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Images, forms and presence outside and beyond the pink ghetto

Abstract

Purpose: As a concept, power has an image component and shifts in power are often conveyed by subtle changes in the cultural semiotic. The semiotics of gendered identity is a complex issue which is difficult to measure, assess and understand. Gender has its own semiotic codes and universally, images of female-entrepreneurship are socially constructed using pejorative stereotypes. We therefore consider entrepreneurial imagery that sheds light on differing and emerging patterns of female entrepreneurial identity which illustrate shifts in the locus of power that challenge masculine hegemony and power structures. We consider the role of artefacts, images and semiotics in constructing gendered socially constructed alternative stereotypes of the entrepreneur that stand beside the heroic, risk taking, non-conforming alpha-male. Therefore, we explore images, forms and presence associated with gendered entrepreneurial identities.

Approach: In this study, 100 images of female-entrepreneurship were subjected to a semiotic analysis using photo-montage techniques to identify common stereotypical representations, archetypes and themes. The resultant conceptual typology points to the existence of near universal gendered entrepreneurial stereotypes such as the Business Wo**man**; the Matriarch; the Diva; and the Pink-Ghetto Girl which have archetypal undertones.

Findings: Although the results being semiotic are subjective and open to interpretation they illustrate that the contemporary female-entrepreneur is far from invisible. However, unlike their male counterparts they are not forced to adopt the persona of the 'conforming non-conformist' but have more options available to them as to whether to adopt an entrepreneurial identity or not. They can thus flout accepted semiotic conventions.

Implications: This study extends research into entrepreneurial identity by considering visual imagery associated with a socially constructed stereotypical imagery. In looking through and beyond images associated with the 'Pink Ghetto' we challenge stereotypical representations of the appearance of female-entrepreneurs, what they look like and how they are perceived. This evidences a social reconstructing in progress manifest in both image and presence.

Value: This study widens our knowledge about entrepreneurship as a socio-economic phenomenon via images which form part of the identity of enterprise, a physical manifestation of a nebulas phenomenon acting as '*visual metaphors*' shaping expected social constructions.

"I WANT, said Bella Rokesmith, to be something so much worthier than the doll in the doll's house".

<div align="right">A quote from Charles Dickens's novel 'Our Mutual Friend' (1864).</div>

Introduction

In her evocatively entitled book 'Out of the Dolls House', journalist and social commentator Angela Holdsworth articulated the collective belief that the biggest achievement of women in the twentieth century was to escape from the constraining imagery of the dolls house (Holdsworth, 1998). It is noteworthy that Dickens's fictional heroine Bella Rokesmith was born into abject poverty at a time when the only viable route out of such a situation open to her was to enter into an arranged marriage with the mysterious suitor John Harmon. Bella is characterised as a *'mercenary young woman'*, with *'no more...character than a canary bird'*. It is fitting we begin this exploration with this stark image of female enterprise.[1]

This study considers images, forms and presence as a conceptual frame work to help us better understand issues of female entrepreneurship and in doing so addresses the neglected issue of semiotics and semiotic analysis (Chandler, 2001: Riot, 2013) in gender research (See table 2 in the methodology section for a more detailed explanation of the framework). Indeed, during the past decade there has been an elevated research interest into the role of myth and metaphor in the social construction of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial narrative (Drakopolou-Dodd, 2002; Nicholson & Anderson, 2005). Visual metaphor presents wonderful insights relating to gendered entrepreneurial

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[1] In a twist of fate believing that her suitor John Harmon the heir to a rich estate drowned in an accident she goes to work for the Boffins who inherit the estate and there later meets John Harmon who has adopted the alias of John Rokesmith. She learns to love him and accepts his proposal. The stark storylines tell us much of the choices open to women long ago.

identities and images of career (Inkson, 2004). Yet, we seldom consider the role of artefacts, images and semiotics play within this process (Smith & Anderson, 2003; Clarke, 2011). This study had two main aims. The first seeks to explore, understand and challenge the widely accepted socially constructed imagery and stereotypes associated with the heroic, risk taking, non-conforming alpha-male (Burns, 2010). Masculine imagery is commonly used to construct this gendered stereotype (Ahl & Nelson, 2010) and although the female-entrepreneur is said to be 'invisible' (Ahl, 2002); 'silent' (Hamilton & Smith, 2003), or associated with 'pinkness' (Reece, 2011) she could be said to be developing a robust media presence. The focus of this study is about images of female entrepreneurs in a semiotic perspective in relation to identity and in particular stereotypes as linked to the concepts of image, form and presence.

