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Consumption of Images: Country-of-Origin Image and the Perception Gaps caused by Global Marketing of Cultural Commodities

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Abstract

Globalization allows the for the consumption of goods produced around the world. It also allows for images to be created and viewed globally. Global marketing is advantageous to many markets and increases the number of possible consumers. However, with changing frames of reference, the perception of the image also changes. While this phenomenon did not unilaterally affect the marketing of most consumer goods, it could have a profound effect on the increasing global consumption of images. This is especially true in terms of countries and their soft power.

Most research has focused the country-of-origin and the quality of the commodities when comparing countries global markets. As more commodities become digitalized and image-based, a stronger knowledge foundation on how images are perceived globally is necessary to avoid misunderstandings.

In this dissertation, I show how images can be reinterpreted depending of their frames of reference or context changes. The first is a part of the research consisted of a global survey of American and Japanese school children and their impressions of a new children's character analyzed with SPSS. The second part was three observational research field-trips to Japanese marketing events with Japanese mascot characters called *Yuru-chara.*

These two parts of the research combined to show where the gaps in perception are for image-based commodities between Japan and the United States of America, particularly with children's characters and *Yuru-chara*. The results show that frames are a key point of context for consumers and the future production of images.

Key words: frames, character images, country-of-origin, perceptions, marketing

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization and global marketing means that commodities are sold around the world. Companies work hard to increase their global market share, and governments support them through policies, such as the ones that incentivize exports. Commodities with recognizable country-of-origins can increase the perception of the country, which is nation branding. Japan, for example, has successfully marketed some commodities recognized as Japanese in international markets. A notable example is Pokémon.

However, as a part of cultural economics, when global commodities go into the market, they are interpreted differently by the consumers. When a commodity is globally marketed, the country-of-origin and the commodity images can become linked. The country-of-origin and the target-country do not share the same cultural references and the possibility for unintentional miscommunication arises from this global marketing of commodities.

These differences in perception could cause information gaps between the country-of-origin and the target countries. This research is one of the steps to discover the differences attaching a national brand to commodities and the resulting interpretations from multiple cultures can cause. More research is needed on these communication gaps caused by global commodities for marketers can analyze, quantify, understand, and challenge them.

Two main challenges arise when studying the cultural perception gap. The first, is that this concept has been recognized and steps are already taken by marketers in the country-of-origin to avoid confusion. Marketing tactics, such as localization, change the commodity from its original content and adapt it for the local market. A side-by-side comparison cannot be performed on a commodity if there exists more than one version due to localization. The second main challenge is that any commodity in use already has a country-of-origin. A product must be designed by a person, and that person will be influenced by his or her country-of-origin or culture.

This research addresses these two issues. The first is by producing a cultural object that imitates a commodity that is practically unchanged beyond the language used in the surveys conducted in this research and by having a commodity designed with cultural frames in mind as described in *Frame analysis: an essay on the organization of experiences* (Goffman, 1986). In addition, this research analyzes the perception of cultural commodities in formalized survey sessions to isolate the perceived country-of-origin and its influence. This research consists of a qualitative research project and two quantitative projects.

For a fuller understanding of the cultural frames in Japan, Japanese cute characters were also analyzed in this research. Specifically, *yuru-chara* were analyzed. *Yuru-chara* is short for "*yurui* mascot character," or "loose" mascot character. Japan has many cute, *yurui* characters to represent otherwise professional or serious groups, companies, or regions. *Yuru-chara,* as a concept of cute marketing characters, is increasingly popular in Japan and some other Asian countries. However, most, individually, have yet to see marketing success even within Japan. These characters are mainly used for promotions, public relations, and branding for specific regions. They appear on all manners of objects, especially near their hometowns. While most are relatively unknown beyond their hometown, a couple of the *yuru-chara* have become so well-known and popular that you can purchase products of them nearly anywhere in Japan.

The visible shift to the use of *yuru-chara* begins with Hikonyan. Hikonyan is a white mascot cat with a red and yellow "samurai" helmet. He was created in 2007, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Hikone Castle in Hikone City, Shiga Prefecture. His name is a portmanteau of the city, Hikone, and the onomatopoeia for the cat's meow, *nyan*. Hikonyan was the main character for the Yuru-chara Matsuri in Hikone 2008, which would eventually become the annual Yuru-chara Grand Prix.

Since then, these mascot characters have been developed everywhere, promoting cities, town, municipalities, prefectures, government agencies, and even companies. In August 2016, Tokyu Power Supply, an electric company, held a naming promotion over their new mascot character, an anthropomorphized light bulb. (Tokyu Power Supply, 2016)

Understanding the cultural frames in which Japanese consumers perceive the *yuru-chara* could help influence marketers utilize them or other similar characters more efficiently in the future as well as provide a visible frame on the differences between Japanese and non-Japanese markets.

With this framework in mind, this paper research two questions with proposed hypothesizes.

Research Questions

R1: Does the consumers' country influence the perception of a commodities' image?

R2: In what ways does a country-of-origin influence the perception of the information received from a cultural commodity?

Hypothesizes

H1: The culture of the consumers' country influences the perception enough that near-identical images will have different interpretations.

H2: The perception of a cultural commodity will differ based on the country-of-origin.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

My master's research was conducted with qualitative research of round-table discussions, archival research, open-ended interviews, and descriptive surveys. The thesis of the research was how a Japanese mascot character, Domo-kun from NHK, was received in the United States and the how the perception of the character changed. As well, the reverse, the image of Disney's Stitch from the US, was analyzed in Japan.

A brief overview of the research process.

The round-table discussions were with Japanese college students to get an introduction into current popular trends and characters in Japan. It also introduced some Japanese insights and feelings of these trends. The archival research was the next step of the process. After the initial introduction, the archival research was done using online sources, such as videos, newspaper articles, comment sections, websites, memes and advertisements. This method was used to broaden the scope of the opinions of the characters and provided remote research of American opinions of them as well.

Japanese and American preschool children were asked to freely draw new characters. The content and context were analyzed using visual and semiotic analysis. The perspectives of Japanese and American college students about the drawings were then collected and coded.

The research indicated that people described and viewed the same character differently, even when nothing changed physically about the character. Japanese and American college students would describe the same character with different adjectives, despite looking at the same picture of the character.

The research also went into how each country localized the characters to make them more appealing after the initial introduction. Domo-kun became known to the English-speaking world through memes before being used in commercials and advertisements in the US. Stitch was from the Disney movie *Lilo & Stitch*, before Japan made it into a cartoon series featuring Stitch.

The next step in the MA research was to analyze how people in Japan and US interpreted children's drawings. Japanese and American children were given the same instructions to draw (and create) a character. The drawings were analyzed for cultural clues on what makes the drawing "Japanese" or "American," such as tools. For example, the Japanese children used the provided crayons exclusively. American children used mixed media but tended to use pencils and markers. The context of the tools allowed for easy identification of either Japanese or American children's drawings. Afterward, college students from Japan and America were asked to interpret the same drawings. In those cases, basic interpretations of the images were preserved, but many of the details and contextual information was interpreted differently, such as the tools used.

The results from the MA showed that the same cultural commodities are viewed differently in Japan and the US. To expand on the research for the doctoral thesis, more quantitative analysis was conducted, as well as qualitative analysis in the form of a country-of-origin survey.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theoretical Concepts

There are five predominate theories of analysis that are being used to interpret the data from the fields of cultural marketing. The overarching theory is Goffman's framing (1986). The other four cultural marketing theories are encoding/decoding (Hall, 1973), country branding (Dinnie, 2008), brand identity (Bloom, 2010), and brand association (Aaker, 1991).

Framing is a way to interpret how people view their world. For this research, frames in Japan and the United States were observed. The focus within each frame is specifically aesthetics and cuteness. Encoding/decoding is the process of which information is transmitted through mediums, which is marketed cultural objects for this research. Country branding, Japan and the United States in this research, is the when a product has ties to a country in the mind of the consumer. Brand identity, a consumer's personal identity tied to specific brands, and brand association, concepts tied to a brand, are very closely related and work in tandem in many ways in this research. For this reason, they are grouped together under soft country-branding.

1. *Framing*

Erving Goffman in his book *Frame Analysis* (1986) highlights how people interpret their surroundings with the concept of frames. Frames work "to isolate some of the basic frameworks of understanding available in our society for making sense out of events and to analyze the special vulnerabilities to which these frames of reference are subject." People have multiple frames for every situation, and for context within this research, the overarching frames looked at are the country frame. It is a large frame that encompasses a big share of a person's identity as well. This frame, while large, is also straightforward to see when it is parsed out for studying, because it is relatively stable for each person unless that person moves abroad from their birth country. It is also straightforward to change the frame of the country by changing the country. On the other hand, many other frames are malleable and constantly changing based on context.

To expand on Goffman's base of frame and framing, Tamotsu Shibutani observed interpretations as a "process through reference groups" (1955). These are two different terminologies that essentially express a similar concept for the purposes of this analysis. For Shibutani, it is not only perception, but also "judgments [that] rest upon perspective, and people with different outlooks define identical situations differently, responding selectively to the environment." Goffman described how people can interpret their surroundings with frames with local culture being an example of a frame in which people use to perceive their world.

Joel Charon (1995) uses the definition of conceptual frameworks as "a set of assumptions, values, and beliefs used to organize our perceptions". Frames of reference allow people to make sense of the world around them. When an artifact moves from its original cultural frame to a new cultural frame through expanding markets, people interpret it differently. When expanding markets, it is not just one frame or one element of a frame that changes. Therefore, it is important to isolate the aspects of the cultural frame which cause change to the perception of the artifact.

Framing is fundamental for interpreting how people see the same image differently. The concept of frames of reference is the overarching theory behind this research and the base for which the other theories are used in analysis as well.

Aesthetics and Cuteness

Daniel Harris (2000) asserts that certain attributes like cute speak to subconscious instinct in all humans. Therefore, they can cross cultural boundaries and maintain those attributes. However, whether those attributes are marketable depend on the culture. Harris's concepts are working with emotional branding of objects, where objects are bought for their emotional value as opposed to their practical value. Emotional branding assigns new, denotative values to the object and the consumers then assign these new values to the original culture based on these reinterpretations. People, therefore, reinterpret other cultures based on their own cultural frames and despite massive amounts of globalization, in-depth understanding of other cultures is still not realized among general populations.

For Harris, cuteness is not an attractive feature. He asserted that "cuteness is not an aesthetic on the ordinary sense of the word and must by no means be mistaken for

the physically appealing, the attractive. In fact, it is closely linked to the grotesque, the malformed." He goes on to talk about cuteness and those deformities as rousing protective and parental instincts at the perceived helplessness of cute things.

2. Encoding and Decoding

Stuart Hall (1973) introduced encoding/decoding theory for television in his essay, *Encoding and decoding in the television discourse*. In terms of marketing, the cultural commodity is not passively read by the consumer, but the consumer interprets the meanings based on the local cultural background and life experiences. Additional meaning is created within the relationship between the commodity and the consumer.
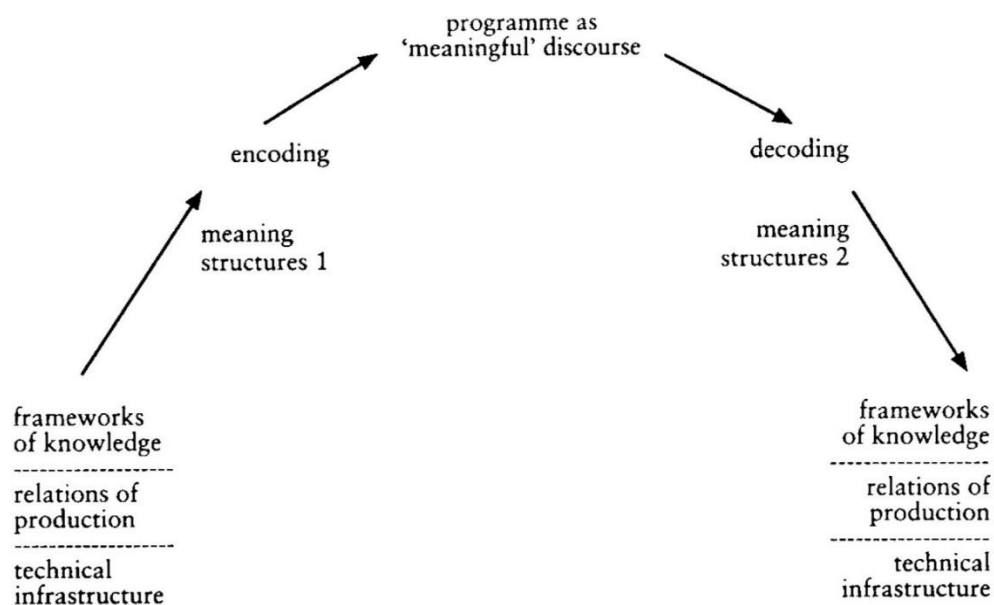
Figure 1: Stuart Hall's Diagram of Encoding and Decoding

With commodities, the creators, designers, and marketers are the encoders and the consumers are the decoders. When they share the same cultural references and frames, the process of encoding and decoding should follow a predictable process that allows the creators, designers, and marketers to reasonably estimate how their commodity will be received. While the they cannot control the *frameworks of knowledge*, *relations of production,* and *technical infrastructure* of the decoder or consumer as illustrated in Fig. 1, they can make assumptions and encode the commodity accordingly.

For this research, it is specifically looking at the concept of having the encoding the same, but splitting the decoding into two different frames, country frames. This means that the same encoding will go through two different decoding interpretations. Reasonable preparations can be made to accommodate both country's frames, however, since the *frameworks of knowledge, relations of production,* and *technical infrastructures* will naturally differ, the decoding will differ as well.
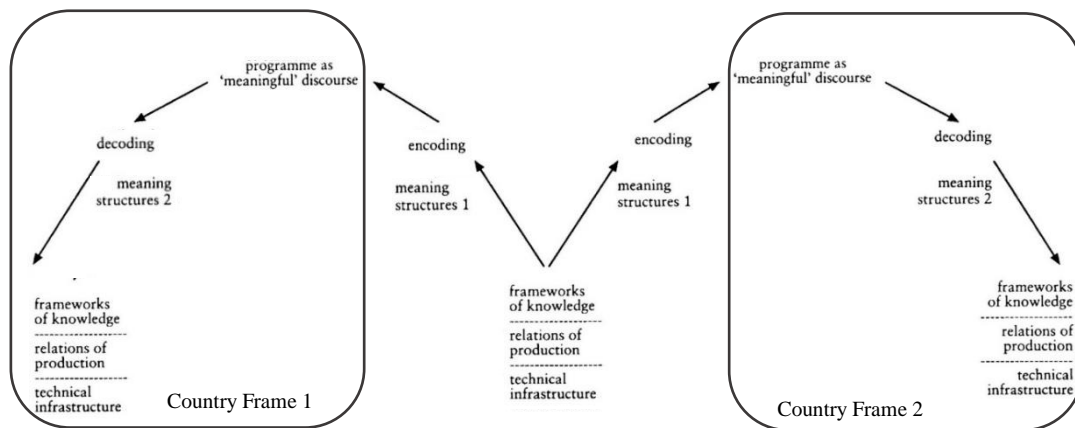
Figure 2 Stuart Hall's Diagram modified for two-country frames

Frame Analysis and using encoding/decoding

This researcher was educated through a mostly western, or more specifically a WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic), lens (Azar, 2010). This education could influence the interpretation of the research. For a Japanese and American comparison to be more valid, they should be analyzed with a more thorough understanding of personal framing.

People can analyze their frames of reference through a process Goffman calls keying, which involves stepping back and observing more than usual. To properly deconstruct an object entering the global market, the semiotics of the object must be properly understood. Colbey and Jansz (2007) introduce some of the core concept of it, which includes the semiotics three levels: the objects, signs, and interpretant. The object is that which the sign stands for and the interpretant is product of reading the sign.

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The aesthetics of objects is also needed to properly deconstruct an object entering the global market. On its own, marketing analysis focuses on the profitability of an item and its ability to be sold when moved from one market to the other, and the aesthetics that work in any, every, or diverse cultures. Marketing aesthetics claim that customers have immediate associations and immediate feelings about products. Those feelings can overcome functionality as a factor in purchasing and that the aesthetics such as the shapes of a commodity become associated with a product of company through repetition (Schmitt & Simonson, 1997).

Schmitt and Simonson also state that as part of the aesthetics of marketing, visual symbols are the most global:

> "As visual symbols, shapes are also an important source of a global identity. Unlike names, shapes cross cultural boundaries with relative ease. But marketers need to identify why particular shapes create certain impressions. Beyond specific object that shapes can emulate, shapes are composed of a few key dimensions that give rise to specific associations." (p. 88)

3. Country Branding

Country branding, also known as nation branding, has been widely studied within the context of globalization. Previous research has focused on added equity, perceived quality, and consumer choices. For the concept of nation branding, Dinnie (Nation branding: concepts, issues, practice, 2008) demonstrates how consumers can have differing country-of-origin images and the ways in which countries can work with these perceptions to create brands and induce desirability. Consumers then interpret objects from other countries based on the brand of that country.

