LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

UNDERCOVER FOOTAGE OF FACTORY FARMING

VISUAL STRATEGIES EXPLAINED THROUGH THREE APPROACHES

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Introduction

The subject of animal abuse in factory farming and the discussion about possibilities of more ethical farming methods is something that many people choose not to be confronted with, often in favour of their own wellbeing, as they do not wish to feel remorseful about participating in this industry. This notion becomes especially clear in the avoidance of both still and moving footage shot with hidden cameras by animal rights activists. The video and photography activism as practiced by animal rights organisations became more common in the 1980s and 1990s, which is a result of a number of factors. For instance, single-issue campaigning became prominent around this time, and cheap high quality video equipment emerged at the beginning of the 1980s. During the 1990s, television was the greatest source for information and strongly influenced the opinions of viewers; activists became aware of the media's failure to cover issues such as animal rights and welfare (Harding 3-9). Moreover, animal rights activists became aware of the lack of surveillance in factory farms.

Organizations within the American animal advocacy movement can be broadly divided into two categories: on the one hand, welfarists or reformists, who seek to improve (farm) animal welfare and ensure humane treatment; and, on the other hand, abolitionists or liberationists, who seek to end the property status of animals, grant them basic rights and protection, and thereby abolish institutionalized exploitation (Deckha 35-36). In 1980, abolitionist Ingrid Newkirk founded the largest animal rights organisation in the world, named People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Their first undercover investigation resulted in the first police raid on a laboratory, and from here on, many investigations followed, of which their first factory farm investigation occurred in 1995. Three other large animal rights organisations that conduct undercover investigations are named The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS, 1954), Compassion Over Killing (COK, 1995) and Mercy For Animals (MFA, 1999). Ever since the foundation of the online video platform YouTube in 2006 and the online social media platforms Facebook (2004) and Twitter (2006), the mass spreading of the organisations' undercover footage over the Internet has caused a lot of controversy and has resulted in for example the dismissal of certain animal products by major companies under the pressure of the media. Evidently, these photographs and videos do affect people. This observation was the starting point of my research and lead me to the main research question:

Which characteristics of the media photography and film are exploited in three approaches to footage shot in factory farms by undercover investigators of animal rights organisations?

For my thesis, I have decided to focus on American animal rights organisations for multiple reasons. These organisations are among the largest in the world and produce and bring to light most undercover investigations, both in America and other parts of the world. Furthermore, because of the amount of investigations and undercover footage exposing inhumane practices to the public, animal rights organisations in America have to cope with strong opposition from the farming industry, which is able to influence the law. Whilst for example dairy factory farms in America contain at least 2000 cows, dairy factory farms in the Netherlands hold at least 250 cows, which comes down to almost ten times less animals. Thus, because the stables in the Netherlands have long time been relatively small compared to stables in America, it is most likely easier to check and supervise employees. This notion might explain the lack of animal rights organisations shooting undercover footage in Dutch farms. However, the sizes and numbers of "mega stables" are drastically growing in the Netherlands, and it is possible that more animal rights organisations such as PETA will begin to immerse. One such organisation is called "Ongehoord", a fairly young organisation founded in 2011. Whilst members of Ongehoord do not infiltrate factory farms to photograph and film undercover posing as employees, they do break and enter farms to record the conditions of the animals. In short, these are the reasons I will focus on undercover footage from American animal rights organisations.

The approaches to undercover footage I mentioned in the research question are the ethical approach, the documentary approach and the rhetorical approach, and these approaches will be discussed per chapter in according order. In Chapter One, the ethical approach will revolve around the problems and potential of surveillance and candid camera photography and film, a topic that is at the moment incredibly relevant in both our everyday life and the art world. To record one or multiple persons unknowingly provides the one that shot the footage with power, a notion that is related to the power relations Michael Foucault thoroughly discusses in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. The question of privacy also surfaces in discussions about social media and targeted advertising. Indeed, in 2015 Amnesty International started a campaign under the name "#UnfollowMe", encouraging people

around the world to sign a petition against mass surveillance accomplished by means of searching through emails, contact lists, telephone locations, and even webcam images. This mass surveillance, however, does not manifest in factory farms, and as a consequence, the employees of these farms are supervised in a different manner. This results in photographs and videos with a certain aesthetic that is affective to viewers. Contrary to animal rights organisations, photographer Mishka Henner discovered an approach to expose the practices on factory farms without infiltrating, and his photography series *Feedlots* thus harbours a diverging aesthetic. In this chapter, I will therefore examine how the manner in which undercover photographs and videos are acquired affects the properties of the recordings.

In Chapter Two, the documentary approach will revolve around the way undercover footage is presented in the informative genre of documentary film in the first section, and how it relates to documentary photography in the second section. There exist many different theories about the documentary form, and one of those theories was devised by film critic and theorist Bill Nichols. In his book *Introduction to Documentary*, Nichols provides the reader with a detailed description of different types of documentary and their persuasive strategies and visual evidence. I will compare his theory to documentary theories by film historian Michael Renov, filmmaker and critic Paul Rotha and historian of photography Olivier Lugon, and subsequently, I will apply these theories to four varying documentary films concerning factory farming, of which three contain undercover footage shot by at least one of the four animal rights organisation mentioned earlier, namely PETA, MFA, COK and HSUS. The fourth film, titled *Facing Animals,* was created by photographer and filmmaker Jan van IJken, and an important difference from the other three films is that it does not contain undercover footage. Nevertheless, all four documentaries are subjected to a truth-value, which is also present in documentary photography. By examining the selected case studies, I will strive to answer in what ways expectations of spectators are influenced by certain modes, forms and qualities of documentary film and photography.

In Chapter Three, the rhetorical approach revolves around the ability of undercover footage to persuade. Animal rights organisation regularly produce campaigns in order to raise awareness of animal suffering in factory farming. These campaigns either contain undercover footage, or merely refer to undercover footage by means of an iconic relation. Some of these campaigns have been fiercely criticized,

not merely by opponents such as the farming industry, but also by many Feminists that do not agree with the way in which such organisations objectify women in order to advocate for animals. In his book *Thank You For Arguing,* author Jan Heinrichs explains how such actions may decrease the *ethos*, the agreeability of character, of the organisations. *Ethos,* alongside *pathos* and *logos,* are persuasion tools that can be applied to both words and images. A commonly used word to describe campaigns by animal rights organisations is "propaganda", which is regularly associated with manipulation and politics. For this reason, I will compare campaigns created by animal rights organisations to a campaign poster of the United Kingdom general election from 2015. Eventually, I will clarify in what ways undercover footage is utilized to create rhetorical arguments and propagandist strategies within the selected campaigns and commercials from animal rights organisations.

Chapter 1: An ethical approach

The famous statement that the whole world would be consist of vegetarians if slaughterhouses had glass walls[1] is one often and heartily repeated by animal rights organisations and those who support them, preferably as a caption for a photograph or a video depicting regular factory farm practices obscured for the eyes of consumers of animal products. In this first chapter, I will examine undercover photography and video presented as such; that is, the selected footage is not integrated in a campaign or applied in a documentary film, but released by the animal rights organisation as a web feature[2]. The to be discussed footage was shot by undercover investigators of the animal rights organisation PETA, and deals with the plucking of Angora rabbits in the Chinese wool industry. The footage did not lead to trial, however, the outcries from viewers all over the world did cause multiple American fashion brands to ban Angora wool from their clothing collections. Other brands that have not yet boycotted the wool are mentioned and criticised on PETA's website, urged to follow suit. Evidently, undercover investigators play a part in stimulating public awareness of the practices occurring behind closed doors. By examining the undercover footage, I want to answer how the manner in which these photographs and videos are acquired affects the properties of the recordings.

Because of the apparent necessity of undercover investigations at factory farms, I believe it is essential to reflect on the absence of surveillance in the farming industry as opposed to the mass surveillance of society. While the mass surveillance of society can be compared to Foucault's theory of the Panopticon, surveillance performed by undercover investigators is of an entirely different nature and may therefore not result in the same power relations. I will elaborate on the supervising role that animal rights organisations thus appropriate, which in turn has resulted in the introduction of so-called ag-gag laws by the farming industry. These laws are based on ethical, though problematic argumentation to prevent investigators from breaking and entering and recording, and have evoked some approval but also much resistance from theorists and the public alike. In the light of online sharing in the digital age, Ashley Michele Scarlett suggests the ethical response of people towards private

[1] The quote is attributed to musician Paul McCartney and his first wife, musician and photographer Linda McCartney (died in 1998), who are both animal rights activists.
[2] An online article or video devoted to the treatment of a particular topic.

photography, and therefore towards undercover footage, should be adapted. The public will most likely tend to accept this new ethos, because the aesthetics of the footage acquired by undercover investigators are in multiple ways affective to viewers. Eventually, as a comparison, I will examine the series *Feedlots* by Mishka Henner, who discovered a different method to expose the activities practiced on factory farms and whose photographs additionally result in deviating aesthetics.

1.1 Surveillance Society

In 2013, multiple investigators from PETA Asia-Pacific, the affiliate of PETA US, infiltrated more than ten Angora rabbit wool factory farms in China, which at this moment in time is the world's biggest animal farming nation (Li 217). There exist no penalties against the cruel treatment of animals and no humane slaughter practices are required. Naturally, this situation is especially convenient for both the farming and fashion industry, because the conditions the Angora rabbits live in and the speed with which their wool is harvested ensure a low selling price of the product to Western countries. The undercover footage was captured by means of small cameras hidden on the bodies of the investigators; the web feature shows no alternative point of views such as establishing shots or high angles that would imply cameras were hidden away in corners of rooms. The only way to properly record the footage in the manner as seen in the case study, is to appropriate the behaviour of the farm's employees and thus partake in the mistreatment of animals. Undercover investigator "Pete" is not employed by animal rights organisations, but does provide them with undercover footage from time to time and helps them training new undercover investigators. Two documentaries about two out of hundreds of his investigations were made, namely *Dealing Dogs* (Tom Simon, 2006) and *Death on a Factory Farm* (Tom Simon, 2009). "Pete" states his whole life consists of undercover investigations in the animal industry and lying to everyone he meets, pretending to be someone else.

> (…) I try and get into the mindset of the character I'm supposed to be: I'm a total loser, I really need the work and I don't give a shit about animals. I just try to step into it, saying if not me, then honestly nobody else, and I am the biggest, baddest motherfucker to set foot on this earth. So I will walk into here

> and take control of this whole situation ("Pete" interviewed by Maureen C. Wyse for SATYA online magazine).

Despite the many gruesome acts he had to commit, "Pete" believes bringing the footage to the outside world is worth his sanity.

In the many farms "Pete" has worked, as well as in the Angora rabbit wool farms, there are no surveillance cameras regulating the behaviour of employees, and therefore the self-disciplinary effect as created by the Foucult's Panopticon[3] is not present in these farms. The Panopticon is an 18th century mechanism that can be compared to modern surveillance techniques.

> He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. By this very fact, the external power may throw off its physical weight; it tends to the non-corporal; and, the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects: it is a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance (Foucault 202).

It is remarkable that, despite being situated in so-called surveillance states, factory farms are rarely and otherwise not properly invigilated or inspected by authorities such as the companies investing in the farms, the police, and the APHIS, which is part of the USDA[4]. Moreover, generally there are no cameras installed in these farms, resulting in frequent misbehaviour of employees, for there is no way to induce a state of conscious and permanent visibility to assure the automatic functioning of power

[3] The Panopticon is a watchtower applied in for example prisons: Each individual, in his place, is securely confined to a cell from which he is seen from the front by the supervisor; but the side walls prevent him from coming into contact with his companions. He is seen, but does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject of communication. He is never sure when or if his behaviour is watched and thus disciplines himself. Foucault, 1995, p 200.

