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‘And Ziggy played guitar’:

Bowie, the market, and the emancipation and resurrection of Ziggy Stardust

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Abstract

Using David Bowie as a human brand and his various characters, particularly – Ziggy Stardust, we address two research themes: who constructs celebrity - the individual or the market, and to what extent can a celebrity emancipate their human brand from the characters they portray?

Market generated materials covering Bowie's fifty year career were analysed using structuration theory. Our findings indicate that Bowie's control of his human brand was increasingly determined by differing agents within the market. We conclude that a celebrity's human brand is as much a creation of the market, as it is the celebrity's. Yet unlike the celebrity, their characters ongoing popularity reflects not only a moment in time but also an ability to adapt to differing times.

Keywords: branding; celebrity; David Bowie; human branding; structuration

Summary statement of contribution

Previous studies have viewed celebrity from separate perspectives of the individual deriving their celebrity status from social authority or the constraints that market and media structures place upon the human brand or as temporal moments in time. By using structuration theory (an underutilised perspective in marketing theory) we unite these two differing perspectives by exploring David Bowie's fifty year career and his relationship with various characters, particularly – Ziggy Stardust. In doing so we contribute to the under-researched area of the human brand having multiple characters and their relationship to controlling the celebrity's human brand. In particular, we discuss to what extent celebrity's effectively become image prisoners of these characters and the wider consequences for this human brand image.

‘And Ziggy played guitar’:

Bowie, the market, and the emancipation and resurrection of Ziggy Stardust

The 6th January 2013 witnessed the global media engage in a news frenzy regarding the first musical release in ten years by the musician David Bowie. Accompanying these news reports was the media’s need to remind their audiences of Bowie’s relevance to popular culture by associating him with his 1972 character – Ziggy Stardust (hence forth called Ziggy). Yet the inherent association of Bowie’s return with a character he had emancipated himself from forty years earlier raises an important issue. To what extent is a celebrity able to manage their human brand by determining and changing their artistic discourse within the structural constraints of the market? In particular, how the market influences a celebrity’s human brand by lionising an individual’s personal talent, achievement or private self (Boorstin, 1964; Rojek, 2001) and endowing them with fame, power and social authority (Gabler, 1995). Using the example of Bowie and Ziggy, our paper explores the extent a celebrity’s human brand can emancipate themselves from their created character and avoid becoming an image prisoner, thereby achieving market agency.

We define the human brand as “any well-known persona who is the subject of marketing communications effort” (Thomson, 2006, p.104) and has been applied to: celebrities (Parmentier, 2010; 2011), artists (Muñiz, Norris, and Fine, 2013; Schroeder, 2005), icons (Eagar and Lindridge, 2014), and employees and CEOs (Close, Moulard, and Morris, 2001; Rindova, Pollock, and Hayward 2006). By focusing on Bowie as a celebrity human brand we extend this definition to include Auslander (2004) and Frith’s (1989) description of Bowie’s human brand consisting of three components: the real person (David Jones), the performance persona (David Bowie) and the characters derived from this persona, such as Ziggy. Furthermore, as Auslander (2006) notes not all three components need to be present to create

a performance. Consequently David Jones hides his real identity behind the fabricated image of a character portrayed by the performance persona of David Bowie, himself an illusory character.

Previous research into celebrity and human brands has taken three perspectives. First, elucidating on the agency of celebrities to create and manage their human brands (Brown and Hackley, 2012; Brownlie and Hewer, 2011; Parmentier, 2011; Schroeder, 2005). Second, the majority of studies focus on celebrities at specific moments in time rather than a celebrity's achievements over a time period (Brown and Hackley, 2012; Hackley, Brown and Hackley, 2012; Brownlie and Hewer, 2011; Gabler, 1995). Finally, how the celebrity changes from an image creator to an image prisoner (Parmentier, 2010, 2011; Schroeder, 2005). Consequently these studies have ignored three important aspects. First, the significance of the market and media structure from which celebrities derive their social authority (Gabler, 1995). Second, the constraints that the market structure places upon the human brand (Parmentier, 2011; Westhead and Wright, 1998). Third, and most importantly, previous research has not considered the extent that characters, like Ziggy, enhance, detract and compete with celebrity's own human brand, like David Bowie, potentially creating image prisoners.

Using structuration theory we explore these themes by challenging existing human brand research that suggests an unfettered agency to manage image and self (Muñiz, Norris and Fine, 2014; Schroeder, 2005) whilst simultaneously being products of the mediated market. We achieve this by providing a historical socio-cultural perspective of Bowie's career from 1966 – 2013 focusing on his performance persona and characters, with particular attention to Ziggy. An undertaking that extends our understanding of celebrities beyond being vessels and lionisations of meaning within a temporal-cultural context that become aspirational identities (Banister and Cocker, 2013; Boorstin, 1964; Erdogan, 1999; McCracken, 1989). Rather, we view celebrity within the context of a performance persona and characters as part of an

ongoing, dynamic, and agentic process of meaning-making discourse mediated by various agents within the market. These agents' then may discourage / encourage the celebrity's human brand becoming an image prisoner to a character. In taking this perspective we challenge previous studies that view celebrities as free manipulators of their self and image in the market (Brown and Hackley, 2012; Brownlie and Hewer, 2011; Hackley, Brown and Hackley, 2012; Illouz, 2003; Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer and Daza-LeTouze, 2011; Muñiz, Norris and Fine, 2014; Schroeder, 2005).

Jones, Bowie as a performance persona and his character Ziggy

In a 2014 interview Bowie's super-model wife Iman implicitly endorsed Auslander's (2006) perspective of David Jones - the real person - being different from the performance persona of David Bowie: "*...I always say I fell in love with David Jones. I did not fall in love with David Bowie. Bowie is just a persona. He's a singer, an entertainer. David Jones is a man I met*" (Cadwalladr, 2014). Yet the human brand is also a business, which has its own set of performative practices (Muñiz et al., 2013; Schroeder, 2005). Practices Iman noted are evident regarding her husband: "*He makes far more money than I do...I don't know why people think he's not doing anything. He's making his money work for him. That's what he is doing*". This separation prompts the question - what exactly does Bowie's human brand represent?

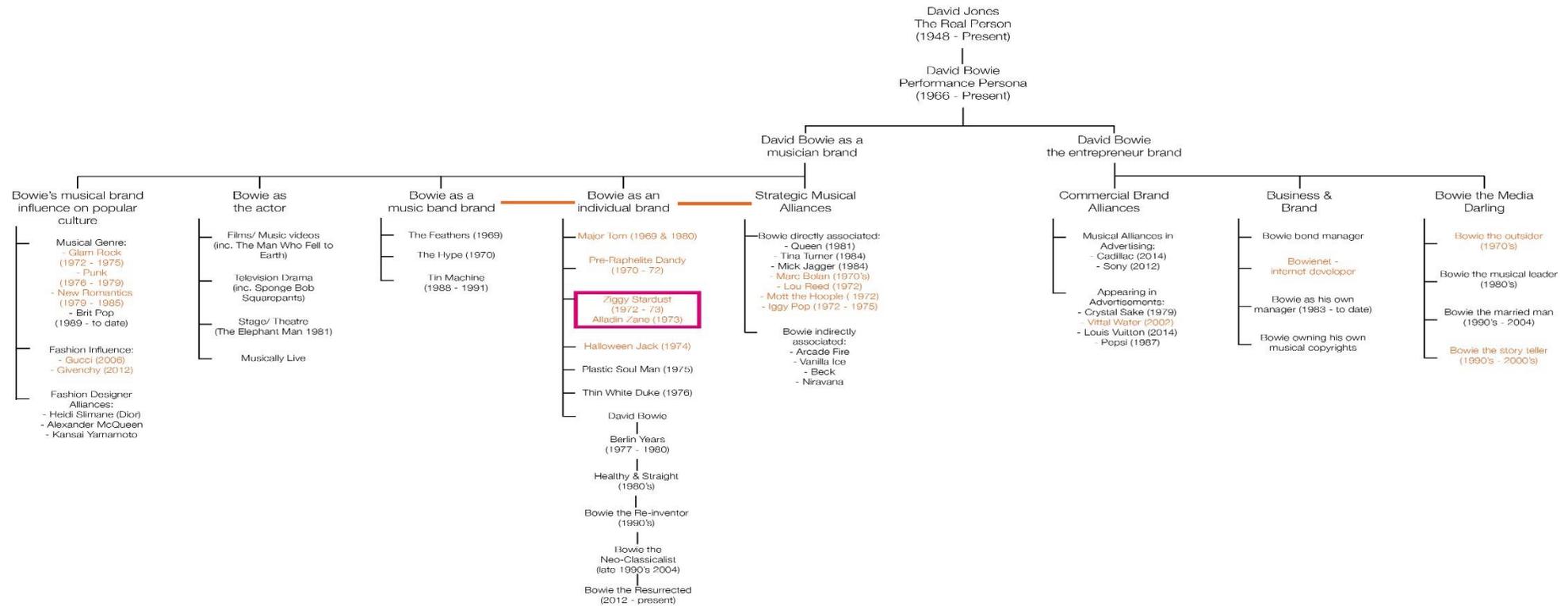
David Bowie was created in 1966 in a legal response to avoid confusion between David Jones and Davy Jones – the singer of the 1960s band 'The Monkeys'. Since then Bowie's human brand, as we shall discuss, has been mediated through David Jones as well as other agents in the music market. Cinique (2013, p. 401) defines Bowie's human brand as representing "ideological narratives around sexual (mis)adventure, expressivity and

resistance to ‘normative behaviour’ ...critically question[ing our] sanity, identity and...what it means to be us”. Bowie perpetuates this critical questioning through his performance persona where “each and every move has been channelled through a look, a style, a quote, an image, a sound, a geography, a character...a noise” (James, 2013, p. 387).

The importance and relevance of characters to Bowie’s human brand is evident from his creation of Ziggy in 1972. Ziggy focused on appearance, performance, and blurring the boundaries between reality and illusion. Ziggy was a sexually ambiguous humanoid alien who arrives just as the world is told of its imminent destruction. Worshipped as the new messiah, Ziggy’s rise to fame is reflected in his fans increasing disdain for his emerging cult culminating in his fans killing him.

Although Bowie went onto create other characters and continued to receive critical acclaim, it is Ziggy that Bowie is predominately associated with. An association we will argue was perpetuated by Bowie himself and various agents within the music market, which contributed to Bowie becoming an image prisoner to Ziggy. Yet understanding Bowie’s relationship to Ziggy is complicated by Bowie’s own human brand hierarchy as a performance persona (a character, collaborator, actor, musician etc) or as an entrepreneurial persona (business man). Whilst not exhaustive Figure 1, echoing Auslander’s (2004, 2006) perspective, presents David Jones, David Bowie and his characters merely as part of wider human brand hierarchy. The highlighted boxes and words illustrate Bowie’s human brand associations between himself and various outputs and strategic alliances associated with Ziggy throughout Bowie’s career.

