

# **Vegan revolution!**

**A critical discourse analysis of the  
use of 'linguistic camouflage'  
by business organisations**

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With thanks to my supervisor and my husband.

In loving memory of my mother, who supported my decision to become vegetarian over fifteen years ago, leading me to the compassionate path I am treading today.

## **Abstract**

Businesses and the media have an increasingly large role to play in reflecting and shaping public opinion and trends. This role is partly enacted through the language that they choose to use in their everyday communications, which could be said to comprise mainstream societal discourses. By applying the method of critical discourse analysis, it is possible to peel away the levels of meaning that such texts have, to explore what is hidden beneath. Only rarely is language neutral in purpose and tone. It may be persuasive, shocking, informative or entertaining. Sometimes, however, language can be used in such a way that it reproduces existing power relations and further ingrains prejudice against minority groups. It can also help to soothe the psychological tension that occurs when an individual's modes of thinking and behaving are misaligned. One particularly interesting example lies in the relationship between humans and animals, as conveyed by euphemisms and other linguistic devices. Veganism is the empirical case through which all of this will be explored.

Keywords: animals, business, cognitive dissonance, critical discourse analysis, discourse, ethics, euphemism, language, linguistic camouflage, management studies, media, power, vegan

## Introduction

Language is universal. It is the building block of human society and culture, with scholars referring to it as “scaffolding” (Bertolotti et al. 2014: 75). If the brain is an intricate map of thoughts and feelings, language is a key to unlocking its mysteries. The primary function of language is to enable us to make sense of the world around us and to communicate what we think and feel about this world to others (e.g. University Of Minnesota 2016). However, it can also construct our reality and convey highly abstract concepts such as *honour*, *purple* or *four*. Language has the capacity to be rich, beautiful and inspiring. But it has its limits: what can be elucidated can also be obscured; what can be honest and accurate can also be deceitful and misleading; and what can help us to understand and be understood can also be misunderstood. As a communication tool that can demonstrate cognitive capability, language may sometimes be used to legitimise morally questionable decisions and situations (Lucas & Fyke 2014; Rittenburg et al. 2016). Often, this is achieved through linguistic devices like oxymorons, euphemisms and metaphors.

One concerning aspect of language is how it can be utilised to sweep aside marginal discourses or reinforce the marginality of such discourses, and consequently implicitly exclude or even demonise the minorities that these discourses represent. The business world is no stranger to the exercising of power and influence. A specific example of this expression of power will be thoroughly explored in this paper through the various discourses that exist in the public domain surrounding veganism and vegans. As Jepson highlights, “language, far from being merely a set of symbols used for communication, is a dynamic system that both reflects and shapes thought” (2008: 129). Veganism is compatible with this view: it is highly relevant to discussions on language because our understanding of the term and the philosophy behind it is constantly evolving. Yet, even though its followers are growing, veganism remains on the margins of business discourse.

In what follows, I will first set the scene for my chosen research problem on the use and effects of language; next, I will concretise the concept of veganism and tie it to a discussion on the salient points of the thesis’ purpose in a review of the literature; then, I will set out the methodology and framework of analysis used to tackle the research problem; finally, I will present and analyse the findings of the study and look to their implications for management studies and, more generally, society.

## Literature review and theoretical approach

### ❖ A blind spot in research

Vegan discourses form a blind spot in management and organisational studies, which it is important to acknowledge and address. This blind spot would appear to stem from a series of taken-for-granted assumptions concerning what veganism means, as well as its place in business. The ways in which businesses engage with the marginal but emerging discourse of veganism will be examined in detail. Most significantly, the rhetorical tactics that companies use to capitalise on this niche market will be explored. Critical discourse analysis provides the main framework with which cognitive dissonance and attempts to assert power and legitimacy are exposed in discourses on veganism.

There is a wealth of research investigating the physical health effects and benefits of veganism; however, most is situated within the scientific disciplines of human nutrition and psychology. Despite the apparent rise of veganism as a lifestyle and social movement, and the accompanying burgeoning sales of vegan products and services, it is an oft-neglected topic in the business domain. In the management literature, research on veganism is scarce (perhaps with the exception of the food industry). This exposes a research gap which has yet to be comprehensively explored.

As epistemological and ontological positions may determine the direction, content and even validity of one's research, it is important to first point out that I borrow from constructivist and hermeneutic-phenomenological approaches as well as abductive reasoning to lay the foundations for this paper. These terms set out that social experiences and meaning are constructed and enacted by social actors; that attempts can be made to interpret human behaviour through written texts; and that the worldview of subjects are taken into consideration to infer the best explanation for a phenomenon (Bryman 2012). More specifically, the kind of language that people and organisations use helps them to create a reality, as opposed to language simply reflecting a reality that exists independently. Social reality is also posed as something that is constantly shifting (Bryman 2012). Thus, a qualitative method – more concerned with words rather than numbers – is most appropriate.

### ❖ Framing the research question

Bertolotti et al. define *camouflage* as “the ability to make something appear as different from what it actually is, or not to make it appear at all” (2014: 65). Camouflage originally described a biological survival strategy but its meaning also extends to the metaphorical. Mowery and Duffy refer to “linguistic camouflage” (1990: 164) in their comparative analysis of the kinds of derogatory terminology and imagery that have historically been used to describe people of Jewish faith (particularly by the Nazis, to justify their persecution), and that continue to be used to describe most

non-human animals. While euphemisms are words or phrases that soften accounts of difficult or taboo situations, voice-assigning entails a dominant group putting words into the mouths of a subordinate group that correspond with their own beliefs. Mowery and Duffy set out euphemisms and voice-assigning as the two methods used to linguistically camouflage the effacing and desensitising capacities of language.

In another study, euphemistic terms were rated more favourably on politeness, maturity and positivity than their literal equivalents (McGlone et al. 2006). This finding flags up a potential issue: if customers and employees alike tend to prefer flowery or fuzzy words, it could leave them open to unethical treatment. Similarly, the participants of a study conducted by Rittenburg et al. felt that describing illicit business transactions through euphemism was preferable, and they were more likely to carry out a morally questionable activity if it involved the use of a euphemism. The authors claim that “While euphemisms are generally used to avoid confrontation, avoid hurting people’s feelings, or substitute for profanity, they are also used to mislead or obfuscate the real meaning of what is being said” (2016: 315). As McGlone et al. succinctly put it: “We often use euphemisms to tell it like it isn’t” (2006: 261).

An introductory example may prove helpful here. Even the aforementioned term *non-human animals* is a linguistic tool that portrays the writer’s choice to remind the reader that she, too, is an animal. It is often used in the context of a philosophical debate to unmask and reverse the common tendency of creating emotional distance from nature, thus functioning as a rejection of non-vegan discourses that place the needs of humans above other animal species. The term ‘linguistic camouflage’ will be utilised throughout this paper in reference to euphemisms and other linguistic tools to uncover the ideology driving an author’s choice of lexicon and grammar. The aim of this paper is to use veganism as an empirical case through which to explore the phenomenon of linguistic camouflage in the business context.

The research question posed is: *how do news outlets and vegan businesses present societal discourses on veganism?* It is hoped that this will yield some answers as to whether veganism has become part of the mainstream.

#### ❖ Small steps, big changes

“It would be difficult to find anyone who is in favour of cruelty” (Regan 1980: 533). Tanner elaborates on the philosophical debate by defining cruelty as “*knowingly causing unnecessary pain and/or suffering*” (2015: 822, emphasis in original). While it may be difficult to find cases of this within organisations, the activities that many industries and multinational businesses engage in do still come under fire from civil society and the media. Some have courted controversy for their disregard for the

environment and indigenous peoples' rights, as in the case of the Dakota Access Pipeline in the United States (BBC News 2017); or for profiting from child labour, as in the case of tobacco plantations in Indonesia (Vaessen 2016). However, some of the most vivid examples of cruelty can be observed in those businesses which centre their daily operations on the use of animals – supposedly for human gain. Essentially, the abuse of animals has traditionally been woven into the fabric of human society.

It is a common misconception that the animal rights movement only emerged in the 1970s (Benthall 2007), since its roots can be traced back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when the first animal protection legislation was passed (Gold 1998). Vegans “represent a new form of social movement that is not based on legislation or identity politics, but instead is based on everyday practices in one’s lifestyle” (Cherry 2006: 156). Veganism is an ethically-driven social movement that influences wider society. As it gathers more followers, it is likely to feature more prominently in mainstream politics as similar movements have done. Despite the reasoning of some academics that animal rights “is virtually invisible within the Left” (Kymlicka & Donaldson 2014: 116), being vegan has nevertheless traditionally been associated with politically radical (The Vegan Option 2017) or leftist leanings (Benthall 2007; Lund et al. 2016; MacInnis & Hodson 2015).

Veganism is a philosophy and ethic whose followers refuse to engage in the exploitation of animals as well as fellow humans and the planet we all inhabit. It is a lifestyle which advocates peace and compassion, much like a religious doctrine. For instance, “in some stories of origin, meat is a forbidden food” (Bump 2014: 64). Indeed, the prohibition of cruelty to animals is inscribed in many religious and legal texts around the world (Evans 2010; López De La Vieja 2011; Tanner 2015), demonstrating widespread recognition of the right of all sentient beings to live a life free from pain and suffering. Though they are undoubtedly far from perfect in their ability to mete out justice when attempts are made to deviate from them, “laws both constrain and reflect social attitudes” (Evans 2010: 233). Religious beliefs and legislation thus help to provide a framework for many businesses in self-monitoring and self-regulation, but they are often not enough in preventing abuse from occurring.

Veganism is not usually connected to the world of business, even though many companies throughout history have thrived on the suffering of animals – travelling circuses and the pharmaceutical industry are two examples. “In the business world, ostensibly more gentle terms soften painful or distasteful experiences” (Lucas & Fyke 2014: 553). Such linguistic techniques are prevalent in non-vegan products to make them appealing to consumers. For example, the simple word ‘sausage’ obscures its true content and transforms active, living subjects into passive, dead objects. Businesses often use this ambiguity to their advantage.

Elias considers modern vegetarians to be somewhat visionary and ahead of their time, because they have already chosen a lifestyle that he regards as inevitable for ‘civilised’ societies. However, it is precisely because vegetarians are in a sense *too civilised* that they are perceived to be radical by a meat-eating majority that fulminates over departure from time-honoured culinary practices (Nath & Prideaux 2011: 137, emphasis in original).