This study also interrogates this presence via the 'Pink-Ghetto' (Kamp, 2012) concept. This contentious sociological term has derogatory undertones in the literature of gender and work (Miller, 1995) but has featured before in scholarly research into entrepreneurship and leadership (Adler, 1999: Taylor, 1986). Thus we explore the misconception that in the 'Pink-Ghetto-Myth' women only start or lead businesses in female industries, such as beauty and fashion (Adler, 1999). Adler, even questions whether the pink-ghetto-myth shapes the stories of women entrepreneur. Thus, if 'Pink-collar-workers' (Howe, 1977) and 'Dolly-Bird Secretaries' (Holdsworth, 1998) are recognised as populating the ghetto, we have to ask ourselves why do female-entrepreneurs (Cava, 2008: Kamp, 2012) not influence the construct? A second aim of this study is to explore images, forms and presence associated with gendered entrepreneurial identities outside and beyond the pink-ghetto to better understand what

this means for our understanding of the changing nature of gendered entrepreneurial identity.

We seek to answer three related research questions. Firstly, we consider the descriptive - *is there a common, stereotypical image relating to female entrepreneurship and what are the manifestations*? Secondly, do these differ from stereotypical images relating to male entrepreneurs? Thirdly, the conceptual - *what do these mean and how can we understand them*? This paper is organised as follows. In section 2, we go in search of extant research relating to the visual aspects of entrepreneurial identity as well as considering the literature on the pink ghetto. In section 3, we consider semiotics as both methodology and mirror by introducing the empirical element to the inquiry; and in section 4 we analyze the data, answer the research questions and what these mean in relation to the study. Finally we bring the paper to a conclusion offering some insights and observations on images, form and presence as they relate to the study.

2. Reviewing the literature on images and forms of female entrepreneurship

We live in a society saturated with images (Baudrillard, 1981; Ewen, 1988) and notions of image, forms, and presence are receiving growing scholarly and managerial attention (Christensen & Askegaard, 2001). This is important because image, form and presence are all crucial aspects of identity formation and stereotypes. For Bardell (1990) identity is based upon environmental, social, political and ethical dimensions and is linked to the concepts of power, status and prestige and to badges of insignia, clothing and artifacts (Morris & Marsh, 1988, p.57). The quest for visibility and credibility in a cluttered and hostile environment makes questions of identity and image salient issues. Even when

images, forms and stereotypes are superficial they are nonetheless real social constructions (Berger & Luckman, 1967). Signs work because such semiotic fields (Goodwin, 2000) enable both social actor and audience to systematically recognize the shape and character of what is produced thereby creating and conveying meaning.

Smith and Anderson (2003) argue that because entrepreneurship is a complex construction, to establish the semiotics of possible entrepreneurial identities; and to understand it as an enacted collective social identity we must invariably start by examining manifestations of economic success. Because entrepreneurship is an enacted collective identity it stands that entrepreneurs' must make use of images, form and presence in developing collective entrepreneurial identities by marshalling multiple semiotic resources of the sign phenomena of speech, the body and dress to broadcast semiotic manifestations of an entrepreneurial identity. These shape the physical appearance of individual female-entrepreneurs and the possessions and artefacts they use to project chosen entrepreneurial identities. Nevertheless, ten years ago, the entrepreneurship literature did not engage directly with entrepreneurial imagery albeit entrepreneurial identity was encountered in books written about the projection of success (Lewis, 1989; Spillane, 1993; Arnott, 2000) and inexorably connected to class structure, image and reality (Marwick, 1980) projected via socially constructed images of success.

2.1. Constructing gendered entrepreneurial identities.

This work builds upon earlier studies of Smith and Anderson (2003) and Wade, Smith and Anderson (2003) which examined how entrepreneurial identities and images were constructed in narrative and in the media as a semiotic formula, paradoxically to construct stereotypically masculine entrepreneurs as conforming-nonconformists. Such

'Bad-Boy' entrepreneurs broadcast class based and criminal iconologies (Smith, 2002; Smith & Anderson, 2003). This masculinised entrepreneurial identity is based on inherent social issues such as homosociality (Fisher & Kinsey, 2013). It is difficult to construct a unified imagery associated with entrepreneurial identity because of the individuality of the entrepreneur and their rise from different class locations and gender positions but images and forms associated with the masculine entrepreneur can be categorized within three identifiable types of iconoclastic presence as shown in table 1:-

TYPOLOGY	DESCRIPTION
Conformist-imagery	Formal and conservative with a cloned aura to it. It combines elements of the corporate executive look; the corporate tycoon look; the stockbroker look and presents a generic successful business
Non-Conformist-imagery	Emphasising individualism, the casual and the flamboyant.
Criminal-imagery	Presenting the flamboyant and stereotypical portrayal of criminal imagery.