Figure 1: David Bowie's brand hierarchy



Structuration Theory and the Human Brand

Structuration theory explains how social systems are created and reproduced through the engagement of structure and agents (Giddens, 1984). Unlike other social theories, structuration theory argues that neither structure nor agents have primacy, instead existing in varying levels of continuous engagement. Structure represents then a society's social arrangements that emerge and determine an individual's, group's or organization's behaviour (hence forth called 'agents'). Agents exist and interact within a structure drawing upon rules and resources, which are indicative of generalized procedures and methodologies that agents possess as knowledge. Hence, the structure of Bowie's human brand (including how it manifests, is perpetuated and created) can be considered through the interactions and knowledge between the agents of the "producers, managers, agents, publicists and the entire machinery of the music industry [collaborating] with artists, and sometimes [coercing] them, in the construction and performance of their persona" (Auslander, 2004, p. 9). Without these agents the structure cannot exist, neither, we argue, would the concept of celebrity. Consequently agents' behaviours are not only determined by the structure that they exist within but are also constantly recreated and adapted through differing time periods. For example, a celebrity like Bowie would potentially change how they relate to their characters, depending upon his artistic narrative but also through relationships with other agents within the structure. Hence, agents' ability to recreate differing meanings, over time, regarding a celebrity's human brand and their characters further develops Turner's (2004) momentary perspective that celebrity is attributed to the individual and Auslander's (2006) perspective that musical performances are created by existing cultural connotations from specific time periods.

Giddens' argument that differing agents, over time, can change the structure they exist within reflects the inter-relationship between structure and agency that forms social practices. Social practices represent the current actions of the various agents and are a direct consequence of agents' previous actions. The structure that agents interact within can exist externally to them (such as celebrity news) as well internally (such as the memories of the celebrity). This raises the question of whether celebrities like Bowie are able to detach their human brand from their characters or whether other agents prevent this. A perspective that recognises celebrities as image creators can become image prisoners depending on which agents hold the power to influence image associations (Parmentier, 2010, 2011; Schroeder, 2005). For instance, the rise of the Internet and social media empower their audiences to share and produce information regarding a celebrity. For human brands like Bowie, this represents a potential loss of control over the brand and its meaning (Palmer, 2010) with the audience taking control of the brand (Cova and Pace, 2006). In this instance, Bowie may become an image prisoner to an audience who do not want or are unwilling to detach Bowie's contemporary human brand from his previous characters, such as Ziggy.

Structuration theory enables us to address this conflict by considering how agents within the structure can influence a human brand's agency. This recognizes the discursive and commodity power of the celebrity, not as a dichotomy but as an ongoing negotiation between the various agents within the celebrity structure (Turner, 2004). Structuration theory addresses previous research failing to understand the celebrity's agency within these structures, with either assumptions of complete market agency to determine meaning and value (Muniz et al., 2013; Schroeder, 2005) or as a non-agentic object of the celebrity structural process that is a product of the system rather than an influential agent within it (Boorstin, 1964; Debord, 2002; Gamson, 1994; Rojek, 2001; Turner, 2004).

An agent's ability to influence the structure they exist within is reflective of their ability to mobilise power. Giddens argues this is not a resource in itself, but is indicative of ownership of material and organisational capabilities. This ownership allows the agent to exercise power within the structure through a variety of ways. First, through signification where a term or symbol is used to communicate or challenge a particular meaning (Giddens, 1984). How this signification is understood and its effect on societal structures is dependent upon whom and how the communication is interpreted. Second, legitimation and sanctioning where other agents power and influence is used to offer an individual or group acceptance and endorsement.

Understanding Bowie's human brand, his agency and ability to mobilise power is complicated by the changing nature of the agents within the music market. As differing agents' power change over time this will ultimately affect the ability of Bowie's human brand to escape historical character associations. This inability may be indicative of a loss of control and becoming an image prisoner (Parmentier, 2010, 2011; Schroeder, 2005). Iglesias and Bonet (2012) develop this perspective further arguing that brands, such as Bowie's, need to accept the loss of control that arises from an empowered audience and technological changes.

Giddens offers some insights into these questions by arguing that the rules and resources that form the structure are not static and instead can be created, changed or combined in different ways by different agents over time. Thus a celebrity at the height of their fame would be associated with high levels of material and organisational capabilities to determine their own self and image, simply because their current celebrity status provides them with power and resources within the structure (Kerrigan et al., 2011; Schroeder, 2005).

The return of Bowie in 2013 to public life, accompanied by imagery associated with Ziggy, would suggest that sometime over Bowie's fifty year career the rules and resources

that form the market structure witnessed a shift away from Bowie towards other agents. A shift that effectively made Bowie an image prisoner to a character called Ziggy that only lived for approximately twelve months.

Method

To explore the extent that a celebrity's human brand can emancipate themselves from a character they are associated with required a historical focus using a process data approach. Process data explains how an entity evolves over time and the influences that affect this process (Van de Ven and Huber, 1990). Consequently, process data's reliance on understanding a sequence of events, multiple levels affecting these events, and temporal embeddedness generates a sequence of phases over a given time period allowing us to understand a phenomenon (Burgelman, 1983; Langley, 1999). To address the need to go beyond surface description and the problematic nature of the data collected (Langley 1999), our process data collection follows Langley's proposed methodology consisting of three sequential data collection stages: grounding, organizing and replicating.

Grounding strategies identify the data sources that can be used to develop the concepts for the subsequent strategies, informing the process data development of constructing agency and structure narratives. This paper, taking a deductive approach used alternate templates to construct several differing interpretations of Bowie's career from 1966 to 2013 and its relationship with Ziggy from the perspective of Bowie and other agents. This approach highlights potential tensions and subsequent gaps between these differing interpretations requiring multiple types of data being collected. An approach Langley (1999) equates with structuration theory.

Data collection, using grounding theories, was achieved through a convenience sample of media sources: social media (YouTube), media (newspapers, magazines - reviews, television programs, Bowie fan websites), music industry (press releases) and materials produced involving David Bowie (interviews, Facebook, Website). This collection process ranged in materials dated from 1966 to 2013 drawn from a variety of North American and British sources.

No screening process was used to review the data, instead focusing on what was being communicated, by whom and when. A summary of the data collected is provided in Table 1 indicating the number of Bowie related media articles per year undertaken and the number of Ziggy mentions. Materials were read, notes made, and re-read to identify nuances and metaphors. Data was systematically coded according to the emergent themes, such as 'Ziggy', 'Paranoia' or 'Career decline'.

Table 1: Analysis of Bowie narratives

Year	Interviews	Press	Television program's	Radio	Total	Total Ziggy mentions	
						N	%
1966	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1967	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
1968	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1969	2	-	-	-	2	-	-
1970	2	-	-	-	2	-	-
1971	1	-	-	1	2	-	-
1972	1 (z = 1)	16 (z = 14)	1	-	18	15	83
1973	3 (z = 3)	14 (z = 10)	1	1	19	13	68
1974	8 (z = 3)	12 (z = 1)	1 (z = 1)	-	21	5	24
1975	4	4	1 (z = 1)	-	8	1	12
1976	3 (z = 2)	5	2	-	10	2	20
1977	3 (z = 2)	5	2	-	10	2	20
1978	2	-	-	-	2	0	-
1979	1	-	-	2	3	0	-
1980	2	4	-	-	6	0	-
1981	-	2	-	-	2	1	50
1982	-	1	-	-	1	1	100
1983	3 (z = 1)	6 (z = 1)	2 (z = 1)	-	11	3	27
1984	3	3	-	-	4	-	-
1985	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1986	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
1987	2	1	-	-	3	-	-
1988	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1989	2 (z = 2)	3 (z = 2)	-	-	5	3	60
1990	1	1 (z = 1)	-	1	3	1	33
1991	4	5 (z = 2)	-	-	9	2	22
1992	1	2	-	-	3	-	-
1993	1 (z = 1)	5	-	-	6	1	17
1994	3		-	-	3	-	-
1995	3	9	-	-	12	3	25
1996	1	2	-	-	3	-	-
1997	5 (z = 2)	6 (z = 4)	-	-	11	-	-
1998	-	13 (z = 8)	-	-	13	8	62
1999	6 (z = 1)	1	-	-	7	1	14
2000	4 (z = 1)	1	-	-	5	1	20
2001	1	2	-	-	3		-
2002	8 (z = 5)	12 (z = 4)	-	-	20	9	45

2003	17	50 (z = 17)	-	-	67	17	25
2004	15 (z = 10)	135 (z = 15)	-	-	150	25	17
2005	1 (z = 1)	2	-	-	3	1	33
2006	-	4	-	-	4	-	-
2007	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
2008	-	2	-	-	2	-	-
2009	-	3 (z = 2)	-	-	3	2	67
2010	-	3	-	-	3		-
2011	-	6 (z = 5)	-	-	6	5	83
2012	-	17 (z = 15)	1 (z = 1)		18	16	89
2013	70 (z = 25)	5 (z = 4)	6 (z = 5)	2 (z = 2)	83	32	39

Z = number of mentions regarding Ziggy Stardust

The second stage of the analysis – organizing strategies – organized the data gathered into a systematic form. This stage, using a narrative strategy, represented the initial theory development. Data was used to identify temporal brackets – a time period reflecting a specific sense of continuity, which is not evident in other time periods. This approach allowed us to compare and contrast differing temporal brackets to review the inter-relationships between Bowie and other agents during and between time periods (Langley, 1999). The use of temporal brackets lends itself to structuration theory with its emphasis on institutions and agents influencing each other's behaviours over time.

Temporal brackets aim to gather realistic tales (Van Maanen, 1995) that show linkages within the structure between Bowie and various agents. In doing so we follow Langley's (1999) suggestion to avoid excessive data reduction and instead focus on the contextual data embedded in various narratives, presenting the differing perspectives. This stage was achieved through numerous reconstructions of temporal bracketing. Both the authors independently studied the data collected from stage 1 and compared and contrasted their findings. Once the temporal bracketing was agreed upon, this output was then presented to five Bowie fans (whose selection was based upon a convenience criteria – they were known to one of the authors) to review. This process achieved a wider sense of external validation to the proposed temporal bracketing. Feedback at this stage led to minor revisions regarding the differing agents' perspectives.

The final stage of data theory development – replicating – aimed to gather the various data strands to construct a theory, which involved comparing the different processes that occurred over Bowie's career. This process moved the analysis onwards from stories linked to events to the identification of variables that represented the critical events (Langley, 1999), forming the basis for theory development.

Findings

In presenting the narrative strategy we adhered to Van Maanen's (1995) call for data to present realistic tales by illustrating differing agents' perspectives over specific temporal brackets. These temporal brackets are indicative of Bowie's changing musical styles reflecting an inherent sense of continuity, which is not evident in other time periods, allowing us to compare and contrast agents' perspectives. We categorize these temporal brackets as:

1966 – 1972: One hit wonder

1972 - 1973: Glam rock: the rise and demise of Ziggy

1974 - 1976: Soul, funk and emerging electronica

1977 - 1982: Electronica I and edging towards mega-stardom

1983 - 1991: Megastardom, credibility loss and Tin Machine

1992 - 1999: Electronica II

1999 - 2003: Neo-classicist Bowie

2004 - 2013: From silence to resurrection

We explore these differing temporal brackets through five agents that form the wider structure that Bowie's agency and celebrity exists within: (i) the wider musical context, (ii) Bowie's agency and related actions, (iii) the music industry, (iv) the media, and (v) Bowie's fan base (where appropriate). We then conclude by reviewing how differing agents within this structure reflect upon and capitalise on Ziggy to satisfy their own interests. Supporting these temporal brackets are tables that illustrate each of Bowie's studio released albums, along with their highest British and USA chart positions and contemporary critics' reviews.