[4] The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is a part of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In an Audit Report from 2010, the USDA criticized APHIS for producing incomplete reports and failing to induce appropriate punishments to factory farms and companies that violated the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). In turn, the USDA is often criticized by animal rights and welfare organizations, for example for failing to verify 80 per cent of allegedly humane meat labels.

(Foucault, 220). Thus, the employees are able to exert their own power over the animals they are responsible for.

Because investigators of animal rights organisations work undercover, their surveilling the employees is not necessarily meant to discipline, but rather to expose. Besides standard factory farm practices and circumstances, it is the employees' abuse of power that is regularly recorded during investigations and chosen out of weeks or even months of collected footage for the final cut of an Internet web feature. On the official website of PETA, the qualifications for an undercover investigator can be read on the vacancies webpage. For example, investigators are required to immerse themselves into animal protection law in order to thoroughly prepare for investigations; they have to visit various industries and try to obtain a voluntary position, an internship or employment, and while there submit daily logs and use photography and film to document conditions of animals as well as illegal, cruel and improper conduct. Moreover, they have to select scenes from the obtained footage and work with approved lawyers to assess evidence for violations of laws and regulations (PETA). The animal rights organisations claim that most of their (published) investigations are conducted randomly, which implies that the mistreating of animals can occur on any factory farm. This impression is affirmed in several interviews with undercover investigators such as "Jane", a woman who requested anonymity concerning her on-going work in an interview for the website *Green is the New Red*[5].

> I would be thrilled to enter a facility and be able to tell my boss "No cruelty exists here. I have nothing to document." The day that happens will be a banner day for animal rights, and I will celebrate accordingly. The strength of our work is based in the fact that we move about these facilities silently, without alteration, and allow unadulterated behaviour to occur around us that we then bring to the public so that they may judge it for themselves. It's not in anyone's best interest for us to manipulate our footage. It doesn't benefit the animals and it doesn't benefit our credibility, which is of vital importance in this field. It is in the interest of that credibility that we go to such great lengths to conduct our work in accordance with absolutely every state and federal law,

[5] *Green is the New Red* is a website devoted to the fear of (eco-)terrorism and how this is being exploited to push a political and corporate agenda.

> and are painstaking in our quest to portray actual conditions as they exist and nothing more ("Jane" interviewed by Will Potter).

In order to adverse the cause of animal rights organisations, as "Jane" counters above, the farming industry often claims that the undercover footage is staged or edited to give the public false impression of the course of events. Indeed, according to the website Animal Visuals, since 2012 there is a steady rise in so-called "Ag-gag"[6] laws, which have the purpose of criminalizing acts related to investigating the day-to-day activities of industrial farms, including recording, possession or distribution of photos, video and/or audio taken at a farm, says Larissa Wilson in her article "Ag-gag laws: a shift in the wrong direction for animal welfare on farms". She argues that these laws are hindrances to the creation, enforcement and expansion of animal cruelty law, because they penalize a broad range of actions, "including obtaining employment by misrepresentation; exercising control within an animal facility without permission of the owner; and recording or photography in farms, either altogether or to the extent that any abuse witnessed or captured on film must be reported to authorities within a limited time period" (Wilson 312).

At first glance, these ethical arguments seem reasonable and even in favour of animal protection, however in this way, investigators are not able to compose a thorough research and thereby create a case for court. In 1992, a chain of American grocery stores called Food Lion won a case on similar grounds against charges of repacking and selling expired meat, accusing undercover reporters of lying about their experience and enthusiasm for the grocery's meat and deli department. Instead of being trialled for their infringements, Food Lion gained five million dollars, while the reporters were found guilty of fraud, trespass and breach of loyalty (Baker 29). According to Jessalee Landfried in her Note "Bound & Gagged: Potential First Amendment Challenges to 'Ag-gag' Laws", the First Amendment[7] does not provide immunity to journalists against civil or criminal charges following undercover investigations even if they ultimately produce an accurate video that serves the public

[6] This term was coined by Mark Bittman in the opinionator blog of the New York Times. "Ag" is short for "agriculture" and "Gag" derives from "gag order", which typically implies a legal order restricting information being made public.

[7] First Amendment to the United States Constitution: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

good, however, distribution of accurate information is supposed to be strongly protected, making the circumstances rather ambiguous (383). To prevent undercover investigators from being persecuted like the reporters in the Food Lion case, animal rights organisations encourage their investigators to apply for jobs with their actual names and identities, and in turn, they will ascertain these cannot be traced back to the organisations; moreover, the investigators are instructed to behave professionally and to act according to the law.

Even though ag-gag laws are intended to conceal unethical practices, the ethical arguments of the farming industry to oppose surveillance in factory farms are not necessarily groundless. In "Private Lives, Public Places: Street Photography Ethics", photography critic Allan Douglas Coleman sympathizes with individuals subjected to the gaze of the camera. In correspondence to Foucault, he argues that living in a photographic culture such as our own generates a heightened self-consciousness in regard to the aspects of ourselves that we project when being photographed.

> This (…) implies that we may very well modify our behaviour in ways both subtle and significant whenever a camera is in our presence (or even when we think we might be photographed) (Coleman 61).

Unlike Foucault, Coleman does not consider this notion clever, but rather believes it invokes dilemmas for the photographer as he considers it to be ethically dubious. He supports his argument with a couple of personal stories. For instance, on a rainy day he and his photographer companion were driving down the Brooklyn Bridge where an accident had happened, and before them, a very aesthetically pleasing view of a well dressed panicked old woman in a wheelchair unfolded. Coleman's companion asked him to drive slowly so he could photograph the scene, but at the last moment, Coleman changed his mind, for he imagined being in the uncomfortable situation of the old woman and took pity on her (64).

Because factory farm workers are not used to being supervised, let alone recorded, their self-consciousness is not necessarily heightened. However, there are other ethical dilemma's to be considered. According to undercover investigators such as "Pete" and "Jane", most employees working in factory farms are often traumatized and in a bad physical shape because of the exhausting work they need to perform.

Similar to the investigators, most of them try and succeed in suppressing their emotions, however other individuals are either deemed to be sadistic or unmoved. Nevertheless, undercover investigators oftentimes commiserate with these employees, especially when the undercover footage results in their punishment whilst the investigators feel that the actual threat to animals is the company that owns the farms. Even though the employees working in the Angora wool farms were not punished because the government of China does not acknowledge animal abuse in the farming industry at this point in time, they are at risk of losing their employment because of the vast boycott from Western fashion brands. These employees are often very poor and in case they have a family, they will not hesitate to follow orders if it means they will be able to support them. By filming, photographing and spreading the undercover footage, PETA has chosen the ethical treatment of animals over the economical situation and future of the farms' employees.

1.3 A New Ethos

In line with Coleman, Hatsuhiko Gah also elaborates on the behaviour of photographers in private places. He admires the advantage of the photograph in its accuracy and likeness of the real subject, but argues that the mere taking of a photograph can be a disturbance, especially in a private place. While he admits that closing the doors to a photographer may encourage curiosity, he argues that it does not justify his prying into people's private affairs.

> No one should enter these (private) places without the consent of those occupying them or working there. And even when a photographer is allowed to enter such a place, it does not give him the privilege of taking as many shots as he wants. He should keep within the limits allowed. Furthermore, even if he should be close enough to take pictures with a camera fitted with a telephoto lens, he should refrain from taking sneak shots of places of a private nature. The more private the occasion is, the more care the photographer should exercise (Gah 69).

Gah's vision is clearly in accordance with the wishes of the farming industry, but is an article from 1960 and dealing with analogue photography still relevant in this day

and age? In her thesis "Remediating Photography: Re-Imagining Ethics In-Light of Online Photo-Sharing Practices", Ashley Michele Scarlett suggests the ethical response of people towards photography should be adapted to the digital age of online photo-sharing, considering private lives are becoming increasingly public, as they are voluntarily made visible and retrievable through the uploading of images to online environments such as the social media platform Facebook. Scarlett argues that images contain significant ethical weight, and suggests becoming mindful and respectful of them and their ethical impact. For, if ethical engagement is deemed worthwhile and pursued, the desire to control the image, regardless of perceived subject matter, must be repressed (Scarlett 145). It appears that the public is well on its way to embracing this ethos, for photographs and videos distributed by animal rights organisations on their social media accounts are frequently shared with an accompanying message expressing the frustrations with the farming industry and governments. As it turns out, according to a poll released by Lake Research Partners, 71 per cent of Americans support undercover investigative efforts by animal welfare organisations to expose animal abuse that takes place on some industrial farms.[8] This notion is reflected in the furore surrounding the undercover footage of Angora rabbits from PETA.

1.4 The Affect and Trauma

Besides the fact that undercover footage exposes unlawful and severe practices, what other qualities do the images possess that is affective to viewers? In order to answer this question, the nature of affect needs to be clarified first. Affect, says Pepita Hesselberth in her book *Cinematic Chronotopes: Here, Now, Me*, alludes to the moment or energy that precedes perception and thought and adds a sense of urgency to proprioception[9]. It is a psychological, material process that is relational, situational and corporeal, and brings about a bodily, or somatic experience. When an image

[8] Lake Research Partners designed and administered the survey with 798 American adults. The survey was conducted over the telephone, using professional interviewers, and over the Internet from a national sample of Internet users. 605 interviews were conducted over the phone and 193 interviews were conducted online. The nationwide survey was conducted January 12-19, 2012. The margin of error for the total sample is ±3.47 percentage points, and larger for sub-groups. The multi-method approach showed no major differences between Internet and telephone respondents. The data were slightly weighted by gender, race, age and region to ensure a comprehensive representation of the adult U.S. population. Beforehand, the interviewers explained the nature of undercover footage and investigations and the ag-gag laws.

[9] The activity of proprioceptors; the perception of the position and movements of the body, esp. as derived from proprioceptors. Proprioceptor: A sensory receptor that responds to stimuli arising within the body, esp. from muscle and nerve tissue.

affects the viewer, it steers a sensation in him or her and incites the viewer to look, to interpret and to think (65-66). An image may contain multiple affective qualities, which I will discuss by means of the case study. However, I will begin by describing two qualities that all undercover videos and photographs from animal rights organisations have in common, and that is their haptic character and indexical nature. According to media theorist and artist Laura U. Marks in her book *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*, the especially haptic character of video is acquired through the constitution of the image from a signal, its low contrast ratio and the possibilities of electronic and digital manipulation. The tactile quality of video is most apparent when one experiences disappearance and transformation or distortion of the image (Marks 9-10). At the same time, photography has been characterized as haptic because the viewer is able to discover its tactile qualities by touching a photograph and thus gain more information (Allan 10). Moreover, the development and editing of analogue film and photography requires a lot of handwork. Has the footage shot at the Angora wool factory thus lost its haptic character by being uploaded to the Internet as a web feature? Media theorist Mika Elo proposes a new language of haptic sensations that arose with the introduction of the touchscreen on mobile telephones and tablets.

> With haptic user interfaces, which enable bodily interaction with information technology, the body is opened a new type of touch to itself as well as to objects and other bodies. Virtually nothing seems to be beyond reach (Elo 2).

As of 2014, 64 per cent of American adults owns a smartphone, which is almost twice as many Americans as in 2011, and the number of tablet users and users of laptops with touchscreens is also steadily growing. Chances are many people have watched and shared the Angora rabbit footage, which was uploaded on PETA's Facebook page, via a mobile device or tablet. Such devices enable users to zoom in and out with their fingers and move the screen over the footage. Because the screens are fairly small, people tend to hold their smartphones close to their faces, and this closeness may in turn increase the affect of the footage.

According to film historian Angela Ndalianis in *The Horror Sensorium: Media and the Senses*, the haptic image as described by Marks engages the viewer and forms a bodily relationship that is affective and amplifies positive, but especially negative experiences such as suffering (Ndalianis 23); in the case study, this concerns

the suffering of the rabbits. In "Writing Trauma: Affected in the Act", Michael Richardson argues that such affects are capable of generating trauma, for when the viewer sees an action performed, the same neural networks that would be involved if one were to perform it himself are activated.