Table 1 – Types of masculine imagery associated with entrepreneurial identity (Adapted from Smith & Anderson, 2003 and Wade, Smith & Anderson, 2003).

A decade ago, images of female-entrepreneurs were few and far between and did not feature in the original analysis. In semiotic terms, the female-entrepreneur was truly invisible (Ahl, 2002; Lewis, 2006). This study is a timely update to the literature and expands the scope of the inquiry to consider gendered semiotic manifestations of entrepreneurial identities exhibited by female-entrepreneurs. Wade *et al* (2003) found evidence of a socially constructed feminine framework for presenting an entrepreneurial identity based upon *power dressing* with business suits accessorized with *pearl necklaces.* See also the works of (Ljunggren & Kolvereid, 1996; Clarke & Holt, 2010; Clarke, 2011) in relation to role of image and identity.

Despite being biased towards the masculine gender, elements of the non-conformist masculine imagery are transferable to female-entrepreneurs. For instance, Smith and Anderson (2003) present a description of the female Tycoon Jan Fletcher written by a journalist (Steiner, 2002, p.14) who invoked the following description of her *'oozing success, being dressed in a white power suit, wearing a diamond encrusted Rolex and looking like she had stepped off the set of Dynasty'*. Steiner further describes her in terms of personal artifacts such as*'....a silver Monte Blanc pen, gold bangles and a marquis diamond ring'*. Steiner completes the picture with a mention of her Aston Martin DB7 with the *'personalized number plate JAN 1'*. This is not really a feminine image, but merely a feminized version of the masculine iconography of success.

This issue of perception is important because Riot (2013) demonstrated that the representation of entrepreneurship in movies (blockbusters) acts as a source of influence on popular representations. Using semiotics to contrast dominant representations in popular movies about Coco Chanel with the reality of her professional life Riot argued that the changes in the account of the entrepreneur's success may disregard important elements such as the importance of collective work and the role of social history on entrepreneurial ventures, not to mention fashion. Visually there is a discrepancy between entrepreneurship theory and popular representations, especially in the movies, justifying a more in-depth analysis of actors' representations in relation to the image of popular entrepreneurs in the public eye.

For Morris and Marsh (1988) adornment and decoration are universal channels of communication within cultural identity. Entrepreneurial identity is influenced by

semiotics and projected via the possession and display of cultural artifacts, clothing and by personal grooming styles, mannerisms. These images are best encountered in fiction, autobiography, newspaper and media content. This is important, because as de Koning and Holmberg (2000) stress media images reflect our assumptions about entrepreneurs. Thus, negative portrayals of the entrepreneur influences perceptions of reality.

2.2. Negative stereotypes associated female-entrepreneurs.

It is evident that despite achieving a higher level of presence in the public consciousness, that perception of female-entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship are heavily influenced by negative stereotyping and little has changed in the archetypal portrayal of women in literature beyond '*the apron string'* (Gibson, 1988). Indeed, Yates (1991, p.341) argued that traditionally women were seen as symbols and the trappings of masculine success. There are many negative socially constructed stereotypes associated with female-entrepreneurs evident in the literature as detailed in table 2:-

Negative stereotypes	Author
Ice-Maiden	Gubar (1979).
Maven Queen-Bitch Boardroom-Bitch	Wurtzel (1999); Clarinbould & Knoppers (2007).
The-Little-Rich-Girl Daddy's-Little-Girl	Lovell (1982).
Gold-digger	Kitch (2001).
Her Indoors	Holdsworth (1988).

Table 2 – Negative socially constructed stereotypes associated with female-entrepreneurs.