Dinnie states that "the reputations of countries function like the brand images of companies" and how people perceive the country will influence how they perceive the product. This is known as country-of-origin or COO. Country-of-origin is generally thought of as the country influencing the product, but countries and brand images do not flow one way. As Dinnie asks, "does the prestigious brand such as Sony enhance the nation-brand image of Japan or does the high credibility

of Japan as a source country for high technology products enhance the Sony brand?" However, there has been less research into in what ways products can affect the views of the country, as opposed to the research into how the country brand can affect the product.

One of the first attempts to quantify country branding or isolating the COO was Schooler with products in the Central American Common Market. (1965) This and many following analyses have been focused on the country perception in terms of quality of the product (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999) (Peterson & Jolibert, 1995) (Knight & Calantone, 2000). These show that the perceived quality of the product is influenced by the COO and therefore influences desirability.

Additionally, the white paper from Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry's on Cool Japan shows Japan's awareness and desire to expand industries such as food, traditional arts and crafts, and express delivery services. The Cool Japan Project is a government program aimed at capitalizing on the popularity boom of Japanese products such as anime characters outside Japan starting in the 1990s. (Cool Japan / creative industries policy, 2013) One of their current missions is the "Enhancement of the Japanese Brand through Efforts to Open Up and Expand Cool Japan Business Ventures".

Some of the trends and promotions have been successful, such as the anime Dragon Ball Z or Nintendo's Pokémon entertainment empire. Others have been more limited, such as voice actors being more popular in Asian countries than in other parts of the world. However, while the successful projects are publicized for how well Japanese products do abroad, there are also examples of "Cool Japan" that have been unsuccessful. For example, there was an unsuccessful venture with the "Japanese High School Girls Ambassadors". This is because stereotypes and cultural frames influence the reinterpretation of commodified and commoditized characters and how this affects the consumers' perceptions of the commodity as well as the country-of-origin. Understanding the aspects of interpreting objects and culture can play a role in understanding the reasons behind those successes and misses.

A branding company, FutureBrand, does analysis of country branding and publishes bi-annual reports on the countries with the strongest positive brands

called the Country Brand Index (2015). In this 2015 report, Japan was named the strongest country brand. Japan's strength was mostly with electronic and car companies. This index also looked at aspects such as tourism and business culture.

4. *Soft Country-Branding, Brand Identity and Brand Association*

This paper uses the term "soft country-branding" to refer to branding with the perceived cultural qualities and images in a commodity, uncoupled from quality of the commodity. This would refer to commodities whose value is in their images, instead properties such as "how well made" or "how good it tastes". For cultural commodities they would fulfill a symbolic need. Thompson et al, states that "symbolic needs such as self-enhancement or self-image are fulfilled by symbolic brands." (qtd. in Salciuviene, Ghauri, Mockaitis, & Mattos, 2009, p. 180)

To uncouple the quality and the COO from the commodity, it is necessary to view the country brand outside the actual product. To begin with, it is important to look at commodities that would correlate with stage 4, esteem need, on Maslow's Hierarchy of Need model (McLeod, 2016). For this, brand association, from Aaker's Brand Equity model (1991) is the most appropriate framing for measuring it. Brand association is the feelings associated with a certain brand. If a brand is successful, the brand association would help the retrieve and process information related to the brand. It would help differentiate and position the brand among the competition. It would be a reason to buy the product in and of itself. Finally, it would create a positive feeling when purchasing it.

Pierre Bourdieu introduces the concept of cultural capital with his analysis of taste and the relationship between class and taste. However, his focus was on the elite forms of popular culture (Bourdieu, 1984). George Rizter expands this to "individuals pursue distinction across a range of cultural fields." (qtd. in Brooks, 2014)

As previously mentioned, people's frame is part of their reference group, and means it involves their identity as well. Paul Bloom (2010), identifies that buying branded products is connected to identity and how we perceive ourselves and our own happiness. This means that authenticity of the product is crucial for the product's identity or brand to succeed. The mostly young people who purchase

Cool Japan merchandise identify with Cool Japan and it is part of their identity. In Japan SPOTLIGHT (2015), it is argued that since *yuru-chara* have not been created with the even the slightest intent to introduce them to an international market, that their authenticity is higher than that of a product designed to appeal to both Japanese and international consumers.

Imprinting

The claim of immediate association and immediate feelings are, in part, the study of semiotics in cultural studies and the fact that meaning can arise from simple everyday things (Pagila, 1990). This connects to the concept of imprinting, a "combination of the experience and its accompanying emotion" that leave a lasting unconscious impression which shapes people's lives and creates the person, a concept in psychology first applied to animals by Konrad Lorenz (1962). As a child, people go through a lot of new experiences in his or her own culture, imprinting the experiences and shaping the person within the culture.

> "We no longer truly see our world, know how it looks, let alone how it works. Exposed to more images than we can possibly appreciate, we have developed a kind of collective aesthetic unconsciousness, a psychic realm of forgetfulness that, much as the Id serves as the repository for many of the formative experiences of infancy, serves as a storehouse for faint memories of the extraneous designs on trash cans, jelly jars, and milk cartons." (Harris, 2000, p. x)

Rapaille (2006) asserts that "every imprint influences on an unconscious level," which would mean whenever a consumer observes a marketing campaign or makes a purchase that produces an emotion, an imprint is created. This imprinting also creates emotional value on products, which contrasts with how Harris (2000) asserts that emotional value is innate within all people. Rapaille's example is how coffee is viewed when comparing the Swiss and Japanese consumer.

> "While the Japanese had an extremely strong emotional connection to tea, they had, at the most, a very superficial imprint of coffee. Most, in fact, had no imprint of coffee at all. Under these circumstances, Nestlé's strategy of getting these consumers to switch from tea to coffee could only fail. Coffee could not compete with tea in the Japanese culture if it had such weak

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emotional resonance. Instead, if Nestlé was going to have any success in this market at all, they needed to start at the beginning. They needed to give the product meaning in this culture. They needed to create an imprint for coffee for the Japanese." (2006, p. 9)

The idea that there was no significant imprint for coffee in Japan underscores that early imprinting has a tremendous impact on the decisions and actions consumers make. These imprints help form cultural frames and help provide a strong association needed in branding, especially among younger consumers.

Previous Research

Localization of Japan and Japan Abroad

Anne Allison (2006) in *Millennial Monsters: Japanese Toys and the Global Imagination*, discusses the brand value of otherness. She argues that the appeal of Japanese monsters globally, especially Pokémon in the context of the United States, is appealing to the target consumers because they are simultaneously foreign and familiar. Previous research into Pokémon has demonstrated how these theories work in the global market. The foreign aspect of the Pokémon, by their very nature of being from Japan, is enhanced in the United States. "For the "Google generation" worldliness is both an asset and a marker of coolness." (qtd. in Allison, 2006)

Allison asserts that one of the reasons Japanese commodified objects, like Pokémon, are popular in the US because they are familiar to the consumer but at the same time, foreign enough to make it unique, interesting and desirable. "[P]art of the appeal of the game play [of Yu-Gi-Oh!] is its novelty. …Yu-Gi-Oh! has a feel that is distinctly non-American. Retaining…signs of cultural difference is more the trend today that simple Americanization of such foreign products." (Allison, 2006, p. 2)

The balance between foreign and familiar can be accomplished between the process of localization, such as renaming characters, or with reinterpreting through cultural frames. And that is that specific mix that helps make them popular globally. Some evidence can be found in the fact that Pokémon and Recently

PokémonGo, with their combination of recognizable and unrecognizable monsters as the stars, are globally recognized games.

"The pleasure of play here [Yu-Gi-Oh!] is studying, mastering, and manipulating these differences: as interactive activity by which something foreign soon becomes familiar." (Allison, 2006, p. 2)

Watson (2006) explores globalization and localization for global markets with McDonalds. Beyond the information the country-of-origin relays, the information can be misinterpreted through globalization and localization. Marketers already understand that one method of promotion and advertising will not work in one culture as it will in another culture. This is because of cultural frames change how people will interpret and use items. McDonalds had to readjust its marketing strategy in each country to accommodate the diverse cultures. "The process of localization is a two-way street: It implies changes in the local culture as well as modifications in the company's standard operating procedure." (Watson, 2006, p. 37) Also demonstrated is that cultures adopt, reinterpret and reassign meanings to objects brought across cultures. In places such as Hong Kong and Beijing, McDonalds was reinterpreted as a safe hang-out for junior high and high school children to go after school because there were limited places for young people to congregate. This contrasts with the US image of it being a place where food is either picked-up or quickly eaten. (Yan, 2006)

Iwabuchi (2004), in *Pikachu's Global Adventure: The Rise and Fall of Pokémon,* discusses the several aspects of determining how much essence is in Japanese global commodities. He touches on how Japan is increasing its "cultural presence" and that it has a "new aesthetic emanating in large part from Japanese cultural inventiveness." However, he also argues that most Japanese exports are "culturally odorless" and how "they have tended not to be talked about in terms of a characteristically Japanese cultural presence." He also demonstrates that, especially originally, products are localized beyond just translating with Pokémon to "hide its 'Japaneseness'"; where names, characters, and the product itself looks different from the original product in the country-of-origin to the receiving country because of localization. In fact, Nintendo of America did not believe that Pokémon would be successful in the US. In the same book, Willett argues that "a key to

Pokémon's success is that it can be "poached" by different people for different purposes." (2004, p. 239) And that it, "thrives in children's culture by providing this variety of subject positions for children to adopt as they perform and play with their identities in a variety of contexts in their daily lives." (2004, p. 239)

Even without planning, Japanese commodities can achieve some marketable success abroad. In 1996, NHK created a mascot character called Domo-kun (Walker, 2007). He is an example of how "foreign and familiar" mix in one character and create a measure of desirability. For the foreign aspects of Domo-kun, he was designed by someone Japanese for a local Japanese market. This makes him authentic. He is also cute, but a bit slow and awkward. This is a relatively unusual and interesting combination in the U.S.

Domo-kun had received wide attention from international consumers, first on the Internet and then with actual physical products. In 2014, Domo-kun products, such as bags, hats, and shirts were still being sold in U.S. shops. He also became the mascot for 7-11 Slurpee™ in 2011 and Target Halloween collection in 2011, as well (Walker, 2007).

Character Management and Brand Management with Yuru-chara

Tribeck Brand Strategy Research Company (トライベック, 2016) analyzes *yuru-chara* with seven distinct characteristics: Intimacy, Personally, Impact, Humor, Matches Outsider Image, Holds Local Interests, and Improves the Impression of the Area. Beyond these seven characteristics, there is one more that is essential and is already woven into the current ones. It is the idea of identity, in so far as the consumer would purchase the product with the *yuru-chara* on it, because the *yuru-chara* reflects a part of the consumer. It is the idea that "I am a person who would like something like this, so I will buy it to show off my interests."

This also explains why some *yuru-chara*, which have very off-putting characteristics, such as Chitchai-Ossan from Hyogo, have become controversial but popular. It is the subversion itself that is popular. *Yuru-chara* already have one aspect that allows it inroads with consumer identity. Most *yuru-chara* are designed to be the mascot of a certain area. This allows the people in that area an instant connection with the *yuru-chara* because of local pride and tribalism.

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In an article that attempted to combine successful *yuru-chara* characteristics automatically, nine different "affective" words were selected as the ones *yuru-chara* possess or should possess (Hotogi & Hagiwara, 2015). Except for subservice *yuru-chara*, almost all of them are cute, and cuteness itself is an unspoken requirement for successful *yuru-chara.*

Thus, popular characters must also have good brand identity for the Japanese population beyond their local demographic. Characters such as Kumamon, Hikonyan, Gunma-chan, and Funassyi- and all able to ascend beyond into most of Japan. Consumers throughout Japan can identify with these characters. They score high on the seven characteristics above. Characters such as Sento-kun and Chitchai-Ossan also become more popular because they are subversive cute and that there is a subversive brand identity existing alongside mainstream brand identity.

All these characters are also easily identifiable. Kumamon is a bear, Hikonyan is a cat, Gunma is a horse, and Chitchai-Ossan is human. Funassyi- might not be as easily identifiable by appearances alone, but the "nashi" in his name helps Japanese consumers identify him as a "nashi" or Asian pear. And while a bit strange, Sento-kun is also identifiable as a humanoid, if not strictly human.

Distinct names are also essential, like Funassyi-, because the names are simple and usually a clue as to the character's identity. *Kuma* in Kumamon refers to both Kumamoto and bear. The *nyan* in Hikonyan refers to a cat. Additionally, for a *yuru-chara* to be successful as a *yuru-chara* and not just a mascot character, they must be simple and usually incorporate one or two aspects for which a person can identify with. The more aspects added to a character, the less people will identify with all the characteristics.

In contrast to the successful *yuru-chara*, including Kumamon, Hikonyan, Gunma-chan and Funassyi-, unsuccessful as a brand *yuru-chara* are too numerous to name. One reason they are unsuccessful is that often they are too local or niche. Some designers try to put everything noteworthy about their area into one character. This leads to confusing looking characters, such as Chan-nishiki-chan from Nabari, Mie. A consumer cannot easily identify this *yuru-chara* from sight alone. Other characters, such as Ii-chan from Iijima in Nagano, are vague and unidentifiable.

They are, in a sense, too generic to produce any brand identity. Ii-chan is a good name for the area, since it refers to Iijima. However, *ii* means cooked rice and the *yuru-chara* itself has nothing to do with rice, so it doesn't help identify the *yuru-chara*. Chan-nishiki-chan's name is long and confusing to anyone outside of Nabari.

This is the cultural frame in which *yuru-chara,* as a whole, have become popular in Japan. Their cuteness is an asset, or at least not off-putting to Japanese consumers, which would not necessarily be the case in the US if marketed the same way. The marketing strategy is only viable within Japan.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research is separated into two sections. The first is a quantitative COO survey on an original cultural commodity. The second is a quantitative analysis of mascot characters, mostly *yuru-chara,* in Japan. Using both quantitative and qualitative projects for this research was to make it more robust. This was based on McKim's (2015) discussion of mixed methodology that has been shown to be considered more rigorous and provide deeper meanings for phenomenon. The target research age was a wide range, with an emphasis on younger people.

Quantitative

The purpose of the quantitative research had two main objectives. The first main objective was to observe the changes in an identical cultural commodity that are perceived when it moves from one frame to another. Market research into expanding and selling commodities abroad tend to incorporate localization and the qualities of the product that should be adjusted to insure quality sales. As opposed to that approach, this research focused on the natural changes that occur when the frame is shifted. This allows for a more distilled analysis of the consumers' cultural frames perspective and provides support into future research into how to avoid miscommunication that could arise from the information gaps that form.

The second main objective was to examine the possibilities of the country brand to see if it has an influence over the perception of a commodity when perceived in isolation. The first step of analyzing the gap caused by cultural commodities based on the country-of-origin is to investigate whether there is a noticeable perception in the cultural commodities. For that purpose, a COO based market survey was created to compare a cultural commodity. For the commodity, something "culturally odorless" (Iwabuchi, 2004) must be created, or minimalizing an essence of the country-of-origin. There are currently many Japanese commodities that are near odorless, but the fact that they were designed or created in Japan means that they are not odorless. An original commodity that was as odorless as possible was needed.

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Real world research and marketing surveys has wide spectrum of variables beyond the country-of-origin itself, so the research project was designed to attempt to limit the variables to the country-of-origin perceptions and the country of the participants. This one specifically would focus on the perception of the country-of-origin.

The research focused on minimizing the effects of localization, language, perceived product value, and the semiotics of the point of origin. According to Barthes, (1972) commodities have information that is embedded into it through semiotics. Moreover, all commodities have one or many country-of-origins.

Looking at typical evaluations of cultural commodities, such as the Country Brand Index (2015), the products observed were based on the full spectrum of the Aaker's Brand Equity Index (1991), quality, value, awareness, and association. This research strives is to distill the variables in a consumer's choice of a product down to the product association, which would then be assigned a country-of-origin. It would also limit the perception of quality of the commodity, which is a common factor in more standard COO surveys.

Qualitative

The second step of the research is observing, documenting, and analyzing mascot characters and their popularity in Japan. These observations allow for reflection on the results of the COO survey and produces overall more rich research. It also helps observe the frames allowing for keying of the frames.

The main objectives of the qualitative research were to provide support the quantitative research, provide real examples of framing with cultural commodities, and allow the opportunity for the theories to develop possible real-world application in marketing.

The qualitative is especially important based on Goffman's frames. To analyze frames, the ability to observe the frame is important. As an international student, I had to observe and an analyze frames in Japan to discuss the results of the COO survey in addition to understanding Japanese mascot characters and their marketing.