> Such neural firings are not mere on/off switches. When certain affects –fear, shame, anger, disgust, grief, pain– occur at radical intensities their encounter with the body wreaks lasting violence. Such trauma does not fade (…) with time or distance (…) it is as if the psyche has incorporated the very structure of abuse in some malformation, which keeps the trauma current by repeating it in the imagination… (Richardson 159).

Trauma occurs when ethical boundaries are crossed and personal and societal norms and values are thus violated. Such boundaries are crossed both in the actions of factory farm employees and undercover investigators, and in the spectatorship of the acquired undercover footage of some of these actions. Trauma can be especially durable because of the indexical nature we attribute to undercover videos and photographs, for despite the increased anxiety about the declining rhetorical status of photographic referentiality in the digital age, the reality of surveillance footage is often not questioned but simply assumed, says Thomas Y. Levin in his paper "Rhetoric of the Temporal Index: Surveillant Narration and the Cinema of 'Real Time'" (583). The truth of the image is "guaranteed" by the fact that it is happening in real time and thus –by virtue of its technical conditions of production– is supposedly not susceptible to post-production manipulation (Levin 592). This real-time somatic experience evoked by surveillance footage is what Hesselberth identifies as affective.

For Gilles Deleuze, the epitome of the affection-image is the close-up, and the close-up is the face. In *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, Deleuze quotes Béla Balász to explain a change of dimension when observing a face in close-up.

> When a face that we have just seen in the middle of a crowd is detached from its surroundings (…) it is as if we were suddenly face to face with it (…) Faced with an isolated face, we do not perceive space. Our sensation of space is abolished. A dimension of another order is opened to us (96).

PETA's undercover investigators do not merely try to capture the overall image of the screaming, bleeding rabbits in their videos and photographs, but also choose to emphasize the animals' faces by coming closer and shooting from certain angles (see fig. 1, fig. 2 and fig. 3). Their body cameras seem to be hidden somewhere near the chests of the investigators, as the viewer repeatedly gains a perspective from over the shoulders of the wool harvesters. In all probability, this perspective was obtained by the investigators requesting the employees to demonstrate their practices; this is something many animal rights investigators do to record further information. The locations of the cameras also become apparent when an investigator slowly walks past the cages the rabbits are left in after the wool harvesting, as the camera seems to be at the level of the cage doors. Even though the average person is not yet accustomed to ascribing emotions to animals, especially not to those that are deemed industry products, close-ups bring us, as Deleuze argues, face to face with a suffering living being. A face will evoke questions about either someone's feelings and sensations, or someone's thoughts (88), and when this notion is applied to the face of an animal, the response of the viewer will be compassionate; this has been evident in the decisions of several fashion companies to ban Angora fur from their clothing lines after public outrage. Especially in the photographs, the space around the rabbits' frightened expressions and eyes that seem to stare directly into the camera's lens is hardly notable; this is accentuated by omitting the faces of the humans pulling out their fur both in the photographs and videos (see fig. 1, fig. 2 and fig. 3). Hesselberth agrees with Deleuze that the close proximity of the body camera preludes clarity of vision, which results in a state of anticipatory alertness and thus affects the viewer in real-time (66).

1.5 Casestudy Mishka Henner's Feedlots

English photographer Mishka Henner decided to address the consequences of the farming industry in the United States in another manner. He exposed several factory farms literally from a different point of view than undercover investigators of animal rights organisations by collecting aerial photographs. While he was researching satellite images for a project about oil fields, he discovered what he perceived to be strange landscape structures, which turned out to be animal feedlots.

> To me, as somebody in the U.K., looking at something [like] the feedlots I was

> shocked on a very personal level. I think what the feedlots represent is a certain logic about how culture and society have evolved. On one level it's absolutely terrifying, that this is what we've become. They're not just feedlots. They're how we are (Henner in Fast Company magazine online).

Feedlots are grounds where animals are gathered to be fattened for the market. Through Henner's photographs, the viewer is not only able to grasp the magnitude of the farming industry, but will also realize the impact of the waste on the American landscape and environment. The bright green colours in fig. 4 and the bright red colours in fig. 5 are the chemical and animal waste that result from intensive farming. The high amounts of animals that are visible walking in sand around the waste remind the viewer of tiny ants. Although the physical details are left unaltered, Henner chose to slightly enhance the colours of the wastelands in order to emphasize the contrast between the aesthetic magnitude of the image and the destructive story behind it. Contrary to undercover footage and its indexical nature, the seemingly abstract photographs may remind the spectator more of paintings and their iconic nature. Because the photographs are publically available, Henner did not run any legal risks and was able to mention the names of the companies in the titles of his photographs. The American magazine Wired posted an online article about Henner's series and asked Matthew Liebman, an attorney with the Animal Legal Defense Fund, how Henner's work might be affected by ag-gag laws. He explains how Henner's images are safe, since Texas has not yet introduced such laws, and even in states that do, the photographs could be protected by legal recognition of satellite-level attitudes as public space. However, under some proposed ag-gag laws, gathering any imagery without the consent of the farmer is considered a crime (Brandon Keim). "Something is wrong in the Land of the Free", says Henner, "when the act of looking is itself being condemned and punished".

In this chapter, I aimed to explain how the manner in which undercover footage in factory farms is acquired might affect its qualities. First, I discussed mass surveillance in our everyday life as opposed to the lack thereof on factory farms. Interestingly, whilst there exists a lot of opposition to mass surveillance of the general public, many people support the undercover investigations on factory farms, which in turn is a

nuisance to the farming industry. The acceptance of Scarlett's new ethos with regard to the undercover footage is in all probability caused by the affective nature of the footage. I compared photographs and videos of PETA to the photography series "Feedlots" of photographer Mishka Henner, which has the same intention of exposing the problems of factory farming. The photographs of PETA are affective because of the lasting trauma they are able to evoke, whereas the series of Mishka Henner are affective because of the element of surprise they possess. Contrary to the immediate perception of cruelty in the footage of PETA, it is necessary to examine Henner's photographs thoroughly after the first glance, because they appear to present a beautiful image, but harbour a harsh reality.

Chapter 2: A documentary approach

Documentary films address the world we live in, rather than an imaginary world created by a filmmaker. They intend to persuade the viewer to adopt a given perspective or point of view about this world and they incite different sorts of expectations from the audience than do fictional films. Although documentaries have existed ever since film was invented, the Golden Age of documentaries began in the 1980s (Nichols, 1). In 1981, a stunning 32 years after the first one, the second documentary film concerning animal rights in the farming industry was created, namely *The Animals Film* directed by Victor Schonfeld and Myriam Alaux. From this time onward, the number of documentaries related to animal rights and the farming industry gradually increased. This does not merely have to do with the Golden Age, but also correlates with the founding of multiple animal rights organisations around that time. These animal rights organisations have often provided filmmakers with undercover footage –both videos and photographs– shot by their investigators in order for filmmakers to be able to properly tell their stories. Even though the documentaries are concerned with similar subjects, their forms and structures may vary greatly, which in turn will also have consequences for the way the undercover footage is presented.

Many theorists, critics and historians have discussed documentary film and have established their own approach to this versatile genre. For my research, I chose to address the documentary modes of film critic and theorist Bill Nichols, the aesthetic and rhetorical functions of film historian Michael Renov, the traditions of filmmaker and critic Paul Rotha, and the trend, line and approach of historian of photography Olivier Lugon. In order to illustrate these various documentary modes, I will analyse three fairly recent feature film length documentaries and one short documentary about factory faming. The selection was based on the divergent qualities of the films, such as the manner in which the story is told and the role of the filmmaker in it. In chronological order, the feature length films are entitled *Earthlings* (Shaun Monsons, 2005), which addresses five ways in which people take advantage of animals through a vast amount of undercover footage, and is arguably the most discussed animal rights documentary up until today; *I Am an Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk and PETA* (Matthew Galkin, 2007), which revolves around the co-founder of one of the largest animal rights organisations; and *Speciesism: The Movie*

(Mark Devries, 2013), which revolves around the search for the truth about factory farming by the filmmaker himself. All three documentaries contain undercover footage by at least one of the following four animal rights organisations: PETA, MFA, COK and HSUS. The fourth, short documentary titled *Facing Animals* was created by the Dutch documentary photographer and filmmaker Jan van IJken in 2012, and will serve as a reflection on the other three documentaries not merely because of its unusual form, but also because it does not contain undercover footage and thus contemplates on factory farming in a different way.

Because van IJken shot an accompanying photography series titled *Precious Animals*, I believe it is worthwhile to divide this chapter into two sections – namely Film and Photography– and additionally discuss how documentary photographers approach the recording of animals in factory farms as opposed to undercover investigators. Besides the series of van IJken, I will analyse the series titled *We, Animals* from American documentary photographer and animal rights activist Jo-Anne McArthur, whose photographs are gladly adopted by animal rights organisations for their websites and campaigns. Eventually, after having analysed and compared the films and photographs to one another, I will strive to answer in what ways expectations of spectators are influenced by certain modes, forms and qualities of documentary film and photography.

2.1 Film

2.1.1 Nichols, Renov, Rotha and Lugon

As opposed to most fictional movies, documentary film is connected to the alleged "documentary guarantee", which is the way in which a documentary establishes truth claims (Takahashi 231). That is, despite the many forms or definitions it may acquire, it is expected of a documentary film to tell the truth. According to Bill Nichols in his book *Introduction to Documentary*, the viewer primarily judges a documentary by the nature of the pleasure it induces, the value of the insight it provides and the quality of the perspective it instils (13). Nichols aspires to compose a thorough definition of documentary by starting off at an acclaimed description by documentary maker and film critic John Grierson: "documentary is a creative treatment of actuality" (6). He argues that there exists a tension in this description, for "creative treatment" suggests the realm of fiction, whereas "actuality" implies journalism and history. Its division

relies on the degree to which the story corresponds to actual situations, events and people, contrary to the degree of subjectivity of the filmmaker. The question the filmmaker's perspective and whose story is presented out of him and the subjects he filmed leaves ample room for ambiguity, but eventually, Nichols arrives at this denotation:

> Documentary film speaks about situations and events involving real people (social actors) who present themselves to us as themselves in stories that convey a plausible proposal about, or perspective on, the lives, situations, and events portrayed. The distinct point of view of the filmmaker shapes this story into a way of seeing the historical world directly rather than into a fictional allegory (14).

As is true in creating a definition for documentary, determining specific categories of documentary is accomplished differently by critics, filmmakers and historians alike. In his book *Documentary Film*, first published in 1935, filmmaker and critic Paul Rotha introduces the naturalist (romantic) tradition, which emphasizes qualities of 19th century Romanticism such as emotion and often concerned anthropological film; the realist (continental) tradition, in which avant-garde notions of time, space and the subconscious are explored; the newsreel tradition, which emphasizes topicality; and the propagandist tradition, which emphasizes the film as an instrument of propaganda (79-92). Rotha believes that the documentary may be described as the birth of creative cinema.

Film historian Michael Renov proposes a different classification based on four fundamental aesthetic and rhetorical functions, which he calls "modalities of desire" (22): "To Record, Reveal or Preserve", a desire to replicate the historical real, mostly in ethnographic or anthropologic films; "To Persuade or to Promote", a desire to use rhetorical techniques of persuasion to achieve social goals; "To Analyse or Interrogate", a desire to involve the audience and "To Express", a desire to favour aesthetic functions (21). In his essay "Documentary: authority and ambiguity" published in *Documentary Now! Contemporary Strategies in Photography, Film and the Visual Arts,* historian of photography Olivier Lugon in his turn distinguishes in both film and photography the encyclopaedic/educational trend, which intends to educate; the heritage/conservation line, which intends to collect and archive; and the

social political approach, which intends to persuade. To these, aesthetic considerations affecting all three categories can be added. The categories flourish at several periods in time, one more prominent than the other, and he ascribes this development to a paradox.

