



LETRAS
Pós-Graduação em Língua Inglesa

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The Dry Facts Behind an Advertisement
A multimodal investigation of persuasion techniques used by PETA

Orientadora: Professora Márcia Lobianco Vicente Amorim

Rio de Janeiro, Setembro de 2018

PONTIFÍCIA UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA
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**Monografia apresentada ao Programa de
Pós-Graduação em Letras da PUC-Rio
como requisito parcial para obtenção do
título de Especialista em Letras.**

Orientadora: Professora Márcia Lobianco Vicente Amorim

**Rio de Janeiro
Setembro de 2018**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Professor Marcia Lobianco Amorim for accepting me as her advisee, and managing to see me even when time was constrained. I am also grateful for being treated with respect, even when the quality of my work was lower than expected.

I would also like to thank Professor Mônica Spitalnik for accepting my invitation to examine my monograph.

I must thank my dear friends Anna Benchimol, Lisa Nascimento and Mariana Chaves, and my sister Luiza Peixoto, for their availability and friendship. Without them, I would not have finished this monograph.

A special thanks to my parents, Angela and Flávio Peixoto, who have always supported me throughout my academic adventures, both financially and emotionally. I would not be anywhere near where I am today if they had not insisted that good education is worth fighting for.

Abstract

This paper explores a printed advertisement. It aims at analyzing and discussing written and visual choices for conveying ideology by using concepts of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Multimodality and Intertextuality with the support of Systemic Functional Linguistics. Finally, it hopes to fuel a discussion about the ways in which the genre advertisement can be used in the classroom to develop students' awareness of how language, in the form of Discourse and Ideology, shapes their own social identities on a daily basis.

Keywords

Ideology - Power - Discourse - Multimodality - Intertextuality - Advertisement - Veganism

Resumo

**“Os fatos enxutos atrás de uma propaganda
Uma investigação das técnicas usadas pela PETA”**

Essa monografia explora um anúncio impresso. Tem por objetivo analisar e discutir escolhas de texto escrito e visual para transmitir ideologia, usando conceitos de Análise Crítica de Discurso (CDA), Multimodalidade e Intertextualidade com o apoio de Linguística Sistêmica Funcional. Finalmente, espera fomentar uma discussão sobre as maneiras como o gênero anúncio pode ser usado na sala de aula para desenvolver a consciência de alunos de como linguagem, na forma de Discurso, molda a sua própria identidade social diariamente.

Palavras Chave

Ideologia – Poder – Discurso – Multimodalidade – Intertextualidade – Anúncio – Veganismo

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"For CDA, language is not powerful on its own - it gains power by the use powerful people make of it."
(Wodak; Meyer, 2001, p. 10)

"Just as with language, choices in visual communication can be equally ideological, shape our world views and negotiate social and power relationships."
(Simpson; Mayr, 2010, p. 135)

1

Introduction

As an animal lover I am intrinsically motivated to read and research on the way animals are represented in society, through verbal and non-verbal language, both by animal rights activists and by those who believe animals to be products. Further, I have always been fascinated by issues of social and cultural contexts, such as how society decides which behavior is desired and which is not, and how language is used to maintain or change the status quo.

Consequently, I decided to conduct this investigation departing from an advertisement published by PETA – People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, a non-profit organization (NPO). At first, I was skeptical about this choice because, as someone who values animal welfare, I did not wish to undermine the work of an institution with which I identify ideologically. However, the more I read about Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the closer I came to the realization that it aims not at judging which ideology is superior or inferior, but rather at unraveling the language used in a text in an attempt to reveal which ideology is being promoted and how. In the present case, PETA promotes its ideology overtly, through the words “try vegan”, however, even when this is the case, CDA is able to point to the process of signification and reality construction (Fairclough, 1992).

A Vegan organization is an institution which seeks to advocate for Veganism. The self-proclaimed largest animal rights organization in the world, PETA, describes Vegans as people who eat a strict vegetarian diet, do not consume animal by-products and do not exploit them in any way. Because PETA advocates for Veganism by actively educating the public, protesting with campaigns and participating in matters of legislation, it can be inferred that Veganism is a socio-political stance, thus closer to an ideology than to a diet.

According to Fairclough, ideology refers to

“constructions of reality (the physical world, social relations, social identities), which are built into various dimensions of forms/meanings of discursive practices (...) The ideologies embedded in discursive practices are most effective when they become naturalized, and achieve the status of common sense” (Fairclough, 1992 p.87).

However, Veganism is not a dominant ideology and it has not achieved the status of common sense or hegemony. A study from 2008 conducted by the Harris Interactive Service Bureau on behalf of Vegetarian Times magazine showed that 1 million Americans considered themselves Vegans at the time of the survey. Considering that the U.S. has over 328 million inhabitants according to the U.S. Census Bureau, it is safe to say that Vegans are a minority social group within North-American society, where PETA is headquartered, and thus Veganism is not a hegemonic ideology and is far from being commonsensical.

The purpose of this monograph is to investigate how Intertextuality and Multimodality are used by PETA in its advertisements to convey its ideology through a CDA framework. Since advertisements are semiotic systems with the potential to reach large amounts of people, they are commonly used to further ideology and produce hegemonic behavior in society (Simpson, Mayr, 2010).

Besides, according to Cook,

“[the] very quantity of advertising in our society, the skill and effort which goes into its creation, the complexity of its discourse, and the impression it undoubtedly makes, are enough to make it interesting” (Cook, 1992, p.188).

Using Systemic Functional Linguistics as a critical tool, I will be exploring the linguistic levels in the selected sample such as the lexical and grammatical choices, as well as its extralinguistic levels, namely the context

of culture and context of situation in which the advertisement is inserted. As texts are subject to various interpretations within different contexts (Fairclough 1995), it is important to define the context of the advertisement. Considering that advertisements are multimodal texts, Multimodality will also be used as an analytical tool in the discussion of how PETA uses non-verbal language to realize meaning.

In order to undertake this analysis, this paper will be composed of five main sections as follows: Literature Review, Methodology, Analysis, Pedagogical Implications and Further Comments.

In the next section I will present the Literature Review with a brief overview of the concepts Critical Discourse Analysis, Multimodality, Intertextuality, Advertisement Discourse and Systemic Functional Linguistics which will be used in this investigation, and subsequently, I discuss how I intend to use them in my analysis. Next, in section 3 I describe the methodology used to investigate the advertisement sample selected. Following this, under section 4 the analysis is developed. The Analysis section has six subsections. Subsection 4.1 Cultural References discusses the background for this monograph by placing the advertisement within its context of culture and situation. It clarifies concepts and influences such as Veganism, PETA, the water crisis issue, the 1960 movie Psycho which seems to have been the inspiration for the campaign, and discusses the choices of the model and photographer in that campaign. Next, section 4.2 deals with the concept of Advertisement as a genre. After that, under section 4.3 Description of advertisement sample, I construct a general description of the advertisement selected by pointing to what is denoted to the reader. Then, sections 4.4 “Verbal language” and 4.5 “Non-verbal language” analyze more deeply the language used in the advertisement by resorting to a CDA framework, supported by Multimodality and Intertextuality concepts. In section 5, “Pedagogical Implications”, I offer suggestions of how multimodal texts

such as advertisement pieces could be explored in the classroom to further students' awareness and involvement with current social matters and argue why. Finally, under section 6, "Further Comments", I consider the limitations of this investigation and propose additional questions which could serve as new research material regarding PETA's advertising campaigns. I also reflect on how the process of writing this monograph has affected me from different perspectives, professionally and personally.

Lastly, because "advertising can focus and redefine ideas about language, discourse, art and society" (Cook, 1992, p.188), and the public is commonly ignorant of this premise (Fairclough, 1995), the undertaking of this kind of study proves to be not only justifiable but necessary.

2

Literature Review

Human history reflects a constant struggle for power amongst various social groups, from very small communities all the way up to Western and Eastern societies. Different wars fought throughout time, which may have differed in their cultural and situational contexts, have had social institutions such as governments and religious organizations behind them with the common ultimate goal of gaining economic, political, cultural and ideological control over others and subsequently working towards maintaining it, seeking Hegemony (Fairclough, 1995).

