now, I just wanna make clear, but I've seen it either with colleagues and other places or places I used to work as well."

Richard commented that the ANZ initiative is not addressing the main issues important in the sector and continues to only focus on operational emissions and makes no mention of AE:

> "I guess that all the vested interests in Ad Net Zero, so the IPA kind of jointly work on that, with the AA but their entire remit is still focused on operations, which is what, one-tenth of the total footprint of the industry? In my opinion… if the question was what's the contribution, talking about the progress of Ad Net Zero… it isn't tackling

the main issue of Advertised Emissions… [it's] not committed past operational changes, setting operational changes are significantly different to kind of, you know, the Advertised Emissions."

Gary also commented on the significance of AE as opposed to operational emissions:

"The emissions coming from [Advertised Emissions] client work is something like, I think it was 400 times more than the operational emissions coming from your business as a marketing business. So what I'm getting at is that client impact is so much more impactful."

Aaron pointed out that the AA were focused on the minimal contributions of operational emissions of office buildings and the like, and that the focus of the trade bodies is in the wrong place:

"I think they're like focused on like helping agencies get their, like there's a phrase, like getting their house in order. And I'm like, advertising like as a professional service, the actual [operational emissions], carbon footprint of a professional service is like pretty minimal, like in relation to the emissions generated by our clients. So I kind of… I think like that focus is like we need to do it, but like it's not, I don't think it should be where the AA or IPA or any industry bodies should be focusing."

Emily was critical of the fact that for an agency to be a paying member of the ANZ initiative and gain accreditation, it did not have to even prove it was making any reductions to operational emissions:

"Why are you allowed to sign up to Ad Net Zero with absolutely no compliance standards in place whatsoever? That's just insane."

Danny's agency had joined the ANZ initiative but like Emily, Danny did not see that it would have any significant impact, because the focus would be on operational emissions only:

> "You know, they'll do that Net Zero initiative but it's just operational it doesn't, you know, it's a drop in the ocean."

In this section, managers describe one barrier to their disrupting work is the way that the ANZ initiative only focuses on operational emissions and ignores the issues of working with highly polluting clients as well as advertised emissions. The AA promote the ANZ initiative widely, and therefore the omission of AE undermines the work of managers who strive to highlight this issue more broadly. Additionally, membership of ANZ implies compliance with organisational and industry net zero goals, yet at the time of this research, managers highlight that there is no necessity to show any reductions to even just operational emissions to gain membership. This further undermines the credibility of the ANZ initiative.

7.2.3 Advertised Emissions (AE) and Working Groups

As discussed in section 3.1.4, advertised emissions (AE) is defined as the carbon emissions created from additional sales generated by advertising, over and above what might have already been sold. The section looks at managers' involvement in the AA's working group on AE. The group, the members of which are brands as well as agencies, was formed to further define the concept of AE and the way it might be usefully incorporated in the advertising sector. Note: the pseudonyms of managers in this section are removed and replaced with the term 'one manager'. This is to avoid identification through triangulation with other data as there are a small number of advertising agency members in these groups.

One manager spoke of their experience sitting on the AA working group. They refer to the Said Business School report, which is the school that the AA commissioned to research AE on their behalf [further explored in section 7.4.5]:

> "I sit on this Ad Net Zero working group and I can ask difficult questions and I do you know… they [the AA] tried to set up an alternative to the Purpose Disruptors

Advertised Emissions formula and they went to Said Business School and they got an academic to you know write a paper which was their version of Advertised Emissions because they didn't like the Purpose Disruptor's one... yeah... I've got it, it's public facing. It's nonsense. I mean it's so academic it's... I mean, it's just a load of nonsense like it is totally unusable, but I think they were hoping to be able to sort of like shoot down the Purpose Disruptors methodology, as not fit for purpose. But I sat in those meetings and I was quite vocal."

Shelly also spoke of the AA's resistance to the work of the Purpose Disruptors and also referrers to the Said Business School paper:

"You know with Advertised Emissions and the work that Purpose Disruptors have been doing, you know, the Advertising Association haven't really engaged with that, well they have engaged with it, but kind of gone, actually, we don't like that, we're going to do our own thing over here and you end up with, you know, 120 pages of unintelligible stuff that doesn't really make any decent recommendations at all."

According to Matty, the AA's response to Advertised Emissions was not simply to resist or seek to change the goal posts, but to also undermine their work, namely, by questioning their annual report:

"So obviously Purpose Disruptors released their annual [Advertised Emissions] report and it just seems like a lot of focus is spent on undermining that report rather than actually just focusing on ways that everybody can reduce."

The findings show that managers consider AE and the existing analytic work done from the Purpose Disruptors to monitor and measure it, an important step in moving the advertising sector towards more responsible advertising. They were also unanimous in perceiving the AA as unwilling to work collaboratively to develop it. For managers, this lack of meaningful engagement and even working to potentially undermine it, was seen as a significant barrier

to their work. If the wider industry does not acknowledge AE, then there may be little support to move away from polluting clients.

7.2.4 The AA - Communications

An additional area in which AA was perceived by managers as not fulfilling its purpose as a trade body, was with regards to its communications within the wider stakeholder environment. Their failure to communicate issues of some of their membership to government left some managers with no further outlet. Claire places the responsibility for the failure of the industry to address the issue of working with polluting clients or acknowledging AE with the AA. She expresses her strong opinions that there should be an investigation into it:

> *"I do wonder how much the Advertising Association is responsible for this too. I really do, because they are creating, like I said, it's creating the space where that's the outlet where you go. Like you are supposed to channel everything through them... but they're not doing anything so, I think there needs to be a BBC Panorama undercover."[33]*

Shelly was sceptical that the AA would engage in any behaviours that involved questioning the sector's work with oil and gas clients:

> *"I can't see them [The AA] suggesting that we step away from any type of client… they don't seem to have the appetite to do that."*

These comments show that managers expect the AA to take some sort of action or communicate their concerns to wider stakeholders. The fact that thus far, there are no signs of AA doing so, is an additional barrier. The AA's mandate as the sector's trade body (see

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[33] BBC Panorama is an Investigative documentary series revealing the truth about 'stories that matter.' It covers stories that are controversial and often shocking, and unknown to the general public.

3.1.6) is to represent its entire membership, but some managers see the AA as a barrier in terms of relaying their concerns about working with highly polluting clients. This was a very small amount of data, however the ways in which the AA communicate to wider stakeholders is further explored in section 7.4.6 when the research looks at the secondary data from online sources.

These sections have discussed the barriers to managers' disruptive work. The following section addresses the data around the ways in which managers think these barriers can be reduced or removed, by exploring the data on 'enablers'.

7.3 Enablers

When managers were asked about enablers to their work, they expressed thoughts around how advertising regulations and restrictions around working with polluting clients would be effective. Whilst this might not directly address their disrupting work, managers felt that this would give a clear signal in terms of how the sector deals with polluting clients. Managers also drew comparisons with government regulation and its effectiveness in other sectors.

Shelly had become disillusioned about any potential change coming from within her agency. For her, external interventions in the form of government regulations were an absolute necessity in instigating any significant change:

> "I can't see an agency walking away from a fossil fuel client anytime soon. I thought maybe we were in a space where that might happen, but I can't see it and it does create a real challenge for people. I personally don't work on fossil fuel clients… my personal view is that we need to move away from them and obviously that's very much at odds with the official company view around this, which is that we should be working with them and helping them to transform… I think yes, [government] regulation, absolutely."

Similarly, Richard commented that of its own accord, the industry would not take responsibility for its clients' emissions:

"Actually, you know, that's probably the hardest one to fix, right, in my opinion is getting advertising to own the emissions of the outputs of the work of the sales of the product, et cetera, that they push. I don't think that anyone's going to do that without regulatory enforcement if I'm really honest... I think there should be a blanket ban."

Jack's view was that without government intervention, there was no incentive for agencies to stop working with polluting clients:

"I would love the government to step in and say from next year you'll no longer be allowed to advertise any of your services... unless a much more stringent regulation comes in... I don't think that the agencies are going to voluntarily stop working with these clients. It's just too embedded."

The advertising industry's relationship with big oil clients was also the focus of Alexander's concerns. He mentions that regulation would create a level playing field for advertising agencies:

"Yeah, it is just legislation, businesses are never gonna sort themselves out... and you need people, planet and profit built into the way companies are measured and only by legislation will that come. I think that's the broader issue, that if our agency would turn around and go, we won't work with big oil, you know, because there's always gonna be... that's where the legislation comes in too because there's always gonna be another cowboy somewhere that's gonna wanna ride your horse for you."

Gary felt that government intervention on businesses cutting their carbon emissions generally, was long overdue:

"I don't underestimate the importance of government. I think quite frankly... I think the problem is government hasn't been effective enough in prioritising those issues.

So I hope that if they come up the agenda more and there's so many things that they could put on the agenda in that way, but that's the example in the context we're talking about of levers around those businesses, changes would be really effective."

Helena was optimistic that such legislation would be introduced eventually:

"For sure there'll be legislation that comes in that will stop high carbon advertising maybe in the next three to five years."

On the other hand, Elaine pointed out that governments also benefit from the big oil companies:

"Obviously a lot of it goes to the government and then the government won't ban anything because they're getting money from these big companies and it is kind of just a vicious circle. Maybe if the government decided that, like they put legislation in place, then maybe it would make a difference."

Robbie compared a potential ban on fossil fuel advertising with other government- imposed bans, such as tobacco advertising:

"There should be a ban on fossil fuel advertising. And when you look at the data that shows that as soon you ban advertising of cigarettes people smoke less, it's got to be a good thing that they're not allowed to kind of pedal their dirty wares."

Sarah compared potential advertising restrictions for polluting products to that of tobacco restrictions as well as recent regulations around high fat, salt, and sugar food advertising (HFSS), implying this is needed to surmount potential shareholder objections:

"There will be more legislation that will go we can't do this in in the same way you had with smoking and HFSS. I assume there'll be more of that coming. And I think that's the kind of thing that will make a difference and I think, you kind of need a little

bit of legislation to force you into change, because otherwise you're making a decision

that your shareholders are gonna look at and go. What the hell are you doing?"

Brian compared the approach to advertising products that are harmful to human health with the need to ban products that threaten the health of the planet:

"What would have to be true is that there is a, you know, an accepted link made by government, possibly with some lobbying from certain organisations to go, we're banning it, you know, in the same way as we're concerned about the health of our citizens and all the people that live in this country, so you know the health of the planet and our place within it is also important and we think it's bad for our health and consequently we're banning it. Which I guess is the same the smoking. You know, we ban it, but at the same time you're still free to smoke if you want to sort of thing with appropriate regulations around it."

For some, government regulations were not the only enabler. Leila said the industry needed pressure groups such as Just Stop Oil[34] to raise awareness and push for change:

"Like we need to do it from the outside or like, you know, get some Just Stop oil activists to spray paint our office orange type of thing because the internal boardroom corporate stuff is definitely, it's that rock up the hill analogy."

For Emily, regulation was what would support younger creatives who did not want to work on oil and gas accounts, to push for change:

"There's so much power in employees... you know young creatives will not want to work on these accounts. So if you can't have creative ideas or work coming through your business, you're not gonna be able to work for those people. But it will also take

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[34] Just Stop Oil (JSO) is a British environmental activist group primarily focused on issues around human-caused climate change.

probably like the legal action and you know it being a greater pure risk to work with some of these companies or legal risk... so probably a combination of those things."

Managers express their thoughts on the ways in which government legislation might act as an enabler to their work. Whilst not directly addressing their disrupting work, external intervention in the form of advertising restrictions for polluting clients, especially oil and gas clients, would create change in the sector that managers are working towards. One manager commented on the way in which regulation might enable a level playing field, in that if one agency adopts a stance of disengaging with polluting clients, another agency may simply step in and service those clients. Some managers also mentioned advertising restrictions around tobacco and HFSS foods, highlighting the ability for these restrictions to reduce harms to human health. Regulation on polluting products and services, especially oil and gas ones, is therefore regarded as an effective, equitable, and comprehensive approach to take.

In summary, this section has discussed the interview findings around barriers and enablers. Managers identify a range of barriers to their work, ranging from a lack of transparency on polluting clients both in advertising agencies as well as in the industry as a whole. They also discuss the role of the AA as a barrier in several ways: The AA's, membership and funding arrangement, its inadequate ANZ initiative, the AA's failure to acknowledge advertised emissions and finally the way the AA fails to communicate the concerns of some of its membership or from its working groups to a wider stakeholder audience.

Collectively, these barriers, along with the push back that managers receive from their CEOs' as detailed in section 6.1, means that some agencies, as well as the advertising sector as a whole, fails to disengage with polluting clients or take responsibility for its advertised emissions. This seems to lead to the conclusion that for many managers, government regulation is the remaining pathway to change.

In the following section 7.4, these barriers and enablers are further explored through secondary data analysis and triangulation. This accords with the critical realist approach of

the thesis, to further understand any potential hidden structures or mechanisms that might explain observable phenomena.

7.4 RQ3 Secondary Data: Findings

Introduction

Thus far, the analysis has been based on qualitative data obtained through interviews with senior managers. This section presents the findings from the secondary data online searches. See section 4.4.3 for the search protocol and section 4.5.4 for the coding process. The data was analysed using content analysis, the approach to which is detailed in section 4.5.5.

The search criteria mirrored the themes explored in chapter six as well as in sections 7.1 to 7.2.4. The data in this section is organised as follows: section 7.4.1 looks at data around advertising agency board members and their links to oil and gas companies; section 7.4.2 examines the claims of lack of transparency in the advertising industry, particularly with regards to oil and gas clients. Section 7.4.3 addresses the AA and its funding structure and membership. In section 7.4.4, the Ad Net Zero (ANZ) initiative, and its lack of inclusion of advertised emissions is explored. Section 7.4.5 looks to the AA's approach to dismiss advertised emissions (AE) and instead they introduce the concept of a 'displacement effect'. Section 7.4.6 looks at the way the AA communicate the concerns of its members to government. Finally, section 7.4.7 addresses the potential for government regulation in the advertising industry.

7.4.1 CEOs and board members in advertising agencies

In chapter six, managers discussed the responses of CEOs to their efforts to disrupt their institution and challenge issues around working with polluting clients. Responses were on the whole, fairly negative and identified as a barrier to continuing work. Managers received no explanations for the reasons for the push back from their C-suite at the time, and therefore, it was unclear as to why their C-suite would not engage with the issue.

Nonetheless, most managers speculated that senior staff in the agency were unwilling to alienate polluting clients for financial reasons.

Through online searches, one report was found that documented the personal commercial connections between global advertising agency board members and their links to polluting industries as well as oil and gas companies (Jordan, 2024) and see Appendix 8. The report found that 32 out of 64 advertising agency directors had a history of working in sectors such as fossil fuels and aviation, with 22 (at the date of the report) still working with these types of organisations at the same time as sitting on boards of advertising agency holding groups. The report suggested that these interlaced interests in polluting industries explained why calls to move away from working with polluting brands might be unsuccessful, stating that: *'The tangled web of board memberships is a key barrier to agencies moving away from working with fossil fuel clients'* (Jordan, 2024).

The second data source from an industry news report (Dembicki, 2024) focuses on Yannick Bolloré, owner of the advertising agency Havas. It shows that Bolloré has significant holdings in companies that distribute oil and gas: *'Bolloré Energy describes itself as 'a key player' in oil distribution and logistics across France, Switzerland, and Germany.'* The article went on to state that a division of the Bolloré company had *'handled millions of tons of cargo globally for the major oil & gas players... operating in 146 countries, this division brought in revenues last year of 7.1 billion euros'* (Dembicki, 2024).

These two reports illustrate the potential institutional conflicts that can exist within the very top levels of advertising agencies and holding groups, as highlighted by participant accounts and perspectives. The push back that was experienced by senior managers as described in chapter six, could potentially stem from these institutional conflicts, making the transition away from working with polluting clients more difficult.

7.4.2 Transparency regarding polluting clients

Senior managers described how agencies obfuscate their oil and gas clients from staff and potentially, from wider stakeholders (see 7.1). This was confirmed by secondary data where annual sustainability reports of the six largest global holding groups were searched for references to oil and gas clients, but none were found (see Appendix 6).

One website that does provide data regarding which advertising agencies engage with oil and gas clients is Clean Creatives (Creatives, 2023). They are a not-for-profit organisation that works towards encouraging agencies to move away from fossil fuel clients and publishes a current list of those that still do. However, aside from this organisation, data regarding the relationships between advertising agencies and polluting clients is mostly hidden from public view.

These findings suggest that opacity around polluting clients is an institutional norm, perpetuated by institutional actors. This lack of transparency is a barrier to managers' work as they aim to raise awareness and disrupt these relationships.

7.4.3 AA Membership

Senior managers provided their perspective on the conflicted nature of the AA's membership, in that the AA were potentially protecting brand members and their ability to continue to advertise without any restrictions (see section 7.2.1). Secondary data analysis found that the AA's membership consists of both UK advertising agencies and holding groups, as well as some of the world's largest brands and brand advertisers such as Meta, Facebook, Sky and Google (A.A., 2024d). The AA receives membership fees from both groups and therefore, it's assumed, equally represents their interests as is stated in their mandate. Whilst no oil and gas companies were listed as members, (as of 2024), it is not clear if the AA displays their whole brand membership, further linking back to issues around the lack of transparency discussed in the previous section. The secondary research did show that historically brand membership has included controversial clients such as cigarette brands,

for example, Philip Morris (see Appendix 11). With reference to institutional conflicts discussed in section 7.2.1, it would seem that the AA are unlikely to suggest advertising restrictions on any products as this would not be supported by their brand and advertisers membership. This again might form a causal mechanism arising from structures which cannot be seen, further addressed in discussion chapter eight.