Humankind has ironically built civilisations on the uncivilised treatment of animals. For example, proponents of bullfighting in the (mainly) Hispanic countries where it is still practised argue that it is a fine art and a valued tradition. Yet barbaric habits and traditions can easily be separated from cultural practices and eventually brought to an end. The ancient Roman practice of *damnatio ad bestias* – a mixture of capital punishment and crowd entertainment, whereby slaves and criminals were fed to wild animals in an arena – no longer exists today. To highlight Alvesson and Sandberg’s (2011) thinking on the importance of assumption challenging, it is entirely possible that “it will only require small cracks in the social acceptance of our exploitation of non-human animals in order to bring this practice into question and gradually make it socially *unacceptable*” (Vinding 2014: 52, emphasis in original). But despite the numerous benefits of veganism, with the existence of powerful meat and dairy industries and lobbyists across the world, it is unlikely that the movement will be successful in converting people to the cause overnight.

#### ❖ Problematisation and contribution to management field

Definitions often reduce vegans to people who abstain from consuming all animal products; however, being vegan goes far beyond dietary habits. There are essentially two types of vegans: whilst *health vegans* (also called strict vegetarians) adhere to a plant-based diet and thus *eat* vegan, *ethical vegans* adhere to a plant-based diet and avoid exploiting animals for any other purpose, and thus *are* vegan (e.g. Greenebaum 2012). The latter form the focus of this study to comply with a broader definition of the term. The distinction is important because as consumers we wield a great deal of influence over businesses and their decision-making processes, such as through boycotting. Ethical veganism offers a new and expansive discourse that differs from the traditional discourses prevalent in organisational studies. Business organisations do not exist in a vacuum, and social mores and preferences continue to evolve over time. All of this has an impact on their everyday operations. Many organisations are now considered vegan as they have adopted approaches that challenge accepted views of animals as well as practices that avoid harming them. Some examples of such businesses will be presented later.

Assuming that veganism is merely a diet implies that individuals who choose to be vegan are only concerned with their own health and physical appearance. It also silences the Other (Bump 2014;



Sayers 2016); that is, animals who are not just victims of human tastes and traditions, but also vanity, curiosity and entertainment. Critiques focusing on the treatment of animals are virtually non-existent in the field of management. Such an oversight is jarring in a context where scholars have in recent decades generated greater awareness of narratives that sweep aside the needs of minority and disadvantaged groups, with the emergence of streams such as feminism and postcolonialism becoming more and more accepted over time. One of the loudest voices in this regard is Marti Kheel, who said that “All too often, women and animals have been relegated to the status of symbols, objects, or props for the construction of masculine self-identity” (1996: 41). Like feminists and postcolonialists, the argument against the dominant discourses surrounding the use of animals for human ends lies not in seeking equality for animals in human society per se, but rejecting claims of human superiority (i.e. speciesism) and the commodification of animals.

For centuries, a connection has been drawn between the abuse of animals in childhood and the propensity to commit cruelty to humans in adulthood (Locke 1769: 171; The Humane Society 2011). Serial killers often practise on animal victims before graduating to people (Johnston 2017). “The more sharply people distinguish between humans and animals, the more likely they are to dehumanise human outgroups, such as immigrants” (Kymlicka & Donaldson 2014: 120). While it would undoubtedly be a huge leap to claim that all meat-eaters are cruel by nature, studies have shown that they do tend to rate more highly than vegans on social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism (Lund et al. 2016; MacInnis & Hodson 2015; Piazza et al. 2015), characteristics that tend to justify social inequality. Conversely, ethical vegans reject all forms of human discrimination, just as they reject speciesism (Francione & Charlton 2012; Piazza et al. 2015). Nonetheless: “Unlike other forms of bias... negativity toward vegetarians and vegans is commonplace and largely accepted” (MacInnis & Hodson 2015: 736) rather than considered a social problem.

There are countless stereotypes and prejudices about vegans. They are often portrayed as weak, emotional, anti-intellectual, fanatical, intolerant, skinny, nutritionally-deprived hippies (Herzog 1993; Kessler et al. 2016; Röhlinger 2017; Valentine 2012). Most of these characterisations carry negative connotations. Yet, vegans come in all shapes and sizes, and from all walks of life. According to Kessler et al. (2016: 100):

Vegetarians and vegans tend to be more liberal, altruistic, universalistic, and empathic; and both ethical and economic reasons as well as health aspects are for them more important motivations for choosing their diets when compared to omnivores.

While they may be on the receiving end of mockery and disparagement, vegans contribute value to society in the form of fairness, kindness and empathy. Moreover, for the animal activists in Herzog's study, "the distinction between emotion and logic was not an issue: they held a more integrated, holistic vision combining reason and emotion" (1993: 108). In contrast to the stereotype, they are not completely overtaken by their emotions: instead, they "seriously consider moral dilemmas that most people conveniently ignore" (Herzog 1993: 109). MacInnis and Hodson (2015) claim that much of this bias can be explained by the perception that vegans pose a symbolic threat to cultural norms and traditions. They are, moreover, targets of envious prejudice which results in discrimination. Such perceptions may in part account for the reluctance of some people to adopt a vegan lifestyle, as it "may be very costly in social or material terms for certain groups" (Kymlicka & Donaldson 2014: 123). It would therefore be interesting to see whether mainstream discourses provide further evidence of this negativity and bias towards vegans, and explore how these discourses propagate power inequalities. This paper expects to make a modest contribution to extant literature on the role that organisations and the individuals that comprise them can play through discourses on social movements.

#### ❖ Theoretical discussion

"Preserving life should be the natural result of commerce, not the exception" (Hawken 2010: 16). Such a perspective would seem to be held by only a minority of businesses who are classed as more ethically-minded; a significant proportion of those with a vegan-friendly approach are small start-ups rather than large corporations. The founder of a new fashion brand argued that "it's just common sense to not 'just' go organic, but also fair and vegan" (Spitzbarth, quoted in Mirbach 2016). Yet the food industry may provide a clearer financial incentive for companies to diversify their product lines or even make the switch to veganism. For example, meat analogues are "plant-based products that approximate the aesthetic qualities and/or nutritional value of certain types of meat, and they are part of a quietly booming alternative food economy" (Nath & Prideaux 2011: 135). Adopting a vegan diet represents a growing trend, with 24% average annual growth in meat substitutes between 2011 and 2015, led by German manufacturers (FoodBev Media 2016; Vegetarierbund Deutschland 2016). Hence, vegan organisations and discourses about vegans in Germany should prove to be a solid reflection of wider trends taking place in the global market. Engelbrecht (2012: 348) argues that radical business ethics:

has the aim of protecting business ethics as a space in which ethical considerations trump business considerations, and in which ethics can act as medium of critique

to transform business and the political and economic framework that acts as its condition of possibility.

Veganism can serve as a catalyst to establishing successful businesses and creating more and better options for consumers. Meat giants like Rügenwalder Mühle and Wiesenhof have already capitalised on this market segment by introducing their own vegetarian and vegan product lines. Even so, since these companies already have a strong online presence given their domination of the marketplace, how vegan companies give voice to the cause of veganism is of interest here.

Veganism tends to entail leading an alternative lifestyle (Herzog 1993; McDonald 2000; see also Cherry 2006 for a comparison of adherence to the vegan lifestyle by punks and non-punks) because it represents an alternative to the status quo of cruelty. This links it to critical theory, which was also “intended as an alternative. It was fuelled by a transformative intent and a particular concern with the culture of modern life” (Bronner 2011: 4). Indeed, veganism exemplifies the ‘great refusal’, a concept first imagined by the Frankfurt School. The increasing commodification of animals may be taken as a sign of the proliferation of neoliberalism in Western nations (Peggs 2015). Vegans reject such commodification, embracing the premise that animals, like human beings, have intrinsic value. “The great refusal was understood by Marcuse as animating resistance to cruelty, exploitation, and the inhumane values of advanced industrial society” (Bronner 2011: 90). These phenomena have not yet been eradicated from our societies, but can perhaps best be illustrated through our treatment of non-human animals. Businesses represent microcosms of society, being made up of groups of individuals with differing backgrounds, beliefs and experiences. Thus, they can set the tone for movements occurring in the world outside.

“First, entrepreneurship does not have to be associated with exceptional individuals; secondly, entrepreneurship does not have to have arisen by choice, and thirdly entrepreneurship can be subversive and anti-systemic” (Berghlund & Johansson 2007: 90). This last point highlights how veganism has the potential to generate change regarding the mistreatment of animals from within the system. The quote can be connected to so-called *veggiepreneurs*, or entrepreneurs dealing with vegetarian food products, as well as to veganism as a social movement more generally. Veganism tends to be regarded as a sacrifice or a limitation of some kind; however:

within certain frameworks the practice of veganism seems to be a practice of freedom, one that can move subjects away in some significant way from patriarchal normalisation and into something less restrictive (Dean 2014: 142).

Vegan discourse is expected to refer to these ideals of freedom and progress.

“The measures we use to determine which companies get our money are removed from how companies affect human and natural life” (Hawken 2010: 108). This ignorance or indifference to the consequences of business activities that we directly contribute to as consumers causes an imbalance that needs to be redressed. Nowadays, in direct opposition to veganism, *carnism*, or the social conditioning to eat some animals, is the hegemonic discourse in society (Beyond Carnism 2017). Derrida’s *carnophallogocentrism* refers to “the ways that meat-eating, masculinity and language intertwine to silence animals” (Sayers 2016: 371). Not only do such dominant societal discourses emphasise meat consumption, then; they also subtly reinforce traditional power structures by associating the practice with becoming the epitome of masculinity. Kheel coined *ecofeminism* in the 1980s to denote a holistic philosophy which combines concern for the environment with animal advocacy and feminism. In other words, it rejects carnophallogocentrism.

An ecofeminist ethic of care must include: 1) a narrative, contextual approach that investigates the roots of environmental problems with a view to removing the external and internal factors that block the growth of empathy; 2) acts of ‘attention’ that promote moral imagination and enhance empathy; 3) a focus on individual beings as well as larger wholes; 4) an embodied response that expresses our feelings for others through concrete actions, including the practice of veganism (Kheel 2009: 48).

This definition helps to express the views of the author as well as those of other vegans.

#### ❖ [Veganism as an answer to cognitive dissonance](#)

Cognitive dissonance theory is a useful lens with which to magnify vegan ethics. Coined by Leon Festinger in the 1950s, it describes a state of psychological tension in an individual due to inconsistencies between their modes of thinking and behaving, and their subsequent attempts to avoid, rationalise or manage these inconsistencies in the pursuit of harmony (cf. Festinger 1957).