The mascot characters were not my only quantitative research. My original MA research used qualitative analysis to explore the cultural perceptions of other characters. This research has provided valuable insight to the discussion of the COO survey results. Consequently, the need for quantitative analysis was to develop a statistical base for the research original research.

Target Research: Children vs. Adults

The age ranges of the two experiments do not match up completely. The marketing survey focused completely on children ages 8-14 and the *yuru-chara* observational field work focused on attendees ages, which was a wide range that included families with young children and individual adults. While the ages do not equate, it does not mean that they are unrelated. First, it is understandable that children as young as eight would not usually have the means to purchase the character in the marketing survey. However, parents will buy for their young children toys and characters for the children. It helps if the parents and children both have positive feelings for the character for commodities to sell well.

Additionally, young children will grow up to be adults and could carry with them their spending patterns from childhood. Nostalgic goods and consumption of childhood images is a growing market. Having children identify and grow up with characters helps to create a life-long consumer. If possible, the survey would have been conducted with even younger children, as young as five years old. With the survey being a written survey, eight was the youngest possible to ensure respondents understanding.

It was important to keep the age of the marketing testing young while the *yuru-chara* observational research had a broad range, because another part of the testing was to see if there was an age at when children become conscious of "the other" in terms of global marketing. Based off Allison's theories and that Japanese monsters are foreign and familiar, it would be important to establish when children start recognizing the concept of foreign.

RESEARCH METHODOLGY

Hoo Cross-Cultural Marketing Survey

- Method: Quantitative
- Sampling: 276 US; 367 Japan
- Analysis Method: SPSS
- Age Range: 8-14 years old
- Measurement: 7-point Likert Scale
- Variables:
    - Consumer's Country
    - Three surveys with different country-of-origin in the introduction – Japan, USA, and None
- Goal:
    - Quantify the likability of a character based on the country-of-origin
    - Demonstrate how the country frame changes the perception of cultural commodities
    - Address the original research questions

For the COO survey, an original cultural commodity was created, and then the survey was conducted with one variable, the perceived country-of-origin. Children in ages from 8-14 were randomly assigned one of three different surveys, one with a Japanese country-of-origin, one with an American country-of-origin, and one with no country-of-origin mentioned. They were the same except for the top instruction sheet that was meant to be read before the survey. To preserve the viability of the survey and avoid priming the children, the questions asking for the children's knowledge of the foreign country was included in the survey only after the questions assessing the character.

They survey was designed based on my MA research with Domo-kun with the help and feedback from Professor Freedman's Teach Japan laboratory at Keio SFC along with Japanese acquaintances for language accuracy. The survey was conducted in two countries, the USA and Japan at elementary and junior high schools. The students' regions were middle-class suburban areas for both countries.

Table 1 Focuses of the Survey

Focuses of the Survey	
Country	Does the opinion change between the two countries?
COO	Does the COO effect the perception of any of the qualities?
Age	Are some children too young to understand different countries?
Gender	Does the character appeal to one gender over another?
Associations	Do the children associate the character with any other character?
Foreign Country	Do the children have knowledge of the foreign country?

Original Character Design

There were no changes to the character, including name, color, age, personality, and structure between the countries. To avoid odor, the design had to be believable in both countries. Therefore, the character was commissioned and designed with the concept of something that would be admissible and desirable in both cultures.

Table 2 Qualities of the Character

Qualities of the Character	
Name	Hoo / ふう
What	Owl
Age	3
Color	Gray/Yellow-green/Orange-brown
Characteristics	Smart/Adventurous/Happy/Curious/Cute
Gender	Genderless

For the first step, I looked at some of my MA research on cartoon images and their perceptions. The research included Domo-kun in the US and Stitch in Japan. Additionally, there were original drawings done by young children and were described and analyzed by college students based on the perceived country-of-origin. This analysis allowed for a perception of characteristics from Japan and the US.

In the MA research, there was an issue that the characters had odors. It was from Japan, or it was from the U.S. The odor of the country could not be eliminated, so an original character had to be created to eliminate or mask any cultural odor. It had to be "country-less" and when it couldn't be, it had to be mixed and confusing. It had to be able to be from both Japan and the US.

For help in the creation of an ambiguous character, I contacted Elizabeth Mae and began working with her. She could understand the aesthetic I was going for and knew about both Japan and the US. Mae is an American who studied Art and Japanese in college and moved to Japan after graduation. She teaches English but does art of original or fan characters as a side-job. Her in-depth knowledge of Japanese and American cultural was a match for creating a character necessary to pass in both worlds. She and I consulted for three weeks on the various aspects of the character to make sure it was viable for the research project. Every aspect we could control for we discussed and tried to have neutral, positive, or ambiguous characteristics with a focus being on neutral or ambiguous when at all possible.

The design of the character began with the concept of something that would be admissible in both worlds. First, we looked at popular characters among a younger audience currently in both countries. Some of them included Mickey Mouse, Hello Kitty, Pikachu, Snoopy and Stitch, which are a mouse, cat, mouse, dog, and alien respectively. From there, we discussed about the idea of using a real animal as a base, as opposed to an imaginary character, such as Anpanman, a popular children's cartoon character in Japan who is an anthropomorphized piece of bread with sweet beans.

Next, we looked at animals that were easily recognized by children in both countries. This means animals such as the tanuki and bison were rejected. Then we discussed that we wanted something rarer than the popular animals, such as dogs, cats, and mice. The list of remaining animals were deer, fish, fox, bear and owl.

We decided not to use bear because no matter how it was designed, it would look too similar to the Teddy Bear in the U.S. and could cause confusion. Fish was dismissed as being too much of a "food" animal in Japan and deer was dismissed because of hunting in the U.S. Finally, we were down to the fox and owl. Foxes have some negative connotation of being cunning on both cultures while the owl

has a positive connotation in both cultures. In Japan, the word for owl, *fukuro*, starts with the sound *fuku*, which is a homonym with the word meaning luck. In the U.S., owls are considered one of the smartest animals and are associated with intelligence.

Table 3 Rejected Character Designs

Rejected Character Designs		
Animal	Rejected Round	Reason
Fantasy Creatures*	Round 1	Too abstract
Alien	Round 2	Not from either country
Bison	Round 2	Not found in Japan
Monkey	Round 2	Not found in the U.S.
Moose	Round 2	Not found in Japan
Raccoon	Round 2	Not found in Japan
Skunk	Round 2	Not found in Japan
Tanuki	Round 2	Not found in the U.S.
Cat	Round 3	Too common
Dog	Round 3	Too common
Mouse	Round 3	Too common
Bear	Round 4	Too similar to the Teddy Bear
Deer	Round 4	Hunting connection in the U.S.
Fish	Round 4	Strong food connection in Japan
Fox	Round 4	Some negative connotations

After the type of character was decided on, we next discussed naming it. The requirements for the name were:

- Work both in Japanese and English
- Same name with no translating
- No -san, -chan, Mr., or Ms.
- Simple for the children
- Related to an owl
- Gender neutral

The name that fit all these requirements was "Hoo." First, in English, it is a pun off the onomatopoeia sound an owl makes, hoo/who. Next, in Japanese, the names is rendered as 「ふう」 in hiragana or *huu* in the Nihon-shiki Romanization style. There is a slight pronunciation difference, but not more than can be considered a dialect difference and considered insignificant enough to count as the "same" name. It was very simple for children, and did not use any naming conventions, such as -san or Mr. Also, there is no obvious gender association with the name, since it is not a conventional name in either language.

To properly create the character, I discussed the qualities I wanted Hoo to have with the character designer. The qualities we settled on were sporty, active, gender-neutral or slightly masculine, smart, and cute. These were considered generally positive characteristics. Gender neutral or slightly masculine was chosen because for a character, one usually must add something to distinguish a female character, and we wanted something more all-encompassing if possible.

The characteristics I wanted were positive attributes that could be used as an actual children's character, like Dora from the Nickelodeon network. Dora is a very successful children's character for Dora the Explorer, an educational

Figure 3 Dora the Explorer from Nickelodeon Productions

television for preschoolers that teaches both English and Spanish. Dora is a Mexican-American girl who goes out on adventures on TV. Hoo would be modeled as a type of educational adventurous character that many children could learn from like Dora. Hoo would also model what are considered positive traits in both cultures, which would be in line with an actual children's character.

I first did an Internet image search for cartoon owls to give the artist a starting point for the style of owl I was going for visually as well as verbally.

Figure 4 Google Image search of "Cartoon Owls"

After a few body shape trials, we decided on a squat, rounded triangle shape with extended feet and wings. The short, fatter shape would be simpler and easier to replicate when necessary. The eyes were big and in a simple almost anime-style. The bigger eyes would keep it cute and young, which we felt it was almost necessary if it had any chance of being successful as a character in Japan, and the simplicity of the eyes would allow it to be acceptable as an American character, a-al Power Puff Girls and Teen Titans. The small lashes added a bit of dynamic to the eye that was necessary to off-set the simplicity of the eye. The tufts of feathers at the top helped indicate it was an owl because without them, it looked like almost any type of bird.

Figure 5 Final Mock-up of Original Owl Character by Elizabeth Quart

The shirt was designed to be as simple as possible and a bit confusing. Technically, the "shirt" is only sleeves, to allow for the inner feathers to be seen. The stripes were chosen to be reminiscent of baseball shirts, a popular sport in both countries,

even if the design is not specifically popular. The colors settled on were green, yellow and orange for the clothes and gray for the body. Green, yellow, and orange tend to be the most gender-neutral colors in both Japan and the US with blue being considered masculine and pink/red being considered feminine. We chose gray as the body color because it seemed simpler and would have less reproduction issues, such as color matching.

One arm was extended to show movement and action. The dynamic wing and visible legs would show the activeness. The messenger bag was also thought of to show that the character was ready to go on an adventure. The glasses were eliminated as being too much and unnecessary since owls already have the image of intelligence.
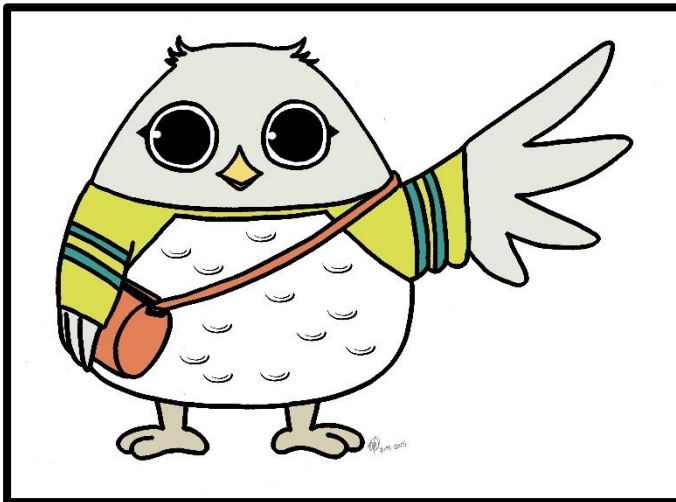
Figure 6 Last Version of Hoo y Elizabeth Quart

Test Design

Survey Structure		
1	Introduction	Introduced the character and the three country-of-origins, Japan, USA, and neither.
2	7-point Likert Scale Questions	To assess the children's first impression of the character.
3	Clarification Questions	Opinions and comparison of the character for further information
4	Foreign Country	To assess if the children have knowledge of the foreign country in question.

There were three surveys, all identical besides the cover page. In the explanations, one cover page said Hoo was American, one said Hoo was Japanese, and one said Hoo was an owl without mentioning the COO. Each instruction page included a large picture. The Japanese COO had a picture of the Japanese flag with "JAPAN" written in large letters under it. The American COO had a picture of the US flag with "USA" written under it. The third was a picture of myself and an owl with a caption of the event written under it.

The second part was the demographics. They children were as young as 8-years-old, so the demographics had to be kept extremely simple. There was a possibility that the children would answer even if they didn't know the answer as a way please me or their teacher. It would skew the results if they answered incorrectly, so I left more difficult questions, such as "How much TV do you watch?" out of the demographics.

The third part is the Likert questions. This would allow the quantitative analysis of the children's responses to see if there is any influence on the perception of the character based on the COO. There were some additional questions comparing the character to others and what the children thought of the character as a "marketable commodity".

The fourth part was to estimate if the children have been exposed to any Japanese or American culture. All the mediums couldn't be covered, so television was chosen because it is universal in both countries, there are shows from both countries on television, and the shows' target audiences include children in the right age range.

Table 5 Differences Between the Surveys

Differences Between the Surveys		
USA	JAPAN	Reasoning
English	Japanese	For understanding
What city do you live in?	東員町にすんでいますか？	The American survey had more variety of (near-by) cities. The Japanese survey only had two students answer "no".
Stupid	変	"Stupid" can be used to show displeasure for something. Not necessarily meaning mental capacity.
Country Order	Country Order	They are both "alphabetical" based on the respective language.
Japan	アメリカ	Each survey is trying to discern the students' knowledge of the other country.

To flesh out the survey and give it weight, I added paraphernalia to the survey. I did not just want to create a 2-D image of the character. I wanted to create a more

Figure 7 Stuffed Hoo made by Oj Flohe

in-depth character with a seemingly thought-out production plan. I created a book cover, multiple 2-D images, stickers, a digital image on a flash drive, and a stuffed animal version of the character. The stuffed animal was created by Oj Flohe of Pwyllo's Nest, an American who had lived in Japan for brief time, after consulting her with the design aspects and how to maintain the essence of the character created while changing mediums.

Sampling and Conduction the Survey

Random sampling was out of scope for the resources of this test. Instead, cluster sampling at elementary and junior high schools was selected for location sites and for conducting the surveys. The Japanese schools were chosen first because of

Figure 8 Hoo Mock-up Book Covers

access. As an international student and an outsider, the only schools I could get permission to visit were in the Toin town. I had connections there because of previous work. The American schools were chosen because of their relative similarity to the Japanese region – middle class and suburban, as well as access to the schools.

Demographics

The American schools were in Clawson, Michigan and Royal Oak, Michigan, neighboring cities with similar demographics. The specific demographic information was provided by the US Census (United States Census Bureau, 2017). Three of the four schools were within Clawson and one was within Royal Oak. Royal Oak is over five times larger than Clawson, however, their population proportions are similar.

Table 6 Popular Information for Clawson and Royal Oak, USA

Population Information	Clawson	Royal Oak
Population estimates, July 1, 2016	11,970	59,006
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	11,825	57,236
Persons under 5 years, percent, April 1, 2010	5.50%	5.80%
Persons under 18 years, percent, April 1, 2010	17.90%	16.70%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, April 1, 2010	14.80%	13.10%
Female persons, percent, April 1, 2010	51.00%	51.00%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2012-2016	7.70%	7.70%
Households, 2012-2016	5,564	28,526
Persons per household, 2012-2016	2.13	2.05
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2012-2016	9.40%	7.40%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	94.50%	96.50%
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2012-2016	70.70%	74.10%
Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	$59,259	$68,504
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	$33,511	$43,251
Persons in poverty, percent	6.70%	7.20%

Population per square mile, 2010	5,377.40	4,856.70
Population per square kilometer	2,100	1,932
Land area in square miles, 2010	2.20	11.79
Land area in square kilometer	5.70	30.54

The data for Toin Town was gathered at two places, the Toin Town home page [Toin Town, 2017], and a national annual income guide site (Nenshuu, 2017). Toin Town has very few immigrants residing there, the immigrant children I interacted with before and while conducting the survey were from Brazil and spoke Portuguese, and many had Japanese and well as Portuguese names.

Table 7 Population information for Toin, Japan

Mie Prefecture, Toin Town Data, 2016			
人口	25661 人（1040 位）	昼間人口	20537 人（80%）
15 歳未満人口	3373 人（13.1%）	15 歳~64 歳人口	16946 人（66%）
65 歳以上人口	5289 人（20.6%）	外国人人口	411 人（1.6%）
労働力人口	13627 人	就業者数	13011 人
完全失業者数	616 人		
出生数	177 人	死亡者数	198 人
転入	635 人	転出	669 人
婚姻件数	86 件	離婚件数	25 件
保育所数	6 カ所	保育所待機児童数	0 人
保育所在籍者数	397 人		
幼稚園数	6 園	幼稚園園児数	403 人
小学校数	6 校	小学校児童数	1412 人
中学校数	2 校	中学校生徒数	729 人
高校数	0 校	高校生徒数	0 人

平均所得	318 万 6147 円	面積	22.68 k㎡
人口密度	1,131 人/k㎡	世帯数	9,191 軒
世帯人員	2.79 人	宅地	4.83 k㎡
人口密度(宅地)	9,067 人/k㎡		

The schools in the US included 3 elementary schools and one middle school: Kenwood Elementary School, Paul A. Schalm Elementary School, and Clawson Middle School in Clawson and Upton Elementary School in Royal Oak. Two of the elementary schools and the middle school, Kenwood, Schalm, and Clawson, were within the same district of Clawson School District while Upton Elementary School was in a neighboring district of Royal Oak School District. All of them were public schools with local attendance and no testing requirements to enter. All the students were fluent in English and the entire questionnaire was conducted in English. A visual survey of the classes showed that the demographics of the classes were around 80 percent white with 15 percent black and the rest other ethnicities, such as Asians and Middle Eastern. The specific ethnicity of the children wasn't asked in the demographics, especially since it would then be on the Japanese survey as well, and that might be a confusing question, because of its rarity in Japan.