> As soon as one group believed they had found a descriptive formula guaranteeing veracity, another would cast doubts on it and seek a more suitable method closer to reality. That is the infinite productive paradox of documentary: when its basic principle - 'to show things the way they are' - seemed to restrict the genre to a repetitive duplication of reality and deprive it of any opportunity for development, this very simply-formulated principle actually gave rise to a constant exploration of new procedures and forms (Lugon 67).

Indeed, the development of the many forms of documentary film becomes especially clear in Nichols' theory on six common documentary modes, as the common practice of these modes is assigned- but not limited to certain decades. In chronological order, from the 1920s to the 1980s and onwards, they are called the poetic documentary, which reassembles fragments of the world poetically; the expository documentary, which directly addresses issues in the historical world; the observational documentary, which observes events as they happen; the participatory documentary, in which interviews and interactions with subjects take place; the reflexive documentary, which questions documentary form and defamiliarizes to other forms and finally, the performative documentary, which stresses subjective aspects of a classically objective discourse. In the course of my analyses, I shall elaborate on certain of these modes, as well as on the approaches of Renov, Rotha and Lugon, granted that they can be applied to the documentaries.

2.1.2 An analysis of *Earthlings, I am an Animal, Speciesism* and *Facing Animals*

The first film I will discuss is *Earthlings*, also known under the morbid name "The Vegan Maker". This award-winning documentary is considered to be the most persuasive film about the suffering of animals for food, fashion, pets, entertainment and medical research, all for the sake of human beings. *Earthlings* possesses the

qualities of roughly two documentary modes; that is the expository mode and the performative mode. An immediately clear quality of the expository mode is what Nichols calls "the voice of God tradition" (74).

> Expository documentaries rely heavily on an informing logic carried by the spoken word. In a reversal of the traditional emphasis in film, images serve a supporting role. They illustrate, illuminate, evoke, or act in counterpoint to what is said. The commentary is typically presented as distinct from the images of the historical world that accompany it. It serves to organize these images and make sense of them just as a written caption guides our attention and emphasizes some of the many meanings and interpretations of a still image (169).

Earthlings is voiced by actor Joaquin Phoenix, who is well known for his highly respected movie performances in amongst others *Gladiator* (Ridley Scott, 2000) and *Her* (Spike Jonze, 2013). Not only was he chosen because of his dedication to animal rights and his vegan diet, but also because it is of course beneficial for commercial purposes to be able to credit a famous name. As is characteristic in the expository mode, Phoenix' voice is calm and richly toned as it guides the viewer through the story; describing the undercover footage, citing quotes, providing the viewer with data on factory farming, and last but not least, frequently reminding the viewer that animals feel in the same way as humans.

The qualities of the performative mode are also evident throughout the film, for documentaries in this mode tend to primarily address the viewer emotionally, invoking affect over effect and challenging the viewer to rethink his or her relation to the world (Nichols, 134). The film opens with a foreboding text that the viewer will have to bear in mind while watching: "The images you are about to see are not isolated cases. These are the Industry Standard for animals bred as Pets, Food, Clothing, for Entertainment and Research. Viewer discretion is advised." Under suspenseful music and over footage of the earth seen from outer space, the title "Earthlings" is explained as lacking sexism, racism and speciesism and identifies every living creature as equal. Speciesism as a problem is introduced alongside of footage of Feminist demonstrations, World War II and the Ku Klux Klan and is therefore granted the same gravity as sexism and racism. The footage of unjust acts

against humans is alternated with graphic undercover footage of animal cruelty on factory farms and with stock footage of wild animals living freely in nature (see fig. 6).

After the introduction, the documentary announces its structure; it will be divided into five parts I mentioned earlier: pets, food, clothes, entertainment and medical research. Given the fact that the documentary does not present interviews or any other alternative clips, the viewer is never allowed a break from the graphic undercover footage until the end, which is similar in structure to the introduction. Throughout the film, the undercover footage is guided by music that intends to evoke multiple emotions, but above all melancholy. There have been numerous of studies researching the responses of both children and adults towards different types of music, its instruments and the timbre of those instruments (Hailstone, 2141-2142). In many of these studies, existing music or music especially created by composers for the study were divided into four emotional states, namely "happy", "sad", "angry" and "afraid" and had to be distinguished as such by the test subjects. The researchers have concluded that the answers of the test subjects were highly accurate, albeit accuracy of emotion recognition also differed per instrument. Sadness was perceived to be most obvious in piano and violin music (Gabrielsson 50). *Earthling*'s soundtrack is largely piano and violin based and is produced by Richard Melville Hall, who is a famous songwriter under his artist name "Moby"; like Phoenix he is a vegan animal rights activist. Not only have the producers of *Earthlings* invited these celebrities to collaborate, they have also quoted several authors that condemn the faults of men with regard to animals, among whom Isaac Bashevis Singer, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1978.

When taking into account the various ways in which a documentary film may be categorized apart from Nichols' documentary modes, *Earthlings* can be considered a film of Rotha's propagandist and newsreel tradition with Lugon's social political approach, expressing the desire to Persuade or to Promote and to Record and Reveal as suggested by Renov. Consequently, the fundamental purpose of this documentary is to persuade the viewer to adapt his or her view on animal suffering in factory farming to the ideals of the filmmaker.

Earthling's end credits acknowledge the footage courtesy of approximately a dozen organisations, of which PETA is mentioned firstly. As one of the first and largest animal rights organisations, PETA is the main focus point of the next

documentary I will discuss. This documentary, titled *I Am an Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk and PETA*, revolves around Newkirk and her passions and work for the organisation. The filmmaker follows her around at the organisation's headquarters, Newkirk's home, on fieldwork and during campaigns. The director probably deliberately presents undercover footage that was also shown in *Earthlings*, for it concerns an abominable scene that is one of the most discussed on the Internet: the live skinning of a fox. It is not clear whether the director felt that the infamous footage belonged in a documentary about PETA or whether he chose the scene as a reference to *Earthlings*, but nevertheless, it is an image the viewer will not soon forget.

The documentary modes that prove to be most dominant in this film are the performative mode and the observational mode. The film opens with Ingrid Newkirk, Co-founder of PETA, reading malicious emails out loud about herself and her organisation (see fig. 7). Then follows footage of misconceptions about the organisation, such as interviews with Ingrid on TV in which the hosts ridicule or attack her ideals, calling PETA a "dangerous movement involved with Terrorism". Contrary to *Earthlings*, piano and violin based music is utilized less frequently in this documentary, however it is strategically applied on appropriate moments, for example when the viewer is first introduced to Ingrid's humble abode and once again as an emotional guidance to the graphic undercover footage. The film intends to grant the viewer insight into the personal story of Ingrid and PETA and their struggle for the amelioration of the lives of animals, as well as the attempts to find a willing ear from the consumers of animal products. The director portrays Ingrid as a gentle, but determined human being when following her around the office planning for undercover missions and partaking in demonstrations against major clothing franchises that sell fur. Nevertheless, the director gives opponents an equal opportunity to speak their minds against PETA in the light of for instance some of their commercials that contain sexism and racism and their comparing factory farming to the Holocaust. Following and observing without interfering in the affairs of the subjects is the primary characteristic of the observational mode.

> The presence of the camera "on the scene" testifies to its presence in the historical world. This affirms a sense of commitment or engagement with the immediate, intimate, and personal as it occurs. This also affirms a sense of

> fidelity to what occurs that can pass on events to us as if they simply happened when they have, in fact, been constructed to have that very appearance (Nichols 113).

Whilst in the observational mode the filmmaker does not interfere, in the participatory mode he or she will go into the field as a researcher and reflect on his or her experience, which will result in a different kind of truth-value than the one described above. Participatory documentaries involve the active engagement between the filmmaker and the subjects or informants, and thus avoid voice over commentary such as in the expository mode, relying more so on the perspective of individual voices gained through interviews.

> The filmmaker may wish to introduce a broader perspective, often one that is historical in nature. How can this be done? The most common answer involves the interview. The interview allows the filmmaker to address people who appear in the film formally rather than address the audience through voice-over commentary. The interview stands as one of the most common forms of encounter between filmmaker and subject in participatory documentary (Nichols 121).

In *Speciesism: The Movie*, filmmaker Mark Devries introduces his documentary on a very personal note in his own voice: "I thought I had a pretty clear idea of how the world works. I was wrong". Hereafter, the title appears and the viewer is presented with footage of naked and body painted animal rights activists protesting on the streets. The filmmaker explains how his interest in the subject of animal rights started with these people, whom he deemed incredibly foolish. After visiting more animal rights events, he decides to interview employees of PETA, including co-founder Ingrid Newkirk, who provides him with some graphic details of what the organization has encountered in factory farms. The filmmaker has no idea what factory farms are and decides to visit a few along with a friend, with whom he alternates in holding the camera. Even though at this point he is still convinced that the problematic conditions of animals are exaggerated, he begins to become suspicious when none of the farmers will grant him permission to film, despite his insisting he wants to prove the accusations of animal rights activists wrong.

Speciesism is a highly personal search for truth behind closed doors of a young man who tries to invalidate the ideals of animal rights organizations until the very end. After much field research, confrontations with undercover footage of organizations and private persons, and numerous interviews with scientists and specialists, he eventually fails to do so. The film contains no music up until the moment the filmmaker realizes the notion of "speciesism" is undeniably true. After he has passionately discussed this awareness with a friend that films him, the music stops and does not return. Most of the time, graphic undercover footage (courtesy of PETA, COK and MFA) is edited in during interviews in which scientists discuss an according subject. *Speciesism* is difficult to cover by any of the documentary categories of Rotha and Lugon, however it expresses multiple desires described by Renov, such as the desire to Record, Reveal, or Preserve and the desire to Analyse or Interrogate. This final desire is evident in the last personal note of Devries:

> When I walk out onto these same streets, they look different. And I think they always will. But now you know too. And you're going to walk out onto these streets. Could speciesism be the greatest hurdle that has ever faced humankind? Could this be the ultimate choice? To pretend we never learned this, or to take responsibility for ourselves? I do not know the answers to these questions, but this film isn't meant to provide the answers. It is meant to provide questions. Because it is not up to me, it's up to you.

The lack of music, the personal search and the seemingly amateurish approach and equipment increase the truth-value of *Speciesism* as opposed to *Earthlings,* wherein the consequent addition of music and the serene voiceover of Phoenix cause over-dramatization; as well as to *I Am an Animal*, wherein music is applied less frequently, but strategically. On the other hand, *Earthlings*' vast collection of undercover footage is undoubtedly overwhelming to the viewer, especially because undercover footage is valued for its indexicality in today's digital age. Another recurring aspect that is interesting to note is the interviewing of the opposition in *I Am an Animal* and *Speciesism*. In *I Am an Animal*, the opponents of PETA and their campaigns seem to be given a fair chance to speak their minds without being confronted with a direct counterargument, as it is foremost an observational documentary. However, to animal rights discussions in *Speciesism,* the filmmaker

applies the same counter arguments as he was initially given by specialists and scientists, which creates the impression that his dialogists are equally ignorant as he himself claimed to be at the beginning of his story. Since the director of *Earthlings* chose not to interview anyone for his documentary, the opposition has no voice whatsoever. In any case, all three documentaries possess the documentary guarantee, albeit in various degrees and manners, which has consequences for the way in which the spectator regards the undercover footage that was used.

Facing Animals is a short documentary by Dutch photographer and filmmaker Jan van IJken. I believe it is interesting to compare this film to the American documentaries because of the varying situations concerning factory farming in the United States and the Netherlands. *Facing Animals* differs from the three previous discussed documentaries in several ways, but the most important distinction lies in the way the footage in the factory farms was obtained: according to van IJken's website, the filmmaker has unique access to industrial farms. Supposedly, it was hard for van IJken to achieve entrance, however he managed to do so by promising the cooperating farm owners not to place their farms within a pejorative context. In consequence, his film contains no strong, direct message against factory farming, which is affirmed in his artist statement.