Jepson’s (2008) research findings can be construed as an example of cognitive dissonance in action. Her linguistic analysis reveals that the verbs chosen to describe the act of killing differ vastly depending on whether the victim is human or non-human. As a point of comparison, for example, *execute* is never used for killing an animal, while *put to sleep* is never used for killing a human being. “All of these terms serve as linguistic means of alleviating the unease humans feel at the killing of animals” (Jepson 2008: 144). Singer and Mason (2006: 46) similarly ask if it is:

part of the gulf we draw between ourselves and other animals that leads farmers to talk of animals as ‘farrowing’ rather than ‘giving birth’, ‘feeding’ rather than ‘eating’, and ‘gestating’ rather than ‘being pregnant’?

Such terms serve to objectify animals, thereby shrinking the circle of moral concern in which we place them. Weible et al. explain that an attitude/behaviour or consumer/citizen gap exists because “while people state that animal welfare is very important for them they behave differently at the point of sale” (2016: 2027). People like to think that their attitudes and behaviour are in alignment when, quite often, they diverge.

In English, many of the nouns for dead animals are distinct from those for living animals, which perhaps helps meat-eaters to psychologically distance themselves from the reality that the food on their plates used to be living and breathing beings like them. Words can act as euphemisms, creating an emotional disconnect and thereby helping to combat cognitive dissonance. Etymologically, the words used for meat animals also derive from the French language. For example, in death, a sheep becomes mutton (*mouton*) and a pig becomes pork (*porc*) (Harper 2017a; Harper 2017b). More generally, animal names and activities make up a great deal of idiomatic language. The term *humane*, derived from human, implies mercy and compassion (Jepson 2008); in contrast, animal terms tend to be semantically unfavourable. Leaving aside the extremely offensive words, some common animal-related insults include *cow* for an annoying, fat or stupid woman, *pig* for a dirty or rude person, *chicken* for a cowardly person, *leech* for an exploitative person, *whale* for a fat woman, or *rat* for a treacherous man. Evidently, these descriptors usually derive from domesticated meat animals or exotic animals. “The closer the relation of dominance of a particular species by humans, the more negative the stereotypes contained in the idioms of mainstream discourse” (Stibbe 2001: 150). Very few terms are positive, with two exceptions being *monkey* (a playful, cheeky person) and *owl* (a wise person). Some animals even comprise verbs, such as *to badger* (to pester someone), *to crow* (to brag about something), or *to hog* (to monopolise something). Language is thus a good measure of the relationships between humans and non-human animals. Whether, and how, vegans and meat-eaters employ euphemisms and other linguistic devices when talking about animals, is an area of interest for this paper.

#### ❖ Rationalisation and compartmentalisation

As Van Dijk claims, “the reproduction of dominance in contemporary societies often requires justification or legitimization: it is ‘just’, ‘necessary’ or ‘natural’ that we have privileged access to valuable social resources” (1993: 263). This comment connects to the 4N framework outlined by Piazza et al. (2015), who extend Melanie Joy’s 3Ns to include *nice* alongside *natural*, *normal* and *necessary*

as common justifications for consuming meat. This rationalisation of meat consumption is a means by which to regulate guilt and avoid the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance, since people who claim to be animal lovers yet continue to eat them are thereby afforded a socially acceptable and psychologically amenable excuse for their hypocrisy. As the authors explain, rationalisation is an attempt to persuade others and the self that one's actions are justified (Piazza et al. 2015: 114). The 4Ns therefore also forge a link to the idea of legitimacy. Another way to avoid cognitive dissonance is for meat-eaters to compartmentalise their compassion (McDonald 2000: 7). A social hierarchy is conceived: those animals judged to be lower down are exploited, while those judged to be higher up are treasured and protected. The language we use thereby helps to maintain this compartmentalisation. The 4Ns will inform my analysis of the findings of this study as a linguistic tool which assists in the avoidance of cognitive dissonance in meat-eaters.

Businesses evoke the 4Ns in the marketing and presentation of their products: an eyeshadow may bring out a woman's *natural* beauty, or a chocolate bar may make a child feel *nice*. Vegan product offerings are generally not immune to this phenomenon. For instance, an interior of a car may be called 'faux leather'; a plant-based drink may be called 'milk'; or a fragrance may be called 'musk'. This language is not, however, intended to be misleading. Nath and Prideaux (2011) explain that meat analogues serve two purposes: they function as a conversion aid and a social instrument for vegetarians and vegans. That is, using names for vegan products that mimic non-vegan ones helps people feel more comfortable when transitioning to a new diet or lifestyle or in maintaining relationships with non-vegans. Consequently, the consumption of such products may, symbolically, either become a means by which vegans unwittingly support and perpetuate the cultural norm of the (ab)use of animals, or by which they resist and subvert it.

#### ❖ The language of power and the power of language

Van Dijk suggests that, amongst critical discourse analysts, the chosen "critical approach prefers to focus on the elites and their discursive strategies for the maintenance of inequality" (1993: 250). Furthermore, "The justification of inequality involves two complementary strategies, namely the positive representation of the own group, and the negative representation of the Others" (Van Dijk 1993: 263). This 'us versus them' mentality links to cognitive dissonance theory, as if these strategies did not exist, cognitive dissonance would occur. Like Mowery and Duffy, Stibbe shows that "Animals are represented in language not only as different but also as inferior, the two conditions necessary for oppression" (2001: 150). The discussion that follows will try to point out how many discourses serve to uphold our supposed superiority over animals and consequently the justification of our mistreatment of them. From this perspective, human beings become Van Dijk's elites, and animals

become the victims of their discursive strategies. A struggle for power is revealed through language. Vaara et al. claim “that legitimacy is closely linked with power and that attempts to establish legitimacy are a key part of management” (2006: 791). In fact, power is an important, but often hidden, component of language. As Stibbe has indicated, “Power is talked about as if it is a relation between people only” (2001: 146), but could in fact be extended to any interaction.

Euphemism “can change the very meaning attached to the phenomenon it is meant to signify” and “has the power to background, conceal, and mask a variety of different deeds and behaviours” (Lucas & Fyke 2014: 554). In other words, euphemism affects the meaning and visibility of phenomena. Language itself has been described by Keith Allan and Kate Burridge as both a shield and a weapon. “It should not be surprising then that euphemism has been described as an ‘injurious weapon’... and a ‘form of violence’” (Lucas & Fyke 2014: 556). Because they tend to be pacifists (cf. Francione & Charlton 2012; Herzog 1993; The Vegan Option 2017), ethical vegans may avoid terminology that is associated with warfare and violence. It is possible that they might avoid using certain common euphemisms that shield them from the reality of their choices as consumers. Those who are more involved in vegan activism might instead opt for detailed, graphic language to elicit an emotional response in others.

The media is an important reflection of trends in modern society, functioning as a source of information on the one hand, and a propaganda tool to steer public opinion on the other. Stibbe refers to an ideological struggle taking place between the meat industry and animal activists, which “occurs primarily through language and the media” (2001: 147). “Nonhuman animals, like all precarious subjects, are not voiceless; they are deliberately silenced” (Sayers 2016: 371) through such devices. This ideological struggle is often posited as a dichotomy between reason and emotion; that is, with non-vegans enacting the rational argument and vegans enacting the emotional argument. As mentioned previously, however, the vegan lifestyle is not exclusively motivated by emotion. Echoing Van Dijk’s concerns about social inequality, Machin and Van Leeuwen state that “news is structured by themes that are consonant with dominant sets of values and closely aligned with elite interests and concerns” (2016: 245). Furthermore:

journalists act as gatekeepers and editors of messages. They have a great deal of power to decide what issues to raise, which perspectives to take, whom to give voice to, which voices to marginalise, and what to leave unsaid. This power should not, however, be overestimated, as the journalists are themselves dependent on both their information sources and their audiences (Vaara et al. 2006: 794).

The media can exert its influence by facilitating communication between vegans to combat the stigma that many face in their everyday lives. The current celebrity culture is an especially potent example. “The mainstreaming of veganism through celebrity thus potentially helps reframe a stigmatised identity and practice... in a positive and accessible way” (Doyle 2016: 777).

## Empirical setting and research design

### ❖ Methodology and framework of analysis

At its simplest, a discourse is an expression of thought captured in speech or in writing. Berglund and Johansson (2007) graphically depict communication as a web or tapestry comprised of interwoven thick and thin threads. While the thick threads represent grand narratives, or common, taken-for-granted discourses, the thin threads represent discourses that are not well-understood and therefore more fragile. This is connected to Phillips and Oswick’s statement that “the more coherent and structured the discourse, the more reified and taken for granted the resulting social reality will be” (2012: 445). As it would appear not to be a fully mainstream discourse, but rather lie towards the periphery of social consciousness, veganism is not yet reified and taken for granted and can thus be imagined as a thin thread. To avoid the “political domination and cognitive closure that easily follow from a dominant and established tradition” (Alvesson & Sandberg 2011: 266), an exploration of vegan discourse in the context of management would seem timely.

Phillips and Oswick (2012) outline two versions of ‘discourse’ in the literature: whereas the first meaning refers to spoken communications, is concerned with actual content, and entails text that can stand alone, the second meaning refers to written communications, is concerned with concepts underlying content, and entails text that is bound up in a web of relationships with other texts. Since “the level of analysis largely dictates the methodology employed and *vice versa*” (Phillips & Oswick 2012: 456, emphasis in original), my research and analysis will focus exclusively on written texts. This is because discourse analysis has historically been concerned with the second meaning of discourse. The methodology used in this paper will follow the outline of multi-level discursive analysis labelled as critical discourse analysis, which involves:

(i) the examination of the language in use (*the text dimension*); (ii) the identification of processes of textual production and consumption (*the discursive practice dimension*); and, (iii) the consideration of the institutional factors surrounding the event and how they shape the discourse (*the social practice dimension*) (Phillips & Oswick 2012: 457, emphasis in original).



A number of written texts will be taken from a variety of sources and placed into context for in-depth analysis in order to explore the linguistic techniques used to talk about veganism. As described above, the purpose of this paper is to investigate business discourses on veganism. According to Van Dijk (1993: 252):

Unlike other discourse analysts, critical discourse analysts (should) take an explicit socio-political stance: they spell out their point of view, perspective, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large. Although not in each stage of theory formation and analysis, their work is admittedly and ultimately political. Their hope, if occasionally illusory, is change through critical understanding.

Furthermore, he is explicit in pointing out that “analysis is not – and cannot be – ‘neutral’” (1993: 270). This is because language is both socially shaped and socially constitutive (Fairclough 1993). By extension, even an analysis of the bias behind the language used by others may itself be tinged with bias.

#### ❖ Research design

In the European context, the numbers of people adhering to a vegan diet have increased rapidly in the last decade and continue to increase. Out of a population of 80 million, there are estimated to be between 900,000 and 1.3 million vegans in the whole of Germany (Meyer-Radtke 2016; Vegetarierbund Deutschland 2016), 80,000 of whom reside in Berlin. “As well as the rise of pure veganism, there has also been an increase in ‘flexitarians’ – people who eat vegan some of the time as a way to eat more healthily or to care for the environment” (The Journal 2016). This makes Germany an interesting setting for any research on veganism.