7.4.4 The AA's Ad Net Zero (ANZ)

While some senior managers welcomed the ANZ initiative, most pointed out that it was inadequate, because it did not address or include advertised emissions. Secondary research analysis show that the initiative comprises of five actions or pillars which it promotes to the advertising community, four of which are adopted and run by other organisations but promoted by the AA (see Appendix 9). As managers have emphasised in their accounts, whilst these pillars promote reductions in operational types of emissions, advertised emissions are ignored.

The absence of any reference to advertised emissions in ANZ supports the contention by senior managers that the AA is failing to lead the industry away from polluting clients. Secondary data show that the ANZ initiative was created in 2021 and expanded to the USA in 2023, (AdAge, 2023). The AA has showcased the initiative globally, as a way to comprehensibly address sustainability and work towards net zero goals and have suggested that it be used as a template for advertising industries in other countries. Essentially, the findings show that the ANZ initiative is the AA's response to the climate crisis for the sector and by promoting the ANZ approach globally, the AA are gaining influence but at the same time, reinforcing the barriers to change.

7.4.5 The Displacement Effect

As intimated in the previous section, managers viewed advertised emissions (AE) as a central tool in reducing emissions in the industry, yet their experience of the AA was that it seemed to be intent upon discrediting the concept, (see section 7.2.3). Some managers suspected

that this was due to the AA's financial dependence on retaining fees from their brand membership.

The secondary data analysis, which was directed at explanation, showed that the AA's working group, formed to investigate AE, commissioned the Saïd Business School, part of the Oxford Business School, to write a report to explore operational as well as advertised emissions. The report, paid for by the AA (see Appendix 12) and reviewed by managers in the AAs working group, was carried out under the 'Oxford Future of Marketing Initiative', funded by organisations such as Meta, Google, Diageo, as well as WPP - it should be noted that the former are some of the world's largest advertisers while the latter is the world's largest advertising agency holding group, at the time of writing (Oxford, 2024).

The resulting report from the Saïd Business School focuses mainly on operational emissions such as those from film production and digital media (Thomaz, 2023). While reference was made to the concept of AE, no methodology for calculating it was proposed, mainly because of the stated difficulties in the technical attribution of carbon emissions from advertising campaigns. Instead of exploring how AE might be calculated, the report emphasised that advertising did not increase emissions from sales, stating:

'Growth for one specific company will most often come from the loss of business by a competitor. By considering the displaced advertising emission we accompany this shift in share of rewards with a commensurate shift in carbon attribution.' (Thomaz, 2023 p70). This statement did not refer to how a '*displaced advertising emission*' might be understood, substantiated, or calculated. There were no references made to academic literature to further explore a displaced effect from advertising. This was a surprising finding, and therefore this term was explored further to seek explanation.

The term 'displaced' subsequently appeared across a range of other media platforms and events by the AA. For example, in a joint statement, the AA, IPA, and ISBA referred to the 'displacement' hypothesis:

'Advertising's displacement effects – the sale of one product or service means the lost sale of another in most markets' (IPA, 2023b).

Close analysis of content shows that the wording from the Saïd report according to which sales were 'most often' lost has been altered to 'the lost sale'. By removing the hedging device 'most often', a certainty regarding displacement effect has been introduced, reinforcing the narrative that the impact of advertising is merely to displace one product with another, rather than promoting more consumption overall.

Another article published a few months later, co-written by the three industry bodies, (AA, IPA and ISBA), was directly critical of AE and was entitled *'Ad Chiefs Warn: 'Advertised Emissions' won't help our industry to reach net zero'*, (Woodford, 2023). The article used the same language:

'It [AE] leads to a significant overstating of the emissions attributable to an advertising campaign by ignoring advertising's displacement effects… the sale of one product or service means the lost sale of another in most markets. As a result, the consumption emissions of the product or service are replaced' (Woodford, 2023). Content analysis again shows how the idea of 'the lost sale', rather than 'most often a lost sale' is reinforcing the displacement hypothesis, with no evidence for this. The use of the word 'warn' in the article's title infers danger of some sort and encourages the perception that AE is not only unhelpful but potentially a barrier to achieving net zero within the industry.

The term 'displacement effect' was used again at a live event held in spring 2024 hosted by the AA and attended by 400 senior leaders across the UK advertising sector (A.A., 2024b). A panel of three industry experts led by the CEO of the AA, asked the audience of expert advertising practitioners if they thought that advertising grew markets, i.e. was advertising effective? The audience was live polled and 95% said they thought it did. The AA then went

on to reveal that advertising mostly did not grow markets and explained 'the displacement effect' to the audience. They explained that their research was based on work from one of the panel members, who had reviewed academic evidence and summarised this in an article entitled '*Does Advertising Grow Markets?*' (Angear, 2016). Alongside of this, they also drew from the industry's advertising effectiveness awards. After explaining this, the audience was re-polled to ascertain whether they still thought that advertising was effective. This time instead of 95% of advertising professionals stating that advertising grows markets, only 49% stated that it did, a significant shift. The AA then commented that they've received push back from the industry on claiming this displacement and diminished effect of advertising, but that they cannot find any academic evidence to show that advertising grows markets, stating, *'People say there are other sources, to which I always say, Ok, produce them, cos we can't find any.'* (A.A., 2024b 30:45).

The data analysis showed that the displacement effect seemed to be forming a type of institutional work, in response to senior managers calls to address advertised emissions. As this displacement effect is something not mentioned in existing literature, the data analysis looked further towards explanation to understand the ways in which this idea was formed.

To understand the origins of the notion of the 'displacement effect', that both appeared in the Said Business School Report and was referenced at the event above, the secondary research examined the article mentioned earlier, entitled '*Does Advertising Grow Markets?*' (Angear, 2016). The article itself was based on and drew evidence from three academic papers (Ambler et al., 1998; Broadbent, 2008; Binet and Field, 2009)*,* which enabled it to arrive at the conclusion that advertising often does not grow markets, i.e., advertising is not 'effective' and therefore only has the function of displacing sales. Yet this is not the conclusion reached by the authors of these three papers (see Appendix 17 for more details). The first paper (Ambler et al., 1998) focuses only on print and television adverts as it

predated any significant internet, social, programmatic display[35] or any other kind of modern digital advertising communications. It concluded that advertising was effective at growing markets in some cases but not all and there are several statements, all which refer to cases of market growth. The authors of this paper concluded that a variety of criteria are needed, but that advertising was effective at growing markets, sectors and brands (Ambler et al., 1998).

The second paper (Broadbent, 2008) provide multiple examples of market growth, growth in sales, and growth in sub sectors. The author introduces his article by saying; *'Today's government, however, has restricted advertising for fast foods and fizzy drinks, and there is talk of banning or restricting advertising in many other categories.'* (p746) The author, an advertising practitioner himself, was perhaps nervous of potential advertising restrictions. He concluded his article with the following: '*We find very few cases of market growth, and none of desire creation*' (Broadbent, 2008 p746). Yet the paper clearly provides significant examples of market growth, therefore the author's concluding remarks conflict with the contents of his paper.

The third paper (Binet and Field, 2009) written by two industry practitioners, one of whom was a fellow of the IPA and an IPA awards judge at the time, analysed the effectiveness of 880 adverts which had been entered into the IPA 'Effectiveness Awards', as being the most effective advertising campaigns for the brands and products they featured. The paper did not focus on market or sector growth, but looked at a variety of effects from advertising and found a multitude of positive and neutral effects across issues such as brand and product awareness, reduction of price sensitivity and other metrics. The paper did conclude that with the increase of multi-channels on broadcast television, that TV advertising was becoming 'more effective'.

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[35] Programmatic advertising employs the use of automation in buying and selling of media; programmatic can apply to anything from display to digital out-of-home and television.

The above summaries of those three papers makes it clear that advertising often functions to grow markets, sectors and brands. The conclusion arrived at from those papers in the following excerpt is therefore confusing: '*Most advertising does not grow markets… why, then, is it the case that most advertising seems not to grow market size?... Common sense suggests that at least some of their sales increases will have come from consumer substitutions at the category or super category level… the result was that the overall market did not grow*' (Angear, 2016). The article closes with the following statement:

'*Its [advertisings'] main potency lies in presenting consumers with different options to meet their existing needs and wants: something for legislators and lobbyists to consider when calling for a ban on 'harmful' products, as there may well be more powerful ways to encourage a desired behaviour. Reducing portion size, for example, might do more to reduce waistlines than a ban on 'junk food' advertising'.*

These conclusions based on the three papers that 'the overall market did not grow' does not accord with the content of those papers and is at best a simplification of the nuances in argument and context. The motivation for arriving at these conclusions is perhaps evident in the last paragraph: by concluding that advertising does not grow markets, and therefore does not increase sales or consumption and therefore emissions, provides support for the argument that advertising restrictions are unnecessary.

The in-depth triangulated analysis of the displacement effect and how it gained traction indicates that institutional actors work to downplay advertised emissions and instead, re-conceptualise the institution of advertising as having limited effect, possibly to avoid sanctions in the form of advertising restrictions. There is, however, a wealth of research that shows advertising's effectiveness at promoting growth at market, sector, product and brand level (see section 3.1.1.). This ideation of advertising's supposed ineffectiveness would therefore allow for a dismissive attitude towards advertised emissions. This presents a barrier for managers seeking acknowledgement regarding the sector's indirect responsibility for the emissions of highly polluting clients and suggests that industry actors are working to

maintain existing institutional norms at all costs. This is further explored in the discussion chapter.

7.4.6 The AA - Communications

Senior managers expressed a general dissatisfaction and frustration that the AA was the conduit for the sector on a range of issues which were of concern to them, (see section 7.2.4) - as one manager phrased it, *'you are supposed to channel everything through them'.* The AAs' mandate, as seen on their website, is indeed to represent the industry to government. It states they are: *'Responsible for developing and presenting a unified view from across the entire industry to Parliament. We relay industry views to Government on a multitude of policy areas, ensuring that the needs of our disparate members are satisfied,'* (A.A., 2023d), as well as *'Informing Government departments on the impact of new measures affecting the industry and channelling sector-specific requests'* (A.A., 2023f).

The following section reports on the secondary data analysis to explore why this barrier was encountered by managers, given the published mandate.

A significant opportunity to relay the views and concerns of the industry arose when the AA were called to give evidence at a House of Lords[36] Environment Enquiry on how advertising might enable a transition towards lower carbon behaviours in society (HOL, 2022). The evidence from the enquiry was to contribute to a larger report for the Climate Change Committee entitled *'In our hands: behaviour change for climate and environmental goals'* (CCC, 2022). This data source was selected as it documented and made public the evidence given, therefore providing an opportunity to understand what was communicated. Its topic was also a relevant to the concerns of senior managers, that of how advertising influences behaviours. The enquiry would have been a suitable opportunity for the AA to convey the

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[36] The House of Lords is the upper house of the UK Parliament and has similar powers to the lower house (House of Commons), specifically they can introduce legislation or propose amendments, scrutinise legislation and public policy. It also has the power to hold enquiries to call for evidence to support legislation.

concerns of some of their membership around advertised emissions (AE). The AE concept was launched nearly two years earlier and during that time, there was a general understanding in the sector, as well as in the sector's press, that tensions around working with polluting clients, as well as oil and gas companies had been brewing. There was an active debate in the industry around how a reduction of advertising of polluting goods and services might affect behaviour change and contribute to emissions reductions both at agency level as well as country level.

The enquiry transcript, over 17,000 words, was made available along with an online video on the government website (ParliamentTV, 2022). The enquiry called three members to give evidence, one academic, one individual from the broadcast media sector[37], and the person representing the UK advertising industry was the AA's communications director.

Content analysis of the transcript found that the AA failed to communicate the concerns of a portion of its members (i.e. some of those interviewed for this research), to the Peers on this occasion. This supported the barrier to sustainability-driven IW by senior managers that was previously identified in the analysis of the interview data. Three examples are detailed below whereby the Peers specifically asked for information on (1) behaviour change from advertising, (2) data from advertisers, to assess which brands are paying for advertising, as well as (3) responses from the AA around push back on advertising restrictions in the past.

(1)
The Peers:
"We would like you to lay out your views on how you think that media content influences public behaviour and the public's readiness to change behaviour in order to meet climate and environmental goals."
The AA's reply;

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[37] Broadcast media deals with TV series and general entertainment.

"From our industry's perspective, we have an initiative called Ad Net Zero. The goal of Ad Net Zero is to say that, by 2030, every ad should be a green ad. What do we mean by that? We mean that every ad should be made in a sustainable way, through its production and distribution."

Instead of addressing the question which asked how advertising might influence behaviour change, the AA reply with a statement around their ANZ initiative. As established in earlier chapters, ANZ has more relevance for operational emissions in the sector, and very little bearing on advertised emissions, behaviour change, or the effects of advertising for oil and gas companies. In this way, the ANZ initiative seems to be used as a distraction from discussing the issues around behaviour change to meet climate goals.

(2)

Content analysis found examples of the AA claiming lack of access to industry data when the Peers ask which brands are paying for what sort of advertising:

The Peers:

"It is about where the money goes. I absolutely take the point that advertisers are very good at communicating, but who pays them is the key issue, and what for. We need to see the balance of advertising in order to make a conclusion as to what the industry as a whole can produce. That is a technical point; could you let us know what you can provide us with and what you cannot?"

The AA response;

"I will be honest. I am asking for the data."

The AA's claim of a lack of data on which brands pay the advertisers is seemingly in contradiction with available metrics. Advertising spend is likely to be available from the AA's advertising agency membership. It is also broken down by sector and many other metrics and is widely available from a plethora of industry sources, which the AA will have access to (WARC, 2023). The AA itself publishes a breakdown of advertising spend on their website regularly (A.A., 2024f; A.A., 2024e), stating the following on their website home page; *'Our*

quarterly AA/WARC Expenditure Report provides detailed advertising spend figures for all major media in the UK' (A.A., 2024c). In addition, data about advertising's financial effectiveness is available from the AA's member body the IPA (IPA, 2023a). The IAB analyser tool provides twenty years of advertising spend data (IAB, 2024). There is also a wealth of data from global consultancies and industry bodies that map the return on investment for advertising campaigns by product and category. At the very least, individual agencies themselves also report their own return on advertising spend for adverts for their clients. Furthermore the AA regularly states financial facts on UK advertising based on their own analysis. For example, it stated that in 2022, the UK advertising sector *'returned a ratio of £1 invested generating £6 of GDP'* (A.A., 2023e). It would, therefore, seem strange that the AA have no data on which brands pay for advertising.

Further along in the transcript, the topic shifts towards advertising restrictions, and one of the Peers refers to previous lobbing from the AA membership. In this example the AA says it disputes the evidence needed for past restrictions around advertising for HFSS (high fat, salt, sugar foods), as the following exchange illustrates:

(3)

The Peers;

"When I saw your submission originally, it seemed to me that it was, I am afraid, extremely superficial. You are saying that you could be a major player in this and you are also saying that the Government should take a lead… as Baroness Boycott has said, the emphasis was that the adverts did not make any difference and so on and so forth. That rather belies the fact that this is a £32 billion business, It seemed to me, from the submission you put in in the first place, that you were not fundamentally engaging with this at all. The examples you have given are very limited. You might say that the Government have to lead, but it is being lobbied all the time by your members. How do we take that forward?"

The AA reply;

"The only way you are going to accelerate that change, once there is government regulation, as I think is needed in those parts, is to use the power of advertising to promote it, to encourage behaviour change."

The Peers;
"Why have you fought back against a very clear piece of government regulation?"

The AA's reply (concerning HFSS foods regulation);
"We disagree with the evidence and have problems with it. We do not think this will work in a way that you think it will work."

On the one hand, the AA acknowledges that advertising restrictions are 'needed in those parts' – by this it is assumed they are referring to advertising regulations for behaviour change. At the same time, they admit they, along with their brand members, have contested previous legislation on other restrictions such as HFSS foods. The AA do not contest the statement about the AA's brand membership lobbying the government around potential restrictions.

On this occasion the AA did not communicate the concerns of some of their members to government as is their mandate. They also failed to communicate any potential data that might support advertising restrictions. This might be in the knowledge that the House of Lords has historically upheld bans on advertising in the UK around political advertising (Sackman, 2009) as well as gambling (HOL, 2020). The depth of this analysis is necessary to show that the ways in which institutions work to maintain is opaque itself, hidden and unobvious unless these data around maintaining actions are sought out.

There have been other opportunities where the AA has been able to interact with government. The AA regularly attend political conferences, and host receptions for government officials (A.A, 2024; A.A., 2023c). Tt seems that the data communicated to government on these occasions, where the emphasis is on the positive effects on trade from

the advertising industry and how advertising supports the UK economy, is forthcoming. For example:

'Advertising is a driver of economic growth and competition. We have estimated that every pound spent on advertising returns £6 to GDP through direct, indirect, induced and catalytic economic effects. The Advertising Association/WARC Expenditure Report (April 2022) put UK ad spend at £31.9bn in 2021' (HOL, 2021):

Moreover, the focus when communicating with government and wider stakeholders, in an environment where advertising restrictions are not being considered, is often around providing data that demonstrate the positive benefits of advertising, as in the excerpts below:

'A strong UK advertising industry is key to returning the economy to good health' (A.A., 2023a):
'The UK's ad market grew 8.8% to £34.8bn in 2022' (A.A., 2023e):
'The [UK] advertising industry is a world-leader in its £15bn worth of exports, second only to the USA' (A.A., 2023c):
'The UK's ad market recorded a 6.1% increase in investment to a total of £36.6bn in 2023; the 13th annual expansion recorded in the last 14 years' (A.A., 2024f)

These excerpts somewhat contradict the claim made in the HOL enquiry as examined earlier, that very little or no data is available from advertising spend.