Table 2: Bowie album performance for 1966 - 1971

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
David Bowie (1967)	Did not chart		<i>'...its surprising the talented Mr Bowie hasn't made a bigger impact on the pop scene'</i> (Melody Maker, 1967).
Space Oddity (1969)	17*	16*	<i>'A bit Dylan-ish...Bowie and his voice, a little more tuneful than Bob's, has a haunting appeal.'</i> (Evans, 1969)
The Man who Sold the World (1970)	26*	105	<i>'There is a bit of horror in...David posing in drag on the sleeve...'</i> (Evans, 1971).
Hunky Dory (1972)	3*	93	<i>'It's very possible that this will be the most important album from an emerging artist in 1972...'</i> (Holloway, 1972).

* Chart position after the album was re-released following Ziggy's success in 1972.

The period of 1966-1972, encapsulated within the flower power movement of passive resistance to the Vietnam War, is characterised musically by The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. Bowie's attempts to achieve commercial success and express his agency during this period were thwarted by his own inability to define and establish his human brand. In particular did Bowie belong in a band (The Feathers - 1969, The Hype – 1970, Arnold Corns - 1971) or as an individual singer? Whilst The Beatles and The Rolling Stones had used clothing and other imagery to position themselves within the market, Bowie struggled to define his visual brand image. A review of publicity photographs from this period show Bowie as a Mod (1966), music hall entertainer (1966), Astronaut (1969), Folk singer (1969) and a pre-Raphaelite dandy (1970-72). As well as singing, Bowie also undertook various acting roles and mime performances, further confusing his human brand.

Bowie's inconsistent human brand is also reflected in his musical outputs. The release of four albums over this period, none of which shared a musical consistency, only compounded confusion over Bowie's human brand image. The release of his first album – 'David Bowie' – failed to chart for two possible reasons. First, the album was released on the same day as The Beatles released their widely anticipated album – 'Sergeant Peppers Lonely Heart Club Band' effectively monopolising the music media. Secondly, the eclectic range of music hall inspired songs did not resonate with the market. Perhaps not surprising when one of the album's songs 'Please Mr Gravedigger' was rumoured to have drawn inspiration from the recent conviction of the child murderers Ian Brady and Myra Hindley (Trynka, 2011). Two years later Bowie used the Apollo Moon landing to create his first character - Major Tom - for the single 'Space Oddity'. Whilst the single was a success (reaching chart position # 5 in the UK in 1969) the album with the same title was not, owing to the single's eerie encapsulation of a lost astronaut being at odds with the album's folk music genre. Bowie's lack of musical consistency is also apparent in his next album's contemporary heavy rock sound - 'The Man who Sold the World'. The album's lack of commercial success partially lied in the album's cover as inferred in Evan's (1971) comment in Table 2. In early 1972 Bowie released his fourth album – 'Hunky Dory' – which although critically acclaimed was deliberately not promoted by Bowie, his new manager Tony Defries (henceforth called Defries) or Bowie's new record label RCA.

Bowie's inconsistent human brand image, musical style and appearance ultimately reflected his lack of agency within the music market. Whilst Bowie had recording contracts with Decca (1964-67) and then Phillips (1967-1971) neither recording company actively promoted Bowie. Only in 1971 when Bowie changed his manager to Defries and signed a new recording contract with RCA of America did Bowie begin to demonstrate his agency. RCA's decision to support Bowie reflected their own commercial interests in seeking a new

profitable artist to reduce their dependence on their aging recording artist - Elvis Presley.

Defries convinced RCA that Bowie was that next big musical star secured Bowie a recording contract and upfront payment. Bowie now had financial resources and RCA now needed Bowie to become commercially successful to recoup their investment. The answer to these complementing goals was to create and promote Ziggy.

Bowie's lack of market presence and human brand confusion is reflected in his media absence. In an interview with Melody Maker (1967) Bowie presents himself as a fun loving teenager rather than a serious singer. By 1969, following the success of his 'Space Oddity' single, Bowie now repositions himself as a serious singer telling Coxhill (1969): *'I don't want to be one of those singers whose career depends on hit singles, and they are virtually dead for six months of the year'*. Yet Bowie's lack of a coherent human brand image and his lack of media presence ultimately reflected Bowie's irrelevance and lack of agency within the music market. A perspective shared by Welch who commenting in 1971 noted: *'Frankly, it is somewhat difficult to know what David Bowie means?'* The answer to this question is captured by Paphides's (2013, p. 72) reflection of this period to understanding Bowie's human brand and its relationship to Ziggy:

The young mod. The flower-folk troubadour. The sci-fi space cadet. The performance artist. The aspiring actor. The camp provocateur. The David Bowie of Ziggy Stardust wasn't an antidote to his previous incarnations. He was the sum total of them.

Table 3: Bowie album performance for 1972 - 1974

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and The Spiders from Mars (1972)	5	17*	<i>'There's nothing more Bowie would like more than to be a glittery superstar and it could still come to pass.'</i> (Johnson, 1972).
Alladin Zane (1973)	1	17	<i>'...probably the album of the year, and a worthy contribution to the...musical work produced in this decade.'</i> (Murray, 1973a).
Pin Ups (1973)	1	23	<i>'He's produced yet another record that fails to live up to its manifest promise...I can foresee nothing but artistic frustration for Bowie...'</i> (MacDonald, 1973).
Diamond Dogs (1974)	1	5	<i>'I'd guess it will turn out to be a success...as for your reviewer...he hadn't really been moved by it at all.'</i> (MacDonald, 1974).

* Chart position in 1974 following the success of 'Diamond Dogs' in the North American market. The album did not originally chart in North America on its initial release in 1972.

Understanding the success of Ziggy to Bowie's human brand lies within the socio-economic context of 1972; a time characterized by Britain's continued economic decline, industrial strife and an impending feeling of apocalyptic doom (Lynskey, 2013). Musically a period typified by heavy rock bands such as Deep Purple, with roaring guitar riffs, screaming vocals, drum solos and de rigueur denim jeans.

Bowie's contractual obligations to RCA, his new manager and his own need for commercial success form the origins of Ziggy. Yet it was the emergence of the Glam Rock movement, in 1972, personified by Marc Bolan's band T-Rex, which created the opportunity for Ziggy to

thrive. Glam rock with its catchy pop tunes, glitter clothing and effeminate male representation offered teenage girls a sexually conformist, mainstream and safe object to project their fantasies onto. Yet the success of T-Rex typified the problem facing musicians like Bowie. How to create a unique selling point to become successful within the music market?

Giddens' notes that an agent's ability to influence the structure they exist within is reflective of their ability to mobilise power derived from the agent's material and organisational capabilities. By utilising these capabilities an agent is able to achieve power and possibly create structural change. Bowie achieves this by using Ziggy to project his homosexuality through his appearance, music, interviews and lifestyle to challenge and confront British societal norms and other agents' social practices.

Bowie's use of homosexual associations (even though he was married with a son) to mobilise power represents a fundamental aspect of Ziggy's signification. Bowie's initial announcement of his homosexuality in an interview with 'Melody Maker' captures Bowie's willingness to challenge and shock by pandering to societal stereotypes of homosexuals:

David's present image is to come on like a swishy Queen, a gorgeously effeminate boy. He's as camp as a row of tents, with his limp hand and trolling vocabulary. 'I'm gay,' he says, 'and always have been, even when I was David Jones.' But there's a sly jollity about how he says it, a secret smile at the corners of his mouth.

(Watts, 1972)

Bowie's deliberate portrayal of himself and Ziggy as a homosexual, or at least sexually ambiguous, hedonistic rock star manifested through his sexualised lyrics, simulated sex acts in his live performances, and his androgynous costuming. Consider the two albums Bowie attributes with Ziggy: (i) 'The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars'

and (ii) 'Alladin Zane'. In the first album Bowie extensively associated Ziggy with being androgynous and a homosexual through the songs 'Five Years' and 'Moonage Day Dream': *'A cop knelt down and kissed the feet of the priest, and a queer threw up at the side of that'* and *'The church of man love is such a holy place to be...'* respectfully. Whilst 'Alladin Zane' lacked direct references to homosexuality, references to sex were evident in songs such as: 'Cracked Actor', 'Let's spend the night together' and 'Drive in Saturday'. Supporting these lyrics was Ziggy's visual image that deliberately emphasised Bowie's sexuality, with clothes worn often reduced to a cod piece or exotic clothing by the Japanese fashion designer, Kansai Yamamoto. Make up, drawing upon Japanese Kabuki theatre, was also increasingly used to further emphasise Bowie / Ziggy's androgenised identity and sexuality. Bowie's sexual and apocalyptic doom references throughout these albums and his physical appearance established Bowie's human brand at the cutting edge of counter culture's concern for the future, as social and economic upheaval reflected a wider societal pessimism, and libertinism in the present (Lynskey, 2013). Ziggy, during this period, became the cultural embodiment of the underlying values of a culture in flux (Holt, 2004).

Ziggy's construction, performance and subsequent success were not solely attributable to Bowie and Defries. RCA's financial investment and marketing skills contributed not only to Bowie's success but also RCA's own profitability. As part of Bowie's contract, RCA had purchased Bowie's previously unsuccessful albums (excluding his first album). Following Bowie's success RCA now repositioned the albums 'Space Oddity' and 'The Man who Sold the World' as brand extensions of Ziggy. The original album covers were now replaced with Ziggy related imagery effectively encouraging fans to listen to these albums through the musical brand lens of Ziggy. Bowie's fourth album, 'Hunky Dory', whilst retaining the original album cover artwork, was also successfully re-released with an

accompanying single release from the album and promotional film (preludes to music videos) featuring Bowie / Ziggy singing 'Life on Mars.'

Bowie's choice of media to communicate with and how the media's agency is expressed towards him during this period illustrates wider structural changes. Bowie's manipulation of the media represents two important aspects of his human brand. The first brand image presented is one of the intellectual musician. An appearance on the BBC's *Old Grey Whistle Test* (1972), a programme known for promoting prominent bands, made no inference of Bowie's homosexuality, whilst philosophical reflections in his interviews and meetings with writers like William Burroughs positioned Bowie as the intellectual. The other brand image Bowie presents of himself is one of sexual provocativeness embodied in Ziggy's libertine sexuality and anti-establishment values. This signification is legitimated by those media agents who shared an interest in Bowie's success; particularly the music media whose legitimization of Bowie's sexual libertinism was a source of titillation and deviance. For example, Bowie's homosexuality declaration to 'Melody Maker' supported the magazine's positioning as a commercially orientated music magazine (compared to its less commercial rival 'New Musical Express' (NME)). The media's collusion with Bowie / Ziggy also served their commercial interests – Bowie articles sold magazines. In an example of Bowie and the media's symbiotic relationship a concert photograph of Bowie / Ziggy committing fellatio on his band member's guitar led to Bowie purchasing the photograph and reproducing the image as a double page advertisement in NME in 1972.