Since texts are “both the building blocks of discourse and a material manifestation of it” (Phillips & Oswick 2012: 444), the principal approach to be taken in addressing the research question will be to analyse a collection of articles. 163 articles in both English and German will be analysed. They will derive from two kinds of online sources: news websites and organisations offering vegan products or services based in Germany. The former will be opinion pieces and news stories on the topic of veganism, comprising Study 1, while the latter will be advertisements, commentaries and press releases for new vegan products, comprising Study 2. The language is thus expected to differ slightly in content, tone and purpose.

These sources were chosen for their accessibility and convenience, which may make them more representative of trends. Online newspapers were chosen over printed newspapers for Study 1 as they

are deemed to be a fair and varied sampling of recent societal discourses on veganism. Vegan businesses were chosen over non-vegan businesses for Study 2 as they comprise a thin thread (Berglund & Johansson 2007) that may provide new insight into how linguistic choices can promote vegan ideology and practice in a predominantly non-vegan world. Study 2 is therefore included to balance out what may be a confused or skewed perspective of veganism in Study 1. Together, the studies should help to build a clear picture of where the social movement currently stands.

#### ❖ Possible limitations of the research

As food (and thinking about food) is a considerable part of human life and therefore also of vegan life, it is anticipated that much of the content of this research will be centred on food. However, I will attempt to seek out articles covering other topics where possible. “Foods consumed can affect how a person is perceived by others in terms of morality, likeability, and gender” (Thomas 2016: 79). In a broader sense, “human language – even at the level of more complicated syntactical expressions – always carries information about moral qualities of persons, things, groups, and events” (Bertolotti et al. 2014: 76). Several studies have concluded that veganism tends to be a lifestyle followed by a greater proportion of women than men (Dean 2014; Piazza et al. 2015; Ruby et al. 2016; Vegetarierbund Deutschland 2016) and by younger rather than older generations (Dean 2014; Vegan Life 2016; Vegetarierbund Deutschland 2016). Given that the research will be principally concerned with online articles, whose authors tend to be invisible and even anonymous, a limitation of the study could be that these age and gender biases will be unaccounted for and thus reproduced.

As some of the texts to be studied will be in German, which is the author’s third language, there is a possibility that some nuances may be missed when translating quotes for analysis. It is likely that some relevant articles will not be picked up by the search, as they may not explicitly mention the keyword ‘vegan’ despite discussing vegan themes. Another limitation is that the number of articles studied will mean only limited conclusions can be drawn from the findings. Due to its qualitative methodology, the ability to make generalisations is bound to be impaired.

There are not expected to be any ethical issues due to the nature of the approach to be taken.

#### ❖ Expected findings

##### *Study 1*

News articles were chosen for this study as representations of dominant discourses. Veganism can be a highly emotive topic. However, as journalism is a professional field, it is likely that these articles will be succinct, fairly formal in tone and written with precise but catchy language. This is in direct contrast to sources which are open to contributions from laypeople and thus likely to be less neutral and more

philosophical or political. In their analysis of internet discussion sites, Swan and McCarthy found that both pro- and anti-animal rights contributors used “emotional appeals to achieve their rhetorical aims” (2003: 318).

Since several of the academic papers discussed in previous sections convey the majority of vegans as oriented to leftist political ideologies, it is expected that publications of a more left-wing persuasion will show greater understanding or support for veganism while those of a more right-wing persuasion will show greater resistance or hostility towards veganism. Six publishers were selected to ensure that texts from different political orientations were represented in the study. They were categorised as per their stated orientation, or my judgement where this was not explicitly stated by the publisher. A comparison of these sources is outlined in Table 1 below, with hyperlinks to the articles included in Appendix 1.

Table 1

Grouping	A	B	C	D	E	F
Title of news outlet	Deutsche Welle	The Local Germany [The Local]	Handelsblatt Global [Handelsblatt]	Die tageszeitung [taz]	Die Welt	Der Tagesspiegel
Publisher's topics	German and European news, German language	German news, lifestyle topics for immigrants (expats)	Business and finance news	Politics, environment, social issues	News	News
Classification of political orientation	Centre-left	Centre-left	Centre-right	Left	Centre-right	Centre-right
Language of articles	English	English	English	German	German	German
Date range	2008-2017	2011-2017	2014-2017	2017	2014-2017	2011-2017
Number of articles selected	20	16	16	19	20	18

Article publication dates ranged from 2008 to 2017, representing recent discourses. The keyword “vegan” was entered in the search bar on each publisher’s website. This was chosen in preference to

“vegetarian” both to narrow down the results and to focus the search on more specific terminology. The length of the text and its date of publication were not used as parameters for rejection because they were deemed irrelevant to the task. Any articles which did not explicitly mention the word vegan or its derivatives (namely, veganism/Veganismus, vegans/Veganer/Veganerinnen), but where the search function had picked up the word in comments or advertisements on the webpage, were discarded as irrelevant. Two of the publications set a limitation on the number of articles that could be accessed; to maintain continued full access, signing up for a paid subscription was required. Apart from this, no barriers to accessing and collecting the information were encountered.

A total of 109 articles remained for the sample. The topic of each article was summarised and quotes were chosen to draw out the main themes. This is roughly in keeping with the methodology adopted by Vaara et al. (2006: 796-797) who set out their process regarding discourses used by firms in the pulp and paper industry. The first step involves selecting the material; the second, performing an interdiscursive analysis; the third, performing a textual analysis; and finally, categorising discourses and subjecting them to further analysis.

### *Study 2*

The focus of this study will be discourses from the perspective of organisations that market and sell predominantly (if not exclusively) vegan products. This will help to shed some light on the marginal discourse of veganism from those positioning themselves within this marginal group. While there are numerous organisations with vegan aims operating in Germany, as their advertising strategies and campaigns may be more visible, and their objective to turn a profit, only businesses will be considered here. A selection of texts and images will be gathered from each business for analysis.

To give a sample of the range of vegan offerings, six companies from a handful of different sectors will be examined. Additionally, although multinational companies are plentiful in Germany, only German companies will be selected to better represent what is available on the local market. Any publicly available online material will be included in the discussion to show a comprehensive picture of the ways in which these organisations engage in vegan discourses.

An overview of the businesses studied is provided in Table 2 below, with hyperlinks to the articles and snips of the social media posts included in Appendix 2. 54 separate items form the basis of this study. Regarding the sample, I was already aware of companies I-L because I had purchased their products on numerous occasions; to ensure coverage of companies in different sectors, G and H were selected from the results of a web search and added to the list for analysis.

Table 2

Grouping	G	H	I	J	K	L
Name of business	Roots of compassion	DearGoods	SANTE	Das veganmagazin	Veganz	LikeMeat
Slogan	-	Vegan, bio & fair Fashion – aus Liebe zu Mensch, Tier und Umwelt [Vegan, organic & fair fashion – out of love for people, animals and environment]	Care for you and the world	Konsequent leben [Living consistently]	Wir lieben Leben [We love life]	Fleisch. Vegan [Meat. Vegan]
Sector	Online store	Fashion	Cosmetics and toiletries	Magazine publisher	Supermarket chain	Meat analogues
Type of organisation	Cooperative (e. G.)	Sole trader (Einzelfirma)	Public limited company (AG)	Limited company (GmbH)	Limited company (GmbH)	Limited company (GmbH)
Year established	2001	2012	1993	2012	2011	2013
Number of items selected	9	9	9	9	9	9

Unlike Study 1, a keyword search was not performed on the organisations' websites, since they were already assumed to lay emphasis on the vegan diet and lifestyle in any communications with customers. Instead, a search was performed to glean insight into how they present themselves to the public through the content on their 'About us' pages, as well as to extract a selection of articles introducing their newest products. In addition, all six have an account on social media site Facebook. Hence, the second component of the study comprises their cover photo, which again reveals how they choose to present themselves to the public, and a few posts that they have shared since the beginning

of 2017. No issues of access were encountered because this information is freely available and I am also a Facebook user.

It is expected that these companies will use language that celebrates and promotes vegan ideals, including showing a high level of transparency regarding their suppliers, processes and any awards received or certification displayed on the labels of their products. To appear contemporary and international, they may throw in the occasional English word or phrase; and to exude a friendly vibe, they may favour using the informal *du* (you) pronoun rather than the formal *Sie* pronoun when addressing their customers. Had other professions such as banks or accountancy firms been selected, more formal and direct language might have been expected. However, the language used by the different business sectors is not expected to vary massively.

## Findings and analysis

### ❖ Study 1

Each of the six publishers was found to have covered a wide range of topics in this small selection of articles. While approximately half of them related to food and drink, other common topics were politics, fashion, and sport and leisure. This alone demonstrates how veganism is a discourse that is present in many areas of society. There was diversity in the types of topics and perspectives that were touched upon, which, rather than presenting them as a homogenous group, better reflects the diverse nature of vegans themselves.

There was no marked difference in style or tone between texts written in English and German. However, as predicted, there were some noticeable differences separating politically left-leaning and right-leaning texts. One notable point is that all nineteen articles published in taz are from the year 2017. There was an abundance of articles with the keyword vegan to choose from, which clearly shows that veganism has become regular subject matter for the publication. This contrasts with The Local, which seems to view veganism not as a mainstream trend or occurrence but rather as something unusual and still somewhat attached to old stereotypes. The vast majority of its articles are about the vegan diet. Taz does not feel the need to define or explain what veganism is in its articles – this could demonstrate that its readers are already vegan themselves or have greater awareness of what it entails as an implicit part of the publication's political make-up. In fact, as the only left-wing publication, taz is also the only one which appears to be overwhelmingly in favour of veganism whilst the stance of the others was somewhat mixed or ambiguous. The Local furthermore stands out from the other publications for being slightly inferior in its journalistic quality and style. While its intended

audience may be smaller, its writers forego in-depth analysis in favour of short, punchy texts. They seek to be entertaining or informative rather than thought-provoking. For this reason, it is difficult to find as much to comment on.

### *The politics of names*

A hot topic that has generated a lot of news coverage in recent months relates to labelling laws for food products, a theme which runs through articles **A4**, **D8**, **D10**, **E12** and **E16**. Agricultural minister Christian Schmidt kickstarted the debate back in December 2016 by emphasising that terms such as ‘vegetarian schnitzel’ and ‘vegan currywurst’ are misleading and should be outlawed. Interviews with EU Health & Food Safety Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis and the subsequent EU ruling on the issue appear in Die Welt (**E9** and **E1**) and Der Tagesspiegel (**F3** and **F1**).