The findings show that the sector's trade body has failed to deliver their mandate of communicating some of their members' concerns to government, providing a potential barrier to senior manager's work. The AA claim to not have data that would help to ascertain the potential negative effects of the advertising industry yet provide ample data when communicating the positive effects. The AA's failure to communicate the tensions and concerns in the industry regarding its indirect support for unsustainable growth presents another barrier to the manager's interviewed for this research, as their concerns fail to reach

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the influential levels of government, where restrictions around working with highly polluting clients could be activated. These findings also show that potential for communications is available to the AA, but it is used in a way which works to maintain existing status quo.

7.4.7 Enablers - Government Regulation

For senior managers in this study, government regulation is key to overcoming the barriers to their work (see section 7.3). They described the ways in which restrictions around advertising polluting goods and services might prove effective, in the same way as tobacco restrictions, as well as regulations around advertising for HFSS foods has been. There is a wealth of academic literature which provides examples of the ways in which advertising is effective at increasing sales, consumption, and growth, as well as the ways in which advertising restrictions around products can help in reducing consumption (see section 3.1.1). Advertising restrictions might act as an enabler by according with managers value driven behaviours and restricting the harms of advertising from the most polluting products and services. It might enable further types of disassociating work to occur, enabling the institution of advertising to move away from its solely capitalist and for consumption foundations.

The secondary data analysis in this section looks to understand if the AA would, or would not, support some of its members in facilitating conversations with government around potential advertising restrictions to further progress this enabler. The data analysis of barriers from the AA thus far have indicated that their actions around potential regulations need to be assimilated when considering regulation as an enabler. The critical realist approach to the research also looks for underlying structures which might provide explanation for causal mechanisms, which, in this case, may work to maintain the institution of advertising. The data analysis in this section finds several occasions where the AA has historically objected to potential advertising restrictions, discussed as follows.

In 2017, the AA's response to proposed restrictions around gambling adverts was to claim that there was strong evidence that restrictions would be *'ineffective to protect children and vulnerable people.'* (Gwynn, 2017).

In 2019, the AA opposed the restrictions on high fat salt sugar foods (HFSS) on the London Transport advertising estate (LFS, 2019). Its lengthy objection was encapsulated in the following excerpt;

'Research has consistently found restrictions on media to have an extremely limited impact on behaviour change… we do not agree with the proposed ban. Research has consistently failed to establish a link between food and drink advertising and childhood obesity rates. Given the lack of evidence of a link between advertising and obesity, it would be disproportionate to pursue further restrictions'. (GLA, 2019).

In 2021, an industry news article which covered activist's calls to restrict advertising for aviation as well as advertising for oil and gas majors detailed a comment from the IPA, a membership body which is part of the AA: *'Fossil fuel and aviation companies are mature and largely stable in terms of size, with little growth, so advertising will be largely about brand share. A ban on the advertising of these products would therefore achieve next to nothing in terms of an effective solution to addressing the climate crisis, but would cause significant consequences to our business, including job losses'* (Watson, 2021). This comment also refers to the idea of a displacement effect, claiming that adverts rearrange 'brand share'. In this news article, The AA additionally comment that any bans would *"damage the media and advertising industry, reducing funding for content and journalists."* (Watson, 2021)*.*

In 2022, the government confirmed that a 9pm watershed on HFSS food adverts would be put in place and issued a statement explaining that exposure to these adverts affects children's eating habits, leading to obesity (UK.Gov, 2022). The AA's response to this was: *'This is the wrong policy and will do nothing to tackle obesity'* (A.A., 2022a). They stated, *'childhood obesity has been steadily increasing for years, but advertising bans are not the silver bullet to the nation's obesity challenge.'* (A.A., 2022b).

Analysis identified the ways in which institutional actors, The AA and at times the IPA, work to maintain industry norms by denying evidence showing that advertising restrictions might bring about behaviour change and continually dispute any scientific evidence to the contrary. Hence, the findings show that powerful industry actors undertake a kind of maintaining institutional work that ensures resistance to sustainability focused changes and maintain the perpetuation of existing industry norms.

7.5 Summary

This chapter identified a series of issues around potential barriers and enablers to senior manager's institutional work through analysis of interview data as well as from secondary data analysis. Barriers ranged from a lack of transparency of agencies servicing polluting clients, to issues around the AA and the ways in which some managers feel that its funding, membership, communications, consideration of advertised emissions (AE) as well as the inadequacies of their Ad Net Zero (ANZ) initiative all collectively, in various ways works as a barrier to manager's efforts to recognise the harms around working with polluting clients. To overcome this, they consider a turn towards regulation as the only remaining avenue to pursue.

The secondary data analysis shows that some advertising agency board members have ties to polluting industries, potentially providing ground for conflicting interests and a barrier to manager's requests to their C-suite to move away from these types of clients. It found that these issues are not transparent in the sector, and indeed even the servicing of oil and gas and other polluting clients does not appear on any advertising agencies annual reports. This may potentially provide explanation as to why senior managers received such strong push back from their C-suite around requests to disengage with oil and gas clients, and therefore the reason for the consequences they suffered from this work.

The AA's ANZ initiative fails to account for advertised emissions (AE), and yet it is promoted as addressing sustainability in the sector. To a non-industry audience, promoting ANZ may provide the impression that sustainability is comprehensively addressed. At times the initiative seems to be used a smokescreen to avoid answering questions around AE.

Analysis shows that the AA develop an approach to defining the role of advertising, which counters the need to concede any harmful effects from it. They introduce a 'displacement effect', and maintain that advertising, in most cases, does not grow sales, sectors or markets, yet fail to provide any satisfactory evidence for this effect. This kind of work is used in response to any calls from the sector to acknowledge the harms of advertising and is especially used when potential restrictions are discussed. Conversely, The AA also claim that the advertising industry provides a valuable contribution to the country's economy and promote this widely in a non-regulatory environment. This work is recognised as a maintaining type of valorising in institutional work, where the norms of an institution are embedded and promoted to maintain institutional norms and avoid change. The way valorising is used is different to the descriptions in the literature where only one ideation of an institution is promoted. In this case, dual but conflicting ideations are valorised, likely with the aim to avoid sanctions in the form of advertising restrictions.

Analysis from senior managers' interviews show that they consider an enabler to their work would be government intervention and advertising regulation. Whilst this does not directly affect their work it may change the advertising environment to facilitate more of their goals. Secondary data around this shows the prospect of powerful institutional actors such as the AA supporting advertising restrictions are highly unlikely due to their existing narrative on this issue as well as their aims at maintaining and supporting existing institutional norms. These issues are further explored in the discussion chapter.

How the findings address the research question

The third research question of this thesis asks:

'What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

- How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?
- How might potential enablers overcome these?

The findings show that senior managers perceive a range of barriers to their work from their CEOs, with the key barrier being that powerful industry actors (the AA) work to maintain existing industry norms through valorising work to avoid potential sanctions. Secondary data supports these findings and the overall enablers to managers' work seems to be government regulation, something unlikely to be supported by powerful actors in the industry.

A discussion of these findings are further explored in chapter eight.

8.0 Discussion

Introduction

This research has explored the ways in which senior professionals in the UK advertising industry use value driven pro-environmental behaviours to challenge institutional norms. In this chapter, section 8.1 provides a summary of the research contributions. Sections 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 discusses the theoretical and empirical contributions of the thesis to the values and IW literature. It also addresses the gaps identified in the literature and the research questions. Section 8.2 details the potential for future research and 8.3, the practical implications of the research for theory and practice. Section 8.4 explores the strengths and limitations to the work and section 8.5 summarises with a short final conclusion.

8.1 Research Contributions Introduction

The research is set against the institutionally embedded background of advertising during a time of an escalating climate crisis, and the need for the UK to meet its national, legally binding net zero targets (UK-Gov, 2024). The advertising sector, through its neo-liberalist and capitalist embedded norms, continues to promote highly polluting goods and services which potentially frustrate these climate goals. Whilst this unrestricted approach to advertising has been somewhat mitigated in other countries, most notably in France, where the government has banned advertising for fossil fuels, the UK advertising sector continues to promote these unabated.

There is evidence that those working within the UK advertising industry show frustration at this situation. What is less clear is what values underpin this frustration, how these values might be expressed through their behaviours and importantly, how these behaviours might contribute to institutional change in the UK advertising sector. This research set out to address three main questions:

RQ1. How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours?

•   How do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?

RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

•   In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?

RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

•   How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

•   How might potential enablers overcome these?

To address research question one and understand senior managers' concerns around the climate crisis, the research looked to the values literature. A review of this literature, in chapter two, showed an increased focus around pro-environmental values over the decades as the climate crisis has worsened. Existing research showed that altruistic values (humanistic - care for others and biospheric - care for nature) as well as egoistic values (care for oneself and care for one's children), are key motivators towards pro-environmental behaviours (Schultz and Zelezny, 1998; Stets and Biga, 2003; De Groot and Steg, 2007). Additionally, scholars call for more research on why actors might be motivated to, and ultimately engage in, IW (Leca, 2009; Wright et al., 2017; Hampel et al., 2017; Hwang and Colyvas, 2011; Kraatz et al., 2020; Gidley and Palmer, 2021; Beunen and Patterson, 2019). Therefore the ways in which altruistic and egoistic values act as motivators for pro-environmental behaviours, and why, is a key area for understanding institutional work and change aimed at reducing the impact of human activities on the environment.

To address research question two and three, the research mobilises the concept of institutional work (IW) to understand senior managers' behaviours as well as the barriers and enablers to their work. Developed by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006), IW is a concept

that can be used to understand the interactions between individuals, organisations and institutions. It is defined as *'the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions'* (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006 p215). The IW literature identifies twenty behaviours across three pillars that actors might take in their institutions. However, there is little consideration of the individual, actor level consequences that might occur for those carrying out IW work, which is likely to be contentious at times. It is therefore important to consider this gap in the literature as consequences may affect the potential for ongoing IW, moreover this may constitute a significant barrier in a context where institutional change appears essential if professed goals to address climate change are to be met.

Also underexamined in the literature are the dynamics of IW between actors, and the extent to which IW is evoked in response to behaviours. IW is often depicted as singular behaviours towards an end goal, or as sequential behaviours working towards change. However, considering that disrupting work is likely to be contentious, it is unlikely to unfold in a straightforward manner. Furthermore, IW scholars have identified that the disrupting pillar of IW is under examined (Leca, 2009), and that there are few studies of IW in the creative industries (Gidley and Palmer, 2021).

The literature review also showed that more understanding around institutional outcomes of IW is needed (Gidley and Palmer, 2021; Lawrence et al., 2013). Whilst IW does not necessarily foreground the effectiveness of behaviours, it is fundamentally concerned with outcomes, that can be facilitated or hindered by institutional actors. This research explicitly adopts the philosophical approach of critical realism (CR) because it is concerned with identifying potential mechanisms and underlying structures to observed phenomena. CR looks for explanation rather than establishing generalisations and therefore the third research question is concerned with the extent to which the IW performed by senior managers encountered barriers and enablers in relation to desired outcomes.

A summary of the research contributions in four areas are as follows:

Biospheric values. The findings contribute to the values literature by showing that whilst a range of altruistic and egoistic values drive pro-environmental behaviours, those who expressed biospheric values reported a greater quantity of behaviours in this particular context. Where embedded institutional values conflict with personal values, the motivation for institutional work appears stronger.

Actor level consequences. The research findings show that the consequences to actors carrying out disrupting work, were at times significant and personally detrimental. In some cases the consequences frustrated attempts at continued IW. It is therefore important to understand the consequences of IW and these findings contribute to a gap in the concept as well as opening up opportunities for future research.

Recursive institutional work. The findings show that creating work is employed to build collateral and networks with which to support future disrupting work. It shows that IW is used in a recursive manner, rather than a sequential way, due to push back from institutional actors. This is a fresh perspective on existing literature. The research also contributes examples of IW in the disrupting pillar, which scholars note is an underexamined area of IW (Leca, 2009).

Maintaining valorising institutional work. The findings from an analysis of the barriers and enablers to IW in chapter 7 show that valorising is used in ways which are new to the literature. Powerful institutional actors valorise dual but conflicting ideations of their institution, to differing audiences at different times. This seems to be used by actors to avoid sanctions, control the narrative around how the institution is understood and maintain existing industry norms.

Each of these four areas are discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

8.1.1 Contributions to the Values Literature and RQ1

The values literature review in chapter two, showed an increased focus around pro-environmental values over the decades as the climate crisis has worsened**.** Altruistic and egoistic values are shown to be instrumental in understanding pro-environmental behaviours (Dietz et al., 2005a), with altruistic values being categorised as humanistic (care for humanity) and biospheric (care for nature). The domain of egoistic (care for self) values, are defined as values that *'predispose people to protect aspects of the environment that affect them personally, or to oppose protection of the environment if the personal costs are perceived as high'* (Stern and Dietz, 1994 p67). They are shown in the literature to be important drivers of pro-environmental behaviours. The literature shows that egoistic values also extend beyond the self to kin, (Hamilton, 1964; Bykov, 2017) marking a distinction between 'egoistic-self value' where there is a focus on the benefit to self and 'egoistic-kin value' where there is a focus on one's children and their wellbeing. This study explored this distinct value basis to gain a more discerning understanding of expressed egoistic values.

Research question one asks, 'How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector express their values that drive sustainability focused behaviours and how do these values relate to the institutional work managers engage in?' The findings respond to this question by showing that whilst a range of altruistic and egoistic values drive pro-environmental behaviours, those who expressed biospheric values reported a greater quantity of behaviours in this particular context and setting. Those having egoistic-self values reported the least. These findings support literature which asserts that biospheric values drive pro-environmental behaviours, yet challenge the assumptions in the literature, previously discussed in this section as well as in section 2.4.3, according to which, it is egoistic values that more commonly drive pro-environmental behaviours.

Findings and literature gaps

Existing literature highlighted that values can be key motivators for institutional work, but the ways in which they motivate is unclear. Scholarship found biospheric values to be the most motivating at driving pro-environmental behaviours, across a breadth of situations ranging from green energy buying behaviour to student actions, and professionals acting within frameworks of corporate social responsibility (Schultz and Zelezny, 1998; Clark et al., 2003; Ruepert et al., 2017; Tamar et al., 2021). This study shows that those who expressed biospheric values were also motivated to carry out pro-environmental behaviours. They often expressed a deep connection to nature, from growing up, either in wild places or simply the back garden in an urban environment. Many expressed a sense of connection to nature and how this provided benefits to their wellbeing. Some also expressed how their values were triggered when seeing pollution and therefore the degradation of nature. Expressions of these biospheric values seemed to be the motivator for pro-environmental behaviours in managers' workplaces. One explanation for this maybe that values shaped by childhood endure and remain stable throughout adulthood, and this early access to nature as children is often carried, perhaps unconsciously, with them as adults (Kraatz et al., 2020). A personal connection to nature and its effect on wellbeing are documented in the literature (Grinde and Patil, 2009; Russell et al., 2013; Balmford and Bond, 2005; Chawla, 2020; Mayer and Frantz, 2004). Martin and Czellar (2017) suggest a sense of connectedness to nature is key to the formation of biospheric values. Work by Roszak et al. (1995) suggest that if one sees oneself as a part of nature, then harming it is akin to harming oneself. In this way, there is a connection to the self, in that nature is part of oneself and provides benefits to wellbeing. In this way, biospheric values seem to also infer a benefit to self, and therefore an egoistic leaning. This shows the complexity of how values are felt and articulated by individuals as well as the difficultly in defining values absolutely.

In this research setting, senior managers' biospheric values seem to conflict with the embedded institutional values of their organisations. Advertising is conceptualised as an institution in which its deeply embedded norms of consumption and growth are central to

its functioning (Brulle and Young, 2007; Sherry, 1987; Sandage, 1972). These organisational values persist, despite a worsening climate crisis and are contrary to managers expressed concerns for nature. If one's professional work is continually shown to be detrimental to the environment, and therefore nature, this might intensify biospherically held values, triggering the need for multiple behaviours towards change. This perhaps provides an explanation as to why this research found that those who expressed biospheric values reported the greater incidences of pro-environmental behaviours. Where personal biospheric values and embedded institutional values conflict, the motivation for institutional work appears stronger.

There is also a wealth of existing literature that supports humanistic altruism as a key motivator for pro-environmental behaviours across a range of scenarios (Stets and Biga, 2003), especially where scenarios focus on justice (Zuckerman, 1975; Wagstaff, 1998; Sultana, 2022; Howell, 2013; Moellendorf, 2015; Heyward, 2014; Sparenborg, 2022). In this research, managers who expressed humanistic values also predominately centred and articulated their concerns around justice for others as well as general concerns for friends and family. Managers referred to the connection between climate breakdown and the inequality and injustice of suffering this causes, especially in developing countries. Managers who stated humanistic values also expressed a range of other values such as biospheric and egoistic-kin but did not express any egoistic self-values. The findings show that their self-reported pro-environmental behaviours in the workplace were similar in number to those who expressed egoistic-kin values but not as many as those who expressed biospheric values.