Bowie's use of signification to challenge British society's structure is also evident in his television appearances. Bowie's first televised interview on ITV's family friendly 'Russell Harty Show', in 1973, provides one such example. During the interview Bowie emphasised his sexual ambiguity through discussing his sexualised fan mail, performing the song 'Drive in Saturday' (a song set in the future where couples learn to have sex through watching 1970s

pornographic films) and wearing an effeminate 'chandelier' style earring. In a retrospective interview Russell Harty commented that Bowie's earring raised the biggest number of complaints of the television series. Bowie also appeared willing to encourage critical media reports to provide a necessary reflection and opposition to the music industry and his fan's legitimization. For example, a 1972 BBC Nationwide television program (an early evening light entertainment family news programme) featured an 8 minute news segment that communicated key aspects of Bowie's human brand image (homosexuality, Ziggy and androgyny). Of particular note is its interpretation of Bowie / Ziggyas "...a high priest of pop" before readily expressing their disapproval by sanctioning him as a "*a self-constructed freak*" who "*who claims he enjoys the pleasure of other men*" and "*...who spends two hours before his show caressing his body with paint* indicative of an immoral society: "*It is a sign of our times that a man with a painted face and carefully adjusted lipstick should inspire adulation from an audience of girls between 14-20.*"

Auslander's (2004, 2006) recognition that the audience / fans need to engage with the performer is also a key agent in Bowie / Ziggy's success. It was Bowie's fans who had made him commercially successful and Bowie's / Ziggy's concert performances represented the embodiment of the human brand values that fans demanded. The clothing, stage performances and fan reactions all contributed to Ziggy's symbolic empowerment of his teenage fans' burgeoning sexuality. In a concert review Murray (1973b) noted and perpetuated the sexual tension that Ziggy inspired, describing the aftermath of an uncontrollable audience of screaming girls: "*seats have been torn right out of the floor. Steel sets, bolted down, and those kids have managed to rip them out*". Developing fans' agency further Hebdige (1979, p. 60) notes how Ziggy's allure lay in "a new sexually ambiguous image for those youngsters willing and brave enough to challenge the notoriously pedestrian stereotypes conventionally available to working-class men and women". A perspective

shared by Frith (1989) who argued that teenagers mimicking Ziggy had the opportunity to become their own celebrity, effectively escaping the direness of their own lives. Boy George, the British singer and Bowie fan, writing in 1995 (pp. 35-36) captures both Hebdige (1979) and Frith's (1989) perspectives:

When Ziggy Stardust...came to Lewisham in 1973 I rushed to buy a ticket. Nan, who was staying with us, said Bowie was a 'big woman,' and that Mum shouldn't let me go...I tried to give myself a Ziggy stardust haircut. It was a disaster....I spent the whole day hanging around Lewisham, watching the crowd well up. Hundreds of Ziggy ... clones. Bowie was like an alien. It was the most exciting thing I'd ever seen.

Bowie's ability to seek out and achieve legitimation from his fans and thereby achieve power is an important aspect of understanding's Ziggy's relevance to Bowie's human brand. Bowie actively encouraged his fans to project their own fantasies onto Ziggy: "*I don't think David Bowie is important. The concept, the atmosphere is more important than I am*" (Murray, 1973c). Yet almost following Ziggy's initial success Bowie begins to distance himself from this character. Consider this interview vignette with Edwards (1972) where Bowie is asked to define Ziggy's success:

The rock star scowls, "I don't know," he barks. "I can't tell you. I wouldn't tell you. Ziggy is a conglomerate, a conglomerate rock star. He just doesn't exist for the moment." It is obvious that Ziggy is terribly real for David, not only because it is the hit that seems to have changed his entire life. "Please don't ask me to theorise on Ziggy",

"Goodbye, David," is the last remark to the futuristic pop phenomenon named David Bowie.

"Call me Ziggy! Call me Ziggy Stardust!" are Bowie's last words.

Bowie's presentation of himself and Ziggy as inter-changeable brands suffering from paranoia, exhaustion and on the verge of a physical (and perhaps mental breakdown) becomes a central theme by 1973. An article in NME captures this moment where the reader is encouraged to empathise and rescue a disempowered Bowie from Ziggy: *'I feel like Dr Frankenstein. What have I created?'* (Hollingworth, 1973a).

Whether out of boredom, disputes with his band members or simply to fulfil his own musical prophecy on the 23rd July 1973 Bowie officially declared Ziggy dead. Immediate media reaction reflected Bowie's agency. Whilst mainstream newspapers reported the announcement, the musical media provided in-depth analysis and reassurances to fans of Bowie's promising future career. Hollingworth (1973b) provides one such example describing Bowie as *'A star. A genius. And his music was brilliant. Yet I'll shed no tear over his [Ziggy's] departure...Bowie has saved himself.'*

Yet as we will argue Bowie and other agents' willingness to relinquish and emancipate Bowie's human brand from Ziggy varied throughout his career. For example, in an interview shortly after killing Ziggy, Bowie was already reluctant to alienate his human brand from that of Ziggy:

A lot of people I've talked to that have been to the shows have got a very, very definite idea of what Ziggy is and what he represents. They know how he works for them. I would not want to shatter anybody's private movie. (Hayman, 1973)

Ziggy’s character did not fully die until the summer of 1974 with two further albums drawing upon the visual imagery and musical genre of Ziggy: the 1973 release of ‘Pin Ups’ (a reimagining of some of Bowie’s favourite 1960s songs) and in 1974 ‘Diamond Dogs’ (based upon the idea of reimagining George Orwell’s book ‘1984’ as a musical). It was the latter album that finally brought Bowie commercial awareness in North America requiring Bowie to create a new character – ‘Halloween Jack’.

1974 - 1976: Soul, funk and emerging electronica

Table 4: Bowie album performance for 1974 - 1976

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
Young Americans (1975)	2	9	<i>‘...isn’t exactly a bundle of fun...but...it’s both revealing and impressively uncompromising.’ (MacDonald, 1975).</i>
Station to Station (1976)	5	3	<i>‘Not only the most important album recorded statement Bowie has ever made, but also one of the most significant albums released in the last five years.’ (Jones, 1976).</i>

Whilst Ziggy’s success can be seen as an act of market orientation (the right product delivered to the market at the right time), Ziggy’s association with homosexuality was perhaps too extreme for America’s social rules. A new character was required and a USA promotional tour for Bowie’s ‘Diamond Dogs’ album offered the opportunity. Dressed in yellow or turquoise African-American zoot suits with bright orange hair, Bowie launched his new character ‘Halloween Jack’; a combination of a White man playing Black funk music. Where Ziggy had challenged Britain’s sexual norms, ‘Halloween Jack’ challenged America’s racial divide. The extent to which Bowie’s human brand recognised racial differences as a

signification opportunity to capitalise upon and achieve legitimisation within the American market is unclear. However, 'Halloween Jack' provided Bowie with the material and organisational capabilities to assert his power by challenging America's social practices. The result was Bowie's commercial success in North America.

Bowie's power within the music market and his changing musical genres and characters were welcomed by RCA. Bowie's increasing agency following the success of his Ziggy era and the sales potential he offered RCA empowered Bowie to record two contrasting albums. The first album the soul orientated album 'Young Americans' released in 1975 would become Bowie's best ever selling in America followed by 1976 release of the electronic / guitar album 'Station to Station'. Like the Ziggy era both albums came with associated characters. On the release of 'Young Americans' 'Halloween Jack' evolved into 'Plastic Soul Man', a term reflecting Bowie's own vulnerability arising from extending his human brand into Black music. The release of 'Station to Station' witnessed 'Plastic Soul Man' being replaced by the emotionally cold and detached 'Thin White Duke.'

The need for spectacle within Bowie's performance to communicate his brand image, which had made Ziggy a success in Britain, was replicated in the Diamond Dogs (1974-5) and Isolar I (1976) tours. The former tour saw Bowie engaging with his audience through a stage recreating a dystopian city of buildings, indicative of Orwell's '1984' that moved around as 'Halloween Jack' performed. His appearance and clothing perpetuated his androgenised persona. References to Ziggy were limited to Bowie dancing on stage with a replica Ziggy mask covering his face. The imagery and its meaning were clear – Ziggy was an illusion and 'Halloween Jack' was the real Bowie. In his Isolar I tour Bowie returned to the intellectual musician imagery with his new character – the 'Thin White Duke' - through a stage set inspired by 1920s German Bauhaus, using varying shades of white light for atmospheric effect. Bowie dressed solely in black trousers, waist coat and a white shirt presented an image

of emotional cold detachment. A persona the audience was encouraged to associate with by replacing an opening band with Brunel's 1929 silent surrealist film *Un Chien Andalou*.

Bowie's skilful manipulation of the media, readily evident in the Ziggy era, continued with Bowie becoming the first White singer to perform on the African-American music show – 'Soul Train'. Yet appealing to an African-American audience would not deliver the audience size or record sales to increase Bowie's material and organisational capabilities, and consequently power, within the American music market. To resolve this problem Bowie's media appearances focused on disseminating his commercial appeal to more mainstream American audiences. Appearances on the 'Dick Cavett Show' (ABC, 1974), 'Cher Show' (1975) and the 'Dinah Shore Show' (1976) perpetuated the mystique surrounding Bowie's human brand. Consider how Bowie's human brand was legitimised on the 'Dick Cavett Show' (ABC, 1974) with the show's presenter, Dick Cavett, explanation of Bowie's human brand:

Rumours and questions have arisen about David, such as who is he, what is he, where did he come from, is he a creature of a foreign power, is he a creep, is he dangerous, is he smart, dumb, nice to his parents, put on, real, crazy, sane, man, woman, robot, what is this?

Whilst Bowie's physical appearance and British mannerisms intrigued American television audiences other media sources exerted greater levels of agency. A review of American print media for this period reveals that unlike the British media they were less willing to unquestioningly accept and sanction Bowie's claims to notoriety. Whilst Bowie intrigued reporters for Rolling Stone and Playboy magazines a review of these interviews suggests there was a recognition that Bowie was perpetuating his human brand image. Consider the

following two quotes where the reporters' agency clearly challenges the legitimacy of Bowie's human brand :

Bowie...is fully aware that he is a sensational quote machine. The more shocking his revelation, from his homosexual encounters to his fascist leanings, the wider his grin. He knows exactly what interviewers consider good copy; and he gives them precisely that. The truth is probably inconsequential. (Crowe, 1976)

There is an honesty about David these days even though it really can't be described as refreshing. It is as carefully acted out as anything he's ever done, and as such, the face of David Bowie presented to me that week was who David Bowie decided to be, February 1976. He's clever, totally aware of his persona, and there's a very determined gleam in his eyes these days.