**A4** quotes Schmidt as referring to meat analogues as “whatever-you-want-to-call-thems” without providing a solution for what to call them. **D8** is a satirical article which pokes fun at Schmidt, calling him “lord of the sausage rings” in reference to a popular series of fantasy books. The author asserts that “sausage is the shape, not the content” and that a line has to be drawn somewhere; otherwise, foods like rollmops (in German, this roughly translates as *rolling pug*) and cinnamon rolls (*cinnamon snails*) would also have to undergo a change of name. The title of **D10** is amusing (“Evil, evil broccoli”) as an inanimate food object is imbued with human characteristics. Again, fun is made of Schmidt, with the author calling him the “schnitzel minister”. Echoing Elias (Nath & Prideaux 2011), vegetarianism is normalised and marked as the trend of the future – meat-eaters become the fringe group. A twist on playwright Bertolt Brecht’s famous adage that “First comes food, then morality”, the title of **E12** is “First comes vegan morality, then food”. While the author believes that “a good steak can work wonders” and agrees with Schmidt that products should be clearly labelled, he also thinks that Schmidt needs to get with the times. He includes a fitting analogy that evokes the image of a fish, which could imply that veganism does not have to be about standing out from the crowd: “It is fun to swim against the current, but gliding with the current can also be a nice experience”. **E16** is more strongly in favour of Schmidt’s position. The author says “Vleischsalat” (*Fleisch* with an ‘F’ is *meat*, so this equates to veganised meat salad) is “nonsense” and he draws an analogy of building a metal cover over a bicycle and making it out to be a Volkswagen Golf. However, such humorous comments silence the real debate on why people choose not to eat animal products by failing to consider that non-vegan names may be retained to aid the transition to veganism and enable social belonging (Nath & Prideaux 2011).

The author of **E9** would seem to agree with the premise that veganism is not good for one’s health, yet does not elaborate on this. During his interview, the commissioner gives Schmidt “carte blanche”

against terms like “vegan currywurst” and agrees with him and the German Nutritional Society that a vegan lifestyle is not suitable for young children. In **F3**, the commissioner finds the idea of a vegan sausage “somewhat strange” and agrees with Schmidt when it comes to ensuring better labelling laws for consumers, but not as far as the name of products themselves is concerned. Ironically, as a medical expert, he thinks that processed foods are better in terms of food safety and avoiding infection, merely recommending that people need to eat less fat, salt, tobacco and alcohol. Though not vegan himself, the author of **E1** ridicules the ruling that products cannot be labelled milk or butter if they are not of animal origin with the question: “how stupid does the EU really think we are?” He acknowledges that cattle farming is responsible for a large proportion of greenhouse gas emissions and says that because of the new rule, citizens will not be educated on “sustainable nutrition”. **F1** is more neutral in tone and matter-of-fact. The title, “Milk must come from udders”, is a very straightforward description, showing the author’s choice not to employ a euphemism to hide milk’s origins.

According to **A2**, “Whether a vegan sausage can be called a sausage becomes a moot political point relative to a state viewed as not in control” – the implication being that “the Left and Greens” are not sensible or viable options in upcoming elections. Such discourse is reductionist and disdainful, as it views this section of the political spectrum as only concerned about the environment and incapable of upholding national security. These articles show that veganism has become a political issue. Schmidt’s comments sparked off a great deal of jesting, confusion, criticism and agreement; in the end, he can feel satisfied that he has scored a partial victory in the battle to suppress veganism.

### *Cognitive dissonance*

In his interview (**A1**) with Deutsche Welle, philosopher Richard David Precht refers to the human relationship with animals as “major social-cultural schizophrenia”. Schizophrenia is a psychotic disorder that results in hallucinations and emotional instability, but also more informally alludes to the existence of conflicting principles. It is the latter meaning that is assumed in this context, which gels with the concept of cognitive dissonance outlined above. Ironically, Precht is the personification of this psychological struggle. Despite an above-average knowledge of factory farming practices, which he condemns, he states that he is not even a vegetarian. He also supports the idea of “a middle-class zoo”, which runs contrary to vegan principles. In another interview (**E17**) with Die Welt, he advocates that ethics move from the private to the public sphere. He would appear to side with fellow philosopher Peter Singer’s utilitarianism by envisaging animal experimentation as permissible in life-threatening cases – again, not a vegan perspective. He points out inconsistencies in human behaviour regarding the treatment of animals, but continues to display these inconsistencies in his own behaviour. His interviews may fulfil their job of making people reflect on moral questions but without



setting an example for them to follow, unlike, for instance, the ancient philosopher Pythagoras, who espoused a vegetarian, ascetic lifestyle (The Vegan Option 2017). Precht's views may have the effect of making veganism seem more accessible, as he does not spout a hardcore message and instead talks about the more relatable and generic themes of respect and non-violence. Alternatively, his own cognitive dissonance may reassure others that they do not need to change anything within themselves, thus reinforcing the mainstream carnist message.

The schizophrenia alluded to by Precht is evident elsewhere. This is because some issues appear more frequently in the articles, giving voice to some vegan concepts and silencing others. The fur and leather industries are one example. Although there is recognition in **A15** that fashion comprises "one of the most damaging industries in the world", the author makes no mention of the implications for non-human animals. Articles **A3** and **E14** discuss the fur fashion industry while articles **C1**, **C15**, **C16**, **E4**, **E6** and **F7** discuss leather and leather alternatives. Ethical fur has been referred to as "a mere greenwashing scheme" that 80% of Germans think is outdated and 86% of EU citizens are opposed to (**A3**). This suggests that awareness surrounding fur farming is growing and that demand for fur is subsequently waning. At the same time, a consumer/citizen gap (Weible et al. 2016) evidently exists, as it is a business that generates \$40 billion per annum (**A3**). With regard to leather alternatives, there have been technological developments, some of which are outlined in **C1**, **C15** and **E6**. While plastic features a lot amongst these innovations, it is not sustainable (**C4** and **F7**). Little attention is given to more abundant and eco-friendly sources like rubber, cotton, pineapples and mushrooms. A dichotomy emerges: "Combining sustainability and fashion is a true challenge since sustainability wants things to last, whereas fashion is all about change and consumption" (Molderez & De Landtsheer 2015: 357). News coverage of vegan materials places them at the forefront of technology but also makes them seem expensive and unattainable, which serves to uphold the status quo. In addition, it is interesting that, in contrast with fur, ecological and practical considerations tend to trump ethical considerations in the case of leather. There is a strong link to the 4Ns (Piazza et al. 2015), as leather has traditionally been associated with all four characteristics: natural, normal, necessary and nice. This is in spite of leather production's huge contribution to environmental pollution, human disease and poor working conditions, and the mistreatment and killing of animals (mainly cows).

#### *Using imagery to silence animals*

Some articles fail to mention animals and instead focus on the health or environmental impact of veganism. The author of **A5** uses a couple of noteworthy images. That vegan restaurants and shops are now "sprouting up like mushrooms" is evocative of new life, rapid growth and ubiquity. As mushrooms are a vegan-friendly food, it is also a fitting analogy. Conversely, a "hotbed" usually

describes an undesirable activity, such as *a hotbed of violence*. This jars with the peaceful philosophy of veganism and makes it seem like a threat, as is outlined in MacInnis and Hodson (2015). The answer to the question in the title (“Veganism: good for the environment, bad for people?”) is largely left unanswered. For instance, the health impact is only seen through the lens of an extreme legal case of child malnourishment, which bolsters the misconception that veganism is unhealthy for children. Germany is frequently presented as a world leader when it comes to environmentalism; the authors of **E18**, however, believe this to have gone a step too far. A paradigm shift towards sustainability has led to “eco hysteria” on a national level, which is suggestive of a sceptical view of Kheel’s ecofeminism.

In **A13**, the author outlines that being vegan is becoming more popular. Though only a short article, in line with Sayers (2016), this could be interpreted as an act of silencing. It is jarring in a discussion on “awareness” when the primary reason for many who become vegan is an ethical concern for animals. The consumption of fish is also included as a ‘sustainable’ option, a justification sometimes used by meat-eaters according to Piazza et al. (2015). **A14**’s title, “Pigging out during Vegan Spring” evokes two strong images. First, “pigging out” is associated with being gluttonous; it also forms a twist on the stereotype of Germans consuming a lot of pork in their diet. Second, “spring” is both descriptive (as it refers to a vegan fair held in April) and full of positive imagery (as the season is symbolic of new life and hope).

Alliteration in **B10** and **B15** is catchy and amusing. The juxtaposition of “revitalising” and “gunk” in “revitalising green gunk” (**B10**) reads in a mildly mocking tone, but it also makes healthy vegan drinks sound unappealing. The opening of a new restaurant is said to cause “hundreds of hungry hipsters” to queue out onto the street. This alliteration could be interpreted as funny or cynical: while it conveys a high level of excitement, impatience and noise, it also strengthens the stereotypes that vegans are exclusively hipsters and that their demand for “vapid hipster fashion symbols” leads to gentrification of the city. In **B15**, an article about a sex shop for women, alliteration of “responsible romping” in the title combines the serious and the fun. The pun, “an intimate new high”, is playful. Vegans are seen as part of alternative culture, but they are praised for “having a clear conscience”. The article performs a partly educational role in making readers aware of the impact of their consumption habits. The closing line rounds it off nicely by using the metaphor of various rooms in a house to explain that veganism applies to various aspects of life: “Now a vegan lifestyle can not only be expressed in the kitchen and bathroom – it can also reach into the bedroom”.

The title of **D2**, “Tortured Easter bunny on the table”, attempts to elicit an emotional response from the reader. Rabbits are highly symbolic in human society because they are small, docile, innocent and fluffy prey animals, making them easy to breed and handle as meat animals and test subjects (hence

why labelling to denote that a product has not been tested on animals is always a bunny rabbit). That a rabbit – and the folkloric Easter bunny no less – has been “tortured” to end up on a dinner plate signifies the epitome of human cruelty and violence. The author’s aim appears to lie in convincing readers to ditch meat as the “direct way to more animal protection”.

Two articles that portray contrasting religious imagery regarding veganism are **A19** and **E8**. The author of **A19** deems Berlin an “oasis” in the “desert”, a “haven” and “heaven”, and brings up the supposed “blasphemy” of favourable comparisons between non-vegan and vegan food. However, the author of **E8** talks about her “hellish experience” in “shoe hell”, with vegan shoes “threatening” us. Both use hyperbole to get their perspectives across and show how veganism can become a personal heaven or hell.