2.3. Gendered entrepreneurial identity and the pink-ghetto.

When the fictional Bella Rokesmith was penned the female-entrepreneur was not a serious role model. Examples of such women were few and far between and those that were acknowledged were vilified and assigned derogatory nicknames such as the so called 'Witch of Wall Street' Hetty Green (Sparkes, 1935). It took the Suffragette movement and the role of working women in two world wars to legitimize the presence of women in the workplace. Nevertheless, sexist notions of the worth of women persist. During the second half of the twentieth century change occurred slowly via the realisation of the 'pink-collar-ghetto' to refer to work in low paid, dead end, stressful jobs in industries dominated by women (Stallard, Ehrenreich & Sklar, 1983; Rung, 1997). It now encompasses positions in corporations held by manageresses who have little hope of progressing to the board room due to the proverbial glass ceiling (Davidson & Cooper, 1992) and 'Glass-Walls' (Comer & Drollinger, 1995). Indeed, the fragile, constricting imagery of glass is common in the literature and to the imagery of ceilings and walls, Skordaki (1996) added that of 'Glass Slippers' to encompass the 'Cinderella-syndrome' (Vijeyarasa, 2010) as a liberating mechanism because entrepreneurship and business ownership offer a viable way out of the perceived trap and entrepreneurship as a practice has the potential to liberate anyone from the tyranny of the workplace and paid employment.

It is relatively common for men and women to be segregated in *'Occupational Ghettoes'* (Charles & Grusky, 2005). Thus the pink-collar-ghetto is characterized by industries where woman's work is traditionally defined by long hours and low pay waitressing, typing and secretarial work (Brown, 1995). Females have historically been socialized to make their careers in poorly-paid occupations such as internet workers

9

(Virnoche, 2001); Hotel management (Mooney & Ryan, 2009); unskilled factory work, retail service, nursing, and pre-school teaching (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Rubery, Smith & Fagan, 1999; Inkson, 2004)[2]. It thus represents exclusion in, within and beyond the workplace and gives rise to the pink-ghetto-myth that women only lead businesses in female Industries, such as beauty and fashion (Adler. 1999). This myth is frequently challenged (Lawrence, 1986; Hudson, 2011). Interestingly, Adler questions whether the pink-ghetto-myth shapes the stories of women entrepreneur. Escape is a common theme in the literature of pink collar workers as life is hard in the ghetto. Indeed Bassett (2005) refers to the phenomenon of the 'second-shift' and 'the-double-day' which befall women trapped in such work as they work two days – one at work and one at home taking care of the home, the children and domesticity.

Mastracci (2004) considered pathways out of the pink-collar-ghetto and argues that during the twentieth century education and in particular College and University became a pathway out of gendered expectations for many women unless they did not have the requisite qualifications to attend. Taylor (1986) and Smith (2008) argued that small business and entrepreneurship provide a valuable avenue of escape for women trapped in low paying pink-ghetto jobs. Furthermore, Göttner-Abendroth (2005) argues that the advances made by women in the pink-ghetto (and by pink-ghetto-entrepreneurs) point

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[2] Pink-collar occupations tend to be personal-service oriented. Possible occupations include - Babysitter / day care worker / nanny / Cosmetologist / beauty salon employee / Flight attendant / stewardess / Florist / Hairdresser / Maid / domestic worker / Receptionist / Secretary / Administrative Assistant / Waitress / Hostess / Meter Maid / Nurse / Phlebotomist / Massage Therapist / Speech Therapist / Public Relations / Governess / Teacher etc. Many of them are trades which one can set up on one's own in business.

towards the creation of new *matriarchies* in the future[3]. The pink-collar label may not be an exclusively negative construct because many women more than hold their own in such positions (Ware, 1982) and for some the pink-ghetto may act as an incubator of entrepreneurial opportunity by permitting women access to the entrepreneurial ladder of opportunity via perpetuating accepted gendered roles.

3. Methodology as a mirror and montage

In this study it was inevitable that the methodology chosen to capture the power of the images and forms of female-entrepreneurship must involve the controversial, qualitative methodology of semiotic analysis (Eco, 1979; Culler, 1981; Chandler, 2001: Lawes, 2002). It is controversial precisely because it entails the injection of subjective interpretation on behalf of the researcher. Semiotics is a science pioneered by men and semiotic analysis involves the comparative analysis of collected images and imagery (both pictorial and textual).

For the purpose of assisting in the semiotic analysis of the internet images the author created a conceptual framework of images, form and presence. See table below for an explanation of the framework.