This clash for power and hegemony has emerged in two distinctive ways across history, being one through coercion and another through compliance (Simpson; Mayr 2010). But exactly how and why does a social group consent to being dominated?

“In democratic societies, power needs to be seen as legitimate by the people in order to be accepted and this process of legitimization is generally expressed by means of language and other communicative systems” (Simpson, Mayr, 2010 p. 3).

When language is used with political intentions, through interaction between subject and object in the sending and receiving of visual, spoken and written texts, it becomes Discourse (Simpson; Mayr, 2010). Albeit not always overtly, Discourse is intrinsically present in advertisements because their main function is to sell a product or promote a person, an idea or a set of ideas (Cook, 1992). This set of ideas can be understood in a broader sense as Ideology, which is seen by CDA as a vital component in the process of instituting and sustaining uneven power relations in society (Wodak; Meyer, 2001). Thus, to better serve the purposes of this paper, I target Ideology only as an ingredient in the elements of a text which enable social institutions to participate in the struggle for power (Fairclough, 1995).

Advertisements which do not sell a product can be referred to as non-product advertisements and often alert the reader about a problem and solicit help with its solution, however even when this is the case, “it can be argued that these other functions are all in the service of a main function which is usually to sell” (Cook, 1992 p.5).

Furthermore, advertisements are communicative systems which serve as social action by constructing a dominant discourse through which they seek to impose ideologies - both echoing and shaping or reshaping social identities. In this way, analyzing advertisements becomes fruitful in the search for knowledge of the society we live in, especially because one may not encounter a certain type of discourse during their lifetime, but seldom will a person in contemporary society not encounter an advertisement (Cook, 1992).

These ideas of Power, Discourse and Ideology discussed above constitute the Critical Discourse Analysis framework proposed by Fairclough (1995) and later developed by Wodak (2001) and will be used as a foundation to examine the piece of advertisement previously selected.

Advertisements are multimodal ensembles; they combine more than one mode of communication, often illustrations and words. Because written and visual elements of a text jointly allow for its message to be conveyed efficiently (Simpson; Mayr 2010), it is imperative to resort to concepts proposed by Kress and Van Leeuwen in their “Reading Images - Grammar of Visual Design” (2006) in order to carry out this investigation. Following its guidelines, in this study I will discuss “forms (‘signifiers’) such as colour, perspective and line, as well as the way in which these forms are used to realize meanings (‘signifieds’) in the making of signs” (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006 p. 6).

Multimodality encourages a social semiotic approach to the interpretation of meanings in multimodal texts. It takes into consideration the context within which the sign-maker is inserted as well as his intentions. Sign-making is not a random act, but a carefully planned one (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006). Multimodality also proves to be useful in the analysis of advertisements because it understands that “the visual elements and arrangements of a text perform persuasive work” (Wysocki, 2003, apud Bazerman and Prior, 2004, p.124), the core of advertisements. Moreover, it is a good counterpart to CDA - which has often been applied exclusively to verbal texts – since it is able to uncover ideological meaning-making within visual aspects, thus making a critical analysis more extensive and complete (Kress, Van Leeuwen, 2006).

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006:32) have borrowed Halliday's nomenclatures to define and later explain texts' ideational, interpersonal and textual functions while exemplifying:

“Whether we engage in conversation, produce an advertisement or play a piece of music, we are simultaneously communicating, doing something to, or for, or with, others in the here and now of a social context (swapping news with a friend; persuading the reader of a magazine to buy something; entertaining an audience) and representing some aspect of the world ‘out there’, be it in concrete or abstract terms (the content of a film we have seen; the qualities of the advertised product; a mood or melancholy sentiment or exuberant energy conveyed musically), and we bind these activities together in a coherent text or communicative event”.

As the text being analyzed in this monograph makes reference to another text (a 1960 cult movie), another indispensable theory is Intertextuality, which refers to the fact that texts come into being by having other texts as foundation (Fairclough, 1995) and to their implied and sometimes overt connections with earlier texts (Wysocki, 2003, apud Bazerman and Prior, 2004).

By analyzing the Intertextuality properties of a PETA's print advertisement, it will be possible to identify ideological stances underlying the

choice of a previous text to be used as its setting. The concept of Intermediality is also suitable here, considering that it occurs when the reference made in the current text does not come from another text of the same mode, but rather a different one – such as when an advertisement is making a reference to a movie (Bazerman, 2004). Inasmuch as analyzing this reference aims at enriching a critical discourse analysis, a comparison between the 1960 cult movie and the print advertisement in question will be drawn as to show how PETA adapted the original material to suit its discourse.

Finally, Systemic Functional Grammar will allow for a recognition and subsequent description of lexical and grammatical choices, demonstrating why these choices construct a more efficient advertisement piece. Functional Grammar concepts of Context of Culture and Situation will be used to explore the advertisement in question, since these meaning-making aspects of a text are fundamental in its comprehensive interpretation (Butt, 2000).

3

Methodology

The background for this monograph subject choice was a presentation I made for the module “Writing for Research”, taught by Professor Vera Selvatici during the Specialization in English Course at PUC-Rio. To illustrate the presentation, I built a poster in which I explored three advertisement pieces. These samples can be found in Appendix 1A, 1B and 1C for reference. During that presentation I observed that the campaign “Skins” (Appendix 1A) attracted more attention in class and resulted in a lot more comments by the viewers than the other two. I was not exactly surprised, because the campaign “Skins” was the only one containing a picture depicting a human being, while the other two featured animals. Interestingly, I noticed similar reactions from vegans and non-vegans alike, which I determined was the case after chatting with each person about their diets and lifestyles, and their feelings towards the advertising samples.

I eliminated the “Skins” campaign as a potential object of examination, as criticizing something unarguably visually repulsive seemed uninteresting to me. Thus, in order to conduct this study, I selected a print advertisement piece which was not in the original project, and which has its theme centered on a likely upcoming water scarcity crisis (Appendix 2). The water crisis theme is extremely relevant - most countries show some degree of concern with the environment today and the vast majority of scientists agree that some course of action must be taken. In addition, the selected sample advert has an enormous target audience, because all humans are affected by levels of water supply, independently of their dietary and lifestyle choices.

I selected this advertisement piece from the official PETA website section Features. PETA’s advertisements are notorious for their shock value and offensive images, although this is not always true, and I decided to select

one of the more subtle pieces. Because I am an enthusiast of American culture, I also decided to choose an advertisement that combined an American pop icon with an American cult movie.

This will be a qualitative study, based on one advertisement piece as opposed to a plethora of samples because “the quantitative aspect of discourse analysis is accordingly always of less relevance to the significance of discourse analysis than the qualitative” (Jäger, 2001, apud Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p.52) and also because Multimodality is apt to guide us in the investigation of macro situations through the analysis of the micro (Jewitt, 2013). Micro and macro aspects of society converge to create its perceived reality (Dijk, 2001).

The chosen sample shows a woman inside a bathroom with a written text placed to her right side. This piece is most likely targeted at people who are not personally moved by campaigns depicting animals in physical pain or psychological distress. Although seemingly minimalist, the advertisement contains several elements that combined are able to co-create meaning. “These meanings are socially made, socially agreed and consequently socially and culturally specific” (Gunther; Kress, 2010, p. 88). As such, it is only possible for an audience familiar with American pop culture and movies to comprehend the Intertextuality aspects of the advertisement, thus to absorb its message as intended.

In order to provide the reader with enough foundation to digest the selected advertisement analysis, and to afford this monograph with texture, these cultural references will be dealt with first.

4

Analysis

4.1.

Cultural References

Cultural references are extremely important to any multimodal analysis because Multimodality proposes that cultural, historical and socially situated language has the ability to achieve communicative goals (Price, Jewitt, Brown; 2013). Thus, previously acquired cultural schemata enable readers to decode the meanings writers seek to realize within different socio-cultural groups. Essentially, “visual language is not – despite assumptions to the contrary – transparent and universally understood; it is culturally specific” (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006, p.4). A reader in Western society may be amused by a text which might otherwise offend readers from the Middle East, for example. Therefore, it is crucial for advertisement designers to pay close attention to detail when deciding which visual and written elements to use.