Avoiding and Accounting for Priming

I briefed each teacher beforehand. After a brief introduction, I had the students take the questionnaire. The students were mostly left to their own to answer the questions but were permitted to ask questions on an individual basis. The most frequent questions were meaning of word questions, such as "What does 'foreign' mean?" There were also questions such as "Is Hoo a boy or a girl?" and "What does Hoo do?" I kept the answers vague and for the boy or girl question, I asked the child what he/she thought Hoo was? I visited a total of 10 classrooms while in the U.S. with the number of students ranging from 10 to 25 students over the course of one week.

The Japanese schools had many more students per school, so I only visited one elementary school, Kanda Elementary School, and one junior high school, Toin First Junior High School. The board of education, the principals, the vice principals, and the teachers were all informed ahead of time. The survey was conducted in the gymnasium of the elementary school and in each individual classroom in the junior high school.

I chose the age range 4th to 8th graders (8-14-year-olds) because I wanted to see if the influence of COO was applicable at an early age. However, they had to be old enough to understand the directions. Children seven years old and younger would possibly have been too young to understand it, and students that young would not have completed the survey accurately.

Mascot Character Fieldwork

- Method: Qualitative
- Analysis Method: Archival Research, Observational Research, Semi-structured interviews
- Location: Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, Japan, November 2016
- Location: Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Kuwana, Japan, November 2017
- Objective 1: Explore reasons for current popularity, "keying" the frames, and avoiding a "WEIRD" frame.
- Objective 2: Propose ways to make *yuru-chara* more internationally

For a comparison of Japanese marketing esthetics, the primary point of reference for the research into the internal nation brand was the Japanese mascot characters called *yuru-chara*. *Yuru-chara* have become a major market player within Japan but are still relatively unknown outside of Japan. The main purpose is to observe people's responses to *yuru-chara* and reasons behind their popularity.

The first part of the research for the mascot characters was archival research into mascot character and *yuru-chara*. The archival research was covered previously in the review of the literature. It describes early mascot characters and the origins of *yuru-chara* specifically, which are important to understand the current climate of *yuru-chara* and to make the observations accurately.

Through-out the year in Japan, different localities host *yuru-chara* events, usually in collaboration with other local specialties. There is also an annual Yuru-chara

Grand Prix that includes characters from localities around Japan, corporations, and even a few international mascot characters make an appearance.

Observing and participating the event allows for keying the event in particular and *yuru-chara* in general. It produces another perspective and allows for a greater understanding of Japanese views of *yuru-chara* and Japanese frames.

Archival Research

*Yuru-chara*s are designed to be cute, but also designed to appeal to adults as well as children. For example, when I visited Kaunet headquarters, I was introduced to Kaubou, an orange box with a smiling face that recently had become the new mascot. Kaubou does not fit the strict definition of *yuru-chara*, which are described below, because it does not hold special meaning to a region. Although it is not quite a *yuru-chara*, it is a representative of the style and it is a *yurui* mascot character. The team in charge of the Bouchan promotions described the character's design as being cute (*kawaii*), even though they and had no intention of marketing him towards children. They mainly sold office supplies as a b-to-b business, and even their lesser direct to customer sales were mainly for office supplies. Their character design incorporated many ideas, but one of the main purposes of building the character and individual homepage was to create a space where the customers could "refresh" or feel "at ease." (Kaunet, 2016)

The team had not done in-depth market research into the viability of Kaubou. Instead, they used a naming competition to engage their customers in the new character and bring more recognition to the company. The character design was not an original concept, but instead was from a modification of the company logo. They wanted a character to compete with similar companies who already had designed a character, like Pencil Boy from ASKUL.

History of Mascot Characters and Yuru-chara

However, Hikonyan was not the first *yuru-chara*. Mr. Miura coined the term to describe Bunkakki-, an oyster (*kaki*) character with a maple leaf hat, created for the Citizen's Prefectural Festival (*kemmin bunkasai*) in Hiroshima in 2000. At the time, yurui was used as derogatory as in the creators did not put effort into creating

the character. Later, Mr. Miura embraced the term, along with *yuru-chara*, as a positive character design.

When Mr. Miura coined the term, he also created the criteria for what makes a *yuru-chara*. Officially, *yuru-chara* have to have three characteristics.

1. It must convey a strong message of love for one's hometown.
2. The character's movements or behavior should be unique and unstable or awkward.
3. The character should be unsophisticated or laid-back and lovable.

In 2011, the first official, national Yuru-chara Grand Prix was held, and every year since then, the number of participating *yuru-chara*s has increased, and nearly doubling between 2012 and 2013. Some of these characters have become insanely popular within Japan. (http://yurugp.jp)

While *yuru-chara* as a specific type of mascot characters are recent, mascot characters have been around for a long time, especially in athletics and children products. Internationally, the Olympics mascots have officially been around since 1972 with the dog Waldi for the Munich Olympics (Olympics, 2016). Schools and universities often have a history of mascots, as well. American companies have had a rich history of "advertising characters" since the turn of the twentieth century. [Dotz Husain, 2003]

In Japan, mascot characters have existed for more than half a century. In 1949, a frog character named Koro-chan was introduced for Kowa Corporation. In 1950, a dessert and pastry company called Fujiya introduced Peko-chan, a girl mascot character who constantly has her tongue sticking out. Small, incremental introduction to mascot characters continued in Japan.

Current Popularity

Within Japan, mascot characters play a substantial role in marketing, branding, and marketing campaigns. Almost all major companies have mascot characters, such as Japan's National Broadcasting Station (NHK)'s Domo-kun. Prefectures and regions also have mascot characters, which happen to be mostly *yuru-chara*. Many of these regional characters followed in the path of other popular characters such as

Hello Kitty and have relatively easy obtainable licensing. Prefectural websites will typically have online application forms for permission to use the characters' image. Some *Yuru-chara* like Kumamon, can be used for free, even on commercial products.

Compared to the US, these characters are cuter, more popular, and more abundant. In a way, they are an untapped resource for the Cool Japan's marketing campaign abroad. There is an almost uncountable amount of *yuru-chara* in Japan. There is also the thought that there may be too many *yuru-chara*. Government offices in Osaka were asked to stop creating and even to cull some of the *yuru-chara* because it was starting to cause confusion and was perceived as excessive and a waste of money, per an article in The Guardian. (McCurry, 2015)

One indication of how popular *yuru-chara* have become is the Yuru-chara Grand-Prix, which is held every year in a new city. In 2015, there were 1,727 *yuru-chara* registered for the event. That is nearly five times the amount of entries compared to the first grand-prix contest held in 2011 with 348 entries.

One of the most popular *yuru-chara* is the above mentioned Kumamon. On April 20th, 2016, a series of large earthquakes hit and devastated Kumamoto Prefecture and the surrounding areas. Agencies, donations, and relief workers have gathered around the symbol of Kumamoto to show support and raise funds and supplies to help the area. Before the event, Kumamon was already a popular character within Japan. He won the 2011 Grand-Prix had has been on numerous television programs. Also, because he is also free to license on most products, you can find him on a variety of packaging, from food, blankets, notebooks, and more. After the earthquake, Kumamoto Prefecture's government expedited the license application process for relief efforts because before the process would take about a month. (くまモン利用申請, 2017)

When visiting the Yuru-chara Grand Prix in Matsuyama, the Japanese visitors interviewed there said that characters that they liked the most provided a sense of comfort and connection with their design. Many of the *yuru-chara*'s motifs are taken from elements of the area or company. (ゆるキャラ®グランプリ 2016 ランキング一覧, 2016) It provides a sense of connection to the community to those

directly involved. At the Grand Prix, comfort, local pride, attractiveness, and authenticity seem to be the main elements that indicate successful *yuru-chara*.

While the characters typically do not speak, outside of a few exceptions, their "voice" when handling social media is crucial to this image. Using "nyan" as a cat and "wan" as a dog are so common that it would be odd if it were not the case. This means that the *yuru-chara* can give a face to the voices of the PR arms of municipalities and companies. *Yuru-chara* "use" Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, along with websites, TV appearances, and in person appearances to promote their company or region. When before, the "town" itself, or perhaps a public worker, would send out the information. Now, the characters can communicate the desired information. It provides a personal connection to the audience that might not have been there before.

Yuru-chara Grand Prix

The Yuru-chara Grand Prix is one of the biggest *yuru-chara* gatherings in the country. It happens once a year and in 2016, it was held in Matsuyama. In 2017, it was held in Kuwana. The location changes every year, so the local characters do not get too much of an advantage in the popularity voting contest. There were over 200 *yuru-chara* at the event with hundreds more available for voting online. Each character has a booth that is manned by attendants and sells merchandise related to the character or region.

The grand prix is over two days. There is a large stage where events, concerts, and contests are held. Each attending character gets a booth for promotions and all characters must be someone in a costume, purely 2-D characters are not allowed. They are usually accompanied by a handler, because vision and movement appear to be severely restricted in the costumes.

RESULTS

Hoo Cross-Cultural Marketing Survey

The focus was limited to six aspects of the marketing survey. They are the country of the children, the country-of-origin of the character, the age of the children, the gender of the children, what associations the children made with the character, and the children's knowledge of the other country.

Table 8 Focuses of the Data Analysis

Focuses of the Data Analysis	
Country	Does the opinion change between the two countries?
COO	Does the COO effect the perception of any of the qualities?
Age	Are some children too young to understand different countries?
Gender	Does the character appeal to one gender over another?
Associations	Do the children associate the character with any other character?
Foreign Country	Do the children have knowledge of the foreign country?

Country

Depending on whether the children were either Japanese or American changed some of the values the children perceived in the character. First, the American children liked the character overall by over a full point. Another difference was that the American children thought the character was cuter than the Japanese children did. However, the character was still considered cute with a score about 5 for both countries. There were also perceived differences on the characteristics of "old-fashion" "foreign" and "dislike."

Table 9 Variables based on the children's country

Variables Based on Children's Country

	Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
7. Like	USA	274	5.743	1.3961	.0843
	JPN	333	4.598	1.4748	.0808
8. Cute	USA	274	5.839	1.5886	.0960
	JPN	333	5.246	1.5752	.0863
9. Interesting	USA	271	5.308	1.7143	.1041
	JPN	332	3.949	1.4502	.0796
10. Stupid	USA	272	1.78	1.496	.091
	JPN	332	2.38	1.543	.085
11. TV	USA	273	4.537	2.0550	.1244
	JPN	332	4.485	1.7954	.0985
12. Cool	USA	272	5.206	1.8228	.1105
	JPN	333	3.390	1.6144	.0885
13. Wearing	USA	274	4.193	2.2861	.1381
	JPN	332	2.840	2.7441	.1506
14. Old-fashioned	USA	272	2.49	1.832	.111
	JPN	332	2.83	1.728	.095
15. Foreign	USA	274	2.971	1.9869	.1200
	JPN	333	3.330	1.8593	.1019
16. Dislike	USA	273	1.93	1.626	.098
	JPN	335	2.73	1.622	.089
17. Never Seen Another	USA	272	4.897	2.3331	.1415
	JPN	335	3.922	2.1064	.1151
18. Thing	USA	270	5.063	2.2151	.1348
	JPN	332	4.048	2.0249	.1111
19. Other Characters (Like)	USA	269	3.428	2.2509	.1372
	JPN	330	3.742	1.7634	.0971
20. Other characters (Don't Like)	USA	268	1.96	1.631	.100
	JPN	333	2.91	1.760	.096

Table 10 Independent sample test for variables based on children's country

Independent Samples Test for Variables Based on Children's Country

| | Equal variances | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
									Lower	Upper
7. Like	Assumed	.010	.921	9.751	605	.000	1.1451	.1174	.9145	1.3757
	Not assumed			9.803	593.229	.000	1.1451	.1168	.9157	1.3745
8. Cute	Assumed	.215	.643	4.599	605	.000	.5932	.1290	.3399	.8465
	Not assumed			4.595	580.819	.000	.5932	.1291	.3396	.8467
9. Interesting	Assumed	25.362	.000	10.547	601	.000	1.3593	.1289	1.1062	1.6124
	Not assumed			10.371	530.030	.000	1.3593	.1311	1.1018	1.6168
10. Stupid	Assumed	8.255	.004	-4.816	602	.000	-.599	.124	-.844	-.355
	Not assumed			-4.831	585.349	.000	-.599	.124	-.843	-.356
11. TV	Assumed	9.157	.003	.330	603	.741	.0517	.1566	-.2559	.3593
	Not assumed			.326	544.369	.745	.0517	.1587	-.2600	.3634
12. Cool	Assumed	10.030	.002	12.981	603	.000	1.8155	.1399	1.5408	2.0902
	Not assumed			12.824	546.405	.000	1.8155	.1416	1.5374	2.0936
13. Wearing	Assumed	10.684	.001	6.508	604	.000	1.3531	.2079	.9448	1.7614

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.	Lower	Upper
	Not assumed			6.622	603.944	.000	1.3531	.2043	.9518	1.7544
14. Old-fashioned	Assumed	1.266	.261	-2.342	602	.020	-.340	.145	-.625	-.055
	Not assumed			-2.328	564.369	.020	-.340	.146	-.627	-.053
15. Foreign	Assumed	3.126	.078	-2.298	605	.022	-.3595	.1564	-.6667	-.0523
	Not assumed			-2.284	566.351	.023	-.3595	.1574	-.6688	-.0503
16. Dislike	Assumed	3.103	.079	-5.977	606	.000	-.791	.132	-1.051	-.531
	Not assumed			-5.976	580.967	.000	-.791	.132	-1.051	-.531
17. Never Seen Another	Assumed	11.771	.001	5.402	605	.000	.9747	.1804	.6203	1.3290
	Not assumed			5.345	552.179	.000	.9747	.1824	.6165	1.3329
18. Thing	Assumed	12.154	.001	5.862	600	.000	1.0148	.1731	.6748	1.3547
	Not assumed			5.808	551.762	.000	1.0148	.1747	.6716	1.3580
19. Other Characters (Like)	Assumed	42.976	.000	-1.920	597	.055	-.3149	.1640	-.6371	.0073
	Not assumed			-1.873	501.083	.062	-.3149	.1681	-.6452	.0154
20. Other characters (Don't Like)	Assumed	5.484	.020	-6.780	599	.000	-.948	.140	-1.223	-.673
	Not assumed			-6.836	587.138	.000	-.948	.139	-1.220	-.676
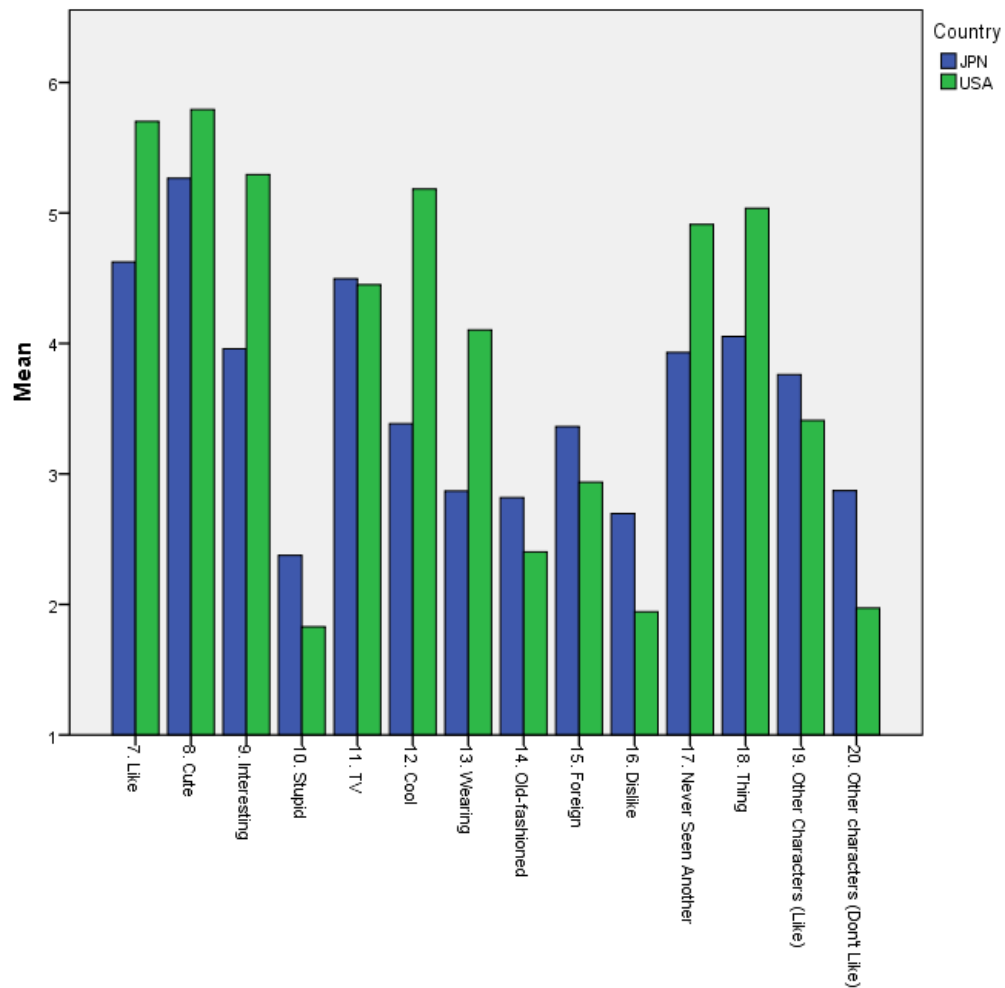
Figure 9 Variables based on the children's country

Country-of-Origin

For the next part, it looks at whether the COO influences the perception of the character. The first analysis is likability. For the American students, when looking at the mean of the "like" question, the results are that the likability of the American Hoo has a mean 0.396 higher than the Japan Hoo and the Neither Hoo has a mean 0.356 higher than the Japan Hoo. For comparing Japan and the US Hoo only, the p>0.05 in the Independence sample test for Equal Variance, so there is no significant difference. Combined, Non-Japanese Hoo has a mean 0.375 higher than Japanese Hoo. For this, the Independent Sample Test has p<0.05 for Equal Variances, so it is statistically significant.