Existing research shows that egoistic values support pro-environmental behaviours across a range of situations, however those situations generally all pertain to how they are experienced personally. For example, in decisions around use of public transport, (De Groot and Steg, 2007) personal risks and threats in their environment (Baldassare and Katz, 1992) personal convenience (Levy et al., 2018); in intentions to support policy as well as environmental volunteerism (Huang et al., 2022) and the proximity of environmental breakdown (Lou et al., 2024). Marshall (2019) does show that egoistic values show concern

for environmental breakdown, however this was in situations where the environment might have had utility to personal wellbeing and did not connect this concern to any behaviours. In this research the egoistic value was separated into egoistic-self and egoistic-kin to further understand where the concern lies, to only oneself or with one's offspring.

Managers who express egoistic-kin values expressed concerns around *future* scenarios for their children – the world their offspring might grow up in, rather than the here and now. Only one participant felt that there could be an immediate threat to her children's safety in the present time. This future thinking might reflect the context of the research, being conducted in a developed country: if the same research was done in a country where climate threats are more imminent and salient, these values might differ in their urgency. Some managers mentioned their behaviours mitigated being held responsible when their children were grown-up or future generations, and therefore seemed to infer an avoidance of guilt. In a way, this egoistic-kin values might bleed into egoistic-self values, as guilt is something that affects the self; however, it is difficult to theorise this without going into more depth on those questions, which was outside the scope of the present research.

Managers who reported egoistic-kin values reported a similar amount of pro-environmental behaviours as those who reported humanistic values. Their strong focus on the future for their children, and how difficult the world will be when their children are grown- up, might make the climate issue feel important, but perhaps less urgent than the here-and-now breakdown of the environment. Tackling future problems can often feel like they can be delayed (Norgaard, 2009), so perhaps there is less urgency for those who hold these egoistic-kin values. Some managers also referenced concern for other people's children in areas where climate disasters are beginning to be more frequent, and it is a consideration that children in high climate risk countries will often suffer worse consequences than those in countries such as the UK (Currie and Deschênes, 2016; Nelson, 2011). This concern for others shows reflects humanistic values, again, showing the ways in which values are complex and overlapping. Generally speaking, managers in this study may have more resources to adapt to and protect their own children against the worst effects of climate

change (Berrang-Ford et al., 2011) and this may account for the slightly reduced number of behaviours when compared to those who hold biospheric values.

Managers who expressed egoistic-self values – defined in the literature as driving behaviours that benefit the self or avoiding ones that do not – described their behaviours as initiated and driven by their client's needs to focus on sustainability. Managers with this value orientation reported the least amount of pro-environmental behaviours. These managers did express secondary values around humanistic and egoistic-kin values, but the sense was that their behaviours were mainly driven by this client focus. These findings concur with existing literature in showing that egoistic values drive pro-environmental behaviours when the benefit is to the self (De Groot and Steg, 2007; Baldassare and Katz, 1992; Levy et al., 2018; Huang et al., 2022; Bouman et al., 2021; Lou et al., 2024; Knez, 2016; Dinurrohmah et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2024; Stern et al., 1993); however, these findings do not concur that this value orientation is a stronger driver than the other types of values. None of the managers who expressed egoistic-self values expressed biospheric values or indicated a concern or connection to nature, indicating that these two value orientations may be exclusive to each other in a person's value frame.

Further addressing questions from the literature

There were a range of questions from the literature which ask about the role of values and pro-environmental behaviours. Olsson and Hysing (2012), find behaviours from internal activists relevant, but that more research is needed to understand what values drive behaviours and how it persists. They find this gap relevant because a deeper understanding of the dynamics of inside actors is needed. It is clear that whilst a range of altruistic values are used to create change, it is biospheric values which seem instrumental in actors working to disrupt and create. DeVille et al. (2021) ask that any future research on values around nature should incorporate climate activity as they deem that identifying contexts which cultivate pro-environmental behaviours may show how adults respond to the climate emergency. This research has shown that altruistic values, especially biospheric ones motivate individuals towards pro-environmental behaviours around climate activity in this

context of a strong institutional background. It is exposure to nature at an early age which seems to cement care for nature into an adults value frame as well as general feelings of connectedness to nature and witnessing the breakdown of nature which were also deeply motivating.

Hemingway and Maclagan (2004) ascribe power to employee values and theorise that organisations are the way they are, due to their values and that employees '*can indeed make a difference*' (p33). This research has shown that employees values do motivate actions which aim to create and disrupt towards making a difference, however that ability is often restricted by other more powerful institutional actors in this strong institutional setting.

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) maintain that values are key in the concept of institutional work and called for more research on how employees use values to create change. This research has shown in this small sample, that managers expressed a range of values which they used to motivate them towards institutional work, however those that expressed biospheric values as their strongest or dominant value, seemed more motivated to partake in disrupting types of work, along with creating work to build collateral with which to disrupt. Leca (2009) does not specifically ask about values, but rather asks what factors support or hinder IW. This research shows that values play a significant part in the motivations for various types of IW. What hinders this work connects with the findings around consequences to IW, as addressed in chapter six.

Hampel et al. (2017), Gidley and Palmer (2021) and Hwang and Colyvas (2011), all question the motivations of employees in IW finding that motivations are essential foundations of IW. Certainly in this sector where actor level values run contrary to institutional ones, altruistic values and especially biospheric ones are key motivating factors that drives actors towards engaging in IW, however, it is acknowledged that there will also be other motivations that sit alongside of values. In this setting it seems that values, especially biospheric ones, not only provide the initial motivation, but provide a continued motivation to act when significant institutional barriers are encountered.

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Wright et al. (2017) state that it's important to consider actor level values in IW because without these the deeply entrenched values of an organisation are more likely different. The findings of this research show that whilst managers' biospheric values might motivate institutional work, the influence of their values on their organisations value frame may be limited, certainly in the short term. This may be a reflection of the institutionally embedded environment, where the deeply embedded capitalist norms of the institution provide barriers to shifting value frames.

8.1.2 Contributions to the Institutional Work Literature and RQ2, RQ3

Existing literature identified the institution of advertising as having capitalist foundations (Sandage, 1972) and embedded institutional norms that drive consumption with a significant environmental impact (Benhabib and Bisin, 2002; Kite, 2023b). This, along with assumptions around contentious issues within the advertising sector, suggested there might be a level of disrupting work found in the research. Despite the inherent difficulty of disrupting work, existing research and literature has not explored the area of actor level consequences. Additionally, IW is often described or visualised as either a singular act, moving towards an end goal in a sequential process (Gidley and Palmer, 2021; Beunen et al., 2017) and it is not clear how the process of IW is used by actors to achieve their goals.

Research questions two and three ask:

RQ2. How can sustainability focused behaviours be understood as institutional work?

•   In what ways are these types of work used to create and disrupt, and with what consequences?

RQ3. What are the barriers encountered through institutional work?

•   How do senior managers in the UK advertising sector experience resistance in their institutional context and how does this relate to other powerful industry actors?

•   How might potential enablers overcome these?

The findings respond to these questions by showing that managers undertake creating and disrupting type of IW: managers work to create new institutions with which to support further disrupting work. They create networks, take part in educating work as well as defining work. This work builds collateral with which to disrupt the moral foundations of their institution and reimagine its capitalist and neoliberalist foundations. The barriers they encounter are maintaining types of IW from embedded organisational actors, (CEO's) as well as institutional actors in the form of trade bodies. However, the trade bodies engage in maintaining valorising work, in a way which is different from existing literature. Government regulation was considered the most effective enabler. This can be attributed to the strength of the institutional norms and structures to maintain them. Regulations in the form of restrictions or bans are, however, unlikely to be supported by powerful industry actors, who work to maintain existing institutional norms in the industry.

Findings and literature gaps

This research makes a contribution to the IW literature in three areas, that of actor level consequences received from disrupting work, the way IW is used recursively and the ways in which actors use maintaining valorising IW to maintain industry norms. These are discussed in turn below, beginning with actor level consequences.

Actor level consequences

The IW literature review showed a lack of consideration towards actor level consequences (Lawrence et al., 2013; Leca, 2009; Pawlak, 2011; Hampel et al., 2017). This being the case, Phillips and Lawrence (2012) ask for a fresh perspective on *'what organizational actors are doing, why they are doing it and with what consequences'* (p228) which is repeated by Lawrence et al (2013) who ask for the *'experience of individuals as they engage in, and are subjected to, institutional work'* and if they have *'significant but unintended consequences'* (p1029).

The finding was a range of consequences to managers aiming to disassociate the moral foundations of their institution. These ranged from potential job loss, to concerns around

future job security, as well as simply knowing that their agency might never align with their personal values. Analysis indicated this affected both the wellbeing of managers carrying out the work, as well as the potential ability for continued and future disrupting work.

The consequences of continuing to work in an environment that does not align with one's values can be significant. Hoffman (2010) notes that *'dissonant relations between personal and professional values produce tensions that people tend to avoid or reduce'* (p155). He finds that if personal values are not considered by the organisation, then employees are forced to continue to carry on working in a way that eventually becomes detrimental to them, as it goes against their own value system. This can result in resignation as tensions become too oppressive. Therefore, if managers cannot undertake institutional work to disrupt, or have their values acknowledged in some way, and are forced to continue to work in an environment that significantly conflicts with their personal values, their eventual departure may happen regardless of any threats of job loss. Therefore, senior managers face multi-faceted consequences. If they hold true to their personal values in a professional environment that is contrary or even hostile to their values, they face consequences of job risk or job loss. If they continue in their role, with this perpetuating contradiction, the personal psychological costs also may be high.

These actor level consequences are also problematic for the development of institutions: if actors are to be instrumental at '*creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions'* (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006 p215) yet are restricted by the consequences of doing so, institutions fail to benefit from ongoing work. Institutions are required to evolve, (Currie et al., 2016) and as the effects of climate change worsen, the institution of advertising will need to adapt as it increasingly becomes recognised as contributing towards climate impacts through its promotion of consumption.

Existing literature lacks concrete descriptions of actors working to disrupt, (Leca, 2009) and the findings of this research address this lacuna. They show the ways in which managers work to challenge the deeply embedded foundations of their institution through working

mainly discursively, in groups, and appealing to higher level management. The group work appears to reduce the risk of personal consequences and also seems more likely to elicit a reply from CEOs. However, even though Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) maintain that it is the insider elites who are suited to carrying out disassociating work, it would seem, that overall, even very senior managers had little agency to disrupt the embedded moral foundations of their industry without suffering consequences.

Recursive IW

The findings show that, in this context, the ways in which individuals use IW is distinct to the literature, which has detailed studies conducted in different institutional contexts. Section 3.2 reproduces the visualisation of IW as proposed by Gidley and Palmer (2021) and Beunen et al. (2017). Both show IW as moving in a sequential fashion towards an end goal. Descriptions of IW in the literature also support this, often with singular behaviours of IW which result in outcomes of some kind. Whilst that might be the case in some contexts, the findings of this study show creating work is employed to build collateral and networks with which to support future disrupting work. After this process, IW is often used in a recursive, messy, stop-start way. It is potentially an ongoing process but one that is difficult to maintain in the resistant institutional background. This is a fresh perspective from existing literature. Figure 4, 'Recursive creating and disrupting IW', represents IW work from the findings. It shows a starting point as managers' values, which motivate creating types of work. This work, such as defining, creating networks, educating, as well as working towards 'influence' through gradual job title changes, is often described as ongoing work and builds collateral with which to disrupt. It is then used to support disrupting work, which then receives push back, and managers return to creating work again. The progress of the institution is described as 'inertia' as it mostly remains unchanged.
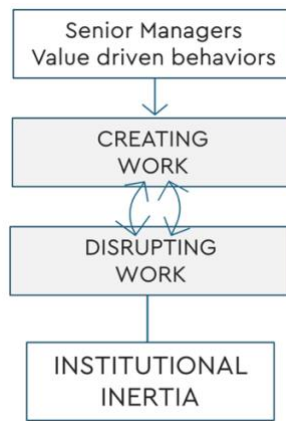
Figure 4 Recursive creating and disrupting IW

Maintaining Valorising IW

The findings show that a barrier to managers' disrupting work is represented by maintaining types of work from two sets of powerful industry actors. Firstly, organisational industry actors (CEOs) engage in maintaining work and focus on preserving existing institutional norms. They push back on senior managers' disrupting work which results in actor level consequences as discussed earlier. Secondly, maintaining work comes from industry actors in the form of trade bodies, who engage in responsive maintaining work, valorising dual, but conflicting ideations of the institution of advertising tailored to different audiences. One ideation is that advertising is essentially ineffective at growing markets, sectors or sales, and its effects are ones of displacement, i.e. one sale displaces another and the sale would have happened with or without any advertising. This assertion allows for maintenance of existing industry norms which avoid sanctions in the form of advertising restrictions or potential bans. If advertising is conceptualised as ineffective, and therefore does not increase consumption, then it cannot be accused of exacerbating climate goals. Another ideation of advertising is that it provides an invaluable contribution to the UK economy and is an industry in which billions of pounds are spent. These two ideations are concurrent and valorised to differing audiences which allows these industry actors to control the narrative both inside the industry as well as to external stakeholders such as the Government.

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The literature notes that actors work to maintain existing arrangements by avoiding changes to embedded institutional norms, often when faced with potential policy interventions, (Currie et al., 2012) and that it is often member associations that work in a regulatory way to maintain institutional norms and reproduce shared meanings (Galvin, 2002; Tschirhart, 2006). Whilst it is possible that different institutional logics can be adopted at the same time, (Lander et al., 2013) these tend to be used during transition periods, and not maintained in the longer term. There seems to be no other examples in the literature where actors valorise dual but conflicting ideations of their institution therefore contributing to the literature in this understanding. Lawrence (2004) notes the ways in which membership strategies shape fields are important to understand. The influence of membership bodies on shaping institutional practices, along with their motivations, particularly in response to evolving external environmental narratives, is therefore an area of further interest. The research highlights the importance of, and need for, widening the boundaries of the institution under examination, to encompass these influential structures.
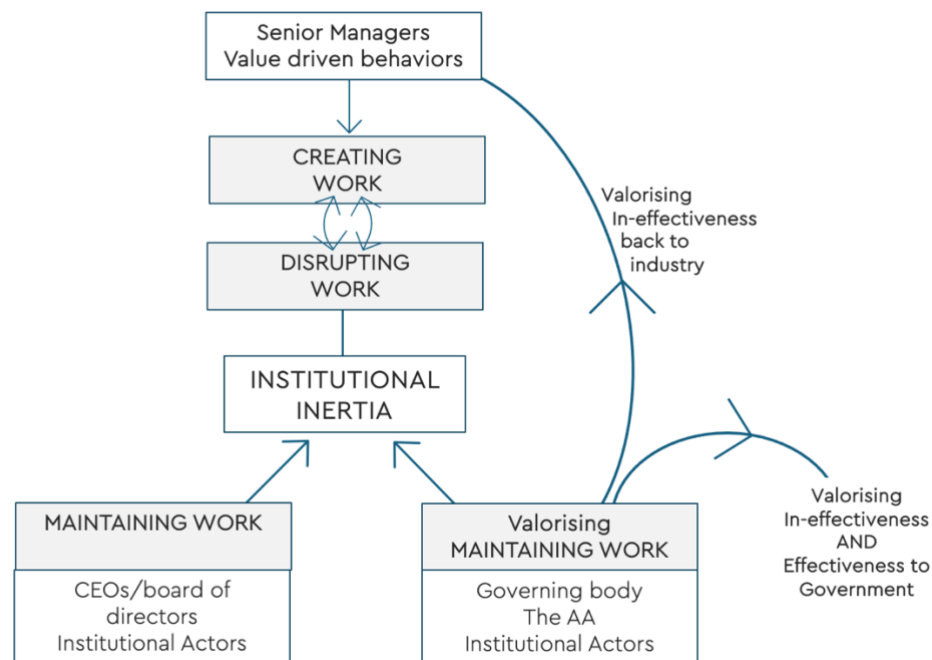
Figure 5 Institutional Work as represented by the research findings

Figure 5 'Institutional Work as represented by the research findings', visualises the dynamics of creating, disrupting and maintaining IW in this research context. It incorporates the creating and disrupting work from figure 4, and further shows how IW unfolds recursively through the behaviours of different actors. Maintaining work comes from two sets of actors, on the bottom left, organisational industry actors (CEOs/boards of directors) engage in maintaining work and focus on preserving existing institutional norms, aligned with the prevailing capitalist mandate. They push back on senior managers' calls to engage on the issues around polluting clients.

Maintaining work is also shown from institutional actors (the trade body, the AA), on the right, where they engage in dual valorising work, which sustains two conflicting perspectives of their institution. They valorise advertising effectiveness, to the Government in an effort to justify the relevance of the industry as a valuable part of the UK economy. They also valorise advertising ineffectiveness to the Government, in situations where the potential for advertising restrictions is present. They valorise advertising ineffectiveness to the industry, enabling them to push back on pressure to acknowledge the potential harms of advertised emissions. The overarching goal of these actors is to maintain institutional inertia as well as positioning themselves as beyond challenge, thereby entrenching increasingly unquestioned norms.