As in Britain, American fans' agency represents a key contribution to Bowie's success. The spectacle of the Diamond Dogs and Isolar I tours captured the American public's imagination in similar ways to Ziggy and Britain. The singer Madonna recalled in 1996 her experience of seeing Bowie perform in 1975, aptly describing American fan adulation through Bowie's performance as 'Halloween Jack':

...Before I saw David Bowie live, I was just your normal, dysfunctional, rebellious teenager from the Midwest, and he has truly changed my life... it was the first rock concert that I ever saw and it was a major event in my life...I was 15 years old... and leading up to the week of the show, I begged my father and he said, "I

absolutely refuse, over my dead body, you're not going there, that's where horrible people hang out," so of course I had to go. So...we arrived...and the place was packed and we fought our way to our seats. And the show began. And I don't think that I breathed for two hours. It was the most amazing show that I'd ever seen, not just because the music was great, but because it was great theatre. And here's this beautiful, androgynous man, just being so perverse ... so unconventional, defying logic and basically blowing my mind. Anyway, I came home a changed woman... and my father...grounded me for the rest of the summer. But it was worth every minute that I sat and suffered in my house that summer...

Bowie's preoccupation with North America during this period and his notable absence from Britain witnessed a shift in Bowie's agency. Whilst Bowie's album releases in Britain were successful, a review of the British media indicates an increasing sentimentality towards Ziggy. The extent that Bowie himself or the media perpetuated this sentimentality is unclear, although Robinson's (1976) representation of Bowie presenting a particular 'face' at a given time infers Bowie was a willing participant. Consider how Bowie presents himself in an interview with the Sunday Times (Brown, 1975), where American criticality is replaced with British credulity:

It all sounds like a clever piece of promotional theatre but even in the Los Angeles sunshine he looks haunted when forced to recall Ziggy. "I am David Bowie," he intones with a zomboid air. "No, I'm not David Bowie, ex-rock star. I'm just David Bowie, period. Whatever you want me to be I won't be it." There's a petulant note. "I am David Bowie."

Bowie's representation of himself as paranoid, traumatised, frail and vulnerable (reminiscent of his Ziggy era) is also apparent in the BBC's Arena program (1975). Bowie is shown watching concert footage of Ziggy before emphasising his fragility by Bowie displaying Ziggy era clothes symbolically as the belongings of a dead man: "*I got lost. I couldn't decide if I was writing the character or the characters were writing me?*" Bowie's willingness to present Ziggy as an artefact of a prior time also illustrated his agency. Within the same programme Bowie reveals himself evolving from 'Halloween Jack' to 'Plastic Soul Man'. Vulnerable, Bowie may have been, but Bowie's use of character reinventions to sell music albums enabled marketing to an audience that still wanted Ziggy.

By the end of 1976 Bowie's heavy cocaine consumption along with his public comments and interest in Alistair Crowley, the occult, and fascism threatened Bowie's ability to control the rules and resources required for his human brand image. Consider this interview with Crowe (1976a):

Rock stars are fascists. Adolf Hitler was one of the first rock stars...He was no politician. He was a media artist. He used politics and theatrics...he would march into a room to speak and music and lights would come on at strategic moments. It was rather like a rock 'n roll concert. The kids would get very excited – girls got hot and sweaty and guys wished it was them up there. That, for me, is the rock 'n roll experience.

In another interview Bowie told a reporter: "*As I see it I am the only alternative for the premier in England. I believe Britain could benefit from a fascist leader. After all, fascism is really nationalism*" (Edmonds, 1976). The American and to a lesser extent the British media's reaction to Bowie's flirtation with fascism suggests that they were unwilling to facilitate and

sanction Bowie's behaviour. Bowie's agency now limited by the media was also affected by his cocaine induced behaviours. Bowie's response was to reposition his human brand and reassert control over his material and organisational capabilities by moving from Los Angeles, USA to Berlin, Germany.

1977 - 1982: Electronica I and edging towards mega-stardom

Table 5: Bowie album performance for 1977 - 1982

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
Low (1977)	2	11	<i>'Low is the only contemporary rock album.'</i> (MacDonald, 1977).
Heroes (1977)	3	35	<i>'These new sketches are among the most mature and trenchant Bowie has achieved...'</i> (MacKinnon, 1977).
Lodger (1979)	4	20	<i>'A nice enough pop record, beautifully played, produced and crafted...expect heavy sales.'</i> (Savage, 1979).
Scary Monsters and Super Creeps (1980)	1	12	<i>'Bowie communicates with an honesty and directness that suggests informed pessimism can be more inspiring than any obtuse optimistic fantasy.'</i> (Murray, 1980).

The period 1977-1982 represents a critical point in Bowie's career. Bowie's departure from America for Berlin, then divided between capitalist and communist ideologies, symbolised the schism Bowie felt within his human brand. Musically, glam rock's appeal in Britain had now been replaced by Punk Rock bands like 'The Sex Pistols' and 'The Damned', whilst America's embrace of disco music differed from Bowie's musical interests. Bowie's response was to reposition both his human brand and his music. The former led Bowie to present himself wearing jeans and lumberjack shirts with his hair, in its natural colour, cut short.

Musically Bowie now embraced the electronica music genre releasing three albums over 1977-1979: 'Low', 'Heroes' and 'Lodger'.

Bowie now began to engage with the newly emerging music video; a promotional tool offering Bowie a modality to communicate his relevance to a changing market. The release of the album 'Lodger' (1979) produced three musical videos that legitimised Bowie's human brand in challenging social rules. In particular the music video for 'Boys keep swinging' (alluding to bi-sexuality) featured a suit wearing Bowie supported by Bowie dressed as three female backing singers. Whilst the video no doubt aimed to shock it also illustrated the limits of Bowie's agency regarding his human brand image. Whilst the video was released in Europe it was not released in North America owing to RCA's fear that the North American market would not sanction a cross-dressing bi-sexual Bowie.

Bowie's use of music videos was also a significant aspect of his next album 'Scary Monsters and Super Creeps'. The single release from this album 'Ashes to Ashes' and accompanying video suggested Bowie was increasingly trying to maintain his musical dominance. The associated music video, released in 1980, is important in understanding Bowie's human brand for three reasons. First, at the time it was the most expensive video ever made, legitimising Bowie's human brand as not just a singer but as a global performer. Secondly, it brought a return to Bowie's 1969 character 'Major Tom'. Perhaps writing from a reflective stance of Bowie's own struggle with drug consumption, Major Tom the hero of 1969 lost in space was now replaced with Major Tom the drug addict lost in space. Finally, the video is noticeable for the inclusion of backing performers from the London based 'Blitz Club'. A nightclub widely associated with the emerging musical genre 'The New Romantics', characterised by bands such as: 'Culture Club', 'Spandau Ballet', and 'Visage' – all who drew inspiration from Bowie's human brand. Bowie through one music video effectively repositioned his human brand at the forefront of this emerging musical genre and changing

market. Through producing music videos Bowie was also quick to respond to the biggest revolution in the music industry – the 1981 launch of the music television channel - MTV.

Bowie's need to control his human brand, assert his agency and maintain his power by controlling his material and organisational capabilities manifested in two separate actions. First, Bowie's removal of his manager, Defries offered Bowie greater financial opportunities. Second, Bowie refused to renew his contract with RCA records. A decision partially arising from RCA's refusal to promote the album 'Low'..

A review of the media for this period suggests differing levels of agency. Whilst mainstream media continued to revere Bowie's apparent intellectualness and musical output (for example the BBC's 1977 Arena programme) the musical media reflects an increasing criticality. For example, NME which had continually supported Bowie's musical evolution was unable to reach a critical consensus regarding the 'Low' album resulting in two opposing reviews being published. Whilst Murray (1977, p. 50) described the album as a fundamental mistake by Bowie whose music '*stinks of artfully counterfeited defeat, futility and emptiness*', MacDonald (1977, p. 51) praised the album stating '*Low is no more or less true than anything else David Bowie has ever recorded*'. Bowie's later album releases and interviews with the musical media suggest the latter's willingness to continue to legitimise Bowie's musical creativity.

Bowie's fans' continuing commitment alongside his commercial success is difficult to assess for this period. Following the release of the 'Low' and 'Heroes' albums Bowie resumed touring with the Isolar II tour. Although fan responses to this tour are scarce 'The London Weekend Show' (LWT, 1978) offers an insight inferring Bowie's continuing allure for his fans, with Ziggy remaining a key motivator.

Bowie's relationship with Ziggy also becomes more apparent in this period. A review of the media reflects the absence of any discussion of Bowie's characters, besides Ziggy. (It

should be noted that The Thin White Duke is discussed in one interview to explain Bowie's earlier Hitler comments). Bowie now presented Ziggy not as a monster but as a key contributor to his human brand: *"I can't say I'm sorry when I look back, because it provoked such an extraordinary set of circumstances in my life"*. Yet in the same interview Bowie feels the need to emancipate himself from Ziggy: *"That fucker Ziggy wouldn't leave me alone for years, that was when it all started to sour"* (Jones, 1977). Indeed, the media's increasing agency and their continued reference to Ziggy reflected the wider changing rules and resources evident in Giddens's (1984) structure. Whilst Bowie's human brand may have wished to distance himself from Ziggy, the media's legitimisation of Bowie through Ziggy suggests an increasing image imprisonment. As Bowie noted in an interview with NME (MacKinnon, 1980):

There are few magazines or newspapers or television programs that will deal with me on the same level that your paper would for instance. In the majority of the media - there I'm completely stifled. I have been for years. I have never been anything other than Ziggy Stardust for the media masse.

1983 - 1991: Megastardom, credibility loss and Tin Machine

Table 6: Bowie album performance for 1983 - 1991

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
Lets Dance (1983)	1	4	<i>'It is a warm, strong, inspiring and useful...utterly worth the wait.'</i> (Murray, 1983).
Tonight (1984)	1	11	<i>'There has been a whole lot of care been taken over Tonight but not, I think a whole lot of effort.'</i> (Sutherland, 1984).

Never Let me Down (1986)	6	34	'Wilfully lacking grandeur, all too immaculate, processed ageing rock for Americans called Phil.' (Roberts, 1987).
Tin Machine I	3	28	'Tin Machine is a triumph [from] a man who we've no longer any right to expect it from.' (Sutherland, 1989).
Tin Machine II	23	126	'Tin Machine II can hardly be hailed as a classic, but at least Bowie's trying this time...' (Staunton, 1991).

The election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States and Margaret Thatcher as Prime minister of Great Britain reflected a wider global shift towards neo-liberalist values. In particular the belief that individual's should be free to capitalise upon their skills for personal gain resonates with Bowie's actions for this period.