Table 11 Likability for US children USA vs Japan vs Neither

Likability for US Children

USA vs Japan vs Neither

Mean

COO	Like
America	5.885
Japan	5.489
Neither	5.845
Average	5.741

Table 12 Likability for US children   Japan vs Not-Japan

Likability for US Children

Japan vs Not-Japan

Mean

COO	Like
Japanese	5.489
Non-Japanese	5.864
Average	5.741

Table 13 Independent samples test for likablility for US children USA vs Japan

Independent Samples Test for Likability for US Children

USA vs Japan

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.027	.869	-1.938	175	.054	-.3962	.2044	-.7995	.0072
Equal variances not assumed			-1.939	174.800	.054	-.3962	.2044	-.7995	.0072

Table 14 Independent samples test for likability for US children Japan vs Not-Japan

Independent Samples Test for Likability for US Children for Japanese vs Not-Japanese

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.044	.834	2.098	272	.037	.3752	.1789	.0231	.7274
Equal variances not assumed			2.122	182.192	.035	.3752	.1768	.0263	.7242

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Table 15 Likability for Japanese children USA vs Japan Vs Neither

Likability for Japanese Children

USA vs Japan vs Neither

Mean

COO	Like
アメリカ	4.55
なし	4.67
日本	4.57
Average	4.60

Table 16 Likability for Japanese children USA vs not-USA

Likability for Japanese Children

USA vs Not-USA

Mean

COO	Like
アメリカ	4.55
アメリカじゃい	4.62
Total	4.60

Table 17 Independent Samples Test for Likability for Japanese Children USA vs Japan

Independent Samples Test for Likability for Japanese Children US vs Japan

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper

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	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.556	.456	-.374	331	<mark>.709</mark>	-.064	.172	-.403	.274
Equal variances not assumed			-.365	203.749	.716	-.064	.176	-.412	.283

Table 18 Independent samples test for likability for Japanese children for USA vs Not-USA

Independent Samples Test for Likability for Japanese Children for USA vs Not-USA

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.162	.143	-.067	219	.947	-.013	.195	-.397	.371
Equal variances not assumed			-.067	213.995	.947	-.013	.195	-.397	.371

For Japanese children, the p value for American Hoo vs Japanese Hoo is p>0.05. The p value for American Hoo vs Non-American Hoo is p>0.05. For Japanese children, the likability of Hoo is insignificant based on the COO.

The American children had a significant different of likability based on the COO where the Japanese children did not. However, for the American children, none of the other qualities displayed any significance as all p>0.05 for Equal variances.

The Japanese children, as well, do not show any significance in features of the country-of-origin of the commodity. All Likert scale variables are p>0.05 for equal variances.

Table 19 Independent samples test for all Likert test variables for American children Japan vs Not-Japan

Independent Samples Test for All Likert Test Variables for American Children Japan vs Not-Japan

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Like	Equal variances assumed	.044	.834	2.098	272	.037	.3752	.1789	.0231	.7274
	Equal variances not assumed			2.122	182.192	.035	.3752	.1768	.0263	.7242
Cute	Equal variances assumed	3.425	.065	1.505	272	.133	.3069	.2039	-.0945	.7082
	Equal variances not assumed			1.463	164.446	.145	.3069	.2097	-.1072	.7209
Interesting	Equal variances assumed	.003	.958	1.051	269	.294	.2329	.2217	-.2036	.6694
	Equal variances not assumed			1.030	165.979	.305	.2329	.2262	-.2137	.6795
Stupid	Equal variances assumed	.014	.907	.292	270	.771	.0575	.1972	-.3308	.4458
	Equal variances not assumed			.294	181.149	.769	.0575	.1957	-.3286	.4436
TV	Equal variances assumed	.023	.880	-.138	271	.891	-.0365	.2650	-.5583	.4853
	Equal variances not assumed			-.138	178.471	.890	-.0365	.2643	-.5580	.4850
Cool	Equal variances assumed	.030	.862	1.158	270	.248	.2726	.2354	-.1909	.7361

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
	Equal variances not assumed			1.140	167.628	.256	.2726	.2391	-.1994	.7447
Wearing	Equal variances assumed	3.160	.077	.754	272	.452	.2219	.2943	-.3575	.8012
	Equal variances not assumed			.775	190.437	.439	.2219	.2861	-.3425	.7862
Old-fashioned	Equal variances assumed	5.704	.018	-1.103	271	.271	-.2625	.2380	-.7310	.2061
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.049	155.736	.296	-.2625	.2503	-.7570	.2320
Foreign	Equal variances assumed	.290	.591	.736	272	.463	.1882	.2558	-.3154	.6918
	Equal variances not assumed			.749	185.266	.455	.1882	.2513	-.3075	.6839
Dislike	Equal variances assumed	3.248	.073	-.799	272	.425	-.1699	.2125	-.5884	.2485
	Equal variances not assumed			-.754	152.703	.452	-.1699	.2253	-.6150	.2751
Never Seen Another	Equal variances assumed	1.001	.318	.703	270	.483	.2115	.3009	-.3810	.8039
	Equal variances not assumed			.693	171.052	.489	.2115	.3052	-.3909	.8139
Thing	Equal variances assumed	5.553	.019	.149	268	.882	.0428	.2881	-.5245	.6101
	Equal variances not assumed			.156	195.744	.876	.0428	.2743	-.4982	.5838
Other Characters (Like)	Equal variances assumed	.026	.871	-.710	267	.478	-.2091	.2946	-.7890	.3708
	Equal variances not assumed			-.711	167.101	.478	-.2091	.2941	-.7898	.3716
Other characters (Don't Like)	Equal variances assumed	1.003	.318	.430	267	.668	.0920	.2139	-.3292	.5132
	Equal variances not assumed			.453	194.343	.651	.0920	.2029	-.3083	.4922

Independent Samples Test for All Likert Test Variables for Japanese Children

USA vs Not-USA

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
7. Like	Equal variances assumed	.556	.456	-.374	331	.709	-.064	.172	-.403	.274
	Equal variances not assumed			-.365	203.749	.716	-.064	.176	-.412	.283
9. Interesting	Equal variances assumed	.421	.517	-1.642	330	.102	-.277	.169	-.609	.055
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.617	209.038	.107	-.277	.171	-.614	.061
10. Stupid	Equal variances assumed	.185	.667	.932	330	.352	.168	.180	-.187	.523
	Equal variances not assumed			.919	207.024	.359	.168	.183	-.192	.529
11. TV	Equal variances assumed	.875	.350	.107	330	.915	.023	.210	-.390	.435
	Equal variances not assumed			.104	201.824	.917	.023	.216	-.403	.448

		.440	.508	-1.733	331	.084	-.325	.188	-.694	.044
12. Cool	Equal variances assumed	.440	.508	-1.733	331	.084	-.325	.188	-.694	.044
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.725	214.410	.086	-.325	.188	-.696	.046
13. Wearing	Equal variances assumed	.154	.695	-.104	330	.918	-.033	.320	-.664	.597
	Equal variances not assumed			-.124	325.379	.902	-.033	.268	-.560	.494
14. Old-fashioned	Equal variances assumed	1.150	.284	.149	330	.881	.030	.202	-.367	.427
	Equal variances not assumed			.146	203.334	.884	.030	.207	-.378	.438
15. Foreign	Equal variances assumed	1.086	.298	.292	331	.771	.063	.217	-.363	.490
	Equal variances not assumed			.284	202.244	.777	.063	.223	-.376	.503
16. Dislike	Equal variances assumed	.545	.461	.373	333	.709	.071	.189	-.301	.442
	Equal variances not assumed			.371	212.613	.711	.071	.190	-.305	.446
17. Never Seen Another	Equal variances assumed	.058	.810	-1.242	333	.215	-.304	.245	-.786	.178
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.261	225.362	.209	-.304	.241	-.779	.171

18. Thing	Equal variances assumed	.370	.544	-.708	330	.480	-.167	.236	-.632	.298
	Equal variances not assumed			-.700	210.878	.485	-.167	.239	-.638	.304
19. Other Characters (Like)	Equal variances assumed	.024	.876	.270	328	.787	.056	.207	-.351	.462
	Equal variances not assumed			.270	215.154	.787	.056	.207	-.352	.463
20. Other characters (Don't Like)	Equal variances assumed	.005	.943	-1.319	331	.188	-.271	.205	-.675	.133
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.327	217.586	.186	-.271	.204	-.673	.131

American Students

Japanese Students

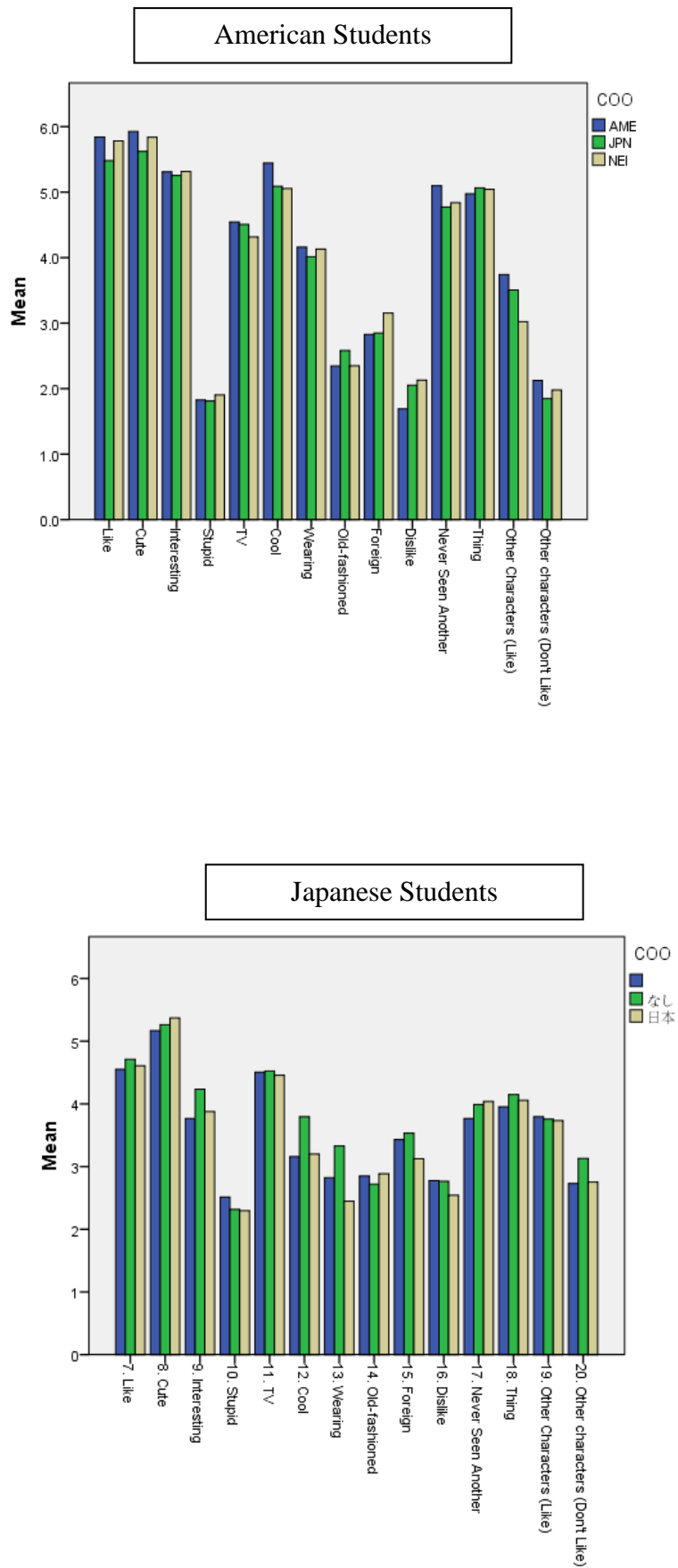*Figure 10 Means COO influence on Japanese and American children*

Age

Likability Base on Age and COO for American children

Figure 11 Line graph of mean likability for American children based on age and COO

Age	COO	Mean Like
8	American	6.500
	Japanese	6.000
	Neither	6.250
	Average	6.200
9	American	6.619
	Japanese	6.235
	Neither	6.556
	Average	6.482
10	American	5.686
	Japanese	5.674
	Neither	5.953
	Average	5.777
11	American	6.188
	Japanese	4.462
	Neither	5.632
	Average	5.500
12	American	5.000
	Japanese	4.429
	Neither	5.000
	Average	4.840
13	American	4.000
	Japanese	5.400
	Neither	4.500
	Average	4.750
14	Japanese	4.000
	Neither	3.000
	Average	3.500
Total	American	5.885
	Japanese	5.489
	Neither	5.845
	Average	5.741

Likability Based on Age and COO for Japanese Children

Mean

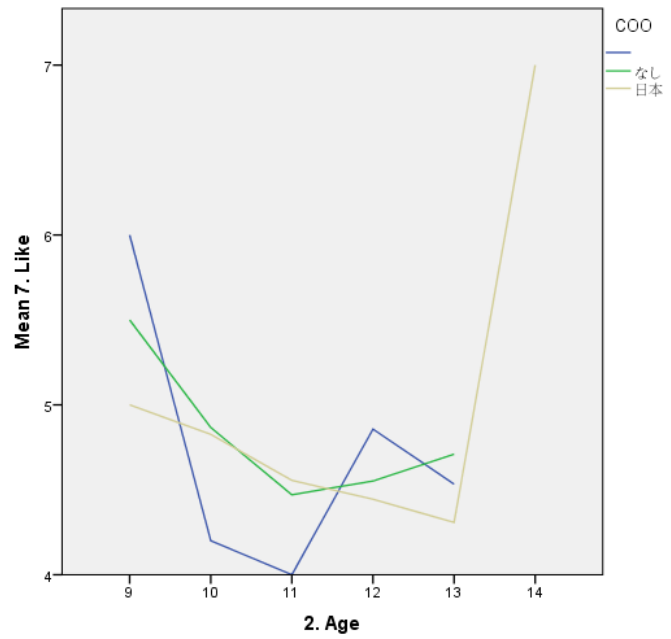| 2. Age	COO	7. Like
9	アメリカ	6.00
	なし	5.50
	日本	5.00
	Average	5.55
10	アメリカ	4.20
	なし	4.87
	日本	4.83
	Average	4.67
11	アメリカ	4.00
	なし	4.47
	日本	4.56
	Average	4.33
12	アメリカ	4.86
	なし	4.55
	日本	4.44
	Average	4.60
13	アメリカ	4.53
	なし	4.71
	日本	4.31
	Average	4.53
14	日本	7.00
	Average	7.00
Total	アメリカ	4.58
	なし	4.70
	日本	4.57
	Average	4.62

Figure 12 Line graph of mean likability based on age and COO for Japanese children

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The 14-year-olds were outliers in the survey. There were only two in the American schools and only one in the Japanese schools. If you take out the 14-year-olds, the trend downward for all categories is easy to see in the American and the Japanese children's results. The American children's downward trend is steeper than the Japanese children trend. However, there is also an uptick for Japanese Hoo at 13-years old for the American children.