Table 3 – A conceptual framework for analysing the selected images		
Related Concepts	How this relates to identity	Its relationship with stereotypes
Images are defined as a picture in our minds, or an idea of how someone, or something, is viewed or perceived. It is the way that something/someone is thought of by other people. An image is thus a mental picture or idea that forms in a reader's or	**Identity** relates to who a person is, or their qualities (individually and as a group) which make them different from others or similar to each other. We can suffer from loss of identity, adopt a false identity and indeed identity is often associated	**Stereotypes** are fixed ideas that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong or misconceived. Stereotypes are based on cultural, racial and sexual prejudices. Thus one can be said to conform (or not) to

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[3] For Göttner-Abendroth *matriarchies* are 'non-hierarchical, horizontal societies of matrilineal kinship' where power is equally shared between the patriarch and the matriarch.

listener's mind from the words they read, hear or in our case see. We are said to be *image-conscious* as in dressing and behaving as expected. Images can be fleeting, ephemeral and can change over time, When an image is captured in photographic form we have a permanent record of a second in time. Image can be staged and manipulated. What is important is that image can be conveyed by imagery, artefacts and icons.	with our job and work. We can achieve a sense of identity. Thus we can have different identities such as personal, professional and even entrepreneurial. Images can thus be influenced by **socially constructed identity scripts** relating to how one is expected to appear.	local, regional or national stereotypes. It is related to collective characteristics. Image is important in relation to the formation of stereotypical representation/misrepresentations of any concept because stereotypes are often based upon perceptions formed from aggregated traits or constructs. Thus cultural prejudices can influence what we see or think we see. We can mistakenly read more into or out of an identity presentation.
Form is defined as something which exists, or comes together. Thus ideas and impressions can form in our minds. Form has to do with shape, patterns and substance, or it can be the process of making or being something. Form combines or separates things as whole.	Form is related to identity because to be meaningful as an organising construct, identity has to take on a recognisable form or forms which can be recogonised for what they are and thus **classified** as **typologies** or **taxonomies**. Form is important in relation to entrepreneurial identity because there is more than one type of possible entrepreneurial identity or **forms**.	When we recognise established patterns of behaviour and **semiotic imagery** projected via the use of **social objects** and cultural artefacts we have the basis of recognisable stereotypes which can be adopted as **identity statements** or **positions**. Thus through the subtle or blatant display of artefacts we can conform to, reject or rebel against an established identity by being seen to belong to stereotypical group representations.
Presence relates to someone, or something being in place. A presence can extend beyond the physical being and can linger after one is gone leaving an impression. A presence can fill a room or space. Presence is a quality that makes people notice or admire you, even without speaking. One can be overawed by a presence and thus it is related to Charisma. Presence can be an individual and thus personal quality or it can adhere to the collective status of being an entrepreneur.	Presence is related to identity because socially and culturally certain identities have a stronger presence in the social consciousness. In Western societies we eulogise and revere the stereotype of the successful entrepreneur, whilst ignoring the counter stereotype of the entrepreneur as a rogue or criminal. The norm is the neroic masculine entrepreneur thus by default the female entrepreneur has a less visible, less recognisable presence.	Presence has a relationship with stereotypical representations of entrepreneurship because the iconic status can be transferred to social and cultural objects. Successful entrepreneurs are said to have a presence and can thus influence the behaviours of others by acting as role models. The presence of positive but particularly negative stereotypes can influence how we perceive certain images and forms of entrepreneurship.

A strategy was formulated to make sense of the selected images using the technique of 'Photographic Montage Critique' (Berger & Mohr, 1975; Berger & Mohr, 1982; Dillon, 2004) via gallery presentation. Photo-montage as a visual narrative methodology relies on

critique by placing visual fragments (photographs or images) in juxtaposition to each other thus creating a montage of images (Berger & Mohr, 1975; 1982) setting up another way of telling stories (Dyer, 1986). The photographic images almost speak for themselves (i.e. without textual prompting and anchorage - Scott, 1999). This messy process entails placing printed images side-by-side on a wall and moved into position in the montage until visual themes emerged as do post-it notes in conventional qualitative research vis-à-vis the suggestions of Miles and Huberman (1989) for analysing qualitative data to produce themes. This exciting, creative process permits visualization of new themes using sensory data. Visual techniques are seldom used in entrepreneurship research and rarely in published format. However, the technique as used herein uses the montage as a form of analysis and not as a form of presentation.[4]

This section reports on a semiotic analysis of collected images associated with female-entrepreneurship. Being a comparative semiotic study it contrasts these images against those associated with masculine entrepreneurship. Whilst some of the social constructs encountered may well rely on possession of similar artifacts, context is the all important dimension in projecting socially recognizable identities. This allows a three dimensional (and thus richer) analytic triangulation. The methodology employed is a categorical analysis of the components of the entrepreneurial images, forms and presence.