Bowie's contractual release from Defries and RCA in 1983 witnessed Bowie undergoing a further human brand repositioning towards a more commercial perspective. Prominent in this repositioning was his denouncing of his previous homosexual associations. The rise of HIV and AIDS in the early 1980s and its association with the increased visibility of the gay pride movement challenging society's rules and values had led to a societal rejection of alternative sexual lifestyles (Jones and Bego, 2009). Bowie too now reflected this societal rejection telling Rolling Stone magazine that his homosexuality declaration was "*the biggest mistake I ever made...[as] I was always a closet heterosexual*" (cf. Gilmore, 2012). Whilst this declaration may have represented society's current rules and values it also reflected commercial reasons. Bowie was later to state that his homosexuality declaration had damaged his commercial success in North America: "*it was a lot tougher in America. I had no problem with people knowing I was bisexual...and I felt that bisexuality became my headline over here [America] for so long. America is a very puritanical place, and I think it stood in the way of so much I wanted to do*" (Clark, 2002).

By declaring himself heterosexual and drug free Bowie's human brand sought out a new legitimisation from the music market. An approach that was evident in his increasing

commercialisation and successful release of three albums over 1983-87 – ‘Let’s Dance’, ‘Tonight’ and ‘Never Let Me Down’. Further evidence of the market’s sanctioning Bowie’s human brand positioning and legitimisation was evident in two world tours which saw Bowie daily performing to audiences of eighty thousand people. Bowie’s commercial legitimisation culminated in Pepsi sponsoring the highly successful ‘Glass Spider Tour’ (1986-7) and Bowie’s appearance in a 1987 Pepsi commercial.

Yet during this period Bowie’s human brand appears to struggle between his new mass market appeal and the bi-sexual anti-establishment figure he had presented in the 1970s. A struggle evident in the 1984 music video for ‘Blue Jean’ (from the album ‘Tonight’) where Bowie appears as two characters – a celebrity singer presented as a ‘New Romantic’ interpretation of Ziggy, and a fan keen to impress a girl. The video is notable for an ensuing discussion where Bowie the fan insults Bowie the pop star’s history of drug abuse, his sexuality and his own music’s commercialization: "*You conniving, randy, bogus-Oriental old queen! Your record sleeves are better than your songs!*" (Bowie, 1984). A perspective Bowie returned to in 1991:

You can tell I was terribly unhappy in the late '80s. ... I was in that netherworld of commercial acceptance. It was an awful trip. 1983, '84, '85, '86, '87 - those five years were simply dreadful. ... Never Let Me Down had good songs that I mistreated. I didn't really apply myself. I wasn't quite sure what I was supposed to be doing. I wish there had been someone around who could have told me (Cohen, 1991).

Bowie’s personal belief that he was losing his musical direction produced two notable decisions. First, Bowie’s announcement that his 1990 ‘Sound + Vision Tour’ would be the

last time he would perform his pre-1987 songs suggested a need to reassert his agency by repositioning his human brand as non-commercial. A decision perhaps motivated by the need to resist image imprisonment offered by his past characters, such as Ziggy. Secondly, by forming the band – ‘Tin Machine’ – Bowie attempted to regain his musical credibility.

A key motivator for Bowie’s mass market appeal lies in Bowie signing a recording contract in 1983 with EMI records. Widely rumoured at the time to be the largest recording payment to that date Bowie was expected to produce mass selling and profitable albums. Yet by signing with EMI and accepting corporate sponsorship from Pepsi Bowie’s material and organisational capabilities were ultimately compromised. In a possible effort to reverse this compromise Bowie left EMI records in 1990 for the relatively unknown label – Reko. A decision the media suggests was for financial reasons - Bowie had simply renegotiated a greater royalty payment for his music. Bowie’s agency and power over a smaller record label led Bowie to seek out ways to capitalise on his back catalogue:

I would look for old obscure tracks and demos and so on and they had their fingers on stuff I'd forgotten about, so between us we compiled a lot of original things that hadn't seen the light of day - and probably never should have! - but are coming out.

(Du Noyer, 1990)

Bowie’s commercial successes for this period, both musical and performance, reflects his almost complete market domination. A review of the media supports this perspective with a variety of media outputs taking an almost reverential approach. For example, the BBC’s Nationwide programme (1983) which had in 1972 ridiculed Bowie now described him as influencing “...the 70s and 80s more than any single pop performer”. Supporting Bowie’s domination is the media’s recognition of his influence in the newly emerging ‘New Romantic’

music movement (Bohn, 1983). Although the media became increasingly critical of Bowie's next two albums ('Tonight' and 'Never Let Me Down') both the music and popular media still pursued their almost reverential perspective. The emergence of 'Tin Machine' was also widely welcomed by the musical press as a return to musical form (Sunderland, 1989).

References to Ziggy during this period largely reflect Bowie's agency and fluctuating control over the music market. During the height of his commercial success in 1983-1988 Bowie appears to willingly engage with Ziggy. This is particularly evident in Bowie consenting to EMI's 1983 album and film footage release of Ziggy's 1973 farewell concert. A concert recording that Bowie had previously prevented from being released owing to its poor sound and visual quality. The reason for Bowie's willingness to consent to the release of this album lies in the album contributing towards his EMI contractual obligations.

By 1988 with Bowie's dismissal of his mass commercial appeal, embodied in the launch 'Tin Machine', Bowie once again attempted to distance himself from Ziggy. Ziggy now represented the embodiment of the music commercialisation that Bowie was rejecting:

Well, not just a joke, but it [Ziggy] was definitely a reaction to late '60s seriousness, and the real murky quality that rock was falling into. I think a bunch of us adopted the opposite stance. I remember at the time saying that rock must prostitute itself. And I'll stand by that. If you're going to work in a whorehouse, you'd better be the best whore in it. (Howkins, 1991)

Bowie's agency in controlling how the media viewed him reflects wider structural changes. The emergence of cable television in America, 'Channel 4' television in Britain and new music magazines like 'Q' offered new opportunities and threats for artists like Bowie. For example, 'Q' magazine and 'Channel 4's' music show 'The Tube' (1983) made repeated

associations between Bowie’s current fame being directly attributable to Ziggy. RCA records, now freed from its contractual agreements with Bowie and against his wishes, released the album - ‘Bowie Rare’. An album composed largely of unreleased Ziggy era tracks. Bowie may have wished to forget Ziggy, but the market agents’ willingness to supply and purchase Ziggy era products contributed to Bowie’s increasing image imprisonment.

1992 - 1999: Electronica II

Table 7: Bowie album performance for 1992 - 1999

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
Black Tie, White Noise (1992)	1	39	<i>‘There are five and half good songs – and bearing in mind Bowie spent most of the 80’s as a laughing stock, that’s an admirable achievement.’ (Harris, 1993).</i>
Buddha of Suburbia (1993)	87	Not released	<i>‘Bowie has a fair stab at some incidental filler...but really, there’s nothing here worth forgiving him for Tin Machine.’ (Phillips, 1993).</i>
Outside (1995)	8	21	<i>‘An over-stuffed, ungainly, confusing, preposterous and occasionally inspirational folly...A long way from rock and roll suicide.’ (Morton, 1995).</i>
Earthling (1997)	6	39	<i>“...shit load of pretension and awful ideas...” (Mulvey, 1997).</i>

Giddens (1984) argues that differing agents within a structure through their shared interests will ultimately begin to integrate together. The beginnings of this integration for Bowie and his relationship with the music industry are increasingly apparent during the period 1992-1999 where Bowie’s actively resists becoming an image prisoner to Ziggy in both his personal and commercial life.

From a personal perspective Bowie's marriage to the Somalian supermodel Iman, in 1992, complimented by the wedding inspired 'White Tie Black Noise' album, legitimised his heterosexual, middle-aged, mainstream lifestyle. Whilst the marriage may not have undermined Bowie's human brand credibility, the 19 pages of wedding photos with a further 4 pages of interview with the married couple in the gossip magazine 'Hello' contrasted with Bowie's previous human brand image of rock n roll fame and associated libertinism.

From a musical perspective following the demise of 'Tin Machine' in 1992 Bowie's human brand image and agency was threatened by the emergence of three contrasting musical genres: 'Brit Pop', rap, and dance music. Music characterised by 'Brit Pop' bands such as 'Oasis' and 'Blur', rap artists, such as 'LL Cool J' or 'Public Enemy', and dance music, such as 'Acon' or 'Altern 8'. Bowie was unable to claim any musical contribution to, or affiliation with, these musical genres. Bowie's response was to reposition his musical human brand by returning to the electronica music genre through three albums that achieved varying levels of commercial success and critical acclaim: 'The Buddha of Suburbia', 'Outside' and 'Earthling.'

To support his return to electronic music and assert his musical legitimacy Bowie created a strategic brand alliance with the then popular Trent Reznor and his North American band 'The Nine Inch Nails'. Consider this interview extract where Bowie justifies his current musical relevance not only through Trent Reznor but also dismissing Ziggy in favour of his previous electronica music from the 1970s:

"Not Ziggy," he laughs. "Actually, I started listening to Low again which I heard Trent Reznor was a big fan of it. I went back to it to find out why and I started to hear the breaking down of the drum sounds and obvious signposts to the way he writes. It was fairly instructive.

(Cavanagh, 1997)

Bowie's eagerness to dismiss Ziggy and reposition his human brand through his previous associations with electronica illustrates tensions between Bowie and opposing agents' emerging material and organisational capabilities. Bowie's insistence on following an electronic music genre whilst dismissing Ziggy reflected a misaligning of Bowie's human brand and the wider market discourse. For example, following the release of his 'Outside' album Bowie went on tour supported by 'The Nine Inch Nails'. Speaking in 2013 Reznor commented how Bowie whilst not ignorant of his fans' needs was willing to ignore them:

He was playing everything from his Outside album and he said: 'You guys are going to destroy us on stage because we're not playing anything anybody wants to hear. Nobody really wants to hear this new album. What they want to hear is The Jean Genie¹ and all the hits but I don't have it in me to do that now.'

(Beaumont, 2013).

Bowie's refusal to appease his fans by performing his back catalogue continued with the 1997 release of the drum 'n' bass album - 'Earthling'. A subsequent tour to support the album reflected Bowie's continual human brand misalignment. Consider this newspaper review of an 'Earthling' concert performance which captured both the media and fans' unwillingness to sanctify Bowie's new musical genre:

Oi, Bowie! No! That was one's first reaction to the rumour sweeping the Hanover Grand on Monday that David Bowie would follow his show with a drum & bass set.

¹ 'The Jean Genie' is a track from the Ziggy era album – 'Alladin Zane'

Though he conducted some brave experiments with the genre on his current album, Earthling, there was something undignified about the idea of him trying to recreate adrenalinised beats in front of a bemused crowd of people his own age.

(Sullivan, 1997)

The above instances indicate that while Bowie had the agency to deny the market their desired performances, as he did with killing Ziggy in 1973, this denial no longer signified 'cutting edge and subversive musician' to the media and his audience. Instead it suggested market irrelevance and pretentiousness evident in the British media's increasingly critical perspective of Bowie's human brand. The media's previously reverential attitude towards Bowie had been achieved through his careful selection of favourable media and authors, such as the NME and their journalists Charles Shaar Murray and Ian McDonald. However, the increasing agency of music magazines like 'Q' reflected wider structural changes in the market. Whilst media like NME continued to present Bowie as having "*an almost intangible force field of superstar charisma...*" (Dalton, 1997, p. 154), 'Q' magazine, in contrast, repeatedly ignored Bowie's contemporary market relevance instead focussing on his 1970s characters (Usher and Fremaux, 2013). For example, 'Q' magazine's front cover for May 1993 featured the face of a 46 year old Bowie with a superimposed 'Alladin Zane' lightning bolt. A decision Bowie was to later describe as 'cheeky'. A comparison of North American and British media for this period also suggests whilst the former were willing to allow Bowie to detach his human brand from Ziggy, the British media were not.