There are two levels of context within a text: context of culture and context of situation; the former encompasses the latter (Butt, 2000). In order to decode PETA’s message, a reader must be acquainted with its context of culture: Veganism. Considering that the target audience is the North-American one, it is likely that the reader is also able to deduce meanings realized by the context of situation of the advertisement: an NPO advertisement - more specifically, an NPO advertisement piece seeking to promote Veganism by presenting a related issue, the water scarcity crisis.

In order to be cohesive, this analysis will be preceded by the contextualization of the advertisement, as follows.

4.1.1.

Veganism as Ideology

As Veganism is the cultural backdrop of the advertisement, it is fundamental to be familiar with its characteristics in order to decode the message contained in the advertisement. This is especially true for the sample selected, since PETA does not explain what its only request “Try Vegan” means. A likely reason for avoiding an explanation of Veganism is that advertisers aim at constructing a positive image of their products – or ideologies – and often use deceptive language in their visual and written texts, excluding negative aspects (Cook, 2008). To explain Veganism, even if superficially, would turn their request into a burden, since there are many steps to be taken in order for someone to adopt this ideology. There has also been a shift in advertising techniques to providing consumers with less product details and instruction. Association of ideas and abstraction are more commonly used today (Goldstein, 2009).

Vegans as a norm seek to avoid any sort of animal exploitation and consumption whenever feasible and this attitude is extended to a Vegan’s relationship with the food, entertainment, scientific research and garment trades. Above that, Veganism is a socio-political statement against human practices in what it relates to animals.

The difference between Vegetarianism and Veganism is that the former restricts its scope to eating while the latter enforces an animal by-product consumption restriction to all areas of life. This principle further ratifies the status of Veganism as ideology, as opposed to simply a diet.

4.1.2.

PETA

PETA is a North-American based NPO dedicated to promote animals' rights and Veganism. The acronym PETA stands for "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals". According to its website, "PETA's motto is clear: Animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment or abuse in any other way." Accordingly, PETA is active in all of those areas of animals' rights issues.

One of the methods used by PETA to achieve its goals is to promote awareness campaigns and protests against institutions which do not adhere to Veganism or respect lawful animals' rights. It often uses print advertisements, since as a semiotic channel of communication they are perfectly suitable to further ideology to large audiences. The NPO has, however, received a fair amount of criticism for their choices in visual images, often considered distasteful, such as in the skin campaign mentioned before. It claims to do this purposefully because mass media is more inclined to cover controversial events, thus allowing them "to initiate discussion, debate, questioning of the status quo, and, of course, action".

Notwithstanding, PETA also creates advertising campaigns that are considered attractive by Western standards, using celebrities and beautiful settings. This is the case of the campaign against horses in entertainment, as shown in Appendix 1C. Using beauty to make advertisement alluring is a commonly used persuasion technique. Images often depict scenery or people who consumers crave and long for (Goldstein, 2009).

PETA takes different approaches with the intention to reach different audiences. This tactic is used because, currently,

"In American society, there is what Kopperud (1993) calls "a pitched battle for the hearts and minds of U.S. consumers "(p.20) taking place between the meat industry and animal activists. This ideological struggle occurs primarily through language and the media" (Stibbe, 2001, p.147).

4.1.3.

The water scarcity crisis

Although the main goal of the chosen advertisement is to sell Veganism as ideology, its central theme is excessive water consumption by cattle farms. This makes sense because according to an article published by Michigan State University, in these farms

"water is used for animal consumption, milk cooling, cleaning and sanitizing equipment, cow cooling, irrigating crops, producing value added products, moving manure and cleaning the barns via flush systems."

Environmental experts' concern over fresh water supply and demand is intense. This is made evident by the gargantuan amount of articles about "the water scarcity crisis" or simply "the water crisis" currently available on the internet. There are also several renowned organizations which advertise this problem and seek to find a solution, such as Water.org, WorldWildLife.org and National Geographic Society's Freshwater Initiative. World Wildlife Organization for instance, affirms that

"Disposal of cattle production waste without proper treatment leads to the pollution of water resources. Sediment resulting from poor grazing management contaminates surface water and groundwater. Beef production also requires a significant amount of water, most of which is used to grow feed for cattle".

Their stances are helpful to PETA since these institutions have effectively established themselves as trustworthy worldwide. Their discourse grants PETA credibility by corroborating claims of an impending water scarcity crisis, by agreeing that cattle farms consume water at copious

amounts and by warning society about the severe need to take immediate action.

4.1.4.

Alfred Hitchcock and the 1960 movie “Psycho”

In 1960, director Alfred Hitchcock released the horror movie “Psycho” and was extremely successful. The movie earned praise from critics and audiences alike, and it broke new grounds in the Movie Industry.

The movie tells the story of the fateful encounter between a young taxidermist and a travelling woman, who becomes a guest in his hotel. Eventually, in the words of film critic Tim Dirks, he kills the woman “in a shocking, brilliantly-edited shower murder scene accompanied by screeching violins”. This is the scene denoted in PETA’s advertisement, in which Pamela Anderson portrays the woman, and can be found in Appendices 3A and 3B.

This movie proves to be the perfect choice for PETA to promote Veganism for several reasons. First, the villain is a taxidermist, a profession that Vegans are inherently opposed to. Second, it is easily recognizable as it is part of North-American pop culture –the scene itself and even the soundtrack used in the scene have been parodied innumerous times in the media. Internationally famous cartoon “The Simpsons” and Ruud water heaters are just two examples of these parodies. Moreover, the movie connotes horror which is the exact mood that PETA seeks to signify. Lastly, the name of the movie – “Psycho”- is the informal word for psychopath, which means “a person who is likely to commit violent criminal acts because of a mental illness that causes the person to lack any feelings of guilt” according to the Cambridge Dictionary. This is the exact image that PETA wants the reader to associate with meat and dairy farms: criminals.

4.1.5.

The choice of model and photographer

Pamela Anderson is a Canadian actress and model who gained considerable prominence in the media in 1989 when she joined the cast of “Baywatch”, a North-American TV drama series hit about lifeguards working on a beach in California. In the series, Anderson often displayed her blond hair, slender legs and large breasts - highly attractive traits by Western society standards - in a sensual manner. She has hitherto stamped the cover of Playboy magazine fourteen times, reaching the status of sex symbol.

Anderson is also known for her persistent animals' rights activism endeavors and vegan lifestyle. She has lent her celebrity status and image to PETA's campaigns several times throughout the years, distinctively against the fur industry and the slaughter of baby seals in Canada, and in favor of veganism (Appendices 4A, 4B and 4C). She works with several vegan organizations besides PETA, including “Mercy for Animals” and “International Anti-Poaching Foundation” (IAPF). Anderson also advocates for environmental issues such as the water crisis. She is a partner with “Waves for Water”, an organization concerned with providing clean water to communities around the world. Pamela Anderson has also won several awards, including a Linda McCartney Memorial Award, presented to her by Sir Paul McCartney himself, for helping PETA further its anti-fur campaign.

According to Ben Goldstein, “adverts often encourage us to buy a product because an authority or a celebrity recommends it” (2009, p.187). Pamela Anderson is the ideal model for the advertisement because she is a sex-symbol celebrity who is an authority in Veganism.

In the advertisement image, she is captured by David LaChapelle, a celebrated American photographer who has worked with internationally

cherished public figures such as Michael Jackson, and with well-established brands such as Louis Vuitton. “LaChapelle is an exceptional practitioner in the field of advertising, amongst other reasons, since he frequently incorporates in his works metaphors with moral, religious motifs, and familiar elements from works by the great masters, from the Middle Ages to the present”.

Besides his familiarity with advertising language, LaChapelle is the ideal photographer for this campaign because he is not only a pop icon but also a vegetarian, which makes him another participant authority on the subject. In a past interview to *The Telegraph*, he stated "My mother taught me a lot about respect for all living things - for plants and animals. I am a vegetarian. I was brought up that way".

Brands in general prefer to use celebrities over unknown participants to endorse their products, and this technique is known as “ask the expert” (Goldstein, 2009). In PETA’s advertisement, both the model and the photographer are expert celebrities. Their names occupy a prime space within the advertisement page: the bottom right, where writers usually display important new information to the reader. This choice confirms the prestige that Anderson and LaChapelle as expert ambassadors confer to PETA’s message.