Gender

In terms of gender, American females liked Hoo better than American males with the means being 6.022 for females and 5.460 for males and a significance of $p < 0.05$ for Equal variance.

On the other hand, there was no significant difference in female and male Japanese children with $p > 0.05$ for Equal variance.

Table 23 Likability for US children male vs female

Likeability for US Children Male vs Female

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Like	Male	137	5.460	1.5147	.1294
	Female	137	6.022	1.2155	.1038

Table 24 Independent samples test for likeability for US children male vs female

Independent Samples Test for Likeability for US Children Male vs Female

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Like	Equal variances assumed	13.548	.000	-3.387	272	.001	-.5620	.1659	-.8887	-.2354
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.387	259.814	.001	-.5620	.1659	-.8888	-.2353

Table 25 Likeability for Japanese children male vs female

Likeability for Japanese Children Male vs Female

	1. Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
7. Like	女	176	4.72	1.433	.108
	男	156	4.48	1.492	.119

Table 26 Independent samples test for likeability for Japanese children male vs female

Independent Samples Test for Likeability for Japanese Children Male vs Female

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
7. Like	Equal variances assumed	.321	.571	1.499	330	.135	.241	.161	-.075	.557
	Equal variances not assumed			1.495	321.653	.136	.241	.161	-.076	.558

Associations

The English answers were from the American survey. The Japanese answers were from the Japanese survey. The most obvious difference in the countries is that the American children thought Hoo looked like Dorami from Doraemon. It clearly is much larger than any of the characters at 119 to 17 being second. However, "None" and "(No Entry)" were clearly the actual most frequent. This is in stark contrast with the Japanese entry where Dorami was tied for most frequent

character with Jake. In the section where the American students were asked about if they knew television shows from Japan, only five said they knew about Doraemon the show. And of those five, only two of them were ones that replied that Hoo looked like Dorami.

Table 27 Frequency of characters that "Look Like" Hoo

Frequency of Characters that "Look Like" Hoo

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	(No Entry)	405	40.9	40.9	40.9
	Dorami	119	12.0	12.0	52.9
	Dorami Grizzly	1	.1	.1	53.0
	Goku	8	.8	.8	53.8
	Grizzly	17	1.7	1.7	55.6
	Jake	11	1.1	1.1	56.7
	Jake Mabel Grizzly Goku	1	.1	.1	56.8
	Mabel	2	.2	.2	57.0
	None	110	11.1	11.1	68.1
	グリズリ	27	2.7	2.7	70.8
	ゴクウ	11	1.1	1.1	71.9
	ジェイク	37	3.7	3.7	75.7
	だれもない	199	20.1	20.1	95.8
	ドラミ	37	3.7	3.7	99.5
	メイベル	5	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	990	100.0	100.0	

Foreign Country

American Children - Knowledge of Japan		Japanese Children – Knowledge of USA	
(No Entry)	I don't know	(No Entry)	分かれません
68 (24.6%)	99 (35.9%)	20 (6.0%)	34 (10.1%)

Japanese children have, or at least claim to have, more knowledge of the US than the US has of Japan. Many of the Japanese entries included Disney and President Obama (who was president when the survey was conducted). American children, on the other hand, did not have a consistent answer when asked about Japan.

Mascot Character Fieldwork

General

The Yuru-chara Grand Prix is a large event where booths sell goods and promote tourism to their region while *yuru-chara* participate in contests and interact with guests. Guests vote on their favorite *yuru-chara* and the one with the most votes after the two-day event and online voting is the winner. The winner becomes a "special guest" *yuru-chara* and participates in things like television programs and promotional events around the country.

People lined up to interact with the characters and take pictures with them. The costumed *yuru-chara* generally do not speak, so most interactions were through movements and the handlers. Most arms and legs were restricted so moving caused most of them to waddle from place to place.

Mascot characters at the Yuru-chara Grand Prix qualified to the three basic rules established by Jun Miura, especially the awkward descriptor. Any movements the characters had to perform usually resulted in lackluster results, causing laughter from the spectators. The events were family-oriented, as well. There were constant activities going on during the day to keep children busy.

The city hosting the event's *yuru-chara* is disqualified from winning and becomes an honorary "special guest" for the year, and that is because the 2015 winner was the local *yuru-chara* mascot of the hosting city, Ieyasu-kun from Hamamatsu, and the event coordinators were trying to avoid that in the following years. Additionally, characters close to where the event was held received boost in popularity during the events. In 2016 and 2017, while the hosting city's *yuru-chara* was a "special guest", two of the top four winners were from nearby towns.

Table 29 Frequent words and associations with popular Yuru-chara

Frequent Words and Associations with Popular *Yuru-chara*	
癒し	Healing
カワイイ	Cute
*地域プライド	*Local Pride
*Respondents didn't say "local pride" specifically, but that they liked the *Yuru-chara* because it was local them.	

2016 Grand Prix

For the Yuru-chara Grand Prix in Matsuyama in 2016, there were 51,591 people in attednance [ゆるキャラ®グランプリ 2016 in 愛顔のえひめ 製作委員会, 2017]. The visual demographics were overwhelmingly Japanese. There were 4 observable non-Japanese people at the event. Two were western men who had Japanese spouses. The other two were a Canadian couple visiting Japan for the first time. The majority was either couples, small groups, or families with young children. There were sometimes larger groups of women, but very few groups of men.

Random sampling of event-goers, during mid-day, were approached and asked about the event any why they were there. People manning the booths were also interviewed to get their perspective as well. The total interviewed were 10 random Japanese people, 3-non-Japanese people, and 11 booths attendants.

When the event-goers were asked what their favorite *yuru-chara* at the event was, Mican won by seven. However, Mican wasn't allowed to participate in the Grand Prix and could not win. Instead, it was considered one of the "special guest" *yuru-chara*. The most cited reason was that the people were local to Matsuyama and that Mican was their local *yuru-chara*. The other two characters were Kumamon who was voted for twice and Ieyasu-kun who was voted for once. They are nationally famous *yuru-chara* and both had won the Yuru-chara Grand Prix in previous years. The event-goers also mentioned that they like *yuru-chara* in general because they are "healing" and "cute."

A young Canadian couple was also at the event. They specifically came to the grand prix during their Japanese vacation, because they know about and like Japanese aesthetics, including mascot characters. They believed that the characters could become popular in western countries, such as the US and Canada, but that because they lack "authority," western countries could not imitate *yuru-chara* for use as mascot characters. Governments, companies, and agencies in the US and Canada do not use cartoons very much because they want to portray competency and authority that *yuru-chara* would undermine.

2017 Grand Prix

The attendance for the Yuru-chara Grand Prix in Nagashima Spaland 2017 was lower, 23,734 attendees (ゆるキャラ®グランプリ 2017 in

三重桑名・ナガシマリゾート 製作委員会, 2017). The weather was much colder and there was rain, compared to the year before so attendance was down. Additionally, the area reserved for eating was much smaller than the year before.

The demographics were similar to 2016 in terms of the percentages of the guest attending. There were six observable non-Japanese at the event. Three agreed to be interviewed. Correspondingly, 20 random Japanese people agreed to be interviewed at the event. As with the 2016 interviewees, *yuru-chara* that were most popular were either local characters or previous winners.

An American couple agreed to an interview and mentioned that their hometown of Portland, Oregon has a mascot character specifically designed and marketed towards Japanese tourists to come to Portland.

Other Events

Outside of the large national events, regions often have *yuru-chara* booths or events alongside other regional promotions. There was a Kanagawa Yuru-chara Event in Atsugi on April 23rd, 2017. It featured local *Yuru-chara*, with a special appearance from a nationally famous *yuru-chara*. It was also attached to a "Gourmet" event where booths sold local specialties to eat, small concerts, and games for children. The event was similarly laid out as the grand prix, but on a

much smaller scale. Seven booths, two non-Japanese, and four random Japanese event-goers were interviewed. There was no voting for the most popular *yuru-chara* at this event and there were only 24 booths.

The smaller event in Atsugi had very similar elements to the Yuru-chara Grand Prix, except that there was no voting for the most popular. There were two non-Japanese people there as well. One was a local American English teacher who lived nearby. The other was a visitor from Germany who happened to discover the event while traveling.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Hoo Cross-Cultural Marketing Survey

Table 30 Focuses of the Survey 2

Focuses of the Survey	
Country	Does the opinion change between the two countries?
COO	Does the COO effect the perception of any of the qualities?
Age	Are some children too young to understand different countries?
Gender	Does the character appeal to one gender over another?
Associations	Do the children associate the character with any other character?
Foreign Country	Do the children have knowledge of the foreign country?

Country

The children's opinion and thoughts on the character change for almost all the survey questions. American children thought Hoo was more likable, cuter, interesting, cooler, wearable, had never seen anything similar, and would want a Hoo product. On the other hand, Japanese children thought Hoo was more stupid, old-fashioned, dislikable, and looked like another character they didn't like. They had the same opinion of whether they would watch Hoo on TV and if Hoo looked like another likable character. The same character produced different results, which would show the frame of reference influences how the cultural commodity is received.

If the children had the same reference frames to interact with the character, then the character should have been relatively similarly received. While some characteristics were perceived similarly, others differed depending on the country. This is in line with the cultural frames analysis and the idea that the same commodity having differing interpretations.

Country-of-Origin

The results show that the perception of the character did not change with the COO of the character. There are several possibilities as to why that must be explored in future research. One possibility is that awareness of COO does not develop as early as previously thought, and that conducting the survey with older children would show the influence of perceived COO. Another possibility is that people are exposed to multiple cultures and with the flow of people and information around the world, COO is become less relevant in terms of cultural commodities. There is a possible explanation of a growing movement towards information sharing and globalization. One indication of this is the emergence of third-culture kids, a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside their parents' culture. (Van Reken, n.d.) One of the most famous persons who grew up as a third-culture kid is the former president of the United States, Barack Obama.

Age

With the COO being similar, it is possible that the children do not understand the difference between countries, yet. However, there does seem to be a trend where the likability of the one with COO of the other country goes down sharper as the children get older. This could mean that the children are becoming aware of COO between the ages of eight and 14 years old.

Gender

American children differed on the likability of Hoo based on gender while the Japanese children were even. This could be reflective of the idea that character and character goods are seem as more "girly" in the US compared to Japan, where the stereotype is not as strong. Because of this stereotype in the US, a cute character would be more equally liked in Japan.

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Associations

The American children thought Hoo looked most like Dorami, while the Japanese children did not make the connection. This is probably because the American children's information on Dorami is limited to the picture provided for the survey, because the television series was not released in the US market until after the survey was conducted. Japanese children, on the other hand, are very familiar with the Doraemon franchise and the character Dorami. They have more knowledge to compare it to, which would likely decrease the idea that they are similar characters. Additionally, another character, a local police mascot, is a bird character. The children could have thought Hoo looked more like the police bird character when they were thinking of the comparisons.

Foreign Country

The Japanese children had more claimed knowledge of the US than the US children had of Japan. One possibility is that children have more access to American exports. For example, one of the common answers was that Japanese children know about the US is "Disney Land." Disney Land is a well-known theme park in Japan as well as the US. There are no similar Japanese theme parks in the US to compare it to. This knowledge of the US is not very deep, but it is more than what the children in the US have. Another possibility is schooling. The Toin Board of Education hires three American assistant language teachers to help teach English at the elementary and junior high schools. The children interact with an American teacher during school. The American system does not have Japanese teachers visiting to teach Japanese to the students. While the exposure does lead to more awareness of the other country, as the survey indicated, it is uncertain if that leads to an increase of knowledge of the other country.

Possible Analysis Issues

Possible Analysis Issues	
Hoo Itself	Hoo was the wrong type of cultural commodity.
Presence	I oversaw the administration of the test. My presence could have influenced children.
Missed COO	To avoid priming the students, I gave them the same instructions. Children could have skimmed the printed instructions and didn't observe the COO.
Age	Some children might have been too young to even grasp the concept of a marketing survey.
Demographics	Demographics were kept simple.
Numbers	The number of respondents for a statistical correlation might not be enough for significance.
Sampling	It was not a random sample of the population

Hoo Itself

The children's character was specifically designed to appeal to children, or at least not let children feel alienated from the character. Despite the attempts to minimize or mask any culture "scent" from the character, it still was made within cultural frames. It would be impossible to make a character outside of culture, and despite best efforts, there could have been something recognizable which influenced the children's perceptions. Hoo having these traits could have influenced how much the children thought it matched the description given to them.

Presence

Other research into sociology and psychology have shown that the person administering or conducting the experiments can influence the participants. White-coat hypertension (Seigel, Blumenthal, & Divine, 1990) is a well-documented phenomenon where people will experience hypertension in the presence of someone in a white-coat or looking like a doctor, but not during other times. Stanley Milgram (1974) famously conducted experiments where participants

would listen to authority figures to the extent of seemingly hurting or killing other people. Another experiment showed that students were influenced based on the gender of the test administrator (Ortner & Vormittag, 2011).

With the American students, while my presence was note-worthy as in it was a singular incident outside everyday school activities, my identity was not note-worthy. I, being another American, would not stand out more than any other test administrator. On the other hand, at the Japanese schools, my presence would have been note-worthy enough to be remarkable, especially when considering the one questionnaire had Hoo the character supposedly made in Japan. In the future, if the experiment was conducted again, someone else would help conduct the Japanese portion of the survey with me out of sight.

Missed Country-of-Origin

As for the aspects of the commodity and if the COO has any influence, the results are inconclusive. All the factors were not statistically significant beyond American children liking the Japanese Hoo less. It is possible the children missed the information on the character's COO. The children were given the same test and the same verbal instructions that briefly told them how to take the test and that it was for a marketing survey on a new character, with only the front-page instructions differing depending on the COO. As the tests were mixed and each student had a random chance of neither, Japanese COO or American COO in each class, it was deemed that it would have been too confusing to add the verbal directions for COO to the students without priming the students. Therefore, the children were not given any verbal directions based off the COO, and it was not confirmed if they looked at and understood the COO of the character based on the front-page instructions.

Age

Another possible issue with the survey was that the youngest participants were too young to understand. This issue was originally mitigated with by designing it with simple language. Also, before the surveys were conducted, the contents were explained to the teachers who could assist students with any explanations needed. Moreover, the demographic questions were limited. However, working with older children would help. It would also allow for some more complicated demographic questions.

Demographics

The demographics of the students were gathered in three ways. Limited questions to students at the beginning the survey, a visual scanning of the students during the survey, and third-party demographic information based off the cities they were conducted in. The younger children in the sampling were considered too young to provide reliable demographic information. For example, in the American questionnaire, there were the questions if the person has even been to another country, and if so, where. One child answered "yes" and "Kentucky". Kentucky is not another country and either the child was mistaken in the place he went abroad to or about the fact that he went abroad. Even more difficult questions, such as parents' income, would have been beyond what the children were capable of answering. Despite the lack of direct demographic information, it does not have a direct effect on the results. It does affect the analysis of the results, but the third-party and visual survey of the students should be adequate for analysis and comparison.

Numbers and Sampling

A larger sample would be taken in future surveys. Clustering samples at schools is still the best option for conducting the survey but getting more schools to participate would be ideal. The student samplings were first chosen based on availability. As a researcher in Japan, I was limited in my access to students for the sample. I had worked previously for the Toin Board of Education in Mie Prefecture. They were kind enough to allow me to conduct the survey at their schools. I selected the American schools as rough equivalent to the Toin schools to preserve validity as much as possible with the data. While the demographics of the school selection could skew results in terms of an open selection, it does invalidate the data results.

Mascot Character Fieldwork

The total understanding of the popularity spike of *yuru-chara* is outside the scope of the research, but there are definite factors that were observed. The research brought into focus perspectives of the culture of cute in Japan, and the appeal of *yurui*. As mentioned before that cute correlates with helpless and rousing protective and parental instincts, *yuru-chara* are even more embodied of helplessness than typical cute commodities. This would arouse the protective and parental instincts to be aroused even more than usual. People dressed as *yuru-chara* for promotional events are incapable of functioning on his or her own. *Yuru-chara* limbs are short and stunted which prevents full movement.

However, unlike the theory that cute arouses protective and parental instincts, it also supports the idea that watching and interacting with silly characters allowed the guest or spectator to relax and enjoy him or herself. This concept of cuteness is rare in the western world and is not discussed among the concepts of aesthetics in literature. Places of authority, like local governments, want their constituents to look fondly on the *yuru-chara* to make the places more welcoming, at least superficially. This is in contrast with what is seemingly common at local governments back in the US. Many places try to look dependable to the constituents. A lack of authority could mean a lack of trust to a western person.

In relation to the market research survey, it is interesting to note about the idea that the home and frame of the event guests changed the perspectives of the characters. Where the guests live changed the popularity of the character, even when nothing about the character has changed from one year to the next. Only the frame of the guest has changed. It is a smaller scale of the different countries viewing the same cultural commodity differently. It is an example of identity branding as well, where the *yuru-chara* is related to the home of the guests, so liking the *yuru-chara* becomes part of the guest's identity.