In connection with the theoretical discussion, one example of commonplace animal terms stands out in **F2**. In German, “tierisch” literally means animal or brutal, but it also takes on a figurative meaning of fantastic, terrible or deadly. As in English, it can be used as an adverb or an adjective to emphasise emotional states, such as to describe something as “deadly boring” or “terribly good”. “Training in the circus: a beastly amount of trouble” here captures the dual meaning of “tierisch” as a negative descriptor and to dissociate humans from non-human animals. The 4Ns also come into play. The author takes sides with the circus troupe by justifying its practices with the argument that “animals want to learn” and that people enjoy watching them perform: in other words, that it is both *natural* and *nice*. Animal rights activists are called “radical” and are supposedly engaged in a “battle” with the circus troupe to end its use of animals. The article thus makes use of bellicose terminology to pit protestors and circus employees against each other.

### *Euphemism*

In an interview with one of the largest poultry producers in Germany (**C5**), a technical lexicon littered with euphemism is favoured. Opening the piece, the title is a clever play on words: “Not about to chicken out”. As alluded to earlier, when somebody chickens out, they behave in a cowardly manner. A secondary meaning implies an endless supply of chickens. Straightaway, the company is set up as able to overcome the challenges it faces. Boss Peter Wesjohann is called a “meat baron”: “baron” makes him seem noble, powerful and wealthy, perhaps with a tinge of ruthlessness. Yet, it is animal rights activists who are portrayed as the threat, having sent “menacing” letters in protest at the company’s practices. Reinforcing the carnist worldview, Wesjohann says that “Evolution is necessary, revolution impossible” in the meat industry. He also portrays the company as an outlier, claiming superior practices over competitors, producers of other meat animals, and companies overseas. On the one hand, the chickens are said to have “died” in the factory. This is on the face of it a neutral

term, but it attempts to absolve the workers of any blame, as though the deaths of these living beings are brought about passively. When the interviewer uses the term “slaughter” to ask how many chickens are killed every day, chillingly, Wesjohann answers with the astonishing number of about one million. On the other hand, he uses technical and business-like terminology which views the chickens as mere objects: “losses”, “products”, “breeding” and “fattening units”. He also uses percentages rather than concrete numbers to take away their individuality. In line with Jepson (2008) and Singer and Mason (2006), these euphemisms objectify animals, serve to create ambiguity and lessen our unease at death.

Similarly, in an interview with Peter and Julius Steinbrück, a family furrier business (E14), reference is made to death without as much recourse to euphemism. “Where did the animal live? How did it die?” are questions posed by the son, Julius, which make the lifecycle of the animals seem simple and carefree. By using the passive verb “die” rather than a euphemism, emotion is taken out of the equation. He also tries to create trust and give their business legitimacy by calling fur farming a “science” and by emphasising a focus on “quality” and the “decent” treatment of animals raised for fur. The father, Peter, claims that these animals are killed by gassing in “seconds”, which makes the process seem humane. While the interviewer uses the term “slaughtered” (*geschlachtet*), the furrier uses “killed” (*getötet*), which may show greater willingness to acknowledge death as a direct consequence of business activity. Fur is also described as a “basic commodity” that appears in a variety of ways in clothing and household objects, offering justification for the company’s existence.

In contrast, D5 injects a little tongue-in-cheek humour through euphemism. The author argues that vegan food is good for the libido and sexual health in general. She provides a recipe for “vegasmic love butter” and refers to “Sexy Time”, defying vegan stereotypes in a fun way. She jokes that plant-eaters have a “cucumber at the front”, which is a vegan-friendly euphemism for an erection.

#### *Combatting vegan stereotypes through sport*

Many articles contribute to the idea that the traditional connection made between meat-eating and masculinity (Sayers 2016; Thomas 2016) no longer applies, as more and more athletes turn to veganism to improve their performance. One such athlete is strongman Patrik Baboumian, who is interviewed by Handelsblatt and Die Welt. According to C4, there are several supposed contradictions inherent to veganism. The author calls veganism an “improbable cause” and “unexpected choice”. Indeed, Baboumian has had to bear “fierce hostility” in seeking to dispel the myth that vegans are neither masculine nor strong and set a positive example for others to follow. He becomes the paragon of the mainstreaming of veganism through celebrity (Doyle 2016). The metaphor in the title (“A force for good”) implies achieving something socially worthy, and is also a play on words given that

Baboumian has such an imposing physicality. Outwardly, he resembles a “badass” (C4) and a “colossus” (E19), but is inwardly “a bit of a softie” (C4), which seems to cause surprise. While there is a lingering suspicion as to the possibility of a strongman thriving on a vegan diet, Baboumian describes in E19 how he has defied early socialisation which sees bulking up on animal products as necessary.

A feature story on Vehement, a manufacturer of vegan boxing gloves (F17), likewise shows that fans of fighting sports may well defy stereotypes and find parallels in the vegan lifestyle. Some people, including the author, continue to view veganism as radical, which suggests that it is far from being considered mainstream. Partner Maria Gross aims to found the company on “transparency, self-determination and trust”, values that link with the concept of veganism as a practice of freedom (Dean 2014) and a reaction to the harm caused by a non-vegan lifestyle. F15 notes that there is a wave of sportspeople who claim to regenerate faster and feel stronger and lighter as a result of following a vegan regime. The author would seem to see it as risky, however, citing a lack of protein in the diet.

#### *The advent of fake news*

So-called ‘fake news’ has been a top trending topic throughout 2017. Although Handelsblatt is the most neutral of the six publishers, its inaccurate portrayal of problems at vegan supermarket chain Veganz (C2) demonstrates how even well-respected news organisations can occasionally perpetuate fake news stories. The dramatic question “Is it the end of the vegan revolution?” is posed. The headline announcing bankruptcy may be eye-catching but is actually false. As is outlined in the article itself, while the subsidiary company is closing down and restructuring is taking place, the parent company is unaffected. So, the vegan revolution is not at an end. It appears that in this case the publication succumbed to journalistic pressure to imitate Der Spiegel, which broke the story. Thus, Handelsblatt upholds a carnist perspective in C2 by drawing on words like “insolvency” and “failure” to convey veganism as incompatible with the world of business.

Moreover, Veganz founder Jan Bredack is interviewed by Handelsblatt (C13) and The Local (B12), with the company mentioned in Der Tagesspiegel’s discussion of a “vegan boom” (F12). In C13, Bredack has many “enemies”: he is seen as a “capitalist interloper” by “militant” vegans and is unpopular with some for not excluding non-organic products in his stores. Such language emphasises war and conflict – perhaps setting the company up for a fall. Veganz aims to make veganism more accessible to people and has filled a niche in the market (B12). However, Bredack is quoted as saying that “I do it because it comes from the heart. Money is not the motivation, but the chance to do something good in life”. This contradicts the image that his “enemies” have of his motives. That most of the supermarket’s customers are flexitarian also shows that veganism is becoming more mainstream. Veganz is analysed in further depth in Study 2.

## ❖ Study 2

As anticipated, all six companies employ an informal and friendly tone, directly referring to customers as “du” (*you*, singular) and “ihr” (*you*, plural) as well as throwing in the occasional English word or even complete translations of text. Veganism is not just presented as a viable lifestyle, but often as *the only* viable lifestyle, associating it with the advancement of human health, intellect and society, the protection and liberation of animals, and the preservation and enjoyment of nature.

First, the slogans in Table 2 reveal love and life as leitmotifs. They celebrate what I term the ‘magic trio’ of veganism: people, animals and the environment, to reinforce a responsible and caring image. Veggiepreneur LikeMeat’s slogan is particularly interesting as it is an oxymoron: ostensibly, products cannot be at once non-vegan and vegan. If language can define our reality, however, it can also shape our reality, so the concept of what meat is can surely evolve over time.

Regarding logos, roots of compassion’s logo depicts a clenched fist and a raised paw, which suggests equality and solidarity between humans and animals and inspires engagement and activism. Three hearts arranged to fit alongside each other form the logo for DearGoods, representing harmony of the magic trio. SANTE is the only company that is not 100% vegan; it chooses a logo resembling the Vitruvian man, which could be a reference to the beauty and symmetry of nature and a focus on using products with natural ingredients. Das veganmagazin and Veganz both keep their logos simple: as in the rest of the magazine, das veganmagazin is written in lower case, perhaps to make it look more modern and friendly, while Veganz draws a heart around the ‘V’ to suggest an aura of compassion and love. The name Veganz is itself a clever play on words: it combines “vegan” and “ganz” (completely), which underscores its purpose of catering to the vegan lifestyle. Finally, the LikeMeat logo has a leaf at the end of the ‘l’ to emphasise freshness and the plant-based origin of its products.

### *Being transparent, inclusive and compassionate*

As expected, the companies in Study 2 attempt to foster a transparent and open image and working environment. Whether a product is fair, organic, natural, handmade, non-animal tested, recycled or climate-neutral in addition to vegan, is proudly stated on the website and usually accompanied by an official stamp or certification that attests to that claim. Further, in **G1**, roots of compassion shares a list of the recipients of its donations and its partner organisations, which suggests a willingness to be transparent in all its dealings with stakeholders. There is simultaneously a subtle emphasis on veganism as complementarity and self-actualisation. For example, a Veganz drink is “the yin for your yang, the kung for your fu, the tae for your bo” (**K3**), a SANTE facial cleanser and mask leaves a “velvety soft complexion” (**I4**) and a LikeMeat sausage combines “the best of both” ham and sausage (**L3**). The

goal is, after all, to attract customers and supporters. Thus, the companies give the impression that purchasing their products is necessary in order to restore balance and achieve one's potential.

All the organisations announce their set of values or goals on their 'About us' pages. **G1**'s proclaimed goals are both broad and ambitious. A family/community atmosphere is outlined by the collective, which claims to have stayed true to its roots and which makes decisions by consensus. Its goal is "the proliferation of veganism and criticism of current social and economic exploitation and oppression"; this is stated as more important than the maximisation of profit. The collective encourages people to have "a respectful, non-violent relationship with other individuals and a conscious, careful interaction with the environment". Such statements emphasise equality and compassion.

**H1** and **K1** share the similarity of repeating sentences beginning with "We love". The word *love* can sometimes sound hackneyed, but it helps to portray the businesses as genuinely concerned about other things and other people. **H1** spreads a message of inclusiveness as "Everyone is welcome" in its stores, which are said to encourage "a good atmosphere, friendliness and respect". Veganz describes itself with the three adjectives "loud, colourful, easy" (**K1**). The tone throughout is fun and informal; for example, its products are referred to as "damn delicious". It alludes to "innovation" and its "experience and competence" and "colourful and life-affirming corporate philosophy". Still, the communication is mildly prescriptive: the reader is asked to contemplate adopting "a more conscious diet"; that is, a vegan one, with the company's goal of "giving all people access to animal-free products and thus to a purely plant-based lifestyle" highlighting the ease with which this can be achieved.