1999 - 2004: Neo-classicist Bowie

Table 8: Bowie album performance for 1999 - 2004

Album name / release date	UK top position	USA top position	Critics comments
Hours (1999)	5	47	<i>'Perhaps it's too late for the happily married drug-free, 52 year old wizard to make another truly great album...'</i> (Cigarettes, 1999).
Toys (2001)	-	-	Not released
Heathen (2002)	5	14	<i>'Finally binning the zeitgeist-mounting personas, our original friend electric embarks on an anniversary waltz through his velvet-lined vaults of his past.'</i> (Dempster, 2002).
Reality (2003)	3	29	<i>'Lyrically mournful...musically euphoric...it's a very, very good sexy-angst album. For real.'</i> (Roberts, 2003).

Reflecting Gidden's (1984) perspective of agents' social practices converging to satisfy their mutual interests, Iglesias and Bonet (2012) note how a loss of brand control requires the brand producer to accept this loss and recognise the audience's perception of what the brand should be. Whilst Bowie released three albums between 1999 – 2004 to mixed critical and commercial success – 'The Hours', 'Heathen', and 'Reality' – information technology developments, as well as commercial and financial reasons, encouraged Bowie to converge his own interests through Ziggy with those of other agents.

Bowie's need to maintain his dominance and power within the music market witnessed his establishment of two musical innovations: (i) one of the world's first interactive website sites – 'BowieNet' and (ii) musical downloads. The launch of 'BowieNet' establishing fan based discussion forums allowed Bowie to directly communicate with his fans effectively controlling information regarding his human brand. Complimenting this was Bowie's willingness to become the first artist in 1999 to release an album ('The Hours') through the Internet signifying Bowie's human brand innovation. Yet this engagement with new technologies also witnessed Bowie willingness to reengage with Ziggy compared to any other post-Ziggy period. For example, in 1973 Bowie had denounced the idea of a Ziggy film, now

in recognition of the growing presence of multi-media Bowie attempted to reposition his human brand - musically, artistically and technologically - through Ziggy (Phoenix, 1999):

Yeah, I'm not only doing it, I'm doing it on three platforms. I'm working with people on a film version and I'm working with people on a theater version that's completely different and I'll synthesize the two into a huge version of Internet hypertext - where we will find out about Ziggy's mum and things like that. I want this kind of parallel world with Ziggy on the Internet that stays there as archive forever - like a living organism. But the theater version and the film versions will be completely and utterly different from each other. The stage show will be about the interior values of Ziggy and his contemporaries. It won't have terribly many characters in it. The film would be the audiences' perception of who or what Ziggy was. It will be a bigger, grander, more blah, blah. But the three taken together is, I suppose, lazy post-modernism where the same story is told in different ways.

Bowie's own increasing association with Ziggy and his interaction with other agents may be attributed to the release of Bowie Bonds, a scheme allowing fans to purchase bonds that entitled them to a share of Bowie's future royalties. The bond release raised a rumoured US \$55 million offering Bowie considerable material and organisational capabilities to finance two decisions. First, establishing his own recording label providing Bowie with the ownership of the material and organisational capabilities of a music industry agent, not just those he had as an artist: "*I've dreamed of embarking on my own set-up for such a long time and now is the perfect opportunity*" (BBC, 2001). A decision motivated by Bowie terminating his contract with Virgin Records following their refusal to release his 2001 album – 'Toys' – owing to its perceived lack of commercial viability. Secondly, allowing Bowie to

purchase the copyright to his musical back catalogue (Trynka, 2011). A decision motivated by Virgin Records owner – EMI - still retaining marketing rights to Bowie's back catalogue. As Bowie owned the copyrights he would financially benefit from any reissues of his previous albums. Evident in two Bowie sanctioned musical outputs: (i) EMI's 2002/3 re-release and promotion of the 30th anniversary of the albums 'The rise and fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars' and 'Alladin Zane', and (ii) the BBC's musical album release of 'Bowie at the Beeb' (2002) featuring an extensive range of Ziggy era performances at the BBC.

Bowie's nostalgic re-engagement with Ziggy is also evident in his media appearances as a story teller. For instance, recalling Ziggy era stories on the music channel VH1's 'Storytellers' (1999) and on three British television interviews ('The Jonathan Ross Show' 2002/3 and 'Parkinson' 2003). Print media interviews for this period also witness Bowie's re-engagement with Ziggy era stories. This storytelling reflects Bowie's willingness to use the media in an attempt to control his human brand image. For instance, in 2002 Bowie was a guest editor for an issue of 'Mojo' music magazine. Whilst Bowie has previously criticised 'Q' magazine's superimposed 'Alladin Zane' lightning bolt across his face, Bowie now used his editorship to replicate similar 'Alladin Zane' imagery to present himself on Mojo's front cover! Bowie's need to associate himself with Ziggy is also reflected in an interview with Mojo:

It became apparent to me that... I had an unbearable shyness; it was much easier for me to keep on with the Ziggy thing, off the stage as well as on the stage. It also seemed a lot of fun, a really fun deceit. Who was David Bowie and who was Ziggy Stardust? But I think it was motivated by shyness as much as anything. It was so much easier for me to be Ziggy.

(du Noyer, 2002)

Performance and spectacle, previously so important to fans experiencing Bowie, also witnessed a return to more Ziggy era music during Bowie's 2002-3 'Reality Tour'. Unlike the earlier 'Earthling Tour', where Bowie's human brand appeared mismatched between his own needs and his audience, a review of Bowie's concert appearances indicated Bowie's readiness to play Ziggy era songs to fan and media approval. A decision reflective of Iglesias and Bonet's (2012) call for brand owners to accept how their audiences view a brand. However, unlike the Ziggy era, Bowie often appeared wearing a suit, perhaps reflecting the changing demographics of his audience, as well as the differences between how Britain and North America viewed Bowie's human brand. As du Noyer (2003) noted:

...a little later in the evening, the club has filled up with Bowie fans, though the ones who've arrived tonight look less hard core than those who kept vigil in the day. In fact there are surprisingly few signs of outright devotion – no Aladdin Sane lightning stripes or spangly pierrot costumes, to be sure. Perhaps the American take on Bowie is more conventionally rock than England's fond conception of him as space age panto dame.

2004 – 2013: From silence to resurrection

Following a heart attack whilst on stage, in 2004, Bowie withdrew from public life. Gidden's (1984) argued that over time those agents that aim to challenge the structure will ultimately become integrated into the very structure they once challenged. This perspective is evident during Bowie's public absence during the period 2004 – 2013. A period where

various agents' actions demonstrate not only Bowie's image imprisonment but also how Bowie / Ziggy had become a constituent and dominating agent in the music industry and wider societal structures.

Although Bowie had withdrawn from public life it would appear he did not withdraw from managing his human brand image. For instance, EMI's release of two Ziggy era records was no doubt done with Bowie's approval. A previously unreleased live recording of Ziggy from 1972 entitled 'David Bowie, Live Santa Monica '72', was followed in 2012 by the 40th anniversary release of "The rise and fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars" (following on from the previous 30th anniversary).

Another demonstration of Bowie's agency and activity within wider society is evident in two Ziggy related events: The 2013 British Victoria and Albert Museum's 2013 retrospective Bowie exhibition – 'David Bowie is...' and the BBC's 'Five years: The making of an icon'. In acknowledgement to the Victoria and Albert Museum's recognition of Bowie as an important agent in Britain's socio-cultural history Bowie provided the museum with uninhibited access to his archives. The result was an exhibition that drew heavily upon Ziggy era symbolisms, including: clothing, film footage and lyric sheets. Associations with Ziggy were also evident in the Museum's promotional materials, such as advertisements, exhibition guides and webpages. The exhibition further legitimised Bowie's relevance by sanctioning his self-declared homosexuality as an important socio-cultural statement and response to Britain's post-industrial decline. Bowie's willingness to allow others access to his past is also evident in 'Five Years: The making of an icon' which focused on five different years in Bowie's career, including the emergence of Ziggy (1971-2). Bowie's input is evident from previously unreleased early Ziggy era concert footage being made available.

Yet the media was not dependent upon Bowie's approval for Bowie related stories. A review of the media shows the domination of Ziggy related stories. Ziggy's 40th anniversary

was celebrated by various media outlets, including: the BBC (a number of BBC radio documentaries and a television documentary entitled ‘David Bowie and the story of Ziggy Stardust’) and various magazine covers (such as Rolling Stone’s front cover featuring a picture of Ziggy entitled ‘The rise and fall of Ziggy Stardust. How David Bowie changed the world’).

The emergence of YouTube (which now includes an officially sanctioned Bowie channel) is perhaps the biggest media agent to contribute to Bowie’s brand and the perpetuation of Ziggy. A review of Bowie and Ziggy uploads reveals the importance of Ziggy to Bowie’s YouTube audience. Whilst 52,948 YouTube clips are directly tagged to ‘Bowie’, 127,000 separate uploaded videos are tagged to ‘Ziggy Stardust’. Perhaps not surprisingly, Ziggy’s 1972 break-through television appearance on TOTP’s, uploaded by ‘midevilfreako’ in 2007 is credited with over 9.8 million viewings.

The symbolism of Ziggy relied upon the awe of spectacle to challenge and subvert societal meanings. Yet forty years later the anti-establishment symbolism of Ziggy had now morphed into societal dominance, particularly within fashion. In 2003 the model Kate Moss was photographed for British Vogue magazine wearing a blue suit worn by Ziggy, whilst in 2012 the fashion magazine Miu Miu took Ziggy inspiration for a fashion article. Fashion designers now re-imagined Ziggy, with the 2006 Gucci collection and the 2012 Givenchy collection making direct reference to Ziggy’s clothes. The fashion that Ziggy had inspired in 1972 - 1973 now served to imprison Bowie within the image of Ziggy.

Bowie’s return to music and critical success in 2013 was juxtaposed by the market with Ziggy. Bowie the image prisoner now looking like a 66 year old man, once again had to compete against the image and products of a 25 year old younger self. Where Bowie had aged, Ziggy remained forever young, captured in a moment of time and kept alive by various agents’ interests. Furthermore, Ziggy’s ability to shock was now replaced with

Ziggy becoming the embodiment of wider societal rule changes towards accepting different sexualities. Ziggy's significance lies in embodying a sense of legitimacy, developed over time and positioned within nostalgia evident in a 2014 comment on YouTube commenting upon Ziggy's TOTP appearance in 1972:

I'm 14 and i know i cant really talk, but i much prefer these live performances then the ones now. these ones are very genuine and without dance or fancy lights, just the band and the music. performances these days are all about fancy staging and dramatic intervals. this is very simplistic and i adore it.