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[4] There are limitations to the methodology in that whilst it may be permissible to present the montage for educational purposes at a conference it may be unfeasible to obtain the requisite copyright permissions. Presenting selected images in conference papers entails adopting a 'social-documentary-approach' (Pauwels, 1993) by placing a few selected photographs within the text to document and illustrate the points made in wider analysis. For such presentations this course of action is the only practical method because of word constraints and the inordinate amount administration work involved in securing copyright. It is ironic in an age where visibility and accessibility of imagery and form is facilitated within seconds by Google images and other search engines that semiotics is still problematic for scholars. A photo essay would be nigh on impossible to publish in academic journals

Common themes in the data are noted and differences examined by using constant comparative analysis. Both the general form and specific artifacts are identified and compared from images collected as raw data from the internet providing evidence of the powerful social process of demonology. This is not a full scale semiotic analysis but a discussion of images selected from the main data base and reordered as a photo essay format (Pauwels, 1993) or photo-elicitation methodology (Harper, 2002) to illustrate themes which emerged from an analysis. A secondary concern is that semiotic analysis involves a level of aesthetic analysis (Prall, 1936) and images may resonate with one researcher but repulse another.

The author opted to conduct semiotic analysis at 2 levels. The first involved a textual semiotic analysis of novels in which the female heroine could be cast as an entrepreneur. The second level related to a semiotic analysis of the visual elements whereby 100 contemporary images of female-entrepreneurship, conveniently located on the internet, are subjected to analysis to identify common stereotypical representations, archetypes and themes. In western literature the female heroine, like the masculine hero, is born of archetype and cast in a heroic light (Powers, 2000). This is important because Singer (1994, p.392) suggests there is an archetypal element in semiotics and that the power of the symbol lies in its ability to attract people and lead them towards that which they are capable of becoming. The resultant conceptual typology constructed from the analysis point to the existence of gendered entrepreneurial stereotypes discussed below. These have archetypal undertones. Thus, semiotic analysis acts as both method and mirror.

4. Analysing the data

From an analysis of the data and from an iterative process of constant comparative analysis of the imagery new stereotypes emerged, illustrating the evolution of imagery associated with gendered female-entrepreneurial identity.

The proverbial poor-girl-makes-good and poor-me-storylines: The existence and persistence, of this stereotype is palpable and derives from historical and socio-political and economic factors. These images and forms have their roots in the iconic writings of the American novelist Horatio Alger whose dime novels established the very notion of the 'poor-boy-made-good'. Although it could be argued that Alger had an unhealthy fascination with the notion of the *Boy* he nevertheless, wrote novels in which the poor-girl-did-make-good such as for example the story entitled 'Helen Ford' (Alger, 2011). This fits with the gendered construct of 'Poor-Me' (Rimstead, 1999) in the biographies of working class women. However, it is in the genre of historical novels, written by authors such as Catherine Cookson, Taylor Caldwell etc that this abiding image is at its most powerful as a variant of the 'rags-to-riches' and 'Cinderella-storylines' in which the heroine is either cast into the role of entrepreneur through the death of a parent, or doggedly works their way up the social ladder to become an entrepreneur. The genre is heavily influenced by the masculine social construction of the entrepreneur (Smith, 2010) which emphasise hubris, flawed relationships and a fall-from-grace, when, in reality, they may have no place in the story. The phenomenon of the Essex-Girl (Skeggs, 1997, 2005; Smith, 2013) is a contemporary image of the poor-girl-made-good centered on the presentation of self using expensive designer clothing and artefacts associated with

wealth.[5] Nevertheless, although the genre persists in contemporary novels written by Jilly Cooper and others, it does not appear to have a significant presence in images and forms encountered on the internet. This may be because the explanatory power of the stereotype for both men and women is waning in contemporary society.

Business Woman: This powerful genre is also evident in the images encountered via the internet in which she is sometimes portrayed as being manly or possessing masculine traits and forms - shades of the 'Tom-Boy' stereotype (Waldron, 2011). For example, she is invariably dressed conservatively in business attire such as grey or dark suits with open necked white blouses. Fashion accessories include black leather briefcases and voluminous, perfunctionary handbags complete with sensible black shoes. Hair will either be tied back in a stern manner or cut short[6]. Nevertheless, there is an aura of careful staging of artificial constructs. This severe, near mythical construct is the business form of the stern, school-mistress and a gendered variant of the corporate-clone stereotype (Smith & Anderson, 2003). Indeed, Corporate Dress Code (Spillane, 1993) dictates that women must fit in with the prevailing conservative dress code. This artificially created genre forms the basis of hundreds of internet stock photographs and portrays the business woman as a faceless clone. This false imagery does not take cognisance of fashion, style or the display of designer accessories. The stereotype bears little resemblance to the maverick entrepreneuse (Hamilton & Smith, 2003) encountered

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[5] Other work by Skeggs paints a more depressing image of the pejorative contemporary stereotypes open to poor girls – namely 'Chavettes', and 'Pram-Faced-Dolls'.