Like the others, SANTE draws on the magic trio in its marketing. "The desire to make the world a bit better" is its aim (**I1**), with "vegan" listed as one of its six core values. This is ironic because the company continues to use some non-vegan ingredients, such as beeswax and cochineal (a red colouring derived from crushed beetles). The statement that products are vegan "provided this is possible and practical" comes across as a feeble excuse when alternatives are readily available on the market.

**J1** also stresses an inclusive strategy, though it hints at a desire for veganism to spread: "Everyone has a heart, a head and hands to make their contribution". Veganism is deemed to be a major facet of that contribution. The magazine claims to feel the biggest connection with "the suffering animals and the starving people", which relies on the emotive adjectives "suffering" and "starving" to increase its readership. Like roots of compassion, das veganmagazin ostensibly appeals to individuals' sense of community and kindness to consider more than themselves when acting as consumers.

LikeMeat's tagline in **L1**, "It is love at first bite", is a clever twist on the saying *love at first sight*. That the head of product development is a doctor and is pictured on the website lends him more authority and accessibility. The company claims to have "achieved what has long been regarded as incompatible: the production of vegan food with the texture and taste of meat", which helps to break down a stereotype of vegan food. Indeed, its primary aims are "taste and enjoyment". Its marketing is furthermore aimed at flexitarians as well as vegetarians and vegans, which demonstrates an inclusive approach and moderate positioning.

#### *Political ideology*

To vegan companies, discourse is not just a vehicle for selling goods (Fairclough 1993); it is also a vehicle for selling ideas. It is clear from the sampling that roots of compassion and *das veganmagazin* are much more political and vocal about animal rights and environmentalism than the others. Moreover, roots of compassion may fulfil the third role of entrepreneurship as outlined by Berglund and Johansson (2007) because it positions itself as subversive and anti-systemic.

By selling a thesis paper (**G5**), it could be argued that roots of compassion is endorsing the views contained within it and therefore accentuating the association between radicalism and veganism. The paper outlines the links between Marxism and animal activism with the aim to strengthen both groups by bringing them together through a common enemy (the bourgeoisie). The company also positions itself as feminist by sharing a post (**G7**) that critiques the use of women as sex objects in advertising campaigns, with the hashtags "smash patriarchy" and "fight sexism".

The April 2017 cover (**J4**) of *das veganmagazin* is of a woman wearing a loose military shirt and hat to represent a discussion on militant veganism. This is, however, a twist on the imagery of war, national pride or violence. The woman is smiling, with her long hair flowing and her belt filled with peppers rather than ammunition, perhaps suggesting that vegans do not typically have militant views.

#### *Confronting cognitive dissonance*

While it is likely that many of these companies' customers are already vegan and therefore emotionally invested in their success, roots of compassion, *das veganmagazin* and *Veganz* nevertheless engage in techniques to encourage others to question their consumption of animal products.

**G2** is a clear example of using plain, confrontational language to deal with cognitive dissonance. The T-shirt reads: "How much do you really love animals?" and features a cartoon drawing of a cow on a large fork. The product description includes the follow-up question "Just enough to skewer them with your fork?"; the verb "skewer" implies violent intent, which makes it hard for the reader to distance



themselves from the act of killing and challenges the compartmentalisation of compassion (McDonald 2000). Animal activism is encouraged through **G3**, a campaign poster about fish. The poster exhorts the reader to recognise “the individual within the fish”, which is an appeal to the reader’s intellect and emotions.

Das veganmagazin’s special feature on fish (**J2**) likewise aims to make consumers reflect on their beliefs and choices. The cover photo is of a man and woman ballet dancing underwater – a parallel is drawn between human beings and creatures inhabiting the ocean, as the pair is portrayed as graceful, artistic and deserving of life. While it may be a worn image in discussions on climate change, the cover photo of a polar bear standing on a small ice floe (**J3**) is nevertheless eye-catching. It is accompanied by the headline “Are you crazy?”, which lays the blame for the polar bear’s dilemma at the reader’s feet, making it extremely personal. **J9**, a page from a children’s book of pigs rollicking around in mud, contributes to the idea that animals on farms lead happy lives. The post above the picture, however, calls it “propaganda” and challenges the social acceptance of killing pigs for food.

**K7** is an image of three animals that share high percentages of their genes with humans. It challenges the ethics of using them for human purposes – for example, to eat or experiment on – due to their intelligence and sentience. In so doing, Veganz subverts the view that animals are inferior to people (Stibbe 2001) and clearly positions itself as a vegan company.

## Discussion

Though only a handful of news websites are analysed in Study 1, it is worth noting that as Vaara and colleagues (2006) have pointed out, journalists can indeed act as gatekeepers and editors of messages – in this case, of the vegan message. Often, the word ‘vegan’ was only mentioned in passing, rather than forming the central argument of each article. This would suggest that veganism continues to hover in the wings while carnism takes centre stage in the theatre of societal discourse.

Veganism is frequently judged to be a fad, especially in the business context. In at least one article by each of the six publishers being vegan is referred to as “cool”, “hip”, or “trendy”. This is particularly the case in The Local, where it frequently figures amongst other tips for how best to fit in as a foreigner to Germany. Being part of a ‘trend’ implies that the phenomenon is expected to be trivial, short-lived, and maybe even worthy of mockery or disdain. Veganism is more than a diet; it is a philosophy that infuses every aspect of life. From the vegan perspective, then, the term becomes inaccurate and even offensive, just as being a Hindu or a feminist is not a trend, but rather a deeply ingrained belief system.

Such terminology can foment the idea that veganism is idiosyncratic and serve to dissuade people from becoming vegan.

The latest survey data from Germany shows that the biggest motive (61%) for becoming vegan is animal welfare (SKOPOS 2016). Despite this, the publications in Study 1 – except for taz, which talks about animal welfare and ethics in some depth – tend to focus more on either the environmental or personal health effects or benefits of veganism. As they are written from a mainstream perspective, this would seem to suggest that the central purpose of veganism is not quite reaching or connecting with mainstream audiences yet. What it may also show, however, is comparatively greater concern for the environment and personal health amongst the German population than in other nations. Despite this, some reference was made to a sweeping change in mentality and awareness when it comes to demand for more ethically-sound products, such as in **A1**, **C16**, **D12** and **F10**.

There is some evidence to support the view (Stibbe 2001) that an ideological struggle is being waged between vegans and non-vegan industries – particularly the dairy industry, which has seen profits plummet in recent years and is now fighting hard to discredit manufacturers of plant-based milks. Generally, non-human animals are judged to be of lesser value than humans (Stibbe 2001). In this scenario, human beings become the elites, legitimising the maintenance of existing inequality (Van Dijk 1993). Euphemism can also serve to legitimise an individual company's operations, such as in **E14**. Animals may be recognised as sentient beings and veganism may be a protected characteristic under European law, but social norms and language have yet to catch up with such advances. Indeed, some of the authors in Study 1 display mild to intense negativity towards vegans and veganism, an attitude that supports MacInnis and Hodson's (2015) supposition of commonplace and socially accepted biases.

The businesses in Study 2 go some way towards redressing the imbalance and inequality created by linguistic camouflage and engage in its opposite: what could be called linguistic transparency. The word 'vegan' is frequently referred to in a frank and simple way; for example, DearGoods states that "We love animals and do not want them to suffer for our clothes" (**H1**). That euphemism and voice-assigning are absent from these types of discourses suggests that, on a societal level, those involved in the vegan movement avoid language that performs an effacing and desensitising function (Mowery & Duffy 1990).

While some businesses in Germany seem to be capitalising on the vegan niche market (SANTE's practices, for instance, are not completely consistent with its stated values), others are true believers and activists. They aim to right societal wrongs through veganism and thus become a means by which to resist and subvert the cultural norm of animal use (Nath & Prideaux 2011). Ergo, a link to the great

refusal (Bronner 2011; Calhoun & Karaganis 2001) is formed. Veganism is portrayed variously as resistance to power and cruelty, an expression of compassion, and a practice of freedom (Dean 2014; Kheel 2009).

The most obvious distinction between the two studies is that the findings from Study 1 are more ambiguous towards veganism while the findings from Study 2 are strongly in favour of it. Further, the four basic arguments frequently used in defence of carnism: that it is natural, normal, necessary and nice, are flipped on their head in Study 2 to present the case for veganism. There is some interaction between online media and business because they can each become a stakeholder in the other's activities. Businesses occasionally react in public to changes in their environment; for example, Veganz issued a press release to refute bankruptcy claims (e.g. **C2**). Two recurring themes in the studies are the politics of veganism and the concept of cognitive dissonance. Veganism is clearly seen as a political issue that invokes a lot of public debate and personal reflection, which may indicate an increase in awareness and popularity of veganism. Examples of cognitive dissonance are provided in Study 1 without the journalists necessarily being aware of its existence, but the companies in Study 2 utilise cognitive dissonance to attract supporters to the cause of veganism.

In answer to the research question, while vegan discourses are not currently mainstream, there is substantial evidence to suggest that they may soon be. The balance of power seems to be shifting. Our language choices are not always overt and intentional: they can be subtle and subconscious. Nonetheless, as veganism grows, the language that people use to describe it will no doubt also evolve.

## Conclusion

Several implications for the future emerge from the findings. First, scope remains for management scholars to investigate the problem area further and in more depth. A comparative study of marketing techniques by vegan and non-vegan businesses, or a review of the social movement in nations 'unsympathetic' towards veganism such as France and Argentina (Ruby et al. 2016), could be of particular interest. Second, organisations should take greater care over the language used in their interactions with stakeholders to ensure that they do not uphold and exhibit outdated and potentially alienating views, whether these views be on vegans or another group. Third, non-vegans may feel inspired to reflect on the ethical issues discussed in this paper with a bearing on their choices as consumers. Fourth, there is plenty of room for the vegan community to continue to grow and for the movement to gather momentum. The vegan revolution may have slowly sprouted up from the margins of the left, but it is now rapidly moving from an emerging to a mushrooming discourse.

Linguistic camouflage is a technique evident in the texts analysed in this paper. As has been seen, language can help to determine how social and political movements are perceived by those standing within and outside of them. From the vegan perspective, it is frequently used in everyday life to silence non-human animals and justify the unethical act of causing harm to others for the sake of our taste buds, habits, fears, whims, curiosity or entertainment. Words as well as deeds can define and redefine individuals and our collective reality. The use of critical discourse analysis contributes to better understanding of the motivations and behaviours of vegans as a somewhat undervalued consumer and stakeholder group, as well as the perceptions and attitudes towards veganism as a whole.