The research shows that senior managers feel one key enabler to their work is in the form of government regulation to restrict advertising for highly polluting goods and services, especially oil and gas products. Whilst this does not have a direct effect on their disrupting work, it would facilitate their calls for moving away from these polluting clients. However, through their valorising work, the trade body navigates discussions around advertising restrictions and historically, they have fought against any kind of advertising bans on services such as gambling, and products such as tobacco and high fat salt sugar foods.

The implications of valorising a dual ideation of the role of advertising highlights the contradictions which exist in the institution, in a way in which those actors were likely trying

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to avoid. Instead of avoiding opportunities for institutional change, valorising in this way may form opportunities to confront advertising's role in the climate crisis, and form part of potential progress towards change and further disrupting work.

Critical Realist Approach

The critical realist (CR) approach to the research aimed to uncover causal mechanisms for what can be seen or observed. An iceberg metaphor is often used to visualise findings in CR, and figure 6, 'Critical Realist Iceberg with findings' is used to show the synthesised primary and secondary data to show the layered strata of the findings.
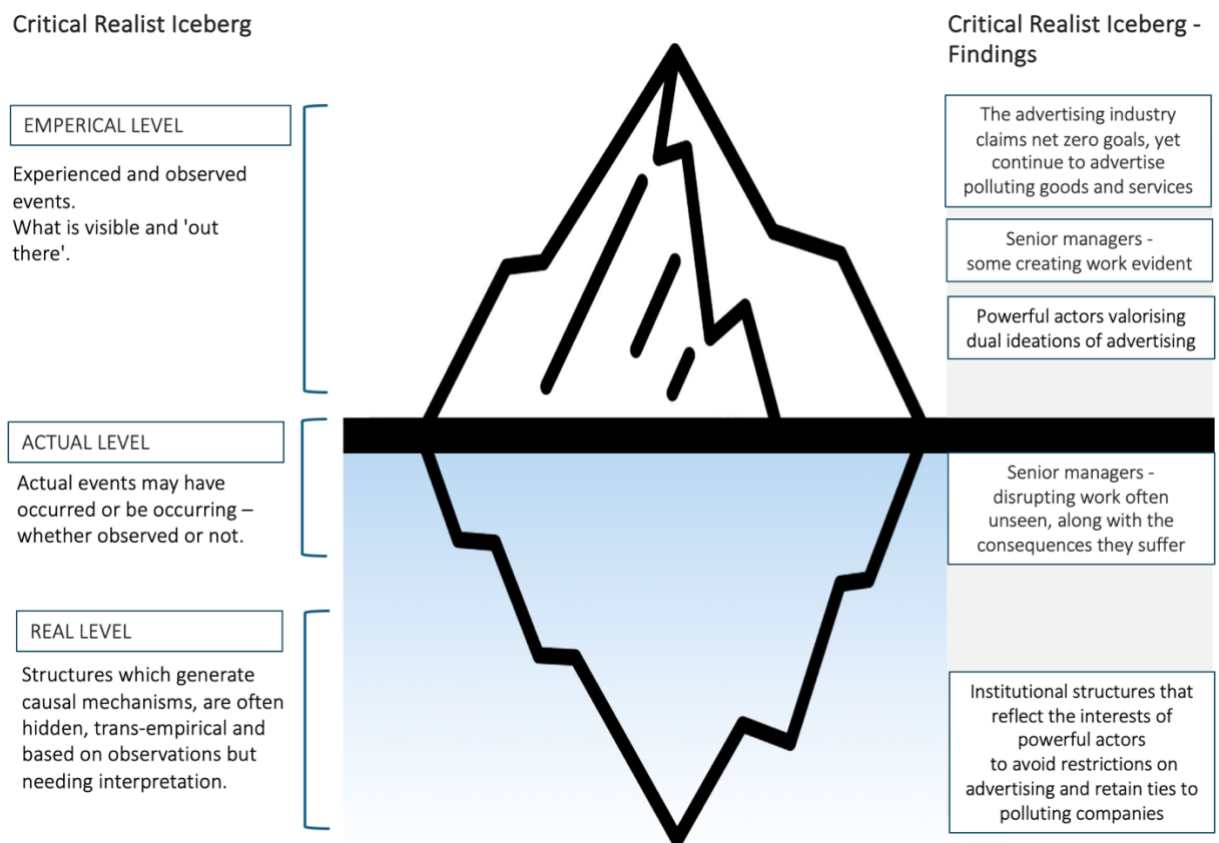
Figure 6 Critical Realist Iceberg with findings

The iceberg consists of three stratified domains: empirical experience, actual events, and generative mechanisms. The empirical is what is experienced and observed and sits above the water line. It shows some of the creating work of senior managers although their

disrupting work remains hidden. This domain also shows two contrasting realities as noted in section 1.2, that of a sector fully aligned with sustainability goals, yet also continuing to advertise for highly polluting goods and services. The empirical also shows the responsive maintaining work from industry actors, both directed towards the industry as well as towards Government.

The actual, sits just below the waterline, not always visible, and features the push back that senior managers receive from their CEOs from disrupting work and the consequences they suffer from this.

The real level, which sits deep in the water, contains the structural and generative mechanisms, which can explain the empirical and actual. These are at times only partially understood and in this research they represent the (previously) hidden structures where advertising agency board members are found to have personal commercial ties to polluting industries. These relationships potentially undermine calls from agency senior managers to disengage with oil and gas companies. This clear conflict of interest may explain why institutional norms within the advertising industry continue to perpetuate a business model that runs counter to climate change goals. Included in this real level are the hidden structures of the powerful industry actors (the AA), who work to promote dual ideations of the institution to avoid advertising restrictions yet maintain the value of advertising to the economy. These hidden structures also reflect the environment in which the UK advertising industry resides, that of free market capitalism, with minimal regulation or consideration of increasing climate impacts.

Retroduction

Aligned with the abductive approach inherent in critical realism, the research utilises retroduction to explore the contextual conditions necessary for these causal mechanisms to exist (the term 'conditions', refers to the circumstances that are necessarily present for something to exist). In this context, the research identifies causal mechanisms arising from institutional structures, conceptualised as powerful actors with vested interests maintaining

institutional norms, in the form of advertising agency board directors and their ties with polluting industries. Counterfactual thinking reasons that in conditions where these ties did not exist, directors may not feel the need to support these polluting industries through advertising therefore potentially removing one barrier to disengaging with these clients.

Additionally, governance structures such as the AA represent the industry, they also represent a range of members with vested interests in undertaking maintaining work towards institutional inertia. The dual ideation of the institution of advertising is a novel example of maintaining work that seems to place institutional actors beyond criticism. Whilst this remains in place, senior managers value driven institutional work is unlikely to lead to institutional change without regulatory intervention.

Further addressing questions from the literature

Scholars call for more understanding around the outcomes of IW, (Gidley and Palmer, 2021) as well as for more research around changes that might occur from IW (Lawrence et al., 2013), these being significantly under theorised. Beunen and Patterson (2019) highlight the potential value of studying IW in sustainability transformations in that it might uncover ways in which *'broad-scale sustainability transformation can actually be pursued'* (p21). The findings of this research have shown the ways in which senior managers' work to create change, through creating and disrupting their institutions. Institutional actors however, deeply established and embedded, work to prevent this, resulting in a lack of transformation from manager's work, resulting in continued institutional inertia.

This research adds to the understanding in the literature around the use of power in IW. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) describe valorising as having an element of power, stating that valorising can *'represent institutional work in which actors identify and evaluate the moral status of participants in the field, both as an enactment of institutionalised beliefs and as a way of maintaining the power of those beliefs'* (p232). The ways in which power might be used to maintain institutions in IW is not well understood. Beunen and Patterson (2019) examine climate adaption and discuss the lack of exploration of power through IW towards

change. They argue that competing perspectives on solutions to environmental governance means that configurations of power, as well as knowledge, begin to shape practices and policies, something which has largely been overlooked in the literature. Hinings et al. (2003) highlight the role of powerful actors who act as gatekeepers in controlling the flow of resources in their field and control and police existing institutional arrangements. They point to the role of power in maintaining institutions and ask that research focus on the ways in which power controls the dynamics of change. Whilst power has not been the central focus of this research, this study has revealed the ways in which power is important in valorising maintaining work, for example, when it is used to control discourses. This highlights the need for further research to understand how valorising is enabled by power.

8.2 Future Research

This research has provided theoretical advances in the application of values and the ways in which they motivate institutional work (IW) in the context of a strong institutional background. The findings have provided valuable insights to understand the ways in which concerned senior managers in the UK advertising sector have strived to evolve their institutions towards meeting urgent climate goals. It has exposed the responsive work from industry actors, intent on maintaining the outdated status-quo, as well as the reasons for doing so. As the third largest industry globally by revenue, the actions of the UK advertising industry are important as well as the behaviours of those within it.

This research has contributed to understanding the way in which biospheric values act as strong motivators for pro-environmental behaviours within (IW) in this setting. Future research might examine the ways in which personal and institutional values can align towards facilitating institutional change. DeVille et al. (2021) asked that future research on values around nature should incorporate climate activity and whilst this research has contributed to this call, the field would benefit from a greater understanding to test the findings of this research.

This research has highlighted overlaps which do not appear in existing values definitions in the literature. It has shown the ways in which biospheric values, as well as primarily showing care and concern for nature also seem to describe benefits the self (through a feeling of wellbeing from a connection to nature). Additionally, those with egoistic-kin values often expressed a reduction in potential guilt towards one's children, which also infers a benefit to the self, which infers egoistic-self values. These strong overlaps and interrelations between values question the way these are categorised discretely in existing literature. The qualitative methodology of this research has highlighted these overlaps, and future research might seek to define these four value dimensions more closely to gain a deeper understanding of this categorisation.

This research employed a qualitative approach to understanding types of IW, as there was no a-priori understanding of which types of IW might be employed by senior managers working in the UK sector. This research has now developed a base for understanding the types of work most commonly used. Future work might test these findings by developing a quantitative approach to gathering data from a wider sample of senior individuals working in strong institutional backgrounds. There were data around pro-environmental behaviours that did not fit into the three pillars of IW and these were inductively coded under the theme of 'influence' and allocated to the creating pillar. This may provide a base for further research to expand and understand how actors work to create new structures and institutions through IW.

This research has contributed to understanding the types of IW used in the disrupting pillar, in the advertising sector. The cross sectional nature of this research however did not allow for a full understanding of the effects of disrupting work over a period of time. Future longitudinal research designs may be useful to understand how IW unfolds and if persistent disrupting work can move institutions toward change. Additionally, future research might examine the ways in which actor level consequences unfold over time, what the longer-term wellbeing implications are for those undertaking IW, and how institutions recognise and respond to these issues.

The findings showed the ways in which institutional actors responded to disrupting work by valorising dual ideations of the institution of advertising. This potentially opens up avenues for future research on how further disrupting work might unmask this contradiction and leverage this dual valorisation to highlight inconsistencies within this logic. In effect, examining how these inconsistencies can be used towards further disrupting work.

The secondary data for this research highlighted the ways in which institutional actors, the trade bodies, worked in groups to control narratives and discourses around their institution. The sector's trade body, the AA did not respond to requests for interviews and therefore their perspective is absent from this research. Future research might persist to engage with these actors, to further understand how trade bodies represent their members, and manage requests for institutional change.

The research found that power is an important aspect of IW especially the way it is used by actors in valorising to embed industry norms. Whilst this research did not focus on how power configures and controls discourses, future research might focus on the ways in which power manifests in IW. This might be researched through ethnographic methods, where a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how power is used between actors can be examined.

8.3 Practical Implications

The study highlights the value orientations of senior professionals in the UK advertising industry. As the climate crisis intensifies, cultivating a workforce deeply committed to climate objectives will become increasingly vital to meet climate goals. Understanding how to nurture these values will grow in importance over the coming decades. This research aims to serve as a foundation for employers striving to create a workplace culture that considers its employees concerns and values and works to align these with commercial objectives.

The concept of IW used in this research has facilitated the ability to identify the pro-environmental behaviors of those working in the advertising industry and uncover the responsive behaviors of institutional actors, working to maintain industry norms. These patterns of work, and their ongoing effects are now identified and may be used to understand practices in advertising sectors in other countries. This may enable senior staff to navigate the difficulties of disrupting and creating in their institutions and pre-empt the potential responses they may receive.

The findings show the practicality of employees using group work as a protective measure when trying to disrupt their institutions. This research has suggested that building formal groups before disrupting avoids potential negative consequences at the individual level. It also suggests that the likelihood of any progress from disrupting work is potentially greater as institutions may feel the need to respond to outreach from larger bodies of staff. These findings also perhaps indicate the need for independent specialist bodies to represent, protect and support senior professionals as they work to steer their institutions away from working with polluting clients.

A practical implication of this research is the way in which it amplifies the voices of senior professionals working in the advertising industry - a previously under-represented group - to policymakers. It is anticipated that hearing these professionals' calls for regulation, alongside their profound concerns about the advertising industry's ongoing role in fuelling the climate crisis, will help drive meaningful discussions around policy reforms. A portion of those interviewed for this research expressed strong views that government regulation in the form of advertising bans of highly polluting goods and services, especially oil and gas products was necessary. The UK government has historically used policy intervention to ban advertising for other products harmful to humans (e.g. tobacco), setting a precedent, and therefore this research speaks to the need for the UK government to seriously consider this intervention.

The findings from this research significantly underscore that industry initiatives, such as the Advertising Association's Ad Net Zero initiative (ANZ), addresses operational emissions within the sector, yet fail to account for the emissions generated from the advertising of highly polluting goods and services. This issue raises two critical concerns. Firstly, the ANZ initiative is widely regarded within the industry as a comprehensive roadmap to reducing emissions in the sector. As a result, it shapes the sector's environmental strategies and those of its membership, all while neglecting a substantial share of their overall emissions. Secondly, the initiative is being implemented on a global scale, with established operations in the UK and USA and forthcoming launches in Australia, Europe, the UAE, New Zealand, and Ireland. Together, these regions account for over 50% of global advertising expenditure (ANZ, 2024). This research highlights the very urgent need for the framework to recognise advertised emissions if advertising sectors both in the UK and other countries are to contribute to meeting country level Net Zero goals.

This research found a considerable lack of transparency from advertising agencies on their client roster, keeping polluting clients obscured from some of their workforce and without mention in their annual public reports. This highlights the need for agencies to publicly declare a complete client list if they are serious about their net zero goals. This would make the industry fully accountable for the clients it services and also help to inform other clients as to which polluting industries it's agency are involved with.

Some of the sustainability standards which managers discuss in this study are highlighted as being useful, yet broadly they all fail to account for the sector specific emissions from advertising, such as advertised emissions, or address issues such as working with polluting clients. During 2024, B-Corp status was withdrawn from the advertising agency Havas, after it re-pitched and retained Shell as a client. Servicing one of the world's biggest polluters goes against the foundations of a 'benefit corporation' whose mandate is to consider not just people and profit, but also the planet. However this was only withdrawn due to pressure from activist groups. B-Corp are currently reviewing allocation of their certification to companies who service polluting industries yet no progress has been made on this point to

date. This research calls for initiatives such as B-Corp to maintain the integrity of their standards and ensure their certifications do not facilitate greenwashing.

The research has shown that the AA services a portion of members who have a vested interest in avoiding policy interventions on advertising. This perspective may be important for policy makers to consider. When asking for expertise from the industry on measures which might reduce the societal harms from advertising, they should question the impartiality of responses from the AA. This leads to questions around the suitability of the trade body to address issues around engagement with polluting clients. By using the concept of institutional work, this research has shown that the trade body works to maintain existing industry norms, preventing the industry from evolving in line with climate threats. This research therefore highlights the potential for the creation of a new, non-biased, independent institution or trade body to challenge the AA. It might function to provide a new set of independent industry standards, which would incorporate three elements. An acknowledgment of the concept of advertised emissions (along with enabling a progression towards refining and calculating this), a transparent client roster, and finally setting in place a roadmap for agencies to follow to disengage with polluting clients. These three aspects would address the issues discussed from senior managers in this research and set in place a thorough and consistent approach to addressing climate issues in UK advertising.

8.4 Strengths and Limitations

It is important to acknowledge both the strengths and limitations of the research.

A strength of this research was its ability to uncover the limitations of existing definitions of values in the literature. The depth of the data as well as the setting highlighted the simplification of these existing categories. Existing values research has largely focused on quantitative research approaches and this resulted in limitations in terms of describing value types. For this study, this was partially mitigated by specifying egoistic values into two categories, egoistic-self and egoistic-kin. The limiting factor in this research is that the

findings around values may not be generalisable, however the critical realist approach to the study aimed to provide explanation, rather than move towards generalisation.

One notable strength was the researcher's knowledge of the UK advertising industry. Research carried out by experienced industry professionals and the pre-understandings they bring is noted by academia as a constructive and useful way to understand which research topics to address. It allows the researcher to contextualise the insights gained and expand the range of possible research topics. Whilst researchers should always be aware of any strong biases, the benefits of pre-understandings can deeply enhance knowledge production from initial processes of research questions through to analysis and contributions.

Any potential limitations from researcher pre-understandings or biases was mitigated from the beginning of, and during the interviews, through a reflexive process whereby any pre-existing assumptions were noted and reflected upon (Nadin and Cassell, 2006). A reminder to treat interviewees as expert knowledgeable agents (Gioia et al., 2013; Elliott et al., 1999) helped to keep any bias in check. During data analysis, the secondary data presented the view that the function of advertising was 'ineffective', and this ran contrary to the researcher's understanding of how advertising works to increase consumption. To sense check this and to ensure that researcher bias did not influence the interpretation of this data, existing literature was consulted to resolve the stance around the effects of advertising (as detailed in section 3.1.1).