4.2.

Advertisement as genre

“In contemporary capitalist society, advertising is everywhere” (Cook, 1992, p 10). Advertising is a multi-modal mode of communication and there are several qualities to advertisement as Discourse. This brief section aims only at a superficial characterization of the sample chosen according to some of these qualities which apply.

Advertisements which do not sell a product as the one in PETA's campaign, can be referred to as non-product advertisements. Here, the goal is to impose a new ideology – Veganism – as a replacement for the hegemonic meat-eating culture of North-America. Although central, this request for a change in behavior is not highlighted to the reader, and needs not to be (Cook, 1992). Actually, “a typical feature of manipulation is to communicate beliefs implicitly, that is, without actually asserting them, and with less chance that they will be challenged” (Van Dijk, 2015, p. 358).

PETA's advertisement is interdiscoursal; it elicits the shared schemata of a movie, and in this way it designs affinity and builds rapport with its audience (Cook, 1992). It can also be classified as soft sell, as it implies that life quality is at stake and Veganism is the right path in the pursuit of well-being. Another technical classification is “reason”, as it gives reasons for its idea to be consumed by showing what will realize if the reader does not. “Non-product ads often show only the effects of not adopting the advocated behaviour” (Cook, 1992, p.184). It is a short copy piece, as it has only three sentences, and slow drip as it is one of many of PETA's advertisements in their campaign for Veganism.

Denotation and connotation play central roles within advertisement discourse. Denotation refers to what is visually obvious to readers by the use of signs, either images or words. When advertisers design a multimodal text, careful thought is given to sign selection. This is because signs carry connotations - associations with concepts that are signified by use of these signs. A critical multimodal analysis of advertisements reveals that all depiction of reality is biased (Machin, 2007).

Finally, a limited portion of society has access to using advertisements as a communication channel to persuade others to buy their ideologies or

products and to undermine dissenting ideas, by choosing what to denote and connote through different types of semiotic modes. Because of this, advertisements as a genre can be considered a site for power practice (Wodak; Meyer, 2001).

4.3.

Description of the advertisement sample

The image in the selected advertisement is shown in black and white while the written text is presented in black and red. The scene depicted takes place inside a minimalist bathroom. In the background, there is a white wooden wall. On the top right there is a shower head delicately spouting water. In the center, under the shower head, there is a female model standing inside a white bathtub.

The woman is tall and slender. She has light colored eyes and is wearing black eyeliner. She has straight white teeth and fleshy lips. Her hair is blonde, short and curled, well-groomed and dry. Her hand and toe nails are manicured in a light color. She has slender hairless legs. Water is hitting and flowing down her backside while she holds a piece of white fabric against her body. She has a posed scared face; her eyes are bulging and her mouth is wide opened. She is looking up and to the left of the picture, making no direct eye contact with the reader. The object of her gaze is not shown in the picture. Her hands are against her body, in a typical self-preserving stance that people take when caught naked by surprise.

The advertisement makes a clear reference to an Alfred Hitchcock movie from 1960, called "Psycho" as discussed previously in the Cultural References section.

On the right side, the words “Meat and dairy farms” are in black capital letters. Below them, the words “drain half the country’s water” are in red capital letters. Beneath these, there are two sentences. The first is “Making a splash for the environment doesn’t just mean shorter showers” which is written in black. The second is “Try vegan” which is written in red.

On the bottom right corner it is written “Pamela Anderson by David LaChapelle for PETA”. Pamela Anderson is written in bold black. Under her name, it is written “by David LaChapelle, for” in capital letters but in a smaller size font, also in black. Below, there is the name PETA which is written in bold red and in the biggest font size when compared to the other two names. PETA’s name is in italics and in similar style to its original logo. Pamela Anderson is the model, and David LaChapelle is the photographer who took the picture; both are participants in the campaign run by PETA.

In the following sections I will analyze in more detail each aspect of the written and visual aspects.

4.4.

Verbal language

Although images are consumed faster, the written text in an advertisement serves to clarify and complete its message. In literate society, people tend to be assured by information conveyed in writing (Cook, 1992). Of course, the paralanguage contained in this part of the composition, the visual aspects such as typography and size, also play a central role. These aspects will be dealt with in section 4.5, “Non-verbal language”.

When verbal language is used with a purpose, it becomes Discourse as it has been discussed previously. The aim of this segment is to investigate exactly how PETA embeds its Ideology inside the discourse expressed

through the verbal component of its advertisement; how it takes action with a purpose through language and realizes speech-acts.

Language as a social semiotic resource has three main functions which encode meaning: representational - language serves to paint and share our view of the world around us, interpersonal – it produces reciprocal actions thus relationships, and textual - affix cohesion (Butt, 2000). The written text presented in this advertisement is composed of three sentences, each of which has these functions simultaneously, as all language does, and will be discussed next. Lexicogrammar choices will also be considered.

Sentence 1: “Meat and dairy farms drain half the country’s water”.

In sentence 1, PETA uses the verb “drain”, when it could have chosen another verb, such as “use” or “consume”, but these would not fulfill the goal of representing meat and dairy farms’ actions with a negative connotation. When PETA uses the verb “drain” it is insinuating that these farms overuse a resource that belongs to society, and ultimately to the reader, establishing a criminal-victim relationship.

This sentence also reveals the careful choice of a verb tense-aspect and its meaning making potential. The only verb in the sentence, “drain”, is in the present simple tense. A likely reason for this choice is that the present simple tense is used to refer to “general, timeless truths, such as physical laws or customs. [For example] The earth revolves around the sun” (Larsen-Freeman; Kuehm, Haccius, 2002, p. 3). PETA is therefore establishing a fact; it nulls the possibility of debate or dissenting opinions. This is a fact, not PETA’s perspective.

This sentence further fills the role of “problem” in a “problem – solution” story line, which induces the reader to keep reading to find out what the solution might be.

Sentence 2: “Making a splash for the environment doesn’t just mean shorter showers”.

After presenting a problem and its cause, in sentence 2, PETA changes the tone of the message from warning to playful, by starting the statement with a pun in the phrase “making a splash”. It changes the tone because this is the beginning of its negotiation, its “sale”: the request it intends to make to the audience. “Advertisers have a predilection for strategies which distract from or add to the literal meaning (denotation, reference or logical content) of language” (Cook, 1992, p.80). The word “splash” has a positive connotation, as people often associate “splashing water” with summer time, having fun and an upwards movement - the upward direction is likewise associated with positive things. This is a common approach taken by advertisers who seek to use words with positive connotations within specific cultures (Cook, 1992). By doing this, PETA removes the feeling of chore and adds an element of ease.

Puns are common in adverts because they act as attention grabbing mechanisms, and make advertisements more interesting.

“(…) before an ad can influence a potential consumer, the advertiser must first persuade them to notice it. An integral way that this is made manifest is through language and specifically, figurative language (Abass, p. 47)

In sum, this choice is ideal because besides distracting the reader, it adds lexical cohesion, agreeing with the “water” theme.

When PETA chooses to write that this action (“making a splash”) is “for the environment”, not animals explored by meat and dairy farms, it portrays the reader as a personally interested party. Correspondingly, it widens the

scope of target public, because it is not only addressing people who feel compassion towards animals, but people who might care about their own survival – virtually everyone.

The second part of the sentence, which is the predicate, “doesn’t just mean shorter showers” serves two purposes. First, it removes ambiguity from PETA’s message. People frequently associate saving water with personal water usage. It is common to associate wasteful use of water with taking long showers, careless dish washing and watering plants during the middle of the day for instance. Some states within the United States, such as Florida for example, have enacted laws limiting the private use of sprinklers and setting guidelines for private lawn irrigation, claiming that this is to avoid water scarcity issues.

The adverb “just” serves a purpose as well and is carefully placed. First, as a speech act, it serves to make statements more subtle and friendly. When combined with the word play discussed above, it further lightens the message. PETA acknowledges that shorter showers indeed help the environment – it negotiates reality with the reader, building rapport - but it explains that this is not sufficient; so in fact it still imposes its own beliefs and exerts power over the reader. PETA de-legitimizes people who only take action about the water crisis by cutting down their private water consumption and not by going Vegan.