> …how is it possible that we rarely see a pig or a chicken outside in the meadows? It made me think about the relationship between man and animal in the Netherlands. What is daily life like for these nameless production-animals? Why do we hide them in dark sheds? At the same time we pamper and humanise our own pets (…) In Facing Animals I give the hidden animals in the industrial farms a face. I invite the viewer to think about the value of an animal. The film isn't a pamphlet against intensive farming, but a visual essay about the complex, intriguing and sometimes confusing relationship between man and animal.

In *Speciesism*, DeVries showed the viewer how he could not gain access to any factory farm, and given the vast amount of undercover footage presented on the Internet, we can assume that no factory farm in America will voluntarily open its doors to someone with a camera.

The structure of the documentary brings to mind *Le Sang des Bêtes* (1949), which is the earliest documentary film concerned with the treatment of animals in factory farming and was created by French filmmaker George Franju. The film presents a day in a Parisian slaughterhouse as opposed to the lives of people in the same neighbourhood, which Franju ingeniously emphasized by alternating between the two stories through editing. The idyllic footage of the neighbourhood is supported by pleasant music and the story is narrated by a female voice, whilst a male voice describes the practices in the slaughterhouse in an indifferent tone; these times, the only sounds to be heard are those recorded in the slaughterhouse. *Facing Animals* is also based on a contrast. Van IJken alternates between footage shot in factory farms and footage of animal beauty pageants and competitions, petting zoos, the vet and even a church where dogs can be baptized. Contrary to *Le Sang des Bêtes* and the other three documentaries, the perspective of the animals in this documentary is equally important as the perspective of human beings on them. Therefore, the cinematography is very intimate and not only consists of a lot of close-ups of the faces of animals, but also contains additional footage from small HD-cameras that were placed between animals in cages, crates and on conveyor belts in order to provide the viewer with the animals' point of view. The documentary contains neither music, nor voiceover commentary or interviews; it is a visual experience with the sounds of the animals and ambient noise. *Facing Animals* is what Bill Nichols calls a reflexive documentary.

> Rather than following the filmmaker in her engagement with other social actors, we now attend to the filmmaker's engagement with us, speaking not only about the historical world but about the problems and issues of representing it as well (…) We now attend to *how* we represent the historical world as well as to *what* gets represented. Instead of *seeing through* documentaries to the world beyond them, reflexive documentaries ask us to *see documentary* for what it is: a construct or representation (125).

The reflexive mode is self-conscious and brings characteristics and notions of documentary film under suspicion, such as the possibility of unquestionable proof and the indexical bond between an indexical image and what it represents. One could for instance wonder if the selection of undercover footage that is presented in *Earthlings*

indeed represents the circumstances on the average factory farm. Of course, the same could be asked about footage that was shot with permission, for the social behaviour changes to a greater or lesser extent when people know they are under surveillance. *Facing Animals* intends to heighten our awareness of these kinds of problems of representation.

Each discussed documentary can be analysed through one or more modes, forms and qualities introduced by one or more authors, resulting in a greater understanding of the documentary's aim. In *Earthlings*, we have seen that the application of emotional music and the starring of a celebrity voice-over intend to persuade the viewer to feel melancholic and even remorseful as they guide the graphic undercover footage. In *I Am an Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk*, it has become clear that strategically applying music at specific moments will evoke unease and sadness in the viewer, but not necessarily overwhelm him or her with emotion to the point of remorse. Unlike *Earthlings*, *I Am an Animal* does not solely consist of undercover footage, and therefore the undercover footage more so serves as evidence of PETA's claims about animal suffering in factory farming. The notion of evidence is also present in *Speciesism: The Movie*, although this film in turn differs greatly from the other two documentaries, as it was not intended to persuade, but rather to provide the viewer with thought-provoking questions. The reflexive documentary *Facing Animals* literally offers the viewer an additional point of view by placing camera's in animal cages. This contrast-based documentary thus suggests that undercover footage may not be sufficient for people to be alerted to the treatment of farm animals as opposed to for example companion animals.

2.2 Photography

2.2.1 Documentary photography in factory farms

Alongside *Facing Animals*, Van Ijken shot a photography series titled *Precious Animals*, which embodies the same philosophy as his documentary film and was frequently shot at the same locations. There exist various debates about the differences between the photographic genres documentary, press and journalism. In her doctoral research *Streets Apart: Genres of Editorial Photographs and Patterns of Photographic Practice*, Louise Grayson investigates the representational strategies of these three genres. She identified patterns of activity types involved in the production

of photography to define the genre of certain photographs (3). Through her conclusion, I believe it can be determined to what genre undercover photography belongs as opposed to documentary photographs from both van IJken and Jo-Anne McArthur.

Grayson divides the actions of the photographer into pre-production, production and post-production. Documentary photography is a genre that discusses issues through an in depth body of work, usually from one individual, and often has a predetermined message or story (pre-production). It acknowledges personal impact on the resulting images and is affected by strong, personal ethics. It often concerns an on-going body of work created over a longer timeframe. People appearing in the photographs are often involved in the image making process or are at least aware of it (production). Eventually, the photographs may be published in books or exhibited at museums, and are rarely published in mainstream media (post-production). Undercover footage seems to share activities from both press and journalist photography. Even though it is not strongly influenced by publication expectations, as is the case with press photography, it is also not concerned with setting up shots, which does happen in journalist photography. Personal impact is acknowledged (pre-production photojournalism), however images are also shot with clear goals from post-production requirements (pre-production press). The images may be found in newspapers, magazines, online (post-production press) or in an exhibition (post-production photojournalism) (Grayson 147). With respect to photographs and videos of animals suffering in factory farms, the public is more familiar with the format of undercover footage by investigators belonging to animal rights organisations than with the personal approach of individual documentary photographers. Therefore, in the next paragraph I will compare documentary photographs to undercover footage depicting similar subjects, as to illustrate how the documentary approach may offer an alternative illustration of the practices in factory farming.

2.2.2 Jan van IJken and Jo-Anne McArthur

Van IJken chose to either shoot *Precious Animals* in black and white, or change the photographs from coloured to black and white in an editing program on a computer. Either way, his choice affects the nature of his photographs, for black and white photography is regularly associated with depth, mystique and rawness by modern

viewers, claims David Lagesse in his article “Don’t color my world” (1). Supporters of black and white photography also link the practice to news photography and talk of honesty and authenticity that leads back to documentary photography from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s (1). Philosopher Vilém Flusser argues that “black” and “white are theoretical concepts that can never actually exist in the world, however black and white photographs do exist because they are images of concepts belonging to the theory of optics; they translate a theory of optics into an image and re-encode theoretical concepts like “black” and “white” into states of things (Flusser 42-43). Nevertheless, he believes that colour photographs are on a higher level of abstraction than black and white ones.

> Colour photographs are on a higher level of abstraction than black and white ones. Black and white photographs are more concrete and in this sense more true: They reveal their theoretical origin more clearly, and vice versa: The ‘more genuine’ the colours of the photographs become, they more untruthful they are, the more they conceil their theoretical origin (44).

In agreement with Lagesse, Flusser states that black and white photographs more clearly reveal the actual significance of the photographs than does colour.

Fig. 6 demonstrates a piglet’s tail being docked without the administering of anaesthesia. This is a common practice in factory farms all over the world, because imprisoned pigs tend to turn to cannibalism when they do not have enough space. There is a lot of detail in the photograph (the viewer sees smoke rising up from the burned tail) as opposed to an undercover image that demonstrates a similar mutilation of a piglet (fig. 7). Because the man in the photograph knew he was being recorded, Jan van IJken was granted time and room to take this photograph and ponder over the composition. The strength of this photograph lies in the depiction of the many tails lying in front of the piglet, demonstrating the quantity of production in one single frame. The open diaphragm of the camera lens, which creates a blurred background that viewers often relate to expensive photography equipment, puts emphasis on the process of tail docking. As a result, on the one hand, the professionalism and depth associated with black and white photography paradoxically generated through editing may evoke a documentary value. On the other hand, van IJken’s photograph lacks the

indexical nature as evoked by the handheld camera aesthetics I discussed in the first chapter.

Photographer and animal rights activist Jo-Anne McArthur was able to unite undercover and documentary photography in her series *We, Animals*, which consists of both undercover photographs and photographs she took with permission. She alternates between colour and black and white photography, also within this one series. Comparable to *Earthlings,* the series covers multiple ways in which animals suffer for humanity, however I choose to focus on a photograph taken at a factory farm. McArthur's undercover photographs are often shot at night, when there are no employees around to interfere with the process (these moments were carefully researched in advance). Fig. 8 is an example of a photograph she took during the night. The absence of employees enabled her to bring lighting equipment to the scene, which results in dramatic shadow play over an already dramatic image (*The Ghosts in Our Machine,* Liza Marshall 2013). The strength in this photograph lies in the separation of the living sow and the dead piglet, which appears to have died of starvation weeks before the scene. As is the case in van IJken's photograph, McArthur's photograph depicts a notion of factory farming, namely the animal as a product, in one single frame. Moreover, as opposed to the undercover photograph depicting pregnant sows in gestation crates, the photograph is aesthetically pleasing.

Contrary to creators of undercover footage, who remain anonymous due to the risk of being prosecuted for trespassing and filming or photographing illegally, artists like Van IJken and McArthur reach and receive support and admiration from a wider audience. As valued members of the photography and art community, their authoritative voices will not merely be heard on various respected occasions, they will also be regarded with respect, whereas even today, animal rights organisations that hold the rights to undercover footage are sometimes still perceived as extremist and thusly portrayed by the media and front groups.

The second section demonstrates how *Precious Animals* –the photographic version of *Facing Animals*– and *We, Animals* by Jo-Anne McArthur reflect on undercover footage. Like the titles, the documentary photographs I discussed are very intimate, especially in comparison to their undercover counterparts. Because the photographs were taken with precision and do not have the sole purpose of a record, they reveal powerful details that the undercover photographs do not. However, despite their authoritative quality, the indexicality as seen in the handheld aesthetics of

undercover footage is not as prominent in these photographs. Ultimately, both the documentary approach and the press/journalist approach of undercover footage possess persuasive qualities to the viewer.

In conclusion, there appear to be various ways in which expectations of spectators are influenced by certain modes, forms and qualities of documentary film and photography. In documentary films, filmmakers utilize the powerful ability of music to persuade, invite celebrities to narrate their story, or experts to be interviewed to increase the documentary's truth-value. Whilst a documentary's truth-value may be increased through a professional production, it can also be achieved through amateurism as seen in *Speciesism: The Movie.* Truth-value, in turn, is often questioned in reflexive documentaries such as *Facing Animals* by Jan van IJken. The role of undercover footage shifts in the three feature length documentaries. In *Earthlings* the specific clip of a fox getting skinned alive serves as one example of many clips depicting cruelty, whereas in *I am an Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk,* the same clip serves as an example of PETA's investigations. In *Speciesism: The Movie,* undercover footage mainly has a supportive role and is never guided by music, contrary to the footage in the other two films. Documentary photographs are equally able to influence the spectator, for example through the use of lighting, the adaptation of colours or the transformation to black and white. As is the case with documentary film, the professionalism in the documentary photographs of Jan van IJken and Jo-Anne McArthur may increase their truth-value, just as the immediacy and indexical nature of undercover photographs can.