Access to senior industry professionals who trusted the researcher and provided valuable information was a key strength of the research process. Such insider access may have been unavailable to non-industry specialists therefore severely limiting the ability to collect important data.

It is acknowledged that the geographical and socio-economic conditions of the sample set interviewed for this research may have influenced the types of values expressed. Senior

managers working in a developed country may be less subject to immediate climate risks than individuals working in other regions of the world. For those who are at immediate harm and risk from climate change, it is possible that egoistic values, where a focus is on day to day survival, may take priority for good reason. The findings are therefore to be understood within the context of the research setting.

A potential limitation of the research was the cross-sectional approach to data collection, rather than a longitudinal study. The cross-sectional approach to the interviews allowed for an understanding around which kinds of IW occurred in what order, through questioning and provision of examples. However, as it emerged that IW was an ongoing, recursive process, a longitudinal study might have captured more data and understandings around the long term outcomes of institutional work in this setting.

The critical realist approach to the research allowed for an understanding towards explanation and causality as well as use of recursiveness. Without this, an understanding of the ways in which actors engage in institutional work, and why, may not have been fully understood. This is seen as a significant strength of the research which in part mitigated the inability to collect data from the sector's trade body, the Advertising Association (AA). The AA did not reply to requests for interviews, and whilst this is a potential limitation, it is possible that any interview data from the AA might reiterate existing 'public-relation' type narratives rather than offering deeper insights. To mitigate for this factor, the research turned to secondary online data to triangulate the findings from the interview data.

8.5 Final Conclusions

The two quotes at the start of this thesis (p13) are attributed to Ed Bernays, a pioneer in advertising and public relations, and António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Nearly 100 years ago, in 1928, Bernays said that our minds were moulded largely by men we had never heard of, referring in part to the advertising professionals of his day. In 2024 António Guterres, the UN secretary general, described these advertising men as

'mad'. It is hoped that this research has shown that through the study of senior advertising professionals' values and how they have used these to motivate pro-environmental behaviours, that not all those in advertising are indeed mad. What is clear however, is that the institution of advertising must evolve from its capitalist foundations if it is to remain contemporary. Guterres urges *'media and tech companies to stop taking fossil-fuel advertising'* (WEF, 2024). It is hoped that this research has added some theoritical weight and insider perspectives to that call.

Appendices

1. Interview Questions and Guide

<u>Victoria Harvey June 2022</u>
<u>Final Set of Interview Questions</u>
• In light of the research focus on sustainability and values, what kind of values in general are important to you, when thinking about environmental issues? Thinking of your values, why do you care about climate change? (<u>Intro question added after 3 pilot interviews)</u>
• In what ways do you think your values align / don't align with your agencies values?
• In what ways do you think you might (or might not) be able to express or enact these values in your workplace and do you have examples of what you've done, or can you explain some situations?
• Thinking of what we've just spoken about, are there ways in which this has brought about issues, tensions, or problems at work? Can you explain a bit more about that, maybe some examples?
• I see that you've had a change of job title recently, can you talk a bit about the reasons for that? And/or, In what ways do you think your job title reflects the values you mentioned earlier?
• In what ways do you think you've been able to create change in your agency. Can you give some examples and if you've not been able to bring about change, then why might this be and what barriers might exist to your work?
• Can you talk a bit about what your agency might do to enable positive changes towards sustainability, / or what can be done in the industry to enable change?

1.1 Interview Guide

Interview Guide V Harvey/UEA / May 2022
Notes to self:
• Before interviews start <u>ensure a signed consent form is completed</u> if not ensure <u>recorded verbal consent</u>.
• Ensure all recording equipment is on and working! Don't forget to press record.
<u>Initial statements from Researcher/ Recap before the questions start:</u>
• This is all completely confidential so please feel free to be as frank about all aspects of what we'll chat about.
• You are free to ask questions at any time before, during or after the study by emailing me. Your confidential, anonymized responses will be combined with other participants completing the survey, so it will not be possible to identify you.
• If there are any questions you'd rather not answer that's no problem just say so.
• Are you happy to give verbal consent?
• I'm conducting research into employees pro-environmental values and how these values are expressed in your organisation, what actions you've taken, what are the roadblocks or enablers, and how you've overcome them / or not. I'm interested in your personal journey and how you're able to effect change through your values.
Interview Questions
• How long have you been with the company? (Pilot Interview changes: I can see your title is X, and you've been there x years)
• In light of my research focus on sustainability and employee values, what kind of values in general are important to you, when thinking about the environment and your own and family's future?
• In a nutshell, why do you care about climate change? (Pilot Interview changes : This sentence added as people seem to struggle to immediately think of their values and state them, but easier to express why they experience concern around the climate).
• In what ways do you think your values align with your organizations?
• In what ways do you think you might (or might not) be able to express or enact these values in your workplace?
• Do you have examples, or can you explain some situations?
• Are there ways in which you feel your values align/don't align, with the organisation's values?
• Going back to your values, are there any others apart from what you've stated that you think might be relevant?
• In what ways do you think you've been able to create change (in your organisation) through your values? Can you give some examples of what you've done or not done, to bring about change, and what barriers / enablers might exist?
• I see that you've had a change of job title recently, can you talk a bit about that? _OR_ In what ways do you think your job title reflects your values? (Depending on the situation with each interviewee).
• Can you talk a bit about what your organisation can do to enable positive changes towards sustainability?/and or what can be done in the industry to create change?

2. Support Sheet

Support to send on after interviews in case any interviewees show distress as discussing climate issues.	
If participating in this study has caused you any distress above or beyond what you might encounter in daily life, please consult some of the following resources which deal with eco-anxiety issues, or feel free to contact me directly.	
PhD researcher at UEA Social Science Faculty / V.Harvey1@uea.ac.uk	
Talking Resources	
Climate Psychology Alliance	Up to 3 free sessions on support for Climate Anxiety issues
British Association for Counselling and Psychology	Eco Anxiety Information and practitioners
Mind	Support and information
NHS	Talking Therapies
Better Help	Counselling service
Articles	
Easing your Eco-Anxiety	
Ecosia Blogs – Climate Anxiety	
Climate Anxiety FAQ's	
Mental Health UK – How to deal with climate anxiety	
SWECO – How to cope	

Table 18 Support Sheet

3. Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Ms Victoria Harvey
PhD Researcher at UEA

13 May 2022

Faculty of Social Sciences
Norwich Business School

University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich NR4 7TJ
United Kingdom

Email: v.harvey1@uea.ac.uk
Tel: 07776157126
Web: www.uea.ac.uk

Employees and Net Zero Organisational Targets

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(1) What is this study about?
You are invited to take part in a research study about You will be asked questions about how you are able to influence your organisation towards net zero goals. You have been invited to participate in this study because you are in a position of leadership or seniority within the organisation and you are passionate about climate change.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. By giving consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- Understand what you have read.
- Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- Agree to the use of your personal information as described.
- You have received a copy of this Participant Information Sheet to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?
The study is being carried out by the following researcher(s): Ms Victoria Harvey.
This will take place under the supervision of Dr Rachel Nayani (r.nayain@uea.ac.uk / 01603 592 263).

(3) What will the study involve for me?
You will be asked to have an hour meeting with the researcher, this might be face to face, where the researcher will come to you, or on video conferencing.
You will be asked questions about how you feel about your values around sustainability and climate change and how these relate to your role and organisation. Most questions will be in and this theme. It's more about how you feel about sustainability rather than how good your organisation is in this area. No personal data will be asked for.

An audio/video recording will be taken.

You will have the opportunity to review information generated about you prior to publication if requested.

(4) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I have started?
Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part.
Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of East Anglia now or in the future.

ETH2122-1092

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4. Participant Sample Size

Sample size and theoretical saturation for qualitative data.

Source: (Low, 2019)

Table 1. Sample Size and Theoretical Saturation.

Research Design Data Collection	Sample Size				
	Informants	Observational Units	Members	Group	Cases
Ethnography	30–50[a]			1[b]	
	50–60[c]				
Grounded theory	15–20[b]				
	20–30[d]				
	30–50[e]				
	30–60[c]				
Narrative analysis	1[d]				
Phenomenology	10[d]				
	5–25[b]				
	≥ 6[f]				
Behavioral research		100–200[a]			
Case studies					3–5[d]
Focus groups			6–12[g]		
			6–10[e]		
			6–9[h]		

[a]Morse (1995).
[b]Creswell (1998).
[c]Bernard (2000).
[d]Creswell (2002).
[e]Langford, Schoenfeld, and Izzo (2002).
[f]Morse (1994).
[g]Johnson and Christensen (2004).
[h]Krueger (2000).

5. Philosophical Positions

A visual of philosophical positions;

Source; (Moon and Blackman, 2014)

1.0 ONTOLOGY: What exists in the human world that we can acquire knowledge about?

Realism: one reality exists ———————————► ◄——————— Relativism: multiple realities exist ————————►

1.1 Naïve realism	1.2 Structural realism	1.3 Critical realism	1.4 Bounded relativism	1.5 Relativism
Reality can be understood using *appropriate* methods	Reality is *described* by scientific theory, but its underlying nature remains uncertain	Reality captured by broad *critical* examination	Mental constructions of reality are equal in space & time within boundaries (e.g., cultural, moral, cognitive)	Realities exist as multiple, intangible mental constructions; no reality beyond subjects

2.0 EPISTEMOLOGY: How do we create knowledge?

2.1 Objectivism	2.2 Constructionism*	2.3 Subjectivism
Meaning exists within an object: an objective reality exists in an object independent of the subject	Meaning created from interplay between the subject & object: subject *constructs* reality of object	Meaning exists within the subject: subject imposes meaning on an object

3.0 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: What is the philosophical orientation of the researcher that guides their action/research?

Knowledge acquisition is deductive, 'value-free', generalizable ◄———► Knowledge acquisition is inductive, value-laden, contextually unique

Application: to predict

3.1 Positivism
Natural science methods (posit, observe, derive logical *truths*) can be applied to the social sciences

3.2 Post-positivism
Multiple methods are necessary to identify a *valid* belief because all methods are imperfect

3.3 Structuralism The source of meaning comes from the formal structure found in language & can apply to all aspects of human culture

Application: to understand

3.4 (Social) Constructivism Meaning making of reality is an activity of the individual mind

3.5 Interpretivism Natural science methods cannot apply to social science; interpretations of reality are culturally derived & historically situated

3.5a Hermeneutics	3.5b Phenomenology	3.5c Symbolic interactionism
Hidden meaning (of language) exists in texts, practices, events & situations, beneath apparent ones	The essence of human experience of phenomena is only understood when the researcher separates their own experiences	The researcher must take the position of those researched (interaction) by sharing language & other tools (symbols)

Application: to emancipate or liberate

3.6 Critical theory Research & theory should be used to change situations (focuses on power relations, critiques assumptions & evolves)

3.6a Emancipatory	3.6b Advocacy or participatory	3.6c Feminism
The subjects of social inquiry should be empowered	Politics & political agendas should be accounted for	The world is patriarchal & the culture it inherits is masculine

Application: to deconstruct

3.7 Post-structuralism Different languages & discourses divide the world & give it meaning

3.8 Post-modernism Truth claims are socially constructed to serve interests of particular groups, methods are equally distrusted; might not be possible to arrive at any conclusive definition of reality

Application: any or all

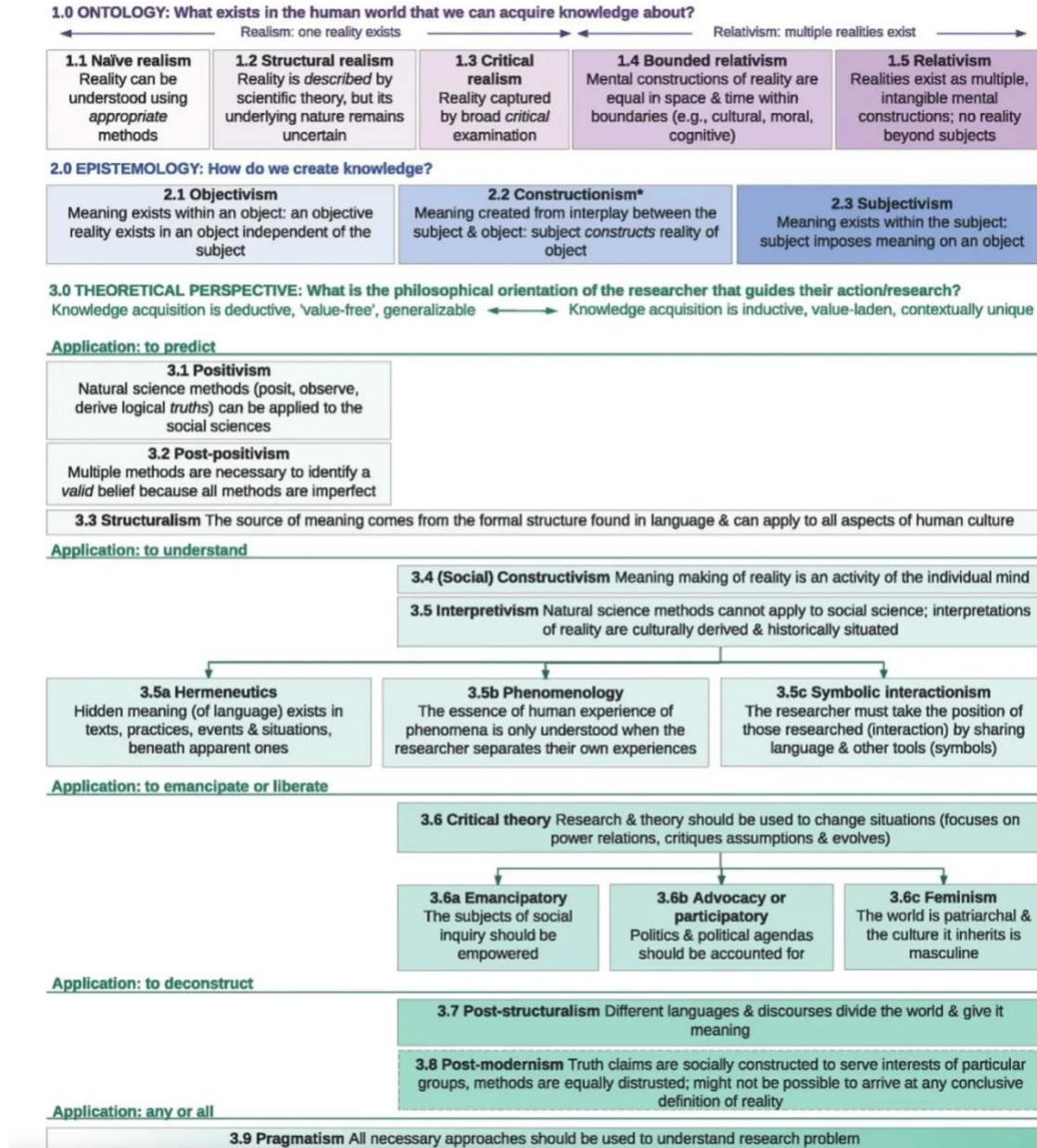**3.9 Pragmatism** All necessary approaches should be used to understand research problem

Figure 7 A visual of philosophical positions

6. Global Agency Holding Groups by Revenue, Net Zero Goals and Oil and Gas Clients

Global Advertising and PR Holding Groups + HQ	Annual Revenue 2022 Source; (EMarketer, 2024)	Sustainability Report Source listed	Net Zero Goals for operational emissions.	Top Ten Oil and Gas Clients Source; (Creatives, 2023)
WPP (London, UK)				
A global leader in advertising offering communications, technology, and commerce services.	$17.9 billion	(WPP, 2023) **No oil or gas clients listed.**	Aiming for Net Zero (on operational emissions) by 2025 Net zero supply chain by 2030	*Saudi Aramco Chevron Shell BP Equinor American Petroleum Castrol Emirates National Oil Indian Oil*
Omnicom Group (NY, US)				
Specializes in digital marketing and serving clients globally.	$14.3 billion	(Omnicom, 2024) **No oil or gas clients listed.**	Aiming for Net Zero by 2030 (on operational emissions) Supports 1.5C Paris Agreement	*ExxonMobil BP Total Énergies Chevron Repsol Gulf Oil AGL Energy Arrow Energy BHP Glencore*
Publicis (Paris, France)				
Focuses on digital media and the success of its Epsilon data business.	$13.5 billion	(Publicis, 2024) **No oil or gas clients listed.**	Joined United Nations Global Compact Supports 1.5C Paris Agreement	*Petrobras ADNOC Saudi Aramco Total Energies Engie PGE Ampol Enel Enbridge Petrobras*