Indeed an advertisement text reflects conflict, as more than one Discourse type is present seeking dominance over others (Wodak;Meyer, 2001). Ideologies compete for attention and potential consumers in a similar fashion that product brands do. Fairclough (1995, p.94) emphasizes that “a significant target of hegemonic struggle is the denaturalization of existing conventions and replacement of them with others”. Accordingly, PETA reveals what is the replacing ideology in the next sentence:

Sentence 3: “Try Vegan”.

This is the culmination of PETA’s discourse - a concise sentence which plays a small role within the written text. This does not undermine the efficiency of the advertisement because advertisements often save space to perform other acts, since it is self-explanatory that their ultimate goal is to reshape behavior. They use the free space for paralanguage elements which carry connotation (Cook, 1992).

PETA’s request is so concise that it does not explain what it entails in practical terms and the only presented requirement for “trying vegan” is to abstain from consumption of meat and dairy farms’ products. Thus, the written text fails to identify other characteristics of Veganism and because of this lack of information it is misleading - Vegans do not consume several other animal by-products such as honey and silk which are not produced in meat and dairy farms. Veganism is also more than a diet as already discussed, but rather a holistic lifestyle. This is a common feature of advertisements - “they eulogize a product, stressing its advantages, while ignoring, or distracting attention from, its disadvantages” (Cook, 1992, p.180).

The verb chosen for the final sentence is in the imperative tense which is often used in advertisement to address the reader directly. This fits well within Advertisement Discourse, for the reason that the ultimate goal of publicity is to convince the target audience to take some kind of action (Goldstein, 2009). Although the imperative tense is used to express commands, its patronizing connotation is mitigated by the choice of the verb “try”, instead of “go”, often used by PETA. “Try” allows room for failure. This concession takes pressure off the reader’s shoulders. Further, the sentence does not use another action verb in combination with the verb “try”. It could have been written as “try going vegan” or “try becoming vegan” or yet “try

eating vegan.” By doing this the advert seeks to minimize the amount of effort the reader needs to make to comply with its request. (“Try something” requires less energy than “try doing something”).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the advert does not ask for donations, which is typical of adverts ran by Non-Profit organizations as a genre. This choice could reflect PETA’s intention to focus on a target public which is not concerned with animals’ rights, but rather their own survival thus interested only in environmental issues.

Sentence 4: “Pamela Anderson by David LaChapelle for Peta”.

Adding the model and the photographer’s names to the bottom right of the advertisement’s written text as discussed under section 4.1 (“Cultural References”), guarantees that the audience observes the significance of who these participants are. The clause “for PETA” states that they both endorse PETA itself and its mission, granting credibility to the organization.

4.5.

Non-verbal language

The use of non-verbal language is significant in the genre Advertisement because it aids the verbal text to lead the reader into the path the producer desires him to take, (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006); in fact, images “perform persuasive work” (Wysocki, 2003, apud Bazerman and Prior, 2004, p.124) - the foundation of advertisements.

As multimodal texts, advertisements combine image and words to create mood, attitude and abstract concepts that in turn convey its elements’ social relationships. In this way, its interpersonal functions are realized through images (Machin, 2007). Because of this characteristic, visual

resources are just as important as verbal language in an advertisement's meaning-making process. In fact, pictures can actually carry complex messages by themselves, and an advertisement can exist without any words at all (Cook, 1992).

4.5.1.

Choices of colors and types

"Specific colors can have very different meanings in different contexts" (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006, p.227), thus are able to aid visual texts in conveying ideas. Because of this semiotic function, the colors comprising advertisements are not arbitrary, but chosen with a specific signifying potential in mind.

PETA's advertisement piece is mainly in black and white. This choice is likely due to four main reasons, the first of which lies in Intertextuality concepts. The movie which the advertisement invokes, *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960) was also shot in black and white. More specifically, this technique is known as Intermediality, where "a reference moves from one medium to another" (Bazerman, 2004 p. 90) as is the case with a movie being referenced to in a picture. Keeping the advertisement as similar to the original visual text as possible is one of the elements which enable the reader to make the desired association with little effort, and in current society we tend to prefer fast exchange of information with no obstacles to understanding (Wysocki, 2003, apud Bazerman and Prior, 2004). This is why people often abbreviate words in cell phone text messages, while using equivalent abbreviations - shared signifiers. Because of this, it is important to facilitate the reading and interpretation of the text, so it can fulfill its purpose.

The second reason for mostly using black and white is that these two colors are generally associated with opposites, such as light and dark, good

and evil. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “a black-and-white subject or situation is one in which it is easy to understand what is right and wrong”. This idea of duality and of right and wrong agrees with the advertisement’s message and meaning-making purposes, as PETA wants the reader to ponder with ethical questions of environmental responsibility, inherent in Veganism as an ideology.

Incidentally, the third reason for this choice of colors is that a black and white picture contributes to an advertisement’s goal of using all attention-grabbing devices which are available. “In a world dominated by color (...) creating an ad in black and white can be taken as a daring feat that will certainly call the audience [sic] attention” (Castro, 2007, p. 26)

Although PETA depicts the scene in black and white, it does so with soft tones - the saturation of color is not very defined. Where the image is black it is not the darkest version of black; where it is white it is not the lightest version of white. The colors do not travel very far within the grey scale of values. Adding to this, the image has several blurred areas, both in the background and on the model’s body. The result is lower modality, which is the fourth reason for this choice of colors with low saturation. This technique - using soft focus and soft colors - allows the reader to read the image not as reality but instead as what the world would look like if meat and dairy farms were allowed to continue draining the country’s water supply (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006).

Regarding the written text in the advertisement piece, PETA continues the process of making meaning through types, by carefully selecting “lettershape, style, size and overall shape” since “typefaces can signal argumentative moves in a text” (Wysocki, 2003, apud Bazerman and Prior, 2004, p.127). Argumentation is essential for persuasion – an advertisement genre main concern. Cook (1992) adds that

“Writing is used both to create text and simultaneously to distract attention from it by using letter shapes and patterns to create parallel iconic and indexical meanings quite separate from the linguistic ones.” (p. 70)

Typefaces are a semiotic mode capable of carrying Intertextuality (Bazerman, 2004). Most of the text is written in black as this is the color associated in Western society with factual information - newspapers and official documents are printed in black. Conversely, the excerpts “drain half the country’s water”, “try vegan” and “PETA” are in red, a color often associated with emergency situations and vital information - the words “exit”, “fire extinguisher” and “ambulance” for example, are conventionally shown in red. In Western societies, red is also used in warning signs such as “danger”, “keep out” and “stop”. Thus the denotation of using red and black have become quite obvious as they are omnipresent signifiers in Western culture, broadly self-evident. Color association exists through previous schemata of its sociocultural use (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006), and these are the roots of PETA’s choices to use these two colors to build the advertisement’s mood.

As it was mentioned before, size matters. The first part of PETA’s message “Meat and Dairy farms drain half the country’s water” is written in capital letters. This awards the information a central role.

With reference to its shape, the sentence “drain half the country’s water” is printed with a type that has a negative connotation, as it is often associated with crime, because it is surrounded by irregular stains. These stains make an allusion to blood splatter found in crime scenes as well as to things which are tainted. Crime is defined in the Oxford Dictionary apart from legal jargon as “an action or activity considered to be evil, shameful, or wrong”. By using this font, PETA connotes Meat and Dairy farms’ actions as such; just as any crime is a repulsive act, so is draining the country’s water supply or supporting those who do.

“Color-coordination’, rather than the repetition of a single color, can be used to promote textual cohesion” (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006). The choice of limiting the color red to these three pieces of information, “drain half the country’s water”, “try vegan” and “PETA” likewise helps the advert to assign a more important role to these parts of the message. It shows that the most relevant points being made are: the constructed reality (water is being wasted at copious amounts), how the reader can fulfill the expectation of the advertisement (pursue a vegan diet) and who is the authority behind the message, the sender (PETA).

The position of the written text further complements the overall feeling transmitted by the advertisement. Most of the text is not aligned, but rather tilted on the page. Something that is tilted probably needs to be straightened or corrected, as it is the situation being reported. The exception is the signature, which is shown in an organized manner because the people and entity represented by it are not incorrect in what they are proposing.

4.5.2.