[6] Personal grooming is important particularly for women and several photographs depicted women sporting flowing locks – however, this appears to be part of the wider semiotics of portraying female power. It is evident from the analysis of the body language in the images that the stereotype is a powerful character frequently portrayed smiling with arms folded or fingers pointing. Occasionally she will be depicted wearing glasses.

in biographies. Interestingly, the stereotype is seldom portrayed seated at a desk, writing or photographed in close proximity to expensive Marques (unless she is depicted in front of a laptop ala the 'Dolly-Bird-Secretary', Holdsworth, 1995). Such power positions are reserved for powerful male-entrepreneurs, or executives.

The Matriarch: This powerful construction is particularly evident in obviously staged internet photographs where the matriarch irrespective of race (Frazier & Platt, 1939: Fleming, 1983: Smith, 2014) is invariably dressed in severe or austere black and positively oozes masculine power. She is depicted standing legs akimbo, arms folded or finger pointing and with a face either contorted in rage, looking smug or emotionless. She thus cuts a stern image and faces the "double-jeopardy" (Fleming, 1983) of being a woman and in this case - entrepreneur. Such images may also be objectified and sexualized (Baker, 2005) and are at variance with the positive characteristics of strong, competent, self-reliant and assertive woman reminiscent of the matriarchal image in social science literature (Fleming, 1983).

The Diva: This contemporary business construct (Smith, 2010: Raffey, 2000) cuts a powerful figure epitomised by the cover image on the book 'City Girl' (Stcherbatcheff, 2009). The image depicts a pair of bright pink/red shiny high heels. Interestingly, the cover of the book 'Women in Business' (Reeves, 2010) flaunts red high heel shoes in a sterile glass like office environment. Raffey's (2000) Filipino business women divas dress in risqué, yet still business attire. The research of Yurchak (2003) into the new Russian women also makes a similar point in which to trap a rich business man, a woman must be beautiful and dress provocatively to attract attention. This emerging form of

17

unruly (Pavda, 2006) female entrepreneurial identity, as yet, lacks a substantive presence on the internet unless one emphasises the word diva. Indeed, fashion shapes entrepreneurial identity and thus images and forms of entrepreneurship. Diva dress style is a form of the 'ghetto fabulous aesthetic' (Mukherjee, 2006).

The CEO Fashionista: The concept of the Fashionista' (Werle, 2009) is of relevance as an emerging construction (Elhert, 2012) and because the Fashionista is a style icon and therefore potentially role-model for other women to follow.[7] The look is based on a combination of power dressing, pearls, jeweled accessories and the work place shots. This is a powerful new construction because it is a combination of person, persona and fashion – faces and body alongside individual fashion categories such as sophisticates, it-girls, bomb-shells and eccentrics each of which personify a certain quality of style. In this case it is a celebration of entrepreneurial style. According to Szocs and Madhavaram (2012) the concept has been virtually ignored by the academic community despite the fact that it represents a lifestyle choice, influences attitudes and behaviours as well as career choice, allocation of time and patronage decisions.

The Pink-Ghetto Girl: The mythical 'Pink-Ghetto-Girl' embraces a multitude of possible identities from the pink, fluffy, 'little-princess' and 'little-girl-lost' stereotypes (DoRazario, 2004) to the manageress (Symons, 1986). Nevertheless, despite the feminization of the office / work place (Boyer & England, 2008) she is the antithesis of the business wo**man** being a product of neo liberal capitalist forces which sell a pink version of femininity. However, she has yet to take on any particular form or image in

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[7] See http://thegrindstone.com/mentor/7-of-the-best-dressed-female-ceos-885/3/ for further details.

relation to entrepreneurial identity – due to the myriad of separate occupations which constitute her from nannies to prostitutes and sex-phone workers (Gnutel, 1997).[8]

Having considered the images and forms above, it is obvious that the stereotypes of female-entrepreneurs are not overtly influenced by images of criminality which permeate the imagery of masculine entrepreneurs. This is a significant finding. However, status and power have a strong presence in the imagery associated with female-entrepreneurs and all the examples presented above typify "Women doing their own thing" (Eikhof, Summers & Carter, 2013).