Global Advertising and PR Holding Groups + HQ	Annual Revenue 2022 Source; (EMarketer, 2024)	Sustainability Report Source listed	Net Zero Goals for operational emissions.	Top Ten Oil and Gas Clients Source; (Creatives, 2023)
The Interpublic Group of Companies (NY, US)				
Houses major network agencies such as FCB and McCann World group, specializing in various marketing disciplines.	$10.9 billion	(IPG, 2024) **No oil or gas clients listed.**-*but one statement said "Reviewing prospective new clients that operate in the oil, energy and utility sectors."*	Joined United Nations Global Compact Supports 1.5C Paris Agreement Aiming for Net Zero by 2040 (on operational emissions)	*Total Energies Petronas Shell Repsol Petro-Canada Kleenheat Saudi Aramco Equinor AGL Energy ExxonMobil*
Dentsu (London, UK)				
Communication strategy services through media planning and buying.	$7.3 billion	(Dentsu, 2023) **No oil or gas clients listed.**	Aiming for Net Zero by 2030 Supports Sustainable Development Goals	*Chevron Alinta Energy Ampol Petronas PTT*
Havas (Paris, France)				
A global advertising and public relations leader, - direct marketing /corporate communications.	$3.0 billion	(Havas, 2023) **No oil or gas clients listed.**	B-Corp – (recently stripped) 71% Aiming for Net zero by 2035 - Energy 41% Net zero by 2030 -scope3	*Imperial Oil and Gas BP Q8 Shell Technip*

7. Secondary Data Analysis Sources

	Search Area	Search Term	URL	Reference	Media Type	Title	Data
1	Agency CEOs	*UK Advertising agency +CEO's +oil and gas UK Advertising agency +CEO's +polluting brands UK Advertising agency +CEO's +polluting clients*	URL	(Jordan, 2024)	News Article	*'Dozens of Ad & PR Industry Directors Have Ties to Heavily Polluting Industries'*	CEO / board member connections to oil and gas companies
2			URL	(Dembicki, 2024)	News Article	*'Havas CEO Yannick Bolloré Staked His Brand on Caring About the Climate. So Why Is His Company Working for Shell?'*	CEO / board member connections to oil and gas companies Bolloré Energy and Yannick Bolloré of Havas – CEO
3		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients*	URL	(Creatives, 2023)	Website Report	*'The F-List2024 The Mad Men Fuelling the Madness'*	Ad agencies + oil and gas links - The F-List documents known relationships between fossil fuel clients and advertising and PR agencies.
4	Agency Transparency, client roster, polluting clients?	*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients +WPP*	URL	(WPP, 2023)	Online Report	*WPP 2023*	Online sustainability ESG report
5		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients +Omnicom*	URL	(Omnicom, 2024)	Online Report	*Omnicom 2023*	No oil and gas clients listed

6		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients +Publicis*	URL	(Publicis, 2024)	Online Report	*Publicis 2023*	No oil and gas clients listed
7		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients +IPG*	URL	(IPG, 2024)	Online Report	*IPG 2023*	No oil and gas clients listed. *'Reviewing prospective new clients that operate in the oil, energy and utility sectors'.*
8		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients +Dentsu*	URL	(Dentsu, 2023)	Online Report	*Dentsu 2023*	No oil and gas clients listed
9		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients +Havas*	URL	(Havas, 2023)	Online Report	*Havas 2023*	No oil and gas clients listed
10		*Advertising agencies +oil and gas clients*	URL	(Campaign, 2024)	Online Report	Campaign 2024 School Report	No oil and gas clients listed in scorecard
11	AA Membership	*Advertising Association +Funding Advertising Association +Membership*	URL	(A.A., 2024d)	AA Website	AA Membership	AA and membership - no oil and gas members listed
12			URL	(WayBack, 2023)	AA Website from 'Way Back When'	AA Membership [2023 version]	Older membership shows affiliations with tobacco clients.

1 3		Advertising Association + Ad Net Zero	<u>URL</u>	(A.A., 2024a)	Webp age	*'Helping advertising tackle the climate emergency'*	ANZ initiative, details on the 5 pillars. No pillars address advertised emissions
1 4	AA and AE	*Advertising Association +advertised emissions*	<u>URL</u>	(A.A, 2023)	Online Article	*'A Statement on Advertised Emissions'*	AA disagrees with AE, states a link to Said paper. States a displaceme nt effect from adverts
1 5			<u>URL</u>	(Thomaz , 2023)	Report	*Said Business School Report*	Link to paper, introduces displaceme nt effect
1 6			<u>URL</u>	(IPA, 2023b)	Webp age	*'IPA, AA and ISBA release joint statement about Advertised Emissions'*	Joint trade body statement denying AE, stating 'a lost effect' of sales, or displaceme nt effect.
1 7			<u>URL</u>	(Woodf ord, 2023)	News Article	*'Ad chiefs warn: 'Advertised emissions' won't help our industry to reach net zero'*	AA, IPA and ISBA argue Purpose Disruptors' methodolo gy is flawed. Argues a displaceme nt effect.
1 8			<u>URL</u>	(A.A., 2024b)	Video Online	*'Advertising s Big Questions'*	Video panel: discussing

					recording	Conference Video	displacement effect .
19	AA and the 'displacement effect'	*Advertising Association +displacement effect*	[URL](URL)	(Angear, 2016)	AA Online Post	*Does advertising grow markets?*	First time 'most advertising does not grow markets' – concluded from analysis of 3 journal articles
20		*Advertising Association +substitution of sales*	URL	(Ambler et al., 1998)	Academic paper	*'Does Marketing Affect Market Size? Some evidence from the United Kingdom'*	Concluded mixed results from advertising, but overall some market growth
21			URL	(Broadbent, 2008)	Academic paper	*'Does advertising grow markets? More evidence from the United Kingdom'*	Concluded mixed results from advertising, but overall some market growth
22			URL	(Binet and Field, 2009)	Academic paper	*'Empirical generalizations about advertising campaign success'*	Concluded mixed results from advertising
23	AA and Communications	Advertising Association +communications	[URL](URL)	(HOL, 2022)	Government transcript	HOL Environment and Climate Change Committee *'Mobilising action on climate change and*	AA called to give evidence, but do not communicate concerns of members to governmen

		Advertising Association +government				*environment: behaviour change'*	t on concerns around advertised emissions.
2 4			URL	(HOL, 2022)	Video Online recordi ng	Video of above	Video of above
2 5			URL	(HOL, 2021)	Online Docum ent	House of Lords Communica tion and Digital Committee inquiry *'A creative future'*	Text in thesis chapter, 33 data points communica ted to governmen t on advertising creativity
2 6			N/A	(LFS, 2019)	Respo nse to the Online Report Submi ssion	*'The London Food Strategy Report'*	AA letter of rejection of advertising restrictions to HFSS to London Greater Authority
2 7	AA and communi cations to Governm ent	Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK	URL	(A.A., 2022a)	Online Statem ent	*'AA Comment on HFSS Advertising Implement ation Announcem ent'*	AA Rejects ad bans on HFSS
2 8			URL	(A.A., 2022b)	Online Blog	*'Britain Thinks': Banning HFSS advertising is not the public's answer to the obesity crisis'*	AA Rejects ad bans on HFSS

2 9			URL	(Gwynn, 2017)	News Report	*'Advertising Association insists current rules on gambling ads are enough'*	AA Rejects ad bans on gambling
3 0			URL	(Watson, 2021)	News Report	*'To boycott or not to boycott: how agencies should work with high-carbon clients'*	AA Rejects ad bans on aviation and oil and gas

8. Advertising Agency Directors with polluting industry ties

Source; (Jordan, 2024)

Climate approaches at six largest ad and PR firms

	Directors with polluting industry ties	Net-zero target*	Number of fossil fuel contracts since the start of 2022**
Omnicom	64%	None (46.2% reduction by 2030)	54
IPG	60%	2040	25
Publicis	46%	2040	11
WPP	42%	2030	61
Dentsu	55%	2040	5
Havas	33%	2025	7

*N.B. None of the six major holding companies include the potential of their client work to increase the sales of emissions-heavy products, protect the reputation of polluting brands or influence environmental policy in their net zero plans, also known as 'advertised emissions'.
**According to DeSmog and Clean Creatives.
Source: DeSmog, 2024

Figure 8 Advertising Agency Directors with polluting industry ties

9. Ad Net Zero Initiative and Pillars

The five pillars of the ANZ initiative from the AA. Summarised from available data online. Source (A.A., 2024a). 'Notes' are researcher's additions.

Action 1: Reduce emissions from operations

'Aims to reduce emissions from the operations of advertising businesses. It calls for agencies and marketing services companies to annually measure consumption data, for example, electricity usage, business travel, waste production'. (A.A., 2024a)

NOTES; This pillar focuses on operational emissions from advertising agencies themselves. SBTi adherence from June 2024 is required. This pillar does not map any advertised emissions from agency clients.

Action 2: Reduce Emissions from Advertising Production

'All agencies and production companies will be encouraged to commit to reducing emissions from advertising production. AdGreen, an advertising production sustainability initiative, is one example of how Action 2 can be implemented. (A.A., 2024a)

NOTES;. The Ad Green program was an existing initiative and was purchased by the AA in 2020. It functions separately from the AA but is owned and supported by them.

Action 3: Reduce Emissions from Media Planning & Buying

'Media agencies, media owners and clients will be encouraged to work together to develop and implement lower carbon media plans. Ad Net Zero is collaborating with GARM and the WFA to develop a consistent data framework and methodology to calculate the emissions from media planning and buying'. (A.A., 2024a).

NOTES; This pillar was set up by the World Federation of Advertisers and led by GARM. The AA took over in late 2024 when GARM was forced to close due to a lawsuit from Elon Musk. The AA now run and promote this pillar.

Action 4: Reduce Advertising Emissions Through Awards and From Events

'Action 4 of the Ad Net Zero plan challenges industry awards bodies to ensure that the sustainability credentials and climate impact of campaigns inform judging'. (A.A., 2024a)

NOTES; This pillar is promoted by the AA but delivered by an independent organisation called ISLA. Looks at increasing sustainability in events and awards events.

Action 5: Harness Advertising's Power To Support Behaviour Change

'Focused on harnessing advertising's power to support behaviour change. Initiatives like #ChangetheBrief are recommended.. The Campaign Ad Net Zero Awards were set up with a wide range of categories to honour our industry's best work in tackling the climate emergency'. (A.A., 2024a)

NOTES; This pillar is promoted by the AA but was set up, owned and delivered by the Purpose Disruptors. This pillar helps agency creatives aim to 'modify' the creative briefs they receive from brands towards considering climate goals (PD, 2024). For example, this might mean encouraging behaviour change through having an actor use a flask instead of disposable cup in an advert, or having actors take the train rather than use a car or fly. It works to positively 'Change the Brief' however it does not enable creatives or agencies to decline briefs from highly polluting adverts, only attempt to alter them in a small way.

10. Advertised Emissions

Excerpt from the Purpose Disruptors report on advertised emissions. The graphic is explained in the text below. Source (Wise, 2022)

Graphic showing that the advertised emissions from just from one advertising campaign for Audi, amounts to around 5.1 M tons of carbon. This is similar to the operational emissions (i.e. energy in electric use in office, flights for staff) for the entire WPP holding group globally which is 5.4M tons of carbon annually. An agency will do many adverts in one year, therefore many more millions of tons from AE.

This demonstrates the extent to which AE is material in the conversation around the climate crisis and why focusing only on operational emissions is only addressing a small proportion of emissions from the sector.

Emissions from one ad campaign for Audi

BBH

5,175,300
tCO_2e

One campaign for one client from one agency

Annual Global Emissions from WPP

WPP

5,400,000
tCO_2e

UK based and the world's largest producer of advertising content. 109,000 employees in 110 countries.
Clients include 317 of the Fortune Global 500, all 30 of the Dow Jones 30, 62 of the NASDAQ 100 and 61 of the FTSE 100.

Figure 9 Comparing Advertised Emissions

11. Advertising Association Membership

There are two screenshots in this appendix from the Advertising Association's website which details their members.

The first screenshot from 2023, below; shows a range of advertising agency members as well as brands. The Philip Morris Cigarette brand (bottom left on the first image below) was a member as of the date of the screenshot (14.03.2023). Source[38] (WayBack, 2023).
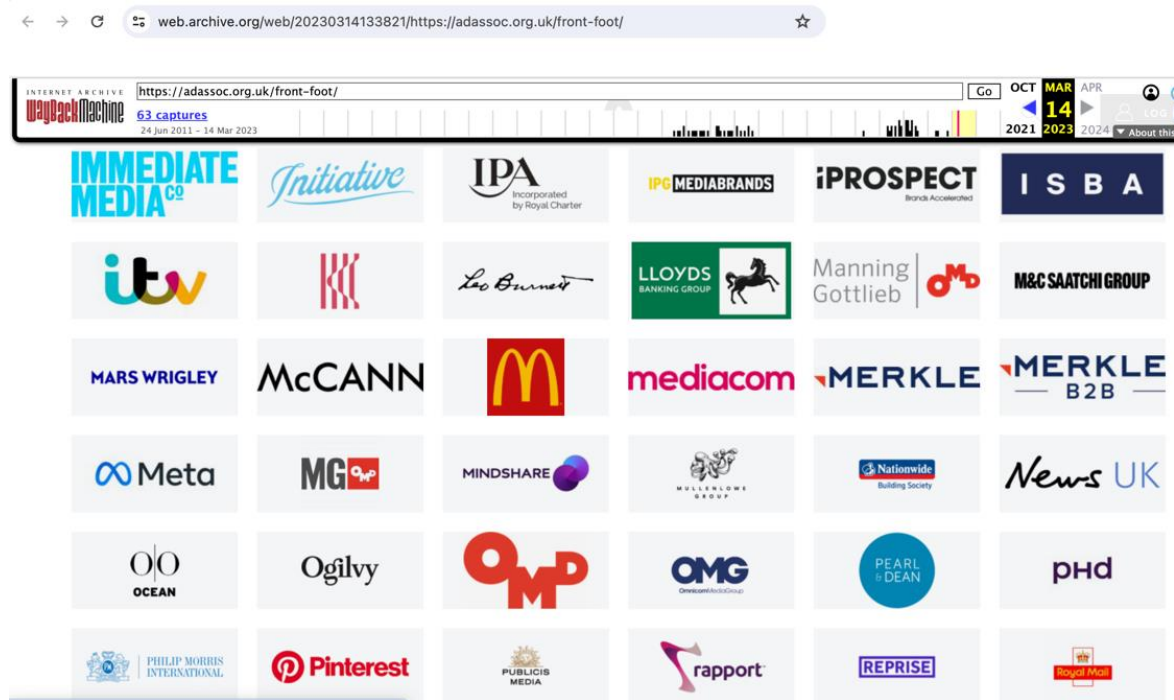
Figure 10 Screenshot of The AA's membership 2023

2nd screenshot in Figure 11 - Advertising Association membership website screenshot from 2024, did not feature the Phillip Morris brand. Source (A.A., 2023f)

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[38] The Way back Machine is a digital archive of the internet founded by the Internet Archive; an American non-profit organization based in California. Created in 1996 and launched in 2001, it allows users to go "back in time" to see how websites looked in the past.

Figure 11 Screenshot of The AA's membership 2024

12. FOI Statement from University of Oxford

INFORMATION COMPLIANCE TEAM
University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

Ref: 202311/1104

19 December 2023

Reply to request for information under the Freedom of Information Act	
Your ref	Email of 20 November 2023
Request	I'm looking into the funding details for a research project carried out by Dr Felipe Thomaz on Advertised Emissions and have a few questions. 1. How was the paper funded (directly / gifts / donations) and who/what was the funding body? 2. What was the funding amount? 3. Is there a publicly available brief for this research project?

Dear Doug Broadbent-Yale,

I write in reply to your email requesting the information detailed above.

Items 1 & 2

There was no specific funding allocated for this paper; it was undertaken as part of Dr Thomaz' role in the Oxford Future of Marketing Initiative (FOMI). There was a donation to FOMI after the paper was completed, for between £10k-£20k, from the Advertising Association (https://adassoc.org.uk/).

Item 3

There was no written brief given for this project.