Visual text

The image denoted in the advertisement sample has already been described in section 4.3 “Description of the advertisement sample” thus it is unnecessary to add more description of this nature here. In this section, I will consider its connotations only.

It is important to explain that when PETA chose certain semiotic modes over others to convey meaning, such as the shower scene from the movie *Psycho* to work as the setting signifying a horrific situation to be avoided, it did so because it was confident that its intended North-American public would be able to make the desired connections and subsequent interpretations (Machin, 2007).

There are other carriers of connotation used by PETA that deserve attention in order to address the issue of choice with purpose, such as pose, objects, settings and photogenic quality as well as the representation of social actors which will be dealt with.

Poses are widely used to connote meaning in advertisements containing people because of their meaning potential. Readers are able to recognize feelings signified by poses through association with their social communication schemata; poses in advertisements are used in the same way they are used within the society or community (Machin, 2007). In PETA's image, the model's pose connotes fear and horror because her hands are in front of her body and her left leg is held up, a natural instinctive defensive move. Her facial expression serves as another mode through which the way she feels is reinforced; her eyes are bulging and her mouth is wide opened. She is not afraid of a person, but of something else. This of course is also rooted in Intertextuality principles, as the model is emulating the scene of a movie and how the movie actress behaved.

Nonetheless, there are significant differences between the original movie scene and PETA's representation. In the original (see Appendix 3), the actress' facial expression is horrendous and dreadful, but in its new version, the model's facial expression is artificially static. This was perhaps done to avoid shrunken, wrinkled skin, a physical trait associated with age and unattractiveness in Western culture. Advertisements "often feature attractive and appealing images which invite you in and seduce the gaze" (Goldstein, 2009, p. 187). In the movie, when the villain opens the shower curtain, the actress's hair is completely wet and undone, but in PETA's vision the model's hair is dry and perfectly groomed. In the original, the actress has a clean face, but in PETA's shot the model is wearing strongly marked black eyeliner and nude lipstick. She also has her finger and toe nails manicured. This

representation of the model reveals PETA's awareness of the hegemonic representation of a desirable woman in Western society. Advertisements often resort to lust and fear (Cook, 2001).

According to Machin (2007),

"cultural categorization is realized through standard attributes of dress, hairstyle, body adornment, etc" while "biological categorization is achieved through stereotyped physical characteristics. Such categorization may invoke both positive and negative connotations. (...) women [may be represented] as Barbie-type stereotypes of female attractiveness" (p. 121)

The advertisement is minimalist although it has a prominent object, the white fabric that the model holds against her body. This fabric does not have the texture of a towel, as it would be more natural considering the bathroom setting. The choice of white as opposed to other colors or a patterned piece of fabric also carries connotation. "The associations taken up in many of the communicative uses of color, such as in advertising or the entertainment media, will usually be with substances, objects, etc" (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 233). A possible interpretation of these choices in texture and color is that the object is made to provoke an association with the universally known flag of surrender. This implies that the model is under attack and is the weaker side in the power relationship with meat and dairy farms.

By portraying the model as a victim, PETA continues to use Intertextuality by portraying central premises to Western literature, present in all domains of storytelling, from Shakespearean plays to classic fairy tales to contemporary movies. The first of which is the fight of good versus evil, the "bad guys versus the good guys" plot. In the advertisement, PETA portrays farms as villains (bad guys) and the reader, who is assumed to share hegemonic values of morality imbedded in Western culture, must align with the model (good guys) against them. The second premise is the idea of the damsel who is helpless and needs to be saved. Semi-nudity confers

vulnerability (Machin, 2007) and this confirms the model's interpretation of an unprotected victim.

The setting in which a picture is set is also able to elicit associations that charge them with values (Machin, 2007). The minimalist bathroom choice works with four main purposes, besides the fact that it is an allusion to the original movie scene. First, this minimalism functions to lower modality, which serves to allow freer deliberation by the audience (Kress, Van Leeuwen, 2006) who can consider what the world could transform into, and not what already is. Second, bathrooms are places that inherently connote vulnerability – when someone enters an occupied bathroom they are assumed to be invading someone's privacy and to be an unwanted presence. This is why it is culturally agreed behavior in Western society to knock and ask for permission before entering. Third, "they remove the actual details of the context which allows us to think in abstractions" (Machin, 2007, p. 36). If PETA decided to represent meat and dairy farms using actors, for example as a butcher and a milkman, some readers may not identify with their classification of them as unwanted criminals. Readers could be consumers of those services, have friends or relatives with those professions, or even see them as individuals rather than representing industries of mass production. In this case, PETA's persuasion strategies would be lost to a substantial part of its audience. Finally, "this has the effect of drawing attention to the foreground, but still allows the setting to have a connotive effect" (Machin, 2007, p. 51). Additionally, the background is blurred or faded in some spots, indicating that the image is not meant to be understood as real (Machin, 2007). For PETA's message, the bathroom in itself is not important, only the social transactions taking place in there.

The participants and their represented relationship are equally important carriers of meaning and connotation. This relationship is built around three conditions: gaze, angle of interaction and distance (Machin, 2007).

The gaze combined with gestures and facial expressions compose a relationship between the model and the audience (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006). Although NPO advertisements usually use the “demand” picture style, one in which the represented participants gaze at the viewer because they are asking for something, usually a donation of either time or money, this is not the present case. Here, PETA chose the “offer” style, in which there is an absence of eye contact with viewers, building an impersonal relationship with the audience. This choice agrees with the photo’s intention of reproducing a movie scene. The “offer” style is used in movies and narrative style photos, because the actors are supposed to pretend to be living a story, not merely telling it (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006). This absence of visual request is later addressed verbally, in the sentence “try vegan”. This confirms the notion that in advertisements, images and words combine to make meaning and thus should not be dealt with separately but in unison (Simpson; Mayr 2010).

The model is looking up to the left side of the photo, to something that the audience is unable to see or identify. According to Multimodality, the viewer can make inferences based on a combination of image and the written text, because different modes come together to realize meaning since they all have different potentials (Gunther; Kress, 2010). It can be assumed that the omitted participant represents meat and dairy farms, which are scaring and threatening the model, who represents the “country” in the phrase “half the country’s water”.

The relationship between represented participants is realized through vectors (Kress; Van Leeuwen, 2006). First, there is a vector – an imaginary line – coming from the actor of the image act (farms) threatening their goal (model). This can be inferred because the model is looking up and standing in a defensive pose with a scared countenance, which places the farms yet again in a position of power over her. Not only is the model in this position in

relation to them, but also in relation to the audience, because the angle in which the photo is taken allows the viewer to see her from above – the inside of her bathtub is visible. This can be interpreted as the viewer having slightly more power than her, thus as a plausible savior. Besides all these factors, it is also possible to analyze the compositional style of the photograph. Information statuses arise from where the information is placed on a page.

Because in Western society we read from left to right, what is on the left is “given” – already known, and what is on the right is considered “new” – not known, more valuable information (Gunther; Kress, 2010). Here, the model is on the left because the audience is presumably acquainted with Pamela Anderson and Hitchcock’s “Psycho”. What it does not know is what the issue is, why she is scared and that meat and dairy farms drain the country’s water or at least how much water they drain, and how the reader can help. Values implied by bottom and top placement apply only to the verbal text in this advertisement, which happens more often in non-product advertisements than in product ones. The written message placed on top - “meat (...) the country’s water” - is a generic oversimplified statement about the issue in question. The other part of the message - “Making a splash (...) Try Vegan” - contains the precise information, with the practical aspects of PETA’s intended message. At the bottom right of the page, is placed the signature, a compelling argument that Pamela Anderson, David LaChapelle and PETA together speak with authority on the issue. The model is centered on the page, a position which affords her chief value. This choice is understandable because of who she is, her physical attributes and the connotations of her pose and demeanor.

Placed on the right margin, the verbal text acts as complementary information, explaining why she is frightened.

In sum, all the elements in this advertisement piece serve a common goal, and the combination of all of them further strengthens the message delivered. Several cultural aspects are contained in the verbal and non-verbal texts, through denotation or connotation, and contribute to the construction of reality enacted by PETA.