Overall Conclusion

From the results of the experiments, it is now possible to address the original research questions.

Does the consumers' country influence the perception of a commodities' image?

The results from the market survey research supports the hypothesis that the country frame of the consumer changes the consumers' perception of the same commodity. The likability of the character changed along with other qualities, such as cuteness and coolness.

In what ways does a country-of-origin influence the perception of the information received from a cultural commodity?

For this research question, because of the possible analysis issues, the answer is inconclusive rather than negated. For the children taking the character marketing survey, the results were inconclusive on whether the character's likability changed depending on the perceived COO. However, there was a trend towards older children changing their perception based on the COO. For the *yuru-chara* observation, many respondents said they like a certain character because it was from their hometown or nearby. This would indicate that the origin of the character, if not the country-of-origin, does have an influence on some consumers in terms of *yuru-chara*. The combined information would indicate that while inconclusive, that once people grow up and become aware of concepts such as foreignness, or the other, that it influences the perception of cultural commodities.

Applying to Theories

The first hypothesis contributes to the interpretation of frames and encoding/decoding. The research demonstrates one way how discourse works between two large frames and not just within a single large frame of reference with how the market research character's perceived characteristics changed from Japan to the US.

This expands on Harris' (2000) idea of universal aesthetics but brings additional nuance to the concept. It shows that while the aesthetics of cuteness are universal to some extent, they change by degree within a country and the function also

changes depending on the frame and country. The marketing character's "cuteness" level changed in the two countries and there was the added "healing" value of cuteness with the *yuru-chara*. It was the same object or encoding, but it there were differences in the interpretation or decoding.

The second hypothesis contributes to the country branding, brand association, brand identity, and soft country-branding. It still contributes to the literature even though it was inconclusive. The trend towards COO being significant as the children grew older could signify the growing awareness of branding, which would be an important avenue of research in the future.

The participants in Allison's (2006) research were in their early teens when they were interviewed, and by then there is an awareness of COO. However, some reported liking Japanese commodities at a younger age. This could mean an interesting path to explore in the idea that they like the commodity before they recognize the COO and then the COO becomes favorable after they learn about it.

Future Practical Applications

Culturally, the globe is becoming more connected. Barriers, such as language, still exist, but these barriers are becoming less imposing with computer translating and AI advances. It is important to research how groups deal with the information gaps caused by misinterpretations, and not translations. Commodities are especially vulnerable, because they are visual and often without context beyond the country brand of the COO.

Knowing how Japanese cultural commodities are viewed globally are important for economic activities such as exporting and tourism. From the Japan Times, "the [Japanese] government said it will target ¥8 trillion in spending by overseas visitors by 2020… After the Olympics, the government's aim is to attract 60 million foreign visitors a year by 2030 with the hope they will spend ¥15 trillion annually by that year." (Murai, 2016) Additionally, the white paper from Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry's on Cool Japan shows Japan's awareness and desire to expand industries such as food, traditional arts and crafts, and express delivery services (Cool Japan initiative, 2014).

In Japan, local municipalities are increasing spending in areas of tourism for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. One of the areas in focus are *yuru-chara* for the cities and regions. For example, Fujisawa recently created and his heavily advertising its new *yuru-chara*, Fuji-kyun, an anthropomorphic wave with the Enoshima Candle Lighthouse as a hat.

A direct marketing transition from Japanese *yuru-chara* to *yuru-chara* abroad would not be currently feasible, because there are two different concepts of cute between Japan and the US. This contrast does not mean that *yuru-chara* would be completely useless in western countries. Their silliness is endearing, and marketing them as collectable toys and experiences, especially for children could do well abroad.

Another marketing research possibility would be to harness the usefulness of current social marketing networks and create a smart phone application like the 2016 popular PokémonGo app. This application would function like a directory of all the *yuru-chara* and a way to "collect" them and travel to different locality within Japan to do so.

More research is needed to expand what has been done in cultural economics. Some options would be to consider how to strengthen "soft-country branding," and that a closer look at how current cultural commodities change in meaning when they are sold abroad. More research is needed to support that COO influences consumer impressions outside of quality. Patterns and trends of how the information changes could be further research.

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Figure 14 Hoo Colored Sketch 1 by Elizabeth Quart

Figure 13 Hoo Colored Sketch 2 by Elizabeth Quart

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Figure 15 Final Sketch by Elizabeth Quart

Thank you for helping me today. My name is Jill Suter and I want to introduce you to Hoo, the owl. We want to make many Hoo products, like books, shows, stuffed animals, hats, t-shirts and toys. Before we can start making Hoo products, we want to see what real children think about Hoo. Please answer a survey and help me find out what children think of Hoo.

There are 3 sections to the survey. Remember it is really important to do them in order. The first is about you, please be honest because I won't know who you are. And please remember to <u>not</u> write your name. The second is about Hoo and what you think. I want to know what you really think so don't worry about my feelings and answer how you truly feel. The third is the general section. Answer the questions as best you can. And don't worry, it is not a test. Last, please don't share the information. Your response is important, please only answer with your own feelings. Please don't talk while taking the survey. This is really important.

The survey is 30 questions on 5 pages, front and back, so please don't forget to answer any of the questions. It should take you about 15 to 20 minutes. It is actually very quick, because most of the questions are scale questions. Do you know about a scale question? It asks "how much" of something.

1. I like ice-cream.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

For example, the sentence "I like ice-cream." If you really, really like ice-cream, then you would choose #7, closest to "Completely Agree." If you think ice-cream is ok, you would choose #4, in the middle. And if you really, really don't like ice-cream, you would choose #1, closest to "Completely Disagree." And if you are somewhere in-between, please choose something in-between. Is everyone ok?

When you are finished, please close the survey and raise your hand and we'll collect it from you.

Now we will hand out the surveys. Remember not to share your survey with others and wait until all they surveys are passed out before beginning.

(Pass out survey [and pencils if necessary])

Does everyone have a survey and a pen/pencil?

(If not, provide survey or pencil.) (If yes,...)

Please start.

Figure 16 English Instructions for Character Survey

皆さん、はじめまして。私はレイです。今日は「ふう」を紹介したいと思います。将来的に「ふう」の本や番組やおもちゃなどのグッズを作りたいのですが、その前に皆さんの「ふう」に対する本当の印象を知りたいです。皆さんが「ふう」に対してどう感じるかという調査のためにこのアンケートに答えてください。

まずは、あなたの名前は書かないでください。大事なことですから、絶対に名前は書かないでください。このアンケートは3部分があります。1つ目の部分はあなたの事についてです。あなたの事を知りませんので、正直で答えてください。2つ目の部分は「ふう」のことについてです。私の感情を気にしないで、素直に自分が抱いた印象で答えてください。3つ目の部分は一般的な質問の部分です。がんばって答えてください。これは試験ではありませんから、心配しないでください。最後にあなただけの印象が大事ですから、隣り人に話さないでください。

アンケートは5ページで30問題があります。すべて答えてください。「わかりません」と「しりません」の答えても結構です。15分から20分くらいかかります。尺度の質問が多いです。尺度の質問を聞いたことがありますか？これです。

1. アイスが大好きです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

例えば、「アイスが大好きです。」の文では、あなたはアイスが大、大、大好きなら、「すごくそう思う」に一番近い番号7番を選んでください。あなたはアイスが大、大、大嫌いなら、「全くそう思わない」に一倍近い番号1番を選んでください。あなたはアイスが好き嫌いじゃないなら、真ん中の番号4番を選んでください。その間にあれば、その間の番号を選んでください。この説明大丈夫ですか？質問がありますか？

終わったら、アンケートを閉じて、待っていてください。

はじめてください。

Figure 17 Japanese Instructions for Character Survey

キャラクターのアンケート

このアンケートは大学院で勉強しているレイがマーケティング調査のために行うものです。ご協力をお願いします。

これは「ふう」です。アメリカ出身ジルとエリザベスが作った新しいキャラクターです。

「ふう」は世界を旅するアメリカのフクロウです。このアンケートであなたの「ふう」の印象を教えてください。

アメリカ製品

Figure 18 Japanese instructions for USA COO

Character Questionnaire

A questionnaire to see what children think about a new character, Hoo.

This is Hoo. A new character from Jill in the Cyber Business Marketing Department and a graduate of Michigan Tech University and Elizabeth from Interac and a graduate from Northern Michigan University.

Hoo is an American Owl and is designed to go around the world. Please tell us your opinion of Hoo.

U S A

Figure 19 English instructions for USA COO

キャラクターのアンケート

このアンケートは大学院で勉強しているレイがマーケティング調査のために行うものです。ご協力をお願いします。

これは「ふう」です。慶応大学の学生レイと北海道で働いているめいさんが新しいキャラクターです。

「ふう」は世界を旅する日本のフクロウです。このアンケートであなたの「ふう」の印象を教えてください。

日 本 製 品

Figure 20 Japanese instructions for Japan COO

Character Questionnaire

A questionnaire to see what children think about a new character, Hoo.

This is Hoo. A new character from Rae in the Cyber Business Marketing Department on Keio University, Tokyo and Mae in Hokkaido, Japan.

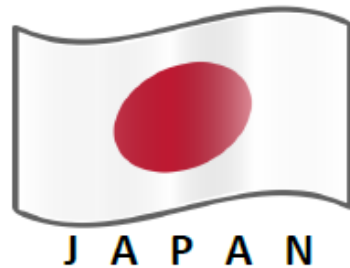Hoo is a Japanese Owl and is designed to go around the world. Please tell us your opinion of Hoo.

Figure 21 English instructions for Japan COO

キャラクターのアンケート

このアンケートは大学院で勉強しているレイがマーケティング調査のために行うものです。ご協力をお願いします。

これは「ふう」です。私とめいさんが作った新しいキャラクターです。

「ふう」は世界を旅するフクロウです。このアンケートであなたの「ふう」の印象を教えてください。

私と「ふう」のモデルになったフクロウ

Figure 22 Japanese instructions for unknown COO

Character Questionnaire

A questionnaire to see what children think about a new character, Hoo.

This is Hoo. A new character from Jill and Mae.

Hoo is an Owl and is designed to go around the world. Please tell us your opinion of Hoo.

The owl who inspired Hoo and me.

Figure 23 English instructions for unknown COO

キャラクターアンケート

1．人口動態統計　（デモグラフィック）

  1. あなたの性別は何ですか？
     o 男の子
     o 女の子
     o 答えたくありません

  2. あなたは何歳ですか？

  3. 東員町に住んでいますか？
     o はい
     o いいえ
     いいえの場合どこに住んでいますか？＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

  4. 海外に行ったことがありますか？
     o はい
     o いいえ
     o 分かりません

  5. 日本語以外には他の外国語を理解できますか？
     o はい
     o いいえ
     o 知りません

  6. 5番に「はい」と答えた場合、どんな外国語を理解できますか？

1

Figure 24 Japanese Survey page 1

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Character Questionnaire

A questionnaire to see what children think about a new character, Hoo.

Section 1 - About You

1. Are you a boy or a girl?
   - o   Boy
   - o   Girl
   - o   Other

2. How old are you?

   [   ]

3. What city do you live in?

   [   ]

4. Have you ever been to another country?
   - o   Yes
   - o   No
   - o   I don't know

5. Do you know another language besides English?
   - o   Yes
   - o   No
   - o   I don't know

6. If yes, what other language(s) do you know?

   [   ]

1

Figure 25 English survey page 1

２．「ふう」について

7. 「ふう」が好きです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

8. 「ふう」はかわいいです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

9. 「ふう」は面白いです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

10. 「ふう」は変です。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

11. 「ふう」をテレビで見たいです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

12. 「ふう」はかっこいいです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

13. 「ふう」が着ている服を着たいです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

14. 「ふう」は古い感じがします。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

15. 「ふう」は海外の物みたいです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

2

Figure 26 Japanese survey page 2

Section 2 - About Hoo

7. I like Hoo.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

8. Hoo is cute.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

9. Hoo is interesting.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

10. Hoo is stupid.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

11. I would watch Hoo on TV.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

12. Hoo is cool.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

13. I would wear something with Hoo on it.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

14. Hoo looks old-fashioned.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

15. Hoo looks foreign.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

1

Figure 27 English survey page 2

16. 「ふう」が好きじゃありません。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

17. 「ふう」みたいなキャラクターを他では見たことがありません。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

18. 「ふう」のグッズが欲しいです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

19. 「ふう」似たようなキャラクターが好きです。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

20. 「ふう」みたいなキャラクターは好きじゃありません。

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
全くそう思わない	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	すごくそう思う

21. 「ふう」に似っているキャラクターを一つ選んでください。

○ ジェイク　　○ ドレミ　　○ メイベル　○ グリズリ　　○ ゴクウ　　○ 誰もない

22. 「ふう」に似ていると思うキャラクターはありますか？キャラクターの名前を書いてください。

3

Figure 28 Japanese survey page 3

101

16. I dislike Hoo.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

17. I've never seen a character like Hoo before.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

18. I want a thing of Hoo.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

19. Hoo looks like other characters I like.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

20. Hoo looks like other characters I don't like.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Completely Disagree	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	Completely Agree

21. Which character looks like Hoo? Pick one.

o Jake   o Doremi   o Mabel   o Grizzly   o Goku   o None

22. What other characters does Hoo look like?

Figure 29 English survey page 3

23. どの年代に「ふう」が一番売れると思いますか？一つ選んでください。
  ○ 0-6 才
  ○ 7-12 才
  ○ 13-18 才
  ○ 19-25 才
  ○ 26 才以上

24. 女の人か男の人かどちらに「ふう」を売れると思いますか？一つのを選んでください。
  ○ 男性
  ○ 女性
  ○ わかりません

25. どの国に「ふう」が一番売ると思いますか？ふくすうかいとうでもいいです。
  ○ アメリカ
  ○ インド
  ○ 中国
  ○ 日本
  ○ ブラジル
  ○ フランス
  ○ 南アフリカ
  ○ メキシコ
  ○ わかりません
  ○ ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿ （国名）

26. あなたの「ふう」の印象を教えてください。

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│                             │
│                             │
│                             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

4

Figure 30 Japanese survey page 4

103

23. In what age group do you think Hoo would sell the best at? Pick one.
   o   0-6
   o   7-12
   o   13-18
   o   19-25
   o   26+

24. Do you think Hoo would sell better to boys or girls? Pick one.
   o   Boys
   o   Girls
   o   I don't know

25. What counties would Hoo sell best in? Pick as many as you want.
   o   Brazil
   o   China
   o   France
   o   India
   o   Japan
   o   Mexico
   o   South Africa
   o   USA
   o   I don't know
   o   Other _____

26. Please tell me what you think about Hoo.

1

Figure 31 English survey page 4

３．アメリカについて

27. このテレビ番組を聞いたことがありますか? 複数の回答でもいいです。
   o 悪魔バスター★スター・バタフライ
   o おさるのジョージ
   o なんだかんだワンダー
   o ひつじのショーン
   o アトミック・ベティ
   o カンフー・パンダ
   o サンダーバード　ARE GO
   o ザ・ペンギンズ
   o スティッチ！
   o スポンジボブ
   o トーマス
   o フィニアスとファーブ
   o マノン
   o ミッフィーと　おともだち

28. アメリカでつくられたテレビ番組をしっていますか? 名前を書いてください。

```



```

29. どんなテレビ番組が好きですか?　名前を書いてください。

```



```

30. アメリカについて知っていることを教えてください。

```




```

5

Figure 32 Japanese survey page 5

Section 3 - About Japan

27. Do you know these TV shows? Pick as many as you want.
    - Attack on Titan
    - Avatar: The Last Airbender
    - Doraemon
    - Dragon Ball
    - Gundam
    - Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi
    - Naruto
    - Pokémon
    - Pretty Cure
    - Sailor Moon
    - Samurai Jack
    - Star Wars: The Clone Wars
    - Teen Titans
    - Yu-Gi-Oh!