Vikki Fletch

Discussion and conclusion

Our paper explores the extent that a celebrity's human brand can emancipate themselves from a character they are associated with and escape image imprisonment, thereby achieving market agency. Using Giddens (1984) structuration theory and analysing archival data covering Bowie's fifty year career we identified the shifting material and organisational capabilities between Bowie's human brand and other agents, such as the media, fans, record companies and the music industry. Our findings indicated a continual reinterpretation of not only Bowie's human brand, by both Bowie and other agents, but also how differing agents continually renegotiated the meanings attributed to Ziggy. The outcome of this renegotiation as informed by Giddens (1984) was Ziggy facilitating Bowie's conformity and image imprisonment within societal structures. This observation produces a number of contributions to our understanding of celebrity and human brands.

The first contribution is in understanding the importance of market and media structures in determining the social authority that a celebrity holds (Gabler, 1995). Previous celebrity research tends to assume a celebrity has unlimited agency, where the focus has been on what human brands *can do* to create and manage their celebrity (Muñiz, Norris, & Fine, 2013; Schroeder, 2005). Our study has highlighted what a human brand *cannot do* to create and manage their celebrity. As Giddens (1984) notes an agent's, such as a celebrity, ability to mobilise power within a structure, like the music market, through material and organisational capabilities is constrained by other agents. In our study Bowie's material and organisational capabilities manifesting through his social authority over differing time periods appears to be inconsistent. In periods where his characters have narrative determinism in the market, such as in creating, killing and replacing Ziggy with Halloween Jack, Bowie's human brand has the agency to manage this narrative. However, in periods of brand confusion, lack of market success or apparent irrelevance (evident with Tin Machine) Bowie often lacks the social authority to direct his narrative. Accompanying this is the emergence of the Internet and websites, such as YouTube, that challenged Bowie's social authority. Whilst Palmer (2010) attributes these changes to an empowered audience our findings illustrated Bowie's attempts, often through his association with Ziggy, to reassert his human brand's material and organisational capabilities. An assertion that challenges the perspective of human brands as completely agentic in creating and managing their brand (Muñiz, Norris and Fine, 2013; Schroeder, 2005). Instead we recognise the constraints placed upon human brands by the celebrity and other agents, such as market success, narrative coherence and temporal moments.

Our second contribution extends our understanding of the constraints that the market structure places upon the narrative determinism of the human brand. Parmentier (2011)

and Westhead and Wright (1998) identified that individual human brands are constrained by their associations with others. However, they did not explore how a human multi-brand may be constrained by their characters. Whilst Bowie's human brand had multiple characters, the market structure in which Bowie existed ultimately limited his agency to emancipate himself from these characters. This was evident by taking a historical perspective to Bowie's career which highlighted the importance of time and aging in understanding human branding. Stever (2011) argued that relationships with imaginary figures are better than with real ones, as they can be controlled by the individual and there is no reciprocity to create negative feelings or events. Bowie's use of imaginary performative characters proved ultimately problematic as the human brand ages while his characters are eternal. As Bowie's commercial success waned and he and his audience aged, his social authority within the market shifted too. In particular in the 1990s when Bowie was confronted by an aging audience who sought a more nostalgic Bowie performances, in contrast to newly emerging musical genres, such as drum 'n' bass. Bowie's efforts to remain innovative were lambasted as 'undignified' effectively resulting in Bowie's human brand differing from what the market felt it should be, i.e. more nostalgic.

Bowie's age is further exacerbated by comparison with his ageless and timeless characters, especially Ziggy. Bowie's sacrifice of Ziggy, rather than emancipating Bowie from the fame associations attached to his character, created brand competition, a powerful icon of a time, place, ethos and subculture that would never age and is infinitely replicable and symbolically malleable, in ways that the celebrity cannot reproduce (Holt, 2004). Ziggy then became wholly owned by agents within the market, becoming an icon and a powerful figure for parasocial relationships (Caughey, 1984). Here we find that Bowie is not only constrained by his associations with others but he is also constrained by

his own creation (Illouz, 2003; Parmentier, 2011; Schroeder, 2005) effectively becoming an image prisoner. This finding extends existing research on the constraints to human branding to include the human attributes of age and the previously unconsidered attribute of the character competing, cannibalising and complementing the human brand. Thus, underlying limitations to human brand management practices can be identified and strategies can be implemented to overcome such constraints, such as Bowie's practice of branding himself in opposition to Ziggy and his eventual strategy of reconciling his human brand with this character.

The next contribution follows on from the constraints created by characters. Where previous research has tended to focus on human brands as singular entities (Brown and Hackley, 2012; Brownlie and Hewer, 2011; Muñiz, Norris, and Fine, 2013; Schroeder, 2005) Bowie and his various characters represent a more complex human brand perspective. As Auslander (2004) notes David Jones is the real person, David Bowie the performance persona who manifests through characters, such as Ziggy, Plastic Soul Man, etc. Our findings extend our understanding of human brands from the unfettered agentic market influencers suggested in previous research (Brown and Hackley, 2012; Muñiz, Norris, & Fine, 2013; Schroeder, 2005) to brand managers who move from image creators to image prisoners depending on which agents hold the power to influence image associations (Parmentier, 2010, 2011; Schroeder, 2005). Recognizing Bowie as an image prisoner reflects the emergent process of his celebrity that changed over time, in terms of the influence he had over taste, his ability to promote his image and self, and ultimately his ability to produce. Complimenting this we have shown how Bowie resisted and collaborated with the market to perpetuate his human brand and eventually used Ziggy to maintain his human brand. This runs counter to definitions of celebrity that tend to assume what a celebrity is at a point in time. Both Turner (2004) and Rojek (2001)

defined celebrity as a media figure whose fame outstrips their achievements. However, in our historical analysis of Bowie's career it can be seen that Bowie's fame emerged and varied over time, affecting his relationship with the music market structure. As our data revealed, whilst Ziggy brought fame, the market repeatedly associated Bowie to this character, often relegating Bowie's other musical achievements to comparisons with Ziggy. Consequently Bowie's fame and achievements, along with his various characters, became separate entities with different associations allocated to each through Bowie's and other agents. This divergence between fame and achievement highlights the importance of the market and media structure to the social authority of the celebrity. In particular, how ownership of celebrity images shifts from the celebrity producer to the industry reproducer and the audience, ensuring the celebrity is constrained in their ability to influence taste regimes (Arsel and Bean, 2013; McQuarrie et al., 2013). This provides a structural argument for the shift in influence between taste makers and taste takers beyond the practices that these two groups use to enact taste. Developing this argument further we extend Iglesias and Bonet's (2012) argument that brand managers need to accept this loss of control by recognising how other agents can and will hold memories of a brand from a different moment in time.

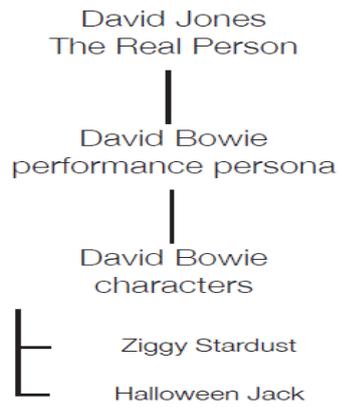
Why then has the character of Ziggy become so prominent compared to Bowie's other character's such as Halloween Jack, Plastic Soul Man or The Thin White Duke? One reason can be attributed to the media. A review of the media from 1977 onwards shows a clear disinterest in any other character besides Ziggy. Another reason lies in Bowie and other agents effectively mythologizing Ziggy within the context of Bowie's human brand (Holt, 2004). This process commenced from the moment Bowie killed Ziggy, presenting at different times of his career an image of Ziggy that served either Bowie's need to allow others to interpret his music, or other agents need to interpret Bowie's career at a particular moment in

time. Ziggy's use of homosexuality to challenge social practices ensured that all subsequent Bowie characters could not compete with Ziggy's socio-cultural impact. Also fan nostalgia for Ziggy, facilitated by information technology such as YouTube, provided a means for Bowie's audience to reengage, reinterpret and recall Ziggy.

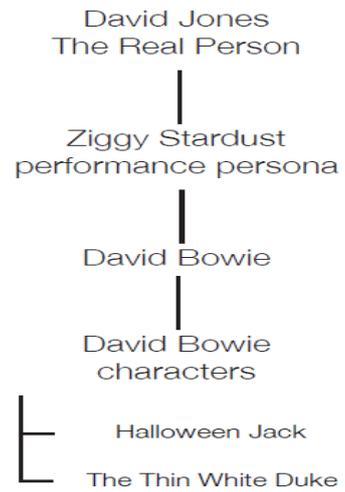
Whilst Auslander (2004, 2006) argued that Bowie is the performance artist, with Ziggy a character, we disagree. Instead, we argue that Ziggy as a character eventually became the performance persona that allowed other agents in the market the opportunity to understand Bowie's human brand. Evident from 1972 when RCA rebranded Bowie's previous albums with Ziggy imagery through to the media's constant referring to Ziggy as a means of understanding Bowie's contemporary human brand in 2013. Consequently, we provided a revised, shortened, version of Figure 1 reflecting Ziggy's prominence over Bowie, see figure 2. The original hierarchy on the left that viewed Bowie as the performance persona is now revised in the right diagram. Ziggy is now shown as the performance persona who allows the market to understand Bowie's human brand:

Figure 2: Reinterpreting Bowie and Ziggy's brand hierarchy

David Jones
perception of his brand
heirarchy



The markets perception
of David Jones brand
heirarchy



Our paper has a number of limitations. In particular is the inherent problem of trying to interpret media reports, interviews and agents actions within the socio-cultural context of the time. Whilst every effort was undertaken to address this, the inherent bias arising from retrospection and nostalgia must be recognised. The issue of bias is also evident in one of the authors being a self-confessed Bowie fanatic and the other author describing themselves as a Bowie novice. Whilst recognising this, remaining objective towards Bowie's career was at times a challenging experience in recognising Bowie's fluctuating commercial success. Finally, whilst structuration theory offered an effective means of exploring the motivations, behaviours and roles of differing agents over an extensive period of time it also produced a vast quantity of data that could not be captured within the constraints of a journal paper. Strategic links and manipulative behaviours by agents had to be omitted to meet journal constraints, ultimately depriving the data of richness.

Further research is encouraged from two perspectives. First, we call for future research to replicate our approach to understanding celebrities and human brands. In particular, is Bowie unique in struggling to reclaim his human brand image from a character like Ziggy? For example, is an actor like Tom Cruise forever associated with his character – Maverick – from his breakthrough film 'Top Gun'? Second, further research is needed to understand the impacts of the agency and structural constraints, identified in this paper, on human brand management and the available strategies human brands can use to counter these effects. Specifically, there is a need to understand how human brands, from a portfolio perspective, manage a range of characters, rather than viewing the human brand as a single performance persona. Viewing the human brand from a portfolio perspective requires specific strategies to overcome the very human issues of age, fame and achievement, whilst striving to realise some level of control in managing their human brand.

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