An agreement between the reality presented by an advertisement and its message is necessary because advertisers strive to maintain or reshape consumers' preferences, and these are based on consumers' views of reality. Because of this premise, the reality conveyed by an advertisement is misleading and completely biased. An indication that reality can be manipulated is that "similar texts can be inserted into very different ideological stances" (Blommaert, 2005, p.184). The famous shower scene from "Psycho" could easily be used by meat and dairy farms to show the "horror" of taking long showers and privately contributing to a water scarcity crisis.

Accordingly, if any of the signs had been removed or replaced, the reality communicated could change and the advertisement's efficiency could have been diminished. If, for example, the written text were kept as it is, but the image had been changed to cattle grazing near a lake, readers might not agree with the possibility of a future water scarcity crisis.

As it was mentioned previously, the advertisement sample selected seemed minimalistic at first sight, however, once investigated it revealed several layers of meaning already discussed in the analysis section. These layers are the reflection of complex persuasion techniques used by PETA to herd consumers into the interpretation it can profit from.

5

Pedagogical Implications

Advertisements have a great potential to be used as authentic material in the educational environment because they can serve as starting point for valuable discussions about

“the most urgent issues of our time: the destruction of the environment, the wealth gap (both within and between countries), the choice between socialism and capitalism, the growth of a world culture, the struggle of feminism and patriarchy, the status of art and popular culture, the consequences of mass communication and high technology. Few discourse types can generate so much” (Cook, 2001,p.12).

Since advertisements are omnipresent in contemporary society, students of different ages and social classes have access to them. Because of this, advertisements prove to be a democratic tool; they can be used with young and adult learners and in private and state schools alike.

Besides the necessity of being able to discuss issues at the socio-political community level, students must also understand how their own identities are built. With this competence they can reflect about who they are as members of their communities, and what power this position affords them. Advertisement discourse constructs identities (Cook, 2001) thus it is inherently useful in this matter. It is essential to be cognizant of self-identity to contribute to the progress of society, either by conforming to or diverging from its status quo.

Comprehensive genre knowledge affords us cultural schemata which in turn allow us to act appropriately in different situations and to make predictions when reading a text (Barwashi; Reiff, 2010). Thus, the importance of being familiar with as many genres as possible, including advertisements, is clear since the aforementioned skills are prerequisites for a successful academic career.

Besides interpreting and discussing advertisements theoretically, it is possible to empower students through real interaction with social institutions which use such genre as a channel of representation and communication. For

example, it is possible to have students “pairing an analysis of the cultural values of advertisements with letters to advertisers arguing the negative effect on consumers” (Barwashi; Reiff, 2010, p.201) or expressing their identification with a product or ideology and pitching ideas for new advertising campaigns. From this ability to recognize and think critically about discourse hidden in advertisements, students can gain self-confidence and personal growth.

Another reason why advertisements are great material for the classroom is that they often use intertextuality. “Learning to analyze intertextuality will help you identify the ideas, research, and political positions behind policy documents” (Bazerman, 2004, p. 84). Likewise, they are multimodal texts and because the reciprocal action between modes realizes meanings (Jewitt, 2013 p4) they can also expedite a student’s own meaning-making learning process.

6

Further Comments

This monograph had a limited scope because, as a qualitative study, it analyzed a single advertisement sample. The chosen sample was an advertisement piece published by North-American NPO PETA.

The aim of this monograph was to present a critical discourse analysis of a specific advertisement piece, using concepts of multimodality, intertextuality and systemic functional linguistics in order to uncover the ideology promoted by it.

Although it is in print format, the advertisement was found on PETA’s website. Besides its website, there are several other modes through which PETA furthers its ideology, namely articles, petitions, protests and social media such as Instagram to name a few. These additional semiotic modes could serve as source for future research of how PETA promotes Veganism

through verbal and non-verbal language. It would also be interesting to ask additional questions regarding PETA's discourse not covered by this monograph such as how PETA represents women in its campaigns, if PETA's discourse is elitist or democratic, and how PETA, as a global brand, presents its ideology to different social and cultural groups.

This monograph exposed some of PETA's techniques for persuading its target public into adopting a Vegan lifestyle. In order to convey its message efficiently, PETA made careful choices, all of which had a specific purpose. In multimodal texts, such as advertisements, the choices of verbal and non-verbal signs jointly construct a biased reality that serves the advertiser's intention. In the sample selected, PETA's choices of signs connoted crime, horror and urgency so that its potential consumer would feel compelled to abide by its request ("Try Vegan").

The extra-linguistic features of the advertisement sample were also discussed under section 4.1 "Cultural References", because as established before, the context of culture and situation are extremely important components of a cohesive analysis (Meyer; Wodak, 2001).

All things considered, this monograph was extremely valuable to me, as a student of the English language, an English teacher, a member of Western society, a consumer and finally, as a PETA supporter.

As a student, I became familiarized with concepts of research and investigation and will continue to benefit from this learning experience in future classes. Additionally, I now distinguish biased verbal and non-verbal language within texts without much effort.

Being a teacher and writing this monograph unveiled to me the potential that advertisements have to be explored in the classroom. It is refreshing to find another source of authentic material which can generate discussion

within the classroom and promote student's awareness of their culture and society. The ability to interpret and decode messages contained in advertisements proved to be relevant to all students.

From the perspective of a member of Western society, this investigation promoted my own awareness of how language is used and the power it has to mold my identity by allowing me to submerge in some of the underlying principles of persuasion techniques used in advertisements. By studying the process of choices and meaning-making which an advertiser must consider, I am more apt to read, interpret and think critically when faced with an advertising campaign.

Finally, as a consumer I am now able to see beyond what is denoted in an advertisement piece and more specifically, in PETA's case, my passion for their mission. I am enlightened to the fact that PETA uses the same persuasion techniques used by powerful capitalist corporations.

It is important to establish that which ideology is in question is irrelevant since this monograph is not concerned with examining Veganism itself, but with the fact that

"action is controlled by our minds. So, if we are able to influence people's minds, e.g. their knowledge or opinions, we indirectly may control (some of) their actions, as we know from persuasion and manipulation" (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 355)

By reading about concepts of Critical Discourse Analysis, Multimodality, Intertextuality and Systemic Functional Linguistics I became more competent to recognize where and how verbal and non-verbal texts disguise facts and construct reality with a purpose to sell products and ideologies.

This monograph demonstrated that PETA is a participant in the struggle for power which occurs in society, since it uses mass media to advertise its discourse. In fact, we are all participants, whether we realize it or not; the only

variable is the position we assume in this struggle, either of dominant or subordinate. Because of this premise, I reaffirm my belief that all students at some point should be exposed to advertisements in the classroom. Professionals of the educational system should constantly research new ways of examining different advertisement samples with students, and of helping students to make a connection between these texts and the communities around them. This would help lead students on a path towards intellectual emancipation, allowing them to become critical citizens who are not easily deceived, since “critical theories aim at making ‘agents’ aware of hidden

coercion, thereby freeing them from that coercion and putting them in a position to determine where their true interests lie” (Wodak, Ruth, 2001, p.13).