28. Do you know any TV shows from Japan? Please list all you know.

29. What TV shows do you like?

30. Please tell me anything else you know about Japan.

1

Figure 33 English survey page 5

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Figure 35 Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, 2016

Figure 34 Fuji-kyun, Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, 2016

Figure 36 Entrance to Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, 2016

Figure 37 Entrance to Kanagawa Festival, Atsugi, 2017

Figure 38 Overview of Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, 2016

Figure 40 Kanagawa Character Event, Atsugi, 2017

Figure 39 Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, 2016

Figure 42 Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Matsuyama, 2016

Figure 41 Yuru-chara Grand Prix, Kuwana, 2017

2017 年 11 月 18 日−１9 日　ゆるキャラグランプリ　インタビューまとめ

【質問リスト】

① どこから来ましたか？

② 誰と来ましたか？

③ なぜ来ましたか？

④ 年齢は？

⑤ 好きなゆるキャラは？

⑥ なぜそのゆるキャラが好きなのですか？

⑦ 人気になるゆるキャラの特徴はなんだと思いますか？

⑧ ゆるキャラは可愛いですか？

⑨ ゆるキャラに可愛さは必要ですか？

⑩ その地域以外の国内で人気がでると思いますか？

⑪ 海外で人気がでると思いますか？

⑫ イベントの感想はありますか？

⑬ ゆるキャラのターゲットはどういう人だと思いますか？

No. 1

① 岐阜県

② 夫

③ 夫の会社が出展しているから。

④ 50 代

⑤ 特になし

⑥

⑦ 地域を盛り上げている

⑧ 可愛いし癒される

⑨ 忙しい毎日の中で癒されたい。可愛いは必要。

⑩ ゆるキャラに詳しい人は多くなっているため人気になると思う

⑪ 海外でも可愛いと思われると思う。

⑫

⑬

No. 2

① 神奈川県

② 妻

③ もともとゆるキャラが好きだから。今回は初めてゆるキャライベントに参加。

④ 34 歳

⑤ うなりくん

⑥ いくつか見た中ですきになった

⑦ 可愛い。その地域に行くと会えるもの。地元など親しみのあるもの。

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 可愛いではなく、ゆるいことが必要。

⑩ 中には全国的に人気がでるものもいると思う。メディアに出ると強いと思う。

⑪ 海外でも人気になると思う。たとえばしんじょうくんはドイツのイベントに参加していた。

⑫ ステージよりもグリーティングなど触れ合った方が楽しい。

⑬

No. 3

① 静岡県

② 家族

③ ゆるキャラのファンだから

④ 30 代

⑤ ゆめちゃん

⑥ 目が可愛いから

⑦ 丸かったり、動物を可愛いと思うような愛らしさがあるもの。

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 可愛いは必要

⑩ 今は人気が下がり気味だと思う。

⑪ 海外はこれから人気がでるかもしれない。地域の特徴がわかるものだ
　といいかも。

⑫ すばらしい

⑬ 子供向けかと思ったが、30 代もターゲットなのではないか。

No.4

① 大阪府

② 一人で

③ ゆるドルを見に来た

④ 29 歳

⑤ うなりくん

⑥ 丸っこいところがすき

⑦ なし

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 可愛いは必要

⑩ 人気になると思う

⑪ 人気になると思う

⑫ いろんなものが集まっている。

⑬ 子供とその家族。

No.5

① 千葉県

② 友達

③ お伊勢参りと一緒に。

④ 50 代

⑤ うなりくん

⑥ 見た目と動きが好きで癒される

⑦

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ ゆるキャラが好きな人には人気が出るかもしれないけど、馴染みがないと難しいかもしれない。

⑪ SNS を通じて人気になる可能性はある

⑫ ブースが狭くてごちゃごちゃしている

⑬ 年齢関係なく、あらゆる層がターゲットだと思う

No. 6

① 三重県

② 家族

③ ゆるキャラに興味がある

④ 46 歳　（子供 10 歳）

⑤ いせわんこ

⑥ 地元のキャラクターだから

⑦

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 人気になると思う

⑪ 人気になると思う

⑫ 賑わっていい。

⑬ 子供

No. 7

① 愛知県

② 職場の仲間

③ かっぱるくんを応援しに来た

④ 50 代

⑤ かっぱる

⑥ ツイッターでコミュニケーションをとっていて、身近に感じる。他の
　ゆるキャラとも仲良くしていて優しさを感じる。

⑦ 他のキャラクターとも仲良くしていること。

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 人気になるかもしれない。

⑪ いろいろなものとコラボすることによって、海外でも人気が出るかも
　しれない。たとえばふなっしーはバンドを組んだりしている。

⑫ 毎年来ていて、楽しい。

⑬ すべて

No.8

① 愛知県

② カップル？

③ ゆるキャラがすき

④ 30代（女性の方は20代）

⑤ ぐんまちゃん

⑥ 見た目

⑦ 特になし

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ わからない

⑪ ならない

⑫ 寒い

⑬ ゆるい人たち

No.9

① 三重県

② 家族

③ ゆるキャラが見たい

④ 40 代

⑤ ばりぃさん

⑥ 可愛いから

⑦ まるくて、動きが俊敏。

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 難しい

⑪ わからない

⑫ ごちゃごちゃしている。キャラがブースにいない。

⑬ 子供とその親

No. 10

① 三重県

② 家族

③

④ 8 歳

⑤ いない

⑥

⑦ ちょっと変なのもいる

⑧

⑨

⑩ 人気はでない

⑪ 人気はでない

⑫

⑬

No. 11

① 三重県

② 家族

③ ゆるきゃらを見に来た

④

⑤ こもしか

⑥ 地元だから

⑦

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 厳しい

⑪ 人気になると思う

⑫ 知らないゆるきゃらに会える

⑬ 子供とその家族

No.12

① 三重県

② 友人

③ ばりぃさん目当てで

④ 27歳

⑤ ばりぃさん

⑥ 可愛いから

⑦ 寸胴であること

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ なると思う

⑪ 海外は無理

⑫ 寒い

⑬ 30代の女性

No.13

① 名古屋市

② 親戚

③ あるくまちゃんの応援

④

⑤ あるくま

⑥ コンテストが無い時期でも PR 活動を頑張っているから。

⑦ 普段から頑張っていること。地元で知名度があること。

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 人気になる

⑪ 人気になる

⑫ 一体感がある。

⑬ すべて

No. 14

① 三重県伊勢市

② カップル

③ ゆるキャラが好きだから

④ 32 歳

⑤ くまもん

⑥ 可愛いし、サービス精神が旺盛

⑦ ファンサービスが多い

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 可愛いは必要

⑩ なりそう

⑪ 受け入れられると思う

⑫ 写真撮れて楽しいし、ゆるキャラのアピールを見るのも楽しい。

⑬ キャラクターによると思う

No. 15

① 名古屋市

② 夫

③ 会社が出展している

④

⑤ かていねこ

⑥ なじみがあるから

⑦ 丸くて可愛いこと

⑧ 可愛く無いのもあるけど可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 無理

⑪ 難しい

⑫ ブースにグッズだけじゃなくて地域の特産品とかあるともっと良いか
　もしれない。

⑬ 小さい子やそのおじいちゃんおばあちゃん

No. 16

① 三重県

② 夫

③ 会社が出展しているから（ろっきー）

④ 20代

⑤ みんな

⑥ ほんわかしてて可愛いところ

⑦ 丸いこと

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 人気になる

⑪ 人気になる

⑫ にぎやか

⑬ 家族

No. 17

① 三重県

② 夫

③ 通りがかり

④ 60代

⑤ こにゅうどうくん、ひこにゃん

⑥ 地元の個性が出ているところと動きが魅力的

⑦ 個性的なこと

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ ならない

⑪ 文化が違うから難しい

⑫ 人もキャラクターも多い

⑬ わからない

No.18

① 愛知県

② 友人

③ チケットが手に入ったから

④ 23歳

⑤ さのまる

⑥ 可愛いから

⑦ 可愛いこと

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 必要

⑩ 優勝したら人気が出ると思う

⑪ わからない

⑫

⑬ すべて

No.19

① 埼玉県

② 一人で

③ 順位が知りたかったから

④ 40代

⑤ ぐんまちゃん

⑥ ゆるキャラが流行る20年ぐらい前から知っているから。

⑦ 地域の特徴を表していること

⑧ 可愛い

⑨ 可愛いは必要

⑩ 個性的であれば人気がでるかもしれない

⑪ 地域をPRするものとして広がるかもしれない

⑫ 他の会場でやったときと比べて規模が小さいし、観覧席も少ない。

⑬ まずは地元、そしてこども。40代ぐらいの大人も意外とターゲットか
　もしれない。

No.20

① 三重県桑名市

② 友人

③ 学校でチケットが配られたから

④ 13歳

⑤ ばりぃさん

⑥ 旅行で知ってから可愛いと思った

⑦ 印象が強いもの

⑧

⑨

⑩ 人気になる

⑪ 日本のは難しい。でも海外でもそういう文化ができれば人気がでるか
　もしれない。

⑫

⑬ 女性。キャラクターが好きな人

No.21

① 埼玉県

② 友達

③ 研究のアシスタントのため

④ ２２歳

⑤ 特になし

⑥

⑦メディア露出が高い

⑧かわいかったりかわいくなかったりする

⑨必ずしも必要ではないが、かわいさはあったほうがいいかも

⑩なるかもしれない

⑪難しいと思うが Youtuber が推したら人気になるかも

⑫意外と人が多い

⑬キャラクターが好きな人、観光客

No.22

① 三重県

②

③ アシスタント

④ 22 歳

⑤ こにゅうどうくん

⑥ 地元だから

⑦ 個性があってメディアにとりあげられる

⑧ かわいいものもいる

⑨ 必ずしも可愛くなくてもいい

⑩ ものによる

⑪ ものによる

⑫ 思っていたよりお客さんが多かった

⑬ 子供や女性

Fact	Clawson	Royal Oak
Population estimates, July 1, 2017, (V2017)	NA	NA
Population estimates, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	11,970	59,006
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2017)	NA	NA
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2016)	11,825	57,236
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2017, (V2017)	NA	NA
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2016, (V2016)	1.20%	3.10%
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	11,825	57,236
Persons under 5 years, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Persons under 5 years, percent, April 1, 2010	5.50%	5.80%
Persons under 18 years, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Persons under 18 years, percent, April 1, 2010	17.90%	16.70%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Persons 65 years and over, percent, April 1, 2010	14.80%	13.10%
Female persons, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Female persons, percent, April 1, 2010	51.00%	51.00%
White alone, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Black or African American alone, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Asian alone, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Two or More Races, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Hispanic or Latino, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Veterans, 2012-2016	638	2,833
Foreign born persons, percent, 2012-2016	7.70%	7.70%
Housing units, July 1, 2016, (V2016)	X	X
Housing units, April 1, 2010	5,791	30,207
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2012-2016	70.20%	65.70%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2012-2016	$139,100	$175,200
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2012-2016	$1,219	$1,401
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2012-2016	$465	$520
Median gross rent, 2012-2016	$828	$947
Building permits, 2016	X	X
Households, 2012-2016	5,564	28,526
Persons per household, 2012-2016	2.13	2.05
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2012-2016	89.00%	83.50%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2012-2016	9.40%	7.40%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	94.50%	96.50%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	34.80%	54.40%
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2012-2016	8.90%	6.60%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	10.50%	7.20%
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2012-2016	70.70%	74.10%

In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2012-2016	65.00%	68.80%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2012 ($1,000)	24,991	170,682
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2012 ($1,000)	37,139	1,681,575
Total manufacturers shipments, 2012 ($1,000)	73,276	412,580
Total merchant wholesaler sales, 2012 ($1,000)	104,316	1,218,939
Total retail sales, 2012 ($1,000)	77,818	633,984
Total retail sales per capita, 2012	$6,515	$10,854
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2012-2016	22.2	23.9
Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	$59,259	$68,504
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	$33,511	$43,251
Persons in poverty, percent	6.70%	7.20%
Total employer establishments, 2015	X	X
Total employment, 2015	X	X
Total annual payroll, 2015 ($1,000)	X	X
Total employment, percent change, 2014-2015	X	X
Total nonemployer establishments, 2015	X	X
All firms, 2012	1,401	6,382
Men-owned firms, 2012	827	3,932
Women-owned firms, 2012	445	2,078
Minority-owned firms, 2012	76	563
Nonminority-owned firms, 2012	1,299	5,642
Veteran-owned firms, 2012	84	506
Nonveteran-owned firms, 2012	1,290	5,699
Population per square mile, 2010	5,377.40	4,856.70
Land area in square miles, 2010	2.2	11.79

人口	25661 人（1040 位）	昼間人口	20537 人（80%）
15 歳未満人口	3373 人（13.1%）	15 歳~64 歳人口	16946 人（66%）
65 歳以上人口	5289 人（20.6%）	外国人人口	411 人（1.6%）
労働力人口	13627 人	就業者数	13011 人
完全失業者数	616 人		
出生数	177 人	死亡者数	198 人
転入	635 人	転出	669 人
婚姻件数	86 件	離婚件数	25 件
保育所数	6 カ所	保育所待機児童数	0 人
保育所在籍者数	397 人		
幼稚園数	6 園	幼稚園園児数	403 人
小学校数	6 校	小学校児童数	1412 人
中学校数	2 校	中学校生徒数	729 人
高校数	0 校	高校生徒数	0 人
図書館数	1 館	公民館数	2 館
郵便局の数	8 局	歯科医院の数	10 院
病院の数	0 院	診療所の数	14 カ所

土地利用の推移

単位:ha

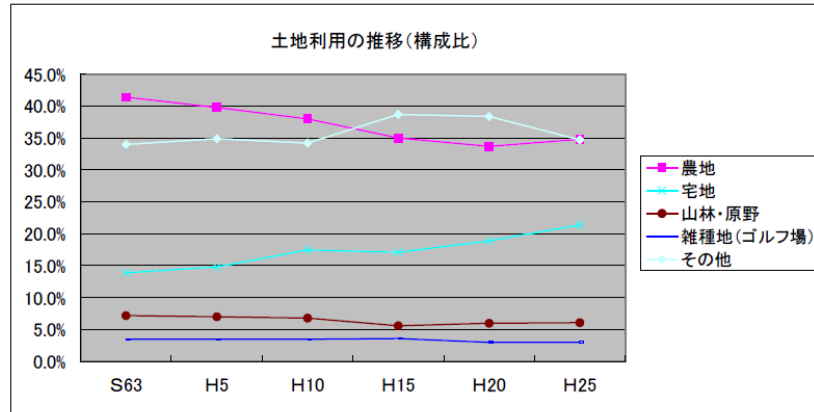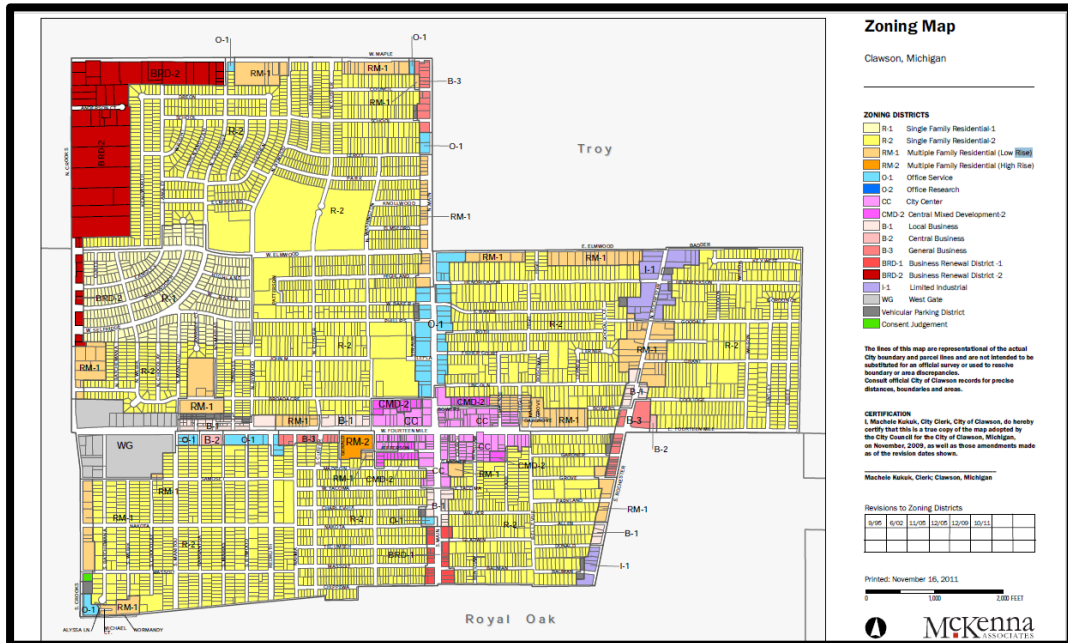| 年次		S63	H5	H10	H15	H20	H25
農地	面　積	931	899	857	789	759	783
	構成比	41.4%	39.8%	38.0%	35.0%	33.7%	34.8%
宅地	面　積	313	333	396	384	425	483
	構成比	13.9%	14.8%	17.5%	17.1%	18.9%	21.4%
山林・原野	面　積	163	159	153	125	136	137
	構成比	7.2%	7.0%	6.8%	5.6%	6.0%	6.1%
雑種地(ゴルフ場)	面　積	79	79	79	81	67	67
	構成比	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.6%	3.0%	3.0%
その他	面　積	766	788	771	873	865	782
	構成比	34.0%	34.9%	34.2%	38.7%	38.4%	34.7%

固定資産概要調書

Figure 43 Area use of Toin Town

Figure 44 Zoning Map of Clawson, Michigan

Figure 45 Zoning Map of Royal Oak, Michigan 1

Figure 46 Zoning Map of Royal Oak, Michigan 2