Yours sincerely

FOI Oxford
Information Compliance Team

13. Organigram of the AA's Membership

The below organigram shows the structure of the AA's membership (as can be seen from online searches). What is not visible is all of the advertising agency members. The ASA is not a member but is included for completeness.
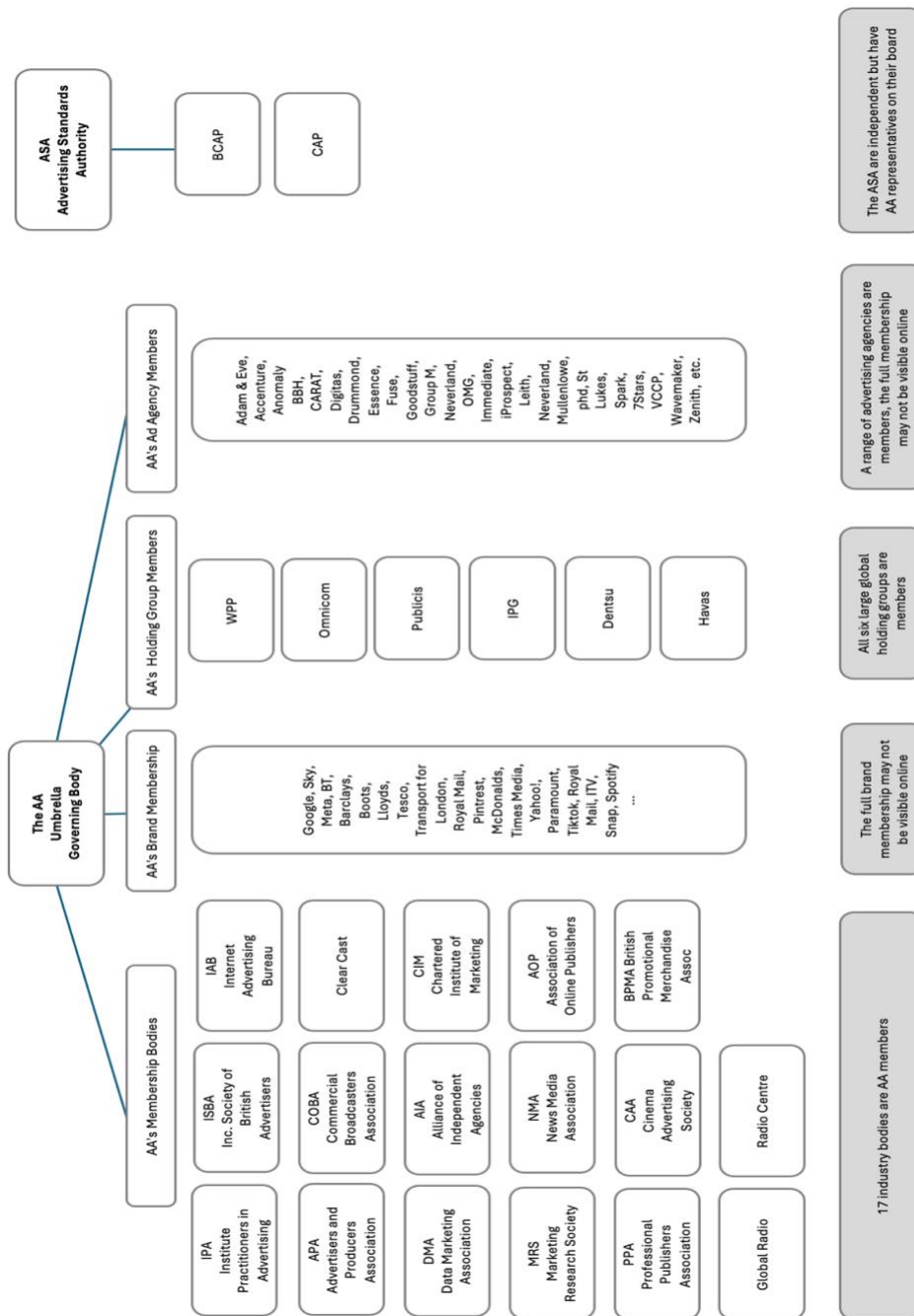
Figure 12 Organigram of the AA's Membership

14. Organigram of UK Advertising Industry Groups, Frameworks, Standards and Courses
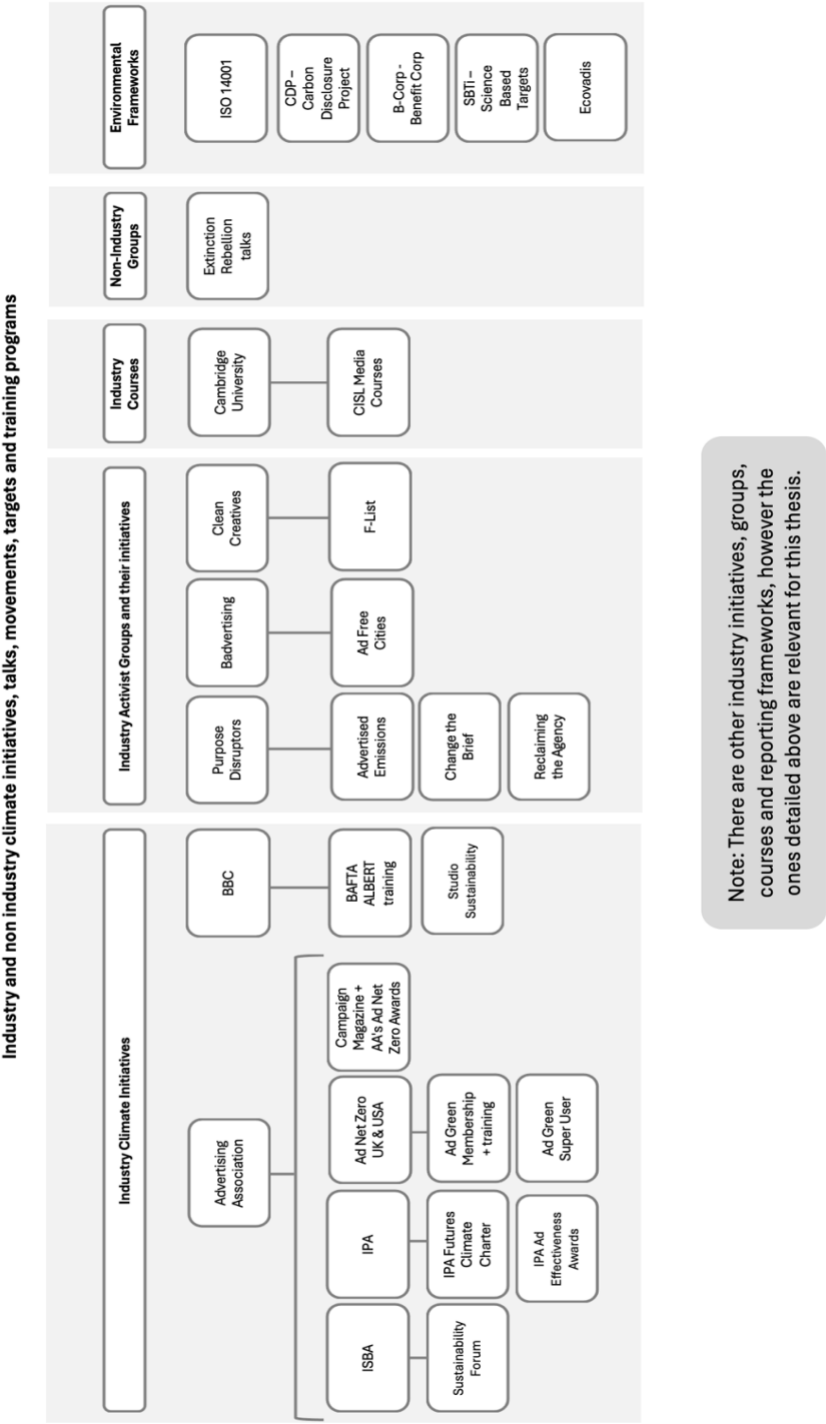
Figure 13 Organigram of UK Advertising Industry Groups, Frameworks, Standards and Courses

15. Ogilvy's Carbon Footprint Campaign

In 2004, British Petroleum (BP) (now rebranded to Beyond Petroleum) asked its advertising agency, Ogilvy Mather to emphasise the responsibility for carbon creation onto the consumer. They used the term 'Carbon Footprint' to promote the idea of consumer responsibility.

Source (Suprans, 2021)

Figure 14 Ogilvy's Carbon Footprint Campaign

16. Coding Examples for Secondary Data Analysis 7.4.7

Examples below are detailed for five of the thirty data items analysed for section 7.4.7.The below shows the coding process, coded data, themes and conclusions around the Advertising Association and their actions and opinions on advertising restrictions.

1.	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK
Prepare data	(LFS, 2019) – GLA FOE letter
Define type of media and unit of analysis	The AA's response to the London Food Strategy Report 2019 to implement restrictions around advertising for high fat salt sugar foods. Source; FOE letter from GLA detailing the AA response.
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Restrictions Regulation
Example data extracts – " " Coding from the text	*We do not agree with the proposed 'unhealthy' food and drink advertising ban* *We do not believe there is any need for further advertising restrictions* *Academic research has also failed to establish a direct link between food marketing and obesity* *The current rules for advertising in the UK are among the strictest in the world.* *We do not agree with the proposed ban* *We believe it is misleading to imply that obesity reduction rates can be related to advertising bans on the metro.* *We believe therefore that an outright ban is entirely disproportionate* Disagree with data Do not believe ad bans will work Academic research – not believed No proof bans work Misleading Disproportionate
Assessment - Move towards themes	Disagree with data Disapprove of bans on HFSS foods
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	The AA do not support restrictions around HFSS foods or believe academic research.

2	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK
Prepare data	(A.A., 2022a)
Define type of media and unit of analysis	Online Statement – The AA

Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Restrictions Regulation
Example data extracts – " " Coding from the text +	*new advertising restrictions …the wrong policy will do nothing to tackle obesity.* *Not…advertising bans.* Wrong policy steps Bans Ineffective
Assessment - Move towards themes	Bans on HFSS restrictions not supported
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	No need for any advertising restrictions

3	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK
Prepare data	(A.A., 2022b) Online Blog – The AA
Define type of media and unit of analysis	AA Website, Blog Post
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Restrictions Regulation
Example data extracts – " " Coding from the text +	*Banning HFSS advertising is not the public's answer to the obesity crisis* *Advertising bans are not the silver bullet* Not the answer Bans not effective
Assessment - Move towards themes	Disapprove of bans Bans Ineffective
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	The AA do not support advertising bans / restrictions

4	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK
Prepare data	(Gwynn, 2017) News Report – The AA
Define type of media and unit of analysis	AA Website, Blog Post
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Restrictions Regulation
Example data extracts – " "	*Current rules on gambling ads are enough* *Further restriction on advertising would be ineffective*

Coding from the text +	*Responsible gambling advertising work* Bans Ineffective Ad restrictions already adequate
Assessment - Move towards themes	Existing restrictions adequate
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	The AA do not support further advertising restrictions around gambling

5	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association + advertising regulation UK Advertising Association + advertising restrictions UK
Prepare data	(Watson, 2021) News Report – The AA
Define type of media and unit of analysis	AA Website, Blog Post
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Restrictions Regulation
Example data extracts – " " Coding from the text +	*Advertising Standards Authority, has helped raise awareness of ads that could be perceived as 'greenwashing'* Awareness of greenwashing
Assessment - Move towards themes	No need for bans as greenwashing is controlled
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	The AA feel that controlling greenwashing is adequate and therefore no need for bans.

17. Coding Examples for Secondary Data Analysis 7.4.5

Examples of market growth from research (Chapter 7, section 7.4.5) – examination of three papers, from which the 'displacement effect' was assumed.

1st Paper	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association +displacement effect Advertising Association +substitution of sales
Prepare data	(Ambler et al., 1998)
Define type of media and unit of analysis	Academic Paper
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Displacement Effect
Example data extracts – " "	*'Increased **brand sales** and also **raised** all ready-to-eat cereals consumption… so there was a **market effect**.';* (p228) *'Advertising had a **strong effect** on the sub-sector and **sector size**. Dairy product **sales** were also **increased**.'* (p228) *'The brand grew and **so did the sector**. Category size was not affected'* (p228) *'The new sector **grew strongly**. So did Hellmann's volume and its share in it. That **market size was certainly affected**.'* (p228)
Coding from the text +	*market effect* *sales were also increased* *brand grew* *sector grew strongly* *market size affected*
Assessment - Move towards themes	*market* *sales* *brand* *sector* *all grew*
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	Advertising grows markets, sales, brands and sectors.

2nd Paper	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association +displacement effect Advertising Association +substitution of sales
Prepare data	(Broadbent, 2008)
Define type of media and unit of analysis	Academic Paper
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Displacement Effect

Example data extracts – " "	*Galaxy succeeded in **growing the market** by bringing in new customers: 90% of Galaxy's sales came from people who had not previously owned an MPV." (p755)* *'The advertising **grew sales of the unit** (Galaxy), the brand (Ford), and the sub-sector (MPVs), but not the sector (all private cars)' (p756)* *'Of the 129 IPA papers in this analysis, 20 were for government, social or charity advertising, leaving 109 commercial cases. **Seventeen of them reported some form of market growth'** (p752).*
Coding from the text +	*Growing market effect* *grew sales of the unit* *Seventeen… of market growth*
Assessment - Move towards themes	*market and sales all grew* *sales* *brand* *sector* *all grew*
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	Advertising grows markets and sales, brands and sectors.

3rd Paper	
Secondary Research - Search Term to enter into search engine	Advertising Association +displacement effect Advertising Association +substitution of sales
Prepare data	(Binet and Field, 2009)
Define type of media and unit of analysis	Academic Paper
Categories and the coding (testing the coding)	Displacement Effect
Example data extracts – " "	*'TV is actually **becoming more effective**, not less …these findings provide potential 'recipes for success' although we advocate exercising prudent care in ascribing causality'* *more effective, not less*
Coding from the text +	
Assessment - Move towards themes	*TV is effective at growing various metrics such as brand awareness.*
Drawing conclusions from the coded data	TV advertising is effective

Glossary

Ad Net Zero

Ad Net Zero is an industry-wide initiative led by the Advertising Association to reduce the carbon impact of advertising (A.A., 2024a).

AdGreen

AdGreen is a UK-based organization that helps the advertising industry reduce the environmental impact of its production. AdGreen's goal is to help the advertising industry transition to sustainable production methods (AdGreen, 2024).

Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent regulator of advertising across all media. They apply the Advertising Codes, which are written by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) (ASA, 2024).

Albert & Albert training

albert is a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television) owned and industry backed organisation and is the leading screen industry organisation for environmental sustainability. Their training programs cover best practice low carbon film production (Albert, 2024).

B-Corp Certification

The B-Corp certification process measures a company's performance in many areas, including: supply chain and input materials, charitable giving, and employee benefits. B-Corp certification denotes some changes to an organisation's legal governing documents and includes changes to its Articles of Association to include mission-aligned legal language. This means the board of directors are legally obliged to balance purpose and profit. Additionally, to certify, the organisation must achieve a score of 80 points on their 3 year annual review (CGL, 2023; BCorp, 2024).

BIMA

The British Interactive Media Association (BIMA) is a not-for-profit industry body representing the digital industry in the United Kingdom (BIMA, 2024).

CDP

The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) is a non-profit organization that encourages companies, cities, states, and regions to disclose their environmental, social, and governance (ESG) impacts. CDP's goal is to build a sustainable economy by measuring and reducing environmental impacts (CDP, 2024).

CEO

CEOs are responsible for the company's financial strength, operational efficiency, and strategic management. They make major decisions, drive the company toward strategic goals, and oversee the company's various functions. CEOs also act as the main point of communication between the board of directors and corporate operations (Investopia, 2024).

Change the Brief

Change The Brief is an on-demand and face to face learning programme and community offering insights and expert advice on how we can adapt our work to promote more sustainable choices and behaviours in line with a net-zero world. It is a partnership between agencies of every size and type - media, creative, design, PR - and their clients, learning and acting together to directly address the challenge of the climate crisis by promoting sustainability via every channel available to them (CTB, 2024).

CISL (Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership)

Provides courses on sustainable marketing and media.

Clean Creatives

Clean Creatives is a not for profit organisation consisting of employees working in the advertising and media industry globally. They consist of strategists, creatives, and industry

leaders who believe that fossil fuel clients represent a threat to the future. Over 1000 agencies have taken the Clean Creative Pledge - not work with fossil fuel clients (Creatives, 2024).

COP

Conference of the Parties is the international meeting focusing on climate. COP is the main decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC, 2024).

C-suite

The C-suite refers to a company's executive-level leadership team. This level of 'C' – which stands for 'chief' is made up of senior executives with titles that typically start with the letter 'C'. The C-suite comprises all the senior level management that run an organisation (Mckinsey, 2023).

Extinction Rebellion (XR)

Extinction Rebellion (XR) is a global environmental movement that uses nonviolent civil disobedience to pressure governments to act on climate change, biodiversity loss, and social and ecological collapse (XR, 2024).

Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse gases (also known as GHGs) are gases in the earth's atmosphere that trap heat. These gases are released from a variety of sources, however they mainly come from burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and gas. Heat is trapped by the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and creates a warming effect, which increases temperatures globally. Most GHG are calculated and converted into carbon dioxide equivalents (CO2E) to represent just one figure.

Holding Company

An advertising agency holding company, also known as a 'holdco', is a parent company that owns and manages multiple advertising agencies. Most of the agencies in this research are part of these six large holding groups. These are listed in Appendix 6.

IPA

The IPA - Institute of Practitioners of Advertising - is a professional trade body and organization that represents the UK's advertising, media, and marketing communications industry. The IPA's membership primarily consists of advertising and media agencies. The IPA promotes best practices, advances the theory and practice of these fields, and ensures their work benefits the public, business community, and national economy (IPA, 2024).

IPA Climate Charter & IPA Media Futures Group

Created by agency members of the IPA Media Futures Group, the IPA Media Climate Charter provides media agencies with the tools and resources to support their transition to a zero-carbon future. (IPA, 2024).

ISBA

ISBA - Incorporated Society of British Advertisers- represents brand owners advertising in the UK. ISBA's purpose and principles are to create an advertising environment that is transparent, responsible and accountable; one that can be trusted by the public, by advertisers and by legislators. (ISBA, 2024)

Net Zero

Net zero is a general term which refers to an intention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, generally by a specified date. Where net zero is used in this thesis in general terms, it is not capitalised, however when referring to a specific program which has net zero goals, the term is capitalised.

Purpose Disruptors

Purpose Disruptors is a UK-based non-profit organization that aims to transform the advertising industry to help drive sustainable behaviour and tackle climate change (PD, 2024).

Reclaiming Agency

Reclaiming Agency is a community of creative leaders, collectively nurturing the change they'd like to see in themselves, and their organisations at this time of great transformation. Run by the Purpose Disruptors and offering courses to advertising industry experts (Agency, 2024).

Science-based targets

Science-based targets provide companies with a clearly-defined path to reduce emissions in line with the Paris Agreement goals (SBTi, 2024).

Science-based targets initiative (SBTi)

The Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) is a program that helps companies and financial institutions set science-based targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (SBTi, 2024).

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