Chapter 3: A rhetorical approach

Imagine strolling along a populous shopping boulevard and stumbling upon an haute couture fashion boutique with its windows covered in red paint that spells out the words "DEATH FOR SALE". Surprisingly enough, it is not as uncommon to encounter in the United States as one might think, for a considerable part of the occupations of animal rights organisations, and in particular PETA, is conducting campaigns such as the anti-fur campaign described above. Especially the campaigns of PETA have been heavily criticized, not merely by people that feel offended by being confronted with the impact of their lifestyle and eating habits, but also for example by several Feminists who do not agree with the way females are portrayed in PETA's still and moving images. After PETA, MFA is the animal rights organisation that produces the greatest amount of campaigns; therefore, I will examine different types of campaigns including lens-based media from both these organisations in the shape of street performances, posters, websites and commercials intended for television. These campaigns either include undercover footage and will thereby be considered indexical, or solely refer to undercover footage by means of tropes[10], and will thereby considered to be iconic, or inhabit both indexical and iconic traits; these considerations will be discussed in the course of this chapter.

The campaigns of PETA are titled "Unhappy Mother's Day", which was a short campaign around Mother's Day 2015 against the confinement of British sows with piglets in tight crates; "The Holocaust on Your Plate", which is a campaign that compares the present conditions and treatment of animals in factory farms to the conditions and treatment of Jewish people in concentration camps during World War II;.and "McCruelty: I'm Hatin' It", which is a campaign against the cruel handling of livestock in farms hired by the fast food chain McDonald's. The campaigns of MFA are titled "#NoAgGag", which is a campaign that encourages people to reject Ag-Gag laws via social media, and the "Farm to Fridge Tour", which is a campaign that travels across the United States to exhibit the documentary *Farm to Fridge* in public places. Besides these campaigns, I will also discuss a commercial sponsored by MFA titled "Mad Sausage", which criticizes the evasive attitude of people eating meat, and

[10] *Rhetoric.* A figure of speech which consists in the use of a word or phrase or image in a sense other than that which is proper to it. Hence (more generally): a figure of speech; (an instance of) figurative or metaphorical language.

a commercial by PETA titled "Get A Feel For Angora", which appeals to the empathy of people concerning the plucking of Angora rabbits. Each of the campaigns and commercials is created to convince people to either take action or to omit certain habits. In this chapter I will thus analyse in what ways the undercover footage is utilized to create rhetorical arguments and propagandist strategies within these campaigns and commercials. In order to do so, it is first necessary to clarify and expound the terms propaganda, rhetoric, indexical and iconic. Then, I will provide the reader with a brief campaigning history of PETA and MFA in order to clarify the overall tone of their methods, and introduce some propagandist responses from front groups. Front groups are organisations that serve a third party or interest whose sponsorship is hidden or rarely mentioned, which in the case of animal rights are often wealthy companies such as fast food chains. Hereafter, I will thoroughly analyse my selection of campaigns and commercials, and finally, I will compare these to an extensively discussed British election campaign from 2015 by the Labour party against the Conservative party. This campaign has nothing to do with factory farming or even animals, but may therefore provide an interesting insight into the propagandist strategies of the campaigns from the animal rights organisations.

3.1 Propaganda, Rhetoric, Index and Icon

A frequently used word in discussions about animal rights organisations is "propaganda", which literally translates to an effort to gain support for an opinion or a course of action. However, it is often uttered with an undertone of slight negativity, for propaganda is commonly associated with manipulation. Indeed, advertisements of propagandizing politicians oftentimes make an appeal to human emotions to steer their opinions into the desired direction, says Ted Brader in his article "Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions" (388). Such communicative strategies are considered to be rhetorical. Author Jan Heinrichs calls rhetoric "the art of influence, friendship and eloquence, of ready wit and irrefutable logic" (4), and introduces three rhetorical persuasion tools, namely *logos*, which is argument by logic; *ethos*, which is argument by character; and *pathos*, which is argument by emotion. Rhetoric is applied in advertising through the use of rhetorical figures, which are inventive variations on the usual way language is used and can either appear verbally or visually. Pictorial stimuli, says Ioannis G.

Theodokaris in “Rhetorical Maneuvers in a Controversial Tide: Assessing the Boundaries of Advertising Rhetoric”, lead to stronger and faster recall of memories as well as stronger attitude formation in comparison to verbal elements.

> (…) in contrast to words, pictures are dually encoded as they can be labelled more easily than words can be imaged. As a result, visual stimuli leave stronger traces in memory and, therefore, are recalled more easily (Theodokaris 16**)**.

As is the case with rhetoric, semiotics, or science of communication studies through the interpretation of symbols and signs, may be applied to both texts and images. A sign always stands for its object; indexical signs refer to their objects by virtue of causal or physical relation, whilst iconic signs demonstrate a resemblance between sign and reverent. An icon does not necessarily need to be a record, as it can be an imaginative, and imaginary, reconstruction (Scott 27).

Philosopher Douglas N. Morgan calls the non-manipulated photograph, whose casual connection with its subject is discoverable and describable through the trace of light on sensitive film, the dearest example of a pictorial index (52). However, as I paraphrased Thomas Y. Levin in my first chapter, in the digital age, the rhetorical status of photographic referentiality has come under severe pressure. Indeed, many theorists, historians and critics alike have either questioned or dismissed the indexical quality of digital photography. Nonetheless, art critic John Roberts states that digitization does not destroy the truth-claims of photography.

> (…) digitalization does not, in fact, represent a loss of indexicality at all (…) this is because the translation of the distribution of light intensities into binary code is no less the product of a causal relationship between image and appearance than that of chemical photography’s contiguous and contingent capturing of light on sensitive film (Roberts 29-30).

As Roberts explains, despite that fact that light is transferred into data that constitutes

the digital image, the notion of that-has-been[11] is nevertheless present in digital photography. For this reason, in addition to the argument made in the first chapter concerning indexicality as evoked by the aesthetics of undercover footage, I will consider the digital photographs and videos shot by undercover investigators to be indexical.

3.2 The ethos of PETA and MFA

To illustrate the way in which undercover footage is utilized to create rhetorical arguments and propagandist strategies in the campaigns, it is firstly worthwhile to understand the manners in which MFA and PETA present themselves to the public by visiting the websites of these organisations, for the number of Internet users, and therefore their outreach, is steadily –is in fact even every second– growing. On the website of MFA, a pop-up window showing a photograph from a recent investigation on a supposedly "humane certified" farm initially blocks the entrance to the homepage. The pop-up gives the visitor the opportunity to play a video of the investigations, but also allows him or her to close the window, after which the visitor arrives on the homepage. The website has a scroll story format, which has become very prominent on the Internet since early 2014. At the top of the page, short clips of an undercover video from the same recent investigation are shown repeatedly in slow motion, and again the visitor is given the choice to watch the full video. The clips are not particularly distracting because they have a colour overlay effect with a high opacity, thus it requires proper focus to distinguish the occurrences. When the visitor scrolls down, he or she will find linked images that encourage a plant-based diet and links to comical animal videos. On the "About MFA" page, the visitor will read this description:

> Inspiring Compassion. Ending Cruelty. Mercy For Animals is dedicated to preventing cruelty to farmed animals and promoting compassionate food choices and policies. Imagine a world free of cruelty. Where we nurture our bodies, minds and spirits with wholesome, healthy food that is kind to animals and sustainable for our planet. Mercy For Animals believes that world is

[11] The essence of photography according to Roland Barthes. For him, every photograph is a certificate of presence.

> possible, in fact inevitable, if we work together to elevate humanity to it's fullest potential (http://www.mercyforanimals.org/about).

When visiting the website of PETA, one will find their statement at the top of the page in capital letters beside their logo.

> Animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment, or abuse in any other way (http://www.peta.org/).

Evidently, MFA aims for cooperation and strives to address the kindness in human beings, imploring people to show mercy, such as their name implies. MFA seems to be using *ethos* as a persuasive tool. An agreeable *ethos,* says Heinrichs, matches the audience's expectations for a leader's tone, appearance and manners (46). PETA, on the other hand, is very straightforward about their mission on their own "About" page, and relies more on *logos*:

> PETA has always been known for uncompromising, unwavering views on animal rights. We aren't afraid to make the difficult comparisons, say the unpopular thing, or point out the uncomfortable truth, if it means that animals will benefit (http://www.peta.org/about-peta/why-peta/).

However, what PETA perceives to be ethical, may hurt the ethos of others, and in order to persuade, it is necessary to combine the persuasive tools. As I will illustrate further on, both animal rights organisations do couple these tools within their campaigns and commercials.

At this point in time, PETA is running no less than 13 individual websites dedicated to their campaigns, which are directed at amongst others the meat industry, the fashion industry and the US military. MFA is running five campaigns at the moment, which are mostly directed at the meat and dairy industry. Both animal rights organisations are supported by vegan and vegetarian celebrities who often contribute as spokespersons in campaigns or as narrators in documentaries. For example, actor Joaquin Phoenix, who narrated the controversial documentary *Earthlings*, which I discussed in the second chapter, has contributed to campaigns for both PETA and MFA, as has famous glamour model and actress Pamela Anderson. Whether or not

such celebrities volunteered to help, the decision to accept or ask for this help is a strategic one. Another oft-applied strategy, especially by PETA, is so-called "shockvertising", which is a combination of the words "shock" and "advertising". According to Brandon Urwin in "Advertising: Not So Shocking Anymore. An Investigation Among Generation Y"**,** advertisements and campaigns are considered offensive or shocking when they disregard personal and societal norms and values, regardless of whether it is because of being sexually inappropriate, indecent, vulgar or aesthetically unappealing (Urwin 204).

> (…) norm violation can be defined as the breach of shared expectations that people develop through the process of social learning. As people interact and form societal groups, they begin to learn what that group defines as acceptable and unacceptable behavior. This range of defined acceptable and unacceptable behavior is used to evaluate objects, ideas, actions, persons, or in this case, advertisements (Urwin 204-205).

In the documentary *I Am an Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk and PETA,* Ingrid Newkirk, cofounder of PETA, mentions that any press is good press. PETA's tactic, confirms Karen Dawn in her article "Moving the Media: From Foes, or Indifferent Strangers, to Friends" published in *In Defense of Animals*, is to publish something that will excite the press, which results in journalists attacking the organisation (Dawn 199); consequently, newspapers publish PETA's letters of response, wherein the suffering of animals is explained in detail. PETA spokespersons are also frequently invited on talk shows, and once there, a lot of times they are verbally attacked by the host. Newkirk claims that being able to discuss animal suffering is worth their being ridiculed. Whether one may agree with Newkirk's methods or not, numerous studies have demonstrated that fear appeals are effective at changing behaviour.

> (…) extant research suggests that negative affective states increase people's involvement and attention in campaigns. Specifically, fear or anxiety enhances information seeking, political involvement, and attention to campaign stimuli (Schemer 413-414).

Critique on animal rights organisations is not merely expressed by the press or with regard to their campaigns, but may also be initiated by organisations commonly known as front groups, who utilize similar fear appeals to discredit the animal rights organisations. According to Michael Pfau in his article "The Influence of Corporate Front-Group Stealth Campaigns", the hiring of front groups is considered to be a successful public relations campaign strategy (74).

> (…) front groups seek to influence by disguising or obscuring the true identity of their members or implying representation of a much more broadly based group. In other words, the use of front groups is designed to shield the true identity of sponsors. In commercial terms, the most common use is on the part of corporations who work collectively through industry-based associations (74).

One of the largest front groups opposing animal rights organisations is the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA), which is a self-described charitable non-profit organisation with animals' best interest in mind; however, they are suspected of being sponsored and funded by the farming industry. Since 2006, NAIA lobbied for the passage of the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA), which allows for special consideration of terrorism issues in the sentencing of animal rights activists. "The time has come", said NAIA, "to say no to terrorists who hold legitimate animal interests hostage to extremist agendas and to stand together against these offensive and intolerable assaults" (http://www.naiaonline.org). Because the organisation's name and campaigns claim to oppose animal abuse, they are highly manipulative to the general public, and it takes a critical reader to read between the lines of their alleged voice of reason and discover their support for laws that are in fact harmful to both animals and consumers. Indeed, Pfau mentions that Americans have grown used to front group stealth campaigns, which are in fact very widespread.