7

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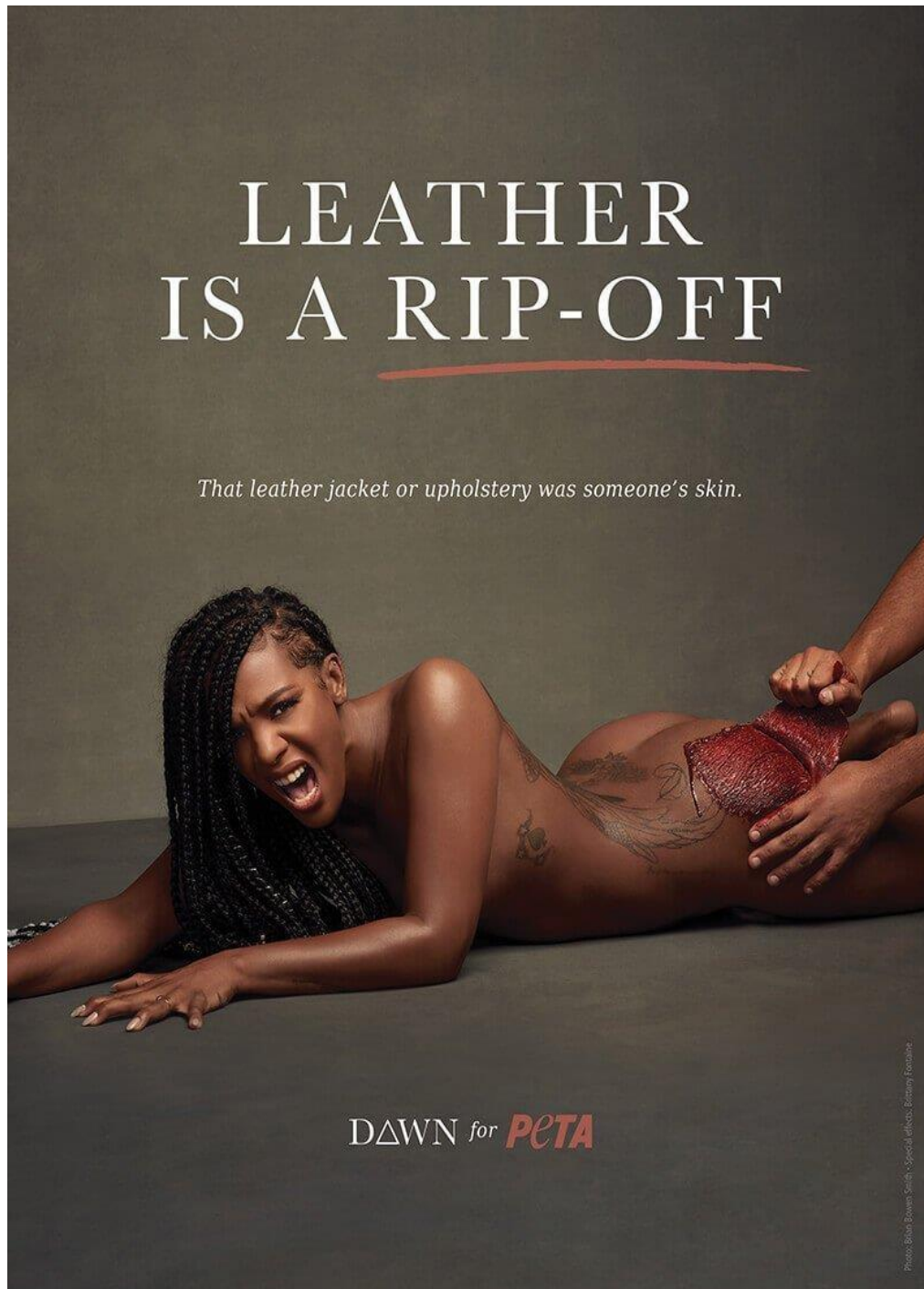
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Appendix 1A




Appendix 1B

Ad supported by a generous contribution from Laurie and Carlee McGrath

FIRST THEY TAKE YOUR FREEDOM...



THEN THEY TAKE YOUR BABIES.



The National Institutes of Health intentionally traumatizes baby monkeys by tearing them away from their mothers at birth, scaring them with loud noises and fake snakes, and addicting them to alcohol—all to the tune of tens of millions of tax dollars.

PETA Text NIH to 73822 to help infant monkeys!

Message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to end, text HELP for info. Periodic messaging. Terms are at <http://peta.org/text>.

Appendix 1C

A photograph of actress Lea Michele smiling next to a white horse. She is wearing a white sleeveless top and has her hand gently resting on the horse's neck. The horse is wearing a purple halter. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with trees and foliage.

HORSES DON'T BELONG IN NYC TRAFFIC

**Lea Michele
for PETA**

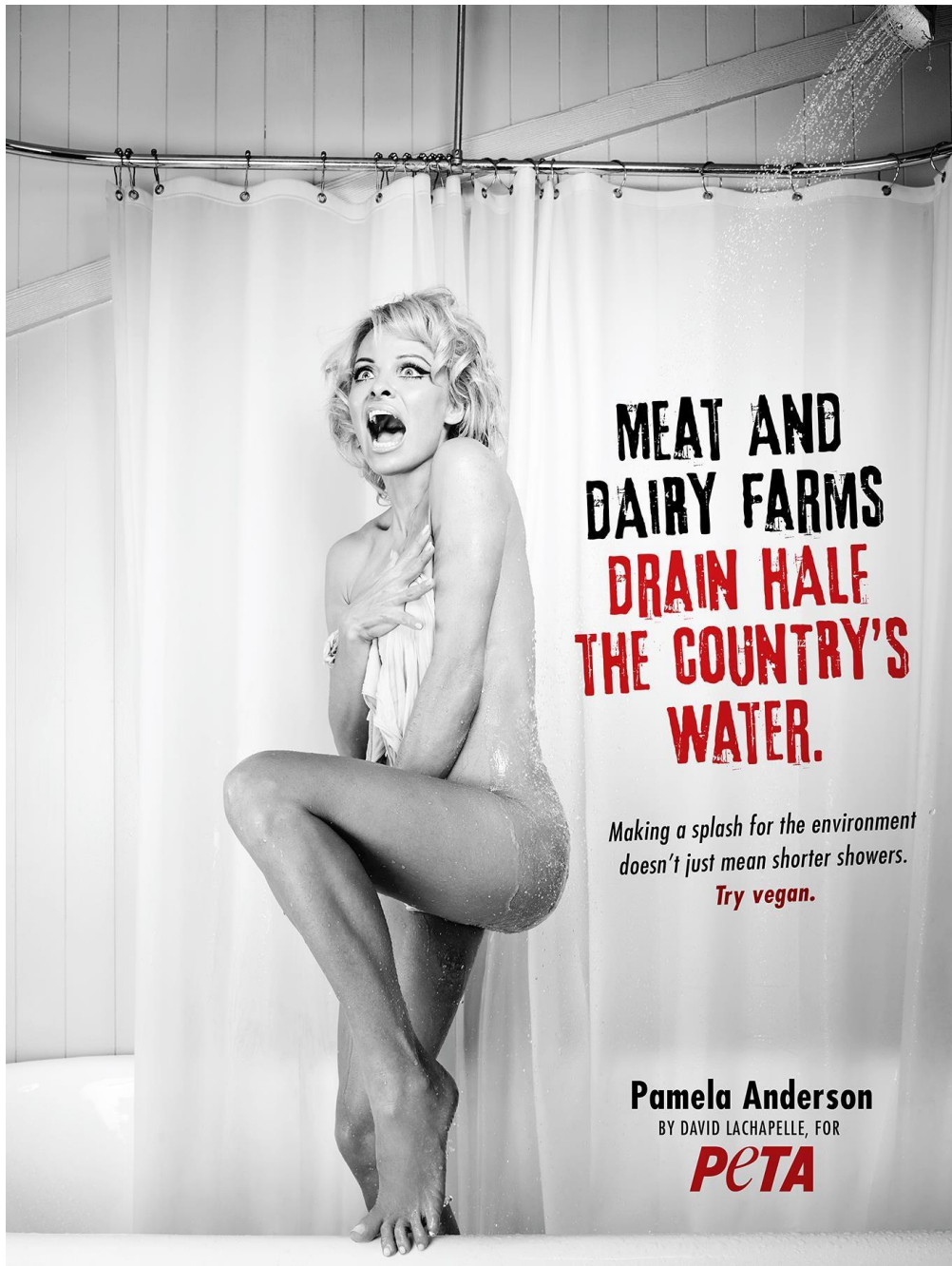
Help Put Horse-Drawn Carriages out to Pasture

For more info, visit NY-Class.org.

PETA

Photo © Lindsey Seidman/Henry Jones & Son Inc. Photo by David LaChapelle. Hair: John Hillier/Beverly Hills. Makeup: Jennifer Smith for The Wall Group. New York City photo by David LaChapelle.

Appendix 2



Appendix 3A



Appendix 3B



Appendix 4A

"What do I have in common with Barack Obama,
Vladimir Putin and The Dalai Lama?
We all oppose the massacre of baby seals.
It's time to end Canada's shameful slaughter."

PAMELA ANDERSON
FOR **PETA**

SAVE THE SEALS

END CANADA'S SEAL SLAUGHTER



Photo: Robert Schreyer

Appendix 4B

Appendix 4C