5. Some concluding reflections on images, forms and presence

The semiotic methodology used in this study makes an innovative contribution to the gender and entrepreneurship research. Although Smith and Anderson (2003) demonstrated that entrepreneurial identity, like its linguistic construct, is a predominantly masculine, formulaic construct this study demonstrates that although similar formulaic elements associated with entrepreneurial iconology are transferable there are unique pejorative elements to feminized entrepreneurial identity which disadvantage female-entrepreneurs. To answer the research questions – there are no one unifying common stereotypical images associated with female-entrepreneurship although certain stereotypical images recur. These are mainly fashion based such as shoes and clothing - manifestations of stereotypicallity and social constructionism and not real images that are

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[8] Another aspect of the profile is the advent of celebrity culture and co modification of femininity in which images of celebrities dressed in pink carrying pampered miniature dogs with diamond encrusted collars influence new generations.

important to women. These images do differ from stereotypical images associated with male-entrepreneurs. Feminized entrepreneurial identity is less formulaic as the women do not set out to conform to the stereotypical imagery associated with '*the mythic rugged individualist'*.

Nevertheless, this exploratory study adds value because it widens our knowledge about entrepreneurship as a socially constructed, ever changing socio-economic phenomenon. Images such as those analysed herein form part of the identity of enterprise, a physical manifestation of a nebulas phenomenon and act as '*visual metaphors'* shaping social constructions and informing expectations. Although the themes uncovered are tentative, deeply subjective and open to interpretation they illustrate that the contemporary female-entrepreneur is far from invisible and has a collectively developed 'presence'. However, unlike their male counterparts they are not forced to adopt a restrictive entrepreneurial persona with all the flawed identity baggage it entails. They have more options available and can thus flout accepted semiotic conventions. There are implications in that it extends research from entrepreneurial narrative to visual imagery associated with a socially constructed entrepreneurial identity. In looking through and beyond images associated with the 'Pink-Ghetto' we challenge accepted stereotypical representations of the appearance of female-entrepreneurs, i.e. what they look like and how they are perceived. This evidences some social reconstructing in progress manifested in both image and presence. This is important because it permits women a real alternative choices relating to how they choose to construct their business identities.

Walter (2011: Jacket cover) argues that although she once believed that women had begun to address the embedded social condition for equality and that the remnants of old-

fashioned cultural sexism would wither away, she was wrong. Nevertheless, in considering images, forms, and presence associated with female-entrepreneurship both inside, outside and beyond the pink-ghetto this article makes a small contribution to the evolving debates on gender and entrepreneurship by opening up a hitherto taboo subject. Twenty first century contemporaries of the fictional heroine Bella Rokesmith have better life chances and better role models and dare to be more than a proverbial 'living-doll' (Walter, 2011). The once restricted roles of businesswomen and entrepreneur are more achievable than before. Levy (2006) also challenges the taming of male chauvinism arguing that many women have deliberately adopted the identity of '*Female Chauvinist Pigs'*. Levy is scathing of the illusion of gender progress and the empowerment of women. Likewise, Banyard (2011) argues that although women have made huge strides in equality over the last century it is merely an illusion of progress.[9] It is debatable whether the new gendered images discussed herein (portrayed in the media replete with high heels and jewellery) have merely reinforced the ghetto like status of the entrepreneurs, or whether there has been a genuine power shift. The shifting media portrayals may have empowered some female-entrepreneurs whilst enslaving others less empowered by the shift in the boundaries encasing gender stereotypes. Aspiring female-entrepreneurs may not adhere to the masculine entrepreneurial format of the entrepreneur as a '*conforming-non conformists'* yet it remains difficult to assess what these gendered stereotypical images actually mean or what we can understand from them.

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[9] Banyard expresses a view that feminism is now generally considered irrelevant, old-fashioned, or embarrassing and that today women working full-time in the UK are paid on average 17% less an hour than men. One in three women worldwide has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused because of her gender. Only 96% of executive directors of the UK's top hundred companies are women.

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The gendering of entrepreneurship: theoretical and empirical insights
Julia Rouse, Lorna Treanor, Emma Fleck (pp. 452 - 459)

Empowerment and entrepreneurship: a theoretical framework
    Haya Al-Dajani, Susan Marlow (pp. 503 - 524)
Theorizing about gender and entrepreneurship: bridging the gap with social psychology
Sylvain Max, Valérie Ballereau (pp. 97 - 110)