> One explanation for why front group stealth campaigns are effective is that the public is inherently low involved on matters of public policy, and, hence, most people are unlikely to cognitively engage messages. As a result, deceptive titles and catchy slogans are able to exert considerable influence (Pfau 76).

Because NAIA and other front groups opposing animal rights organisations focus on the rights of humans with regard to animals (they claim to represent a broad spectrum of animal owners), they possess an agreeable *ethos* and the public will be eager to listen, whereas campaigns of animal rights organisations mostly focus on the rights of animals that may be inconvenient for humans.

PETA's campaign titled "Unhappy Mother's Day", which is a play on words of the phrase "Happy Mother's Day", was a short street campaign raising awareness for pregnant sows in gestation crates and caused quite the uproar. A gestation crate is a cage approximately the size of the pregnant sow that is confined in it for four months until they give birth; in that time, they are only able to eat, defecate, stand up and lie down. They are not able to walk or turn around, thus out of boredom and depression, the sows tend to wound themselves by shaking their heads and biting the metal bars. Once the piglets are born, the sows are moved to slightly larger crates for four weeks while they nurse the piglets. Thereafter, they are again artificially inseminated and the cycle is repeated until they are slaughtered after six years. For PETA's campaign, a few of the organisation's pregnant members dressed down to their bottom underwear and posed in specially created gestation crates on hands and knees in British public streets (fig. 9). In this campaign, PETA did not display the undercover footage itself, but instead chose to utilize the footage of sows in gestation crates to create an iconic relationship to human mothers meant to both shock and empathize people. This attempt at administering the persuasion tool *pathos* will not work because of the disagreeable ethos PETA created for itself in past campaigns. For many feminists, "Unhappy Mother's Day" is the umpteenth campaign to sexually objectify female bodies, which they feel may also be problematic for the animal rights movement.

> Equating femininity with a body that is always already amenable to consumption by a masculine gaze reinforces a dualism that is also used to subordinate animals. Moreover, reducing women to their bodies in a context of animality, whether by presenting them as sexualized "bunnies" or "foxes" or simply connecting their sexualized bodies to the idea of animals, solidifies the trajectory of thinghood. All the usual suspects of things, rather than persons, are still aligned: women, body, animals (Deckha 55).

Whilst some feminists fear that PETA will alienate female supporters with these types of campaigns, others have argued that the absent referent of the animal contains strength, for farm animals have been made so absent from our consciousness that people are not able to fathom them representing their own needs (Deckha 39**)**.

"The Holocaust on Your Plate", once again a clever title that comments on people's participation in cruelty by consuming animal products, was a travelling display that juxtaposed undercover footage of factory farms with images of the Holocaust in World War II. The installation travelled to more than seventy cities in the United States and around twenty countries between 2003 and 2005. The viewer is presented to a photo of men stacked in wooden beds next to chickens stacked in battery cages; a photo of dead human bodies piled on top of each other next to a photo of dead pigs piled on top of each other (fig. 10); a photo of undernourished naked men next to a photo of undernourished cows. Every time, the title reads "To animals, all people are Nazi's", which is a quote from Nobel prize winning Jewish author Isaac Bashevis Singer.

> What do they know—all these scholars, all these philosophers, all the leaders of the world—about such as you? They have convinced themselves that man, the worst transgressor of all the species, is the crown of creation. All other creatures were created merely to provide him with food, pelts, to be tormented, exterminated. In relation to them, all people are Nazis; for the animals it is an eternal Treblinka (271).

In her article "Moral Extensionism or Racist Exploitation? The Use of Holocaust and Slavery Analogies in the Animal Liberation Movement", Claire Jean Kim states that "writing in the post-Holocaust period as a survivor, about survivors, to an audience of survivors, Singer's message is undeniably powerful" (315). Still, the campaign was eventually banned due to it being considered too offensive, and it was argued that it made the fate of the victims of the Holocaust appear banal and trivial. Whether one may agree with the banishment of the campaign or not, the juxtaposition of the images is very compelling, especially because of the indexical quality of the photographs. Unlike the depicted practices of factory farming, the depicted practices from the Holocaust are accepted as truth all over the world by almost every living

human being[12]. Therefore, by juxtaposing these images, the truth-value of the factory farm footage increases because of the notion of that-has-been in the Holocaust photographs. Moreover, the similarities between the photographs make the juxtaposition logical, which is a sign of the use of the persuasion tool *logos*.

The title "McCruelty: I'm Hatin' It" is a mockery of fast food chain McDonald's slogan, "I'm Lovin' It". The humorous angle is meant to improve the *ethos* of the organisation, for humour invokes a positive attitude (Heinrichs 85). Because it is an on-going campaign re-launched in 2009, the website is still up and running at this moment in time. At first glance, the visitor may think he or she has reached the fast food chain's own website because of the iconic red white and yellow colour scheme, until he or she notices subtle differences. For example, McDonald's friendly mascot, Ronald the Clown, now has more in common with Stephen King's "It"[13], and to the logo a dangling upside down chicken bleeding from its neck was added (fig. 11). The undercover footage shot at McDonald's farms was thus used to create the iconic logo. The website contains among other information about the campaign, PETA's past conflicts with McDonald's and an image gallery with undercover footage of the mistreatment of chickens. There have been multiple street protests around McDonald's restaurants, where members of PETA handed out "Unhappy Meals", which instead of fast food and children's toys contained graphic undercover images, information about McDonald's slaughter methods and less cruel alternatives, a t-shirt and toys of animals covered in blood. The campaign has been criticized because children were interested in the "Unhappy Meals", what with them resembling the traditional Happy Meal, and parents found the undercover footage to be unsuitable for them.

The name of the MFA campaign "#NoAgGag" is a sensible one, for it already contains the "hashtag"[14] with which people may tag and spread images and statuses on social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook and the image-sharing website

[12] Several Front Groups have spread and kept alive the rumour that animal rights organisations oftentimes stage the events seen in the footage.
[13] "It" is a monstrous clown from a movie of the same name, based on a book by famous horror author Stephen King.
[14] "A (Twitter) hashtag is a unique tagging format with a prefix symbol, #, that associates a user-defined tag with (Tweet) content. Beyond supporting different search criteria, various (Twitter) hashtag applications may also provide users with functionalities to organize, share, save, or publish the search results of (twitterverse) resources" (Hsia-Ching Chang and Hemalata Iyer, "Trends in Twitter Hashtag Applications: Design Features for Value-Added Dimensions to Future Library Catalogues", 248) [parantheses added].

Tumblr. In the light of the rise of ag-gag legislation, MFA invited celebrities to be photographed with black tape over their mouths containing the white text "#NoAgGag". Many other people followed in their footsteps and photographed themselves with either tape, paper or hands over their mouths, making it a trending topic around May 2015 (see fig. 12 and fig. 13). While the "#NoAgGag" street campaigns included indexical undercover footage as to stimulate people to vote against ag-gag laws, the self-portrait photographs circulating the Internet are iconic through representing the silencing and punishing of undercover investigators. They have trended, I will argue, because of the popularity of the self-portrait, otherwise known as the "selfie". In his photo essay "Selfie Love: Public Lives in an Era of Celebrity Pleasure, Violence, and Social Media", anthropologist Jesse Weaver Shipley states that the prominence of the selfie, which is also often associated with the hastag, is one of the unintended consequences of Internet and mobile interconnectivity.

> It has become a genre of image making with recognizable, though shifting, aesthetic parameters of posting and composition. The selfie requires the technologies of instant digital photography and social media circulation for its existence (Weaver 404).

According to Shipley, selfie takers become the protagonists in a self-produced melodrama and intend to provoke commentary, responses and recirculation. Therefore, selfies are an ideal form for campaigning and spreading a message. Moreover, the hastag invites people sharing a similar *ethos* to engage, and because ag-gag laws keep being introduced and reshaped by the farming industry, this campaign will not cease to be relevant.

The "Farm to Fridge" tour campaign took 92 days and visited 42 cities across America in 2011. The tour van was equipped with large screen monitors and audio, broadcasting the documentary short *Farm to Fridge* to thousands of passersby along public streets. Before the start of the documentary, the screens were covered with banners asking, "How much cruelty can you swallow?", which is both a literal question and a figure of speech. After the documentary, members of MFA handed out leaflets with information and vegetarian starter kits, employing both *pathos* and *ethos*. The tour received ample mainstream media attention and evoked many positive

reactions. During the tour, MFA did not use any iconic imagery, but fully relied on the indexical undercover footage. Even though the footage itself is shocking, the norms and values of passersby were not challenged in the way they might be when confronted with for example a naked female body, such as in campaigns from PETA. Furthermore, the handing out of vegetarian starter kits is a friendly and inviting method to spark the interest of people, especially after having seen shocking imagery. Such gestures evoke pleasant emotions and create a positive attitude towards the organisation, whilst shocking imagery in turn creates a negative attitude towards the farming industry.

3.3 Television Commercials

The commercial "Mad Sausage" was created by Dutch director Louis van Zwol and was sponsored by MFA, who adapted it to a slightly shorter version. It aired in several American cities on networks such as MTV and VH1. The film shows a young man buying some food at a snack bar. When he decides to start with a sausage, it suddenly begins to speak to him and tells him "I wouldn't do that if I was you, son" (fig. 14). The sausage first tells him what sorts of meat, and even bones, are grinded up to have become the sausage, but suggests not telling every ingredient, because that would probably upset the young man. It then starts to talk about his past as a prisoner and the conditions he used to live in, utilizing *pathos* as a persuasion tool. All the while, the viewer hears emotional violin music. At first, the young man seems intrigued, but when the sausage notices he is too hungry to care about his health and the past of the sausage, it says "Suit yourself then". The moment the young man puts the sausage in his mouth, the music changes to frightening sounds and suddenly, the video switches to undercover footage in multiple factory farms. Besides the music, the viewer also hears the sounds from the factory farm, among those the screams of frightening pigs. The young man, shocked, seizes to take a bite. The film ends with the text "If fast food could talk, you'd bloody well listen". In 2013, it was nominated for the Viral Video Awards in Berlin.

Not only did the director use humour as a persuasive technique, he also chose to apply the rhetorical device of personification: a figure of speech in which inanimate objects are characterized in terms of human attributes, thus representing the object as

a living and feeling person (Delbaere 122**)**. According to Marjorie Delbaere, personification and anthropomorphism[15] create an emotional connection.

> (…) when consumers engage in anthropomorphism, they process the ad that triggered this response more easily. This fluency occurs because consumers have a lot of experience and knowledge of human beings, their actions, and their personalities, and the accessibility of these schemas helps them to comprehend what they see in the ad. The pleasure and ease associated with fluency then lends a positive cast to the emotional responses and brand personality attributions that follow from anthropomorphism. In consequence, summative measures of advertising outcomes, such as brand attitude, are expected to be more positive (123**)**.

Ironically, the inanimate object of the sausage used to be a living being (or multiple living beings) and used to have, according to many scientists, a personality. The sausage has a common British accent and uses swearwords every now and again. Usually, people are not prone to use swearwords in front of strangers, and because of that, the viewer may view the sausage as a friendly person. The sausage is an icon for the animals the viewer sees in the indexical undercover footage that follows when the young man tries to take a bite out of it. After the humorous iconic image of the animated sausage, the indexical images and sounds seem especially disturbing. Evidently, both *ethos* and *pathos* are practiced.

"Get A Feel For Angora" by PETA contains the same iconic/indexical structure as "Mad Sausage", however, the tone of this commercial is a lot darker from the start. The image of multiple men and women preparing themselves for getting their body hair waxed off is guided by calm piano music and the sound of a heartbeat. The video mostly consists of close-ups and extreme close-ups and the anticipating, scared and screaming faces of the humans are dramatically lighted (fig. 15). The sound of the breath of the men and women and the sound of the wax ripping out their hair is very prominent, but their screams are muffled. While everything is filmed in slow motion, the cuts are rather fast and keep getting faster towards the transition to the indexical undercover footage. The footage of rabbits getting plucked is not

[15] The cognitive bias whereby people are prone to attribute human characteristics to things.

adapted and their screams are not muffled. The images are alternated with the text "It's even more painful when it's not your choice", which can be considered as persuasion through *logos*. Instead of applying personification, this commercial uses actual human beings to implore people to relate to the animals, and the title literally and metaphorically asks the viewer to commiserate, thus also applying *pathos*. As is the case with "Mad Sausage", the switch from iconic imagery to indexical imagery is very powerful.

3.4 Political campaign: Labour versus the Conservatives

In this paragraph, I will demonstrate the resemblances between the campaigns of the animal rights organisations and a campaign of a political party. On May 7 2015, the United Kingdom general election was held to appoint the 56th Parliament. Two major parties, Labour and the Conservatives, have often opposed and campaigned against each other in the past. Instead of solely creating posters to demonstrate their own stances, the two parties also created posters to scold one another. One of these posters (fig. 16), which was created by the Conservatives berating Labour in 1978, includes a photograph of a long queue of people from the left to the right side of the poster, ending at a banner that reads "Unemployment Office". The title of the poster says "Labour isn't working", and at the bottom of the poster is a smaller text saying "Britain's better off with the conservatives". For the election of 2015, Labour decided to use an identical looking poster in their own campaign against the Conservatives as a referent to the 1979 version, changing the title to "The doctor can't see you now" and adding a similar looking photograph. This time, the banner reads "waiting room" and the smaller text says "The Tories[16] have made it harder to see a GP" (fig. 17). Labour thus claims that under the leadership of the Conservatives, it will become more difficult to make an appointment with a general practitioner. As is the case with the original poster, the long queue is an exaggeration that has a comical effect, and the title "The doctor can't see you now" is a variation on the well-known phrase "the doctor will see you now". The people in the photograph are old and sick and are supposed to have an iconic relationship to the people of the United Kingdom under the leadership of the conservatives. The poster is thus not merely meant to increase

[16] Supported or recognized by the Tory party: Conservative.

the *ethos* of Labour towards the elderly in particular, but also as a warning for supporting the Conservatives.

Both the photograph from the 1979 poster and the 2015 poster were staged and thus have no physical connection to people who have actually waited for a GP or employment in such long queues. Hence, even though the exaggeration is comical, the depiction is simply a prognosis, and not a fact. Moreover, multiple newspapers speak of "recycling" when referring to the Labour poster, attacking Labour's sense of creativity. Their attempt at persuading through *ethos* has in this way an opposite effect. The campaign is best comparable to "McCruelty" from PETA and "Animal Welfare" (fig. 18) from the front group NAIA, which depicts animal abuse, animal welfare and animal extremism according to the front group. NAIA portrays itself as a moderate animal welfare group through the iconic drawn image of a young girl playing with a dog, and portrays animal rights organisations such as PETA through the iconic drawn image of a villain wearing a mask and holding a burning torch. In all these campaigns, the opposition is vilified, however, PETA's campaign diverges from the other two because of the implementation of both indexical and iconic imagery.

In this chapter, I have analysed multiple campaigns by two of the largest animal rights organisations in the United States in order to illustrate in what ways their undercover footage is utilized to create rhetorical arguments and propagandist strategies within these campaigns and commercials. The organisations choose to use indexical undercover footage, iconic imagery that refers to undercover footage, or both indexical and iconic images. Oftentimes, especially in the case of PETA, these images are considered to be shocking as they disregard personal and societal norms and values. Shocking imagery may either alienate possible animal rights supporters, such as feminists opposing the exploitation of the female body, or evoke critical thinking and increase involvement in certain issues. Front groups opposing animal rights organisations use this same kind of tactic to convince people to be aware of terrorist activities.

Other rhetorical strategies used in campaigns are personification of inanimate objects, which is most prominent in the commercial "Mad Sausage" and allows the viewer to empathize with both the object and the cause, and the evocation of empathy by placing a human in the role of an animal. Both positive and negative press, as Newkirk states, will bring attention to the mission of the organisations. However, it

can also result in the organisation in question not being taken seriously and their methods and truth-claim being questioned. This notion is confirmed in a comparison of the campaigns of animal rights organisations to the campaigning poster of the political party Labour. The similar propagandist strategies to for example PETA's "McCruelty" campaign, in this case the discrediting of the opposition, have an opposite effect because Labour was in turn criticized for its lack of creativity. Moreover, the iconic imagery was based on a prediction and does not refer to an actual event.

Overall, the combination of iconic and indexical imagery is more persuasive than one or the other apart. Mere indexical imagery is often avoided because the undercover footage is especially graphic and "real", whilst iconic imagery may unintentionally make people forget about the real suffering animals. Combining the two will initially invoke empathy or humour in a person, and eventually, these emotions will still linger once the indexical undercover footage is presented.

Conclusion

Which characteristics of the media photography and film are exploited in three approaches to footage shot in factory farms by undercover investigators of animal rights organisations? The three approaches, namely the ethical approach, the documentary approach and the rhetorical approach have given insight into the visual strategies of undercover footage as presented on websites of animal rights organisations; as presented in documentary film and as reflected in documentary photography; and as presented in campaigns. The affective and indexical nature of undercover footage initially described in the first chapter is of great importance in the second and third chapter as well, for the indexicality of the undercover footage will increase the truth-value of a documentary film, and may act as a persuasion tool within campaigns. Furthermore, the undercover footage is persuasive because it is affective to spectators. The affective qualities are generated by aesthetics that are inherent to undercover footage. These aesthetics, in turn, are brought about by the manner in which the footage was photographed and filmed. In all probability, these affects are able to change the attitude of people towards surveillance and solve the dilemma of the ethical problems of photographing and filming people without their consent within the farming industry.

In the discussed documentary films and photographs, the indexical and affective nature of undercover footage is exploited by for example adding music to the moving images, or by transforming still colour images to black and white images. In the discussed campaigns, the utilization of humour and comparison through the juxtaposing of indexical and iconic images is generally prominent. The indexicality and affect of the undercover footage in a campaign are often emphasized because of the interaction with iconic imagery. Even though spectators are guided by the persuasion tools *ethos, pathos* and *logos,* most of them expect a certain degree of intervention or manipulation in campaigns. However, they tend to have faith in the "documentary guarantee" of documentary films and photography. For this reason, it is important consider to what extent a visual strategy is principally guidance, or manipulation.

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Appendix

Figure 1 Undercover photograph by an anonymous investigator. PETA.

Figure 2 Undercover photograph by an anonymous investigator. PETA.

Figure 3 Still from an undercover video by an anonymous investigator. PETA.

Figure 4 Tascosa Feedyard, Texas (2013) Archival pigment print, 150x216cm.

Figure 5 Coronado Feeders, Dalhart, Texas (2013). Archival pigment print, 150x180cm.

Figure 6 Film Stills from *Earthlings* by Shaun Monson.

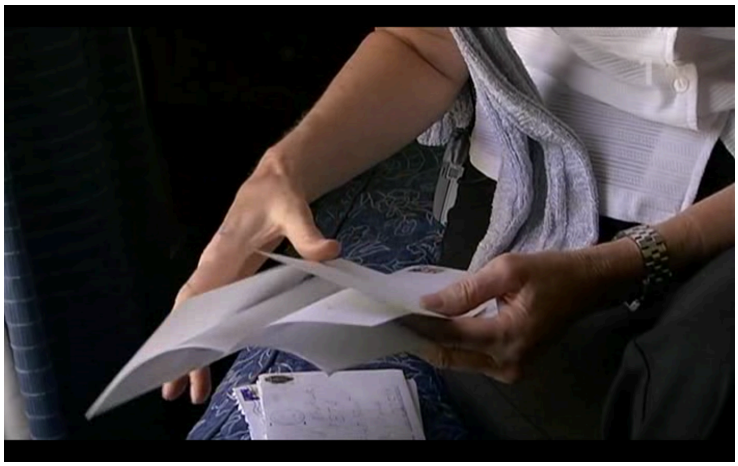

Figure 7 Film still from *I am an Animal: The Story of Ingrid Newkirk* by Matthew Galkin.

Figure 8 Film still from *Speciesism: The Movie* by Mark DeVries.

Figure 9 Film stills from *Le Sang des Bêtes* by Georges Franju.

Figure 10 Film stills from *Facing Animals* by Jan van IJken.

Figure 11 "The two-day-old piglet's tail is cropped, without anaesthetic". Jan van IJken, *Precious Animals.*

Figure 12 Undercover photograph by an anonymous investigator. MFA.

Figure 13 Jo-Anne McArthur, *We, Animals.*

Figure 14 PETA, *Unhappy Mother's Day.Photograph by Atland.tv*

Figure 15 PETA, *The Holocaust on your Plate.*

Figure 16 PETA, *McCruelty: I'm Hatin'It.*

Figure 17 MFA's #noagag campaign

Figure 18 MFA's #noaggag campaign, collection of Facebook user photographs.

Figure 19 Still from the commercial *Mad Sausage.*

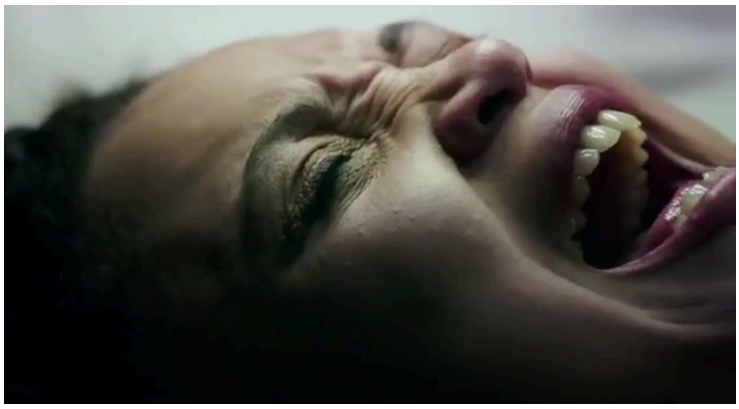

Figure 20 Still from the commercial *Get a Feel for Angora.*

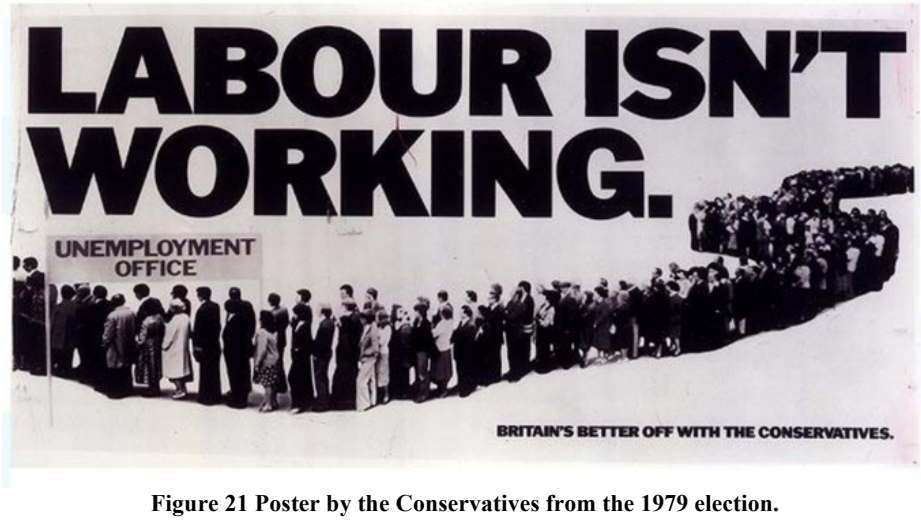

Figure 21 Poster by the Conservatives from the 1979 election.

Figure 22 Poster by Labour from the 2015 election.

Figure 23 Anti-terrorism campaign poster by NAIA.