On the one hand, veganism continues to be beset with stereotypes and myths that hinder its message from being widely disseminated and adopted. On the other hand, it is positive to see greater use of the term veganism by not just the vanguard but also the mainstream, and thus greater consumer awareness, accessibility and uptake of veganism itself. As a lifestyle and social movement, it is growing stronger every day. For example, Google Trends (2017), which captures statistics on web searches for particular terms, shows that interest in the term 'vegan' has never been higher, with Germany currently ranking number seven in the world and with Berlin the number one region within Germany. More and more information is becoming available and having an impact on consumer buying habits, especially through visual media: documentaries like *Forks Over Knives* and films like *Okja* have already convinced masses of people to go vegan. Veganism is slowly but surely moving from the private to the public sphere.

It comes as little surprise to learn that old-fashioned beliefs subconsciously linger on in common parlance, remnants of a legacy of abuse of those apparently different to us. Change can take time. A vegan revolution is certainly gathering pace in Germany, driven by a desire to internationally lead the way in technological innovation and environmental protection. With a population that is very concerned about issues such as sustainability and climate change, it would seem that Germany may yet retain its title as the country of poets and thinkers (Focus 2013).

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## Appendices

### ❖ Appendix 1

#### A *Deutsche Welle*

- 1 <http://www.dw.com/en/why-our-obsession-with-animals-is-schizophrenic/a-39311074>
- 2 <http://www.dw.com/en/opinion-election-year-politics-leave-parties-little-room-for-error/a-37127041>
- 3 <http://www.dw.com/en/fur-fashion-boom-faces-a-growing-backlash/a-37026137>
- 4 <http://www.dw.com/en/no-more-veggie-sausages-minister-wants-ban-on-meat-names-for-plant-based-foods/a-36928962>
- 5 <http://www.dw.com/en/veganism-good-for-the-environment-bad-for-people/a-19476296>
- 6 <http://www.dw.com/en/german-butchers-bake-worlds-longest-leberk%C3%A4se-sausage-amid-vegan-opposition/a-19325435>
- 7 <http://www.dw.com/en/vegetarianism-on-the-rise-in-germany-but-schools-draw-the-line-at-veganism/a-19269264>
- 8 <http://www.dw.com/en/be-deutsch-parody-song-goes-viral-hailing-germanys-liberal-values/a-19156659>
- 9 <http://www.dw.com/en/the-nipsters-npd-and-neo-nazis-change-their-style/a-18902369>
- 10 <http://www.dw.com/en/thies-schr%C3%B6der-germany/a-18701930>
- 11 <http://www.dw.com/en/tapping-into-a-new-source-of-protein/a-18069192>
- 12 <http://www.dw.com/en/alarm-over-soaring-world-meat-consumption/a-17353196>
- 13 <http://www.dw.com/en/awareness-tastes-good/a-17118662>
- 14 <http://www.dw.com/en/pigging-out-during-vegan-spring/a-16744578>
- 15 <http://www.dw.com/en/eco-fashion-to-the-rescue-in-berlin/a-16646972>
- 16 <http://www.dw.com/en/leipzig-the-new-berlin/a-16491032>
- 17 <http://www.dw.com/en/passing-on-holocaust-tattoos/a-16397305>
- 18 <http://www.dw.com/en/big-challenges-in-dairy-industrys-quest-to-curb-climate-change/a-15719945>
- 19 <http://www.dw.com/en/berlin-is-veggie-oasis-in-meat-loving-desert-of-germany/a-15275772>
- 20 <http://www.dw.com/en/retirement-homes-in-germany-dish-up-veggie-fare-for-residents/a-3520990>

#### B *The Local Germany*

- 1 <https://www.thelocal.de/20170209/vegans-protest-leads-town-hall-to-stop-playing-kids-song-about-fox-and-goose>
- 2 <https://www.thelocal.de/20161124/9-ways-living-in-germany-makes-you-a-better-person-diet-cycling-nationalism-technology-vegetarian>
- 3 <https://www.thelocal.de/20161031/getting-to-know-berlin-through-your-stomach>
- 4 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160905/10-essentials-to-surviving-as-a-vegetarian-in-germany>
- 5 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160822/government-warns-of-dangers-of-vegan-diet>
- 6 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160816/how-veganism-is-taking-over-the-german-capital>
- 7 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160811/how-berlin-helped-me-go-vegan>
- 8 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160518/school-kids-dont-have-right-to-vegan-food-berlin-court>

- 9 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160511/volkswagen-where-germanys-two-passions-are-united>
- 10 <https://www.thelocal.de/20160418/police-calm-frenzy-at-berlin-vegan-restaurant-opening>
- 11 <https://www.thelocal.de/20150910/meet-the-germans-offering-their-homes-to-refugees>
- 12 <https://www.thelocal.de/20140605/jan-bredeck-boss-of-worlds-first-vegan-supermarket-vegan-z>
- 13 <https://www.thelocal.de/20140423/berlin-feminist-vegan-flat-advert-goes-viral>
- 14 <https://www.thelocal.de/20140404/berlin-squats-at-your-service>
- 15 <https://www.thelocal.de/20120416/41967>
- 16 <https://www.thelocal.de/20110620/35781>

#### C *Handelsblatt Global*

- 1 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/our-magazine/sustainability-gets-stylish-782319>
- 2 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/companies-markets/first-vegan-supermarket-chain-goes-bankrupt-683868>
- 3 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/opinion/fight-the-righteousness-621927>
- 4 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/a-force-for-good-601085>
- 5 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/companies-markets/not-about-to-chicken-out-307100>
- 6 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/an-intolerance-for-low-profits-306710>
- 7 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/kitchen-confidential-286037>
- 8 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/eating-is-cheating-280292>
- 9 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/companies-markets/aldi-nord-store-revamp-pays-off-579343>
- 10 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/companies-markets/supermarket-sweep-230316>
- 11 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/the-constant-gardeners-221559>
- 12 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/the-revolution-at-home-212193>
- 13 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/eating-with-the-enemy-203549>
- 14 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/companies-markets/the-constant-gardener-138075>
- 15 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/new-kid-on-the-oktoberfest-block-18371>
- 16 <https://global.handelsblatt.com/european-lifestyles/footwear-makers-embrace-vegan-trend-with-leather-free-shoes-14467>

#### D *die tageszeitung*

- 1 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5415822>
- 2 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5401086>
- 3 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5390188>
- 4 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5389951>
- 5 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5388000>
- 6 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5386533>
- 7 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5386017>
- 8 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5383747>
- 9 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5384823>
- 10 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5382417>
- 11 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5382055>
- 12 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5381474>

- 13 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5382951>
- 14 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5379530>
- 15 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5382799>
- 16 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5379853>
- 17 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5381301>
- 18 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5374906>
- 19 <https://www.taz.de/Archiv-Suche/!5371451>

## E Die Welt

- 1 <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article165560004/Tofubutter-Verbot-fuer-wie-bloed-haelt-uns-die-EU-eigentlich.html>
- 2 <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article162396930/Mein-Vater-dachte-ich-habe-den-Verstand-verloren.html>
- 3 <https://www.welt.de/vermischtes/article162311133/Warum-Veganer-und-Vegetarier-so-polarisieren.html>
- 4 <https://www.welt.de/icon/unterwegs/article161727861/Viele-der-Alternativen-zu-Leder-schaden-eher.html>
- 5 <https://www.welt.de/kmpkt/article161795962/Hier-findest-du-Leute-die-das-Gleiche-hassen-wie-du.html>
- 6 <https://www.welt.de/motor/article161699621/Jetzt-werden-sogar-unsere-Autos-vegan.html>
- 7 <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article161483198/Deutsche-sind-im-Naschparadies-und-wissen-es-nicht.html>
- 8 <https://www.welt.de/icon/mode/article161310559/Vegane-Sneaker-kommen-direkt-aus-der-Schuhhoelle.html>
- 9 <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article161372124/Deutschland-darf-jetzt-die-vegane-Currywurst-verbieten.html>
- 10 <https://www.welt.de/vermischtes/article161108109/Diese-Souvenirs-liessen-die-Camper-mitgehen.html>
- 11 <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article161108770/Vegan-kochen-Das-tut-sich-dieser-Kantinenchef-nicht-an.html>
- 12 <https://www.welt.de/debatte/henryk-m-broder/article160740940/Erst-kommt-die-vegane-Moral-dann-das-Fressen.html>
- 13 <https://www.welt.de/icon/partnerschaft/article160225961/Stadt-vs-Land-Eine-kurze-Befindlichkeitskunde.html>
- 14 <https://www.welt.de/icon/mode/article160038077/Gibt-es-Pelz-den-man-guten-Gewissens-tragen-kann.html>
- 15 <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article160106987/Der-Veggie-Boom-hat-seinen-Zenit-ueberschritten.html>
- 16 <https://www.welt.de/vermischtes/article159920671/Hoert-auf-veganes-Essen-Vleischsalat-zu-nennen.html>
- 17 <https://www.welt.de/wissenschaft/article158983739/Der-Mensch-ist-nicht-zum-Fleischessen-gemacht.html>
- 18 <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article137324810/Deutschland-leidet-unter-gefaehrlicher-Oeko-Hysterie.html>
- 19 <https://www.welt.de/sport/fitness/article138788688/Hier-bruellt-der-staerkste-Veganer-der-Welt.html>
- 20 <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article127895363/Deutschland-nimmt-Abschied-vom-Fleisch.html>

## F *Der Tagesspiegel*

- 1 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/urteil-des-europaeischen-gerichtshofes-veganer-kaese-darf-nicht-kaese-heissen/19934368.html>
- 2 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/dressur-im-zirkus-tierisch-viel-aerger/19298442.html>
- 3 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/eu-gesundheitskommissar-andriukaitis-bei-der-gesundheit-muss-das-profitstreben-aufhoeren/19283860.html>
- 4 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/studie-zu-ernaehrung-in-deutschland-niemand-kocht-so-selten-wie-die-berliner/19243410.html>
- 5 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/mode/mode-wunderwerk-in-berlin-oeko-als-neuer-standard/14838452.html>
- 6 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/fluechtlinge-in-berlin-vom-drogendealer-zum-kameramann/14726856.html>
- 7 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/mode/mode-und-nachhaltigkeit-von-wegen-kartoffelsack-bio-kann-auch-sexy-sein/13947416.html>
- 8 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/essen-trinken/kochen-fuer-die-gesundheit-eine-persoенliche-geschichte-wie-eine-krebskrankheit-das-leben-umkrempele/13685950.html>
- 9 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/sport/kolumne-so-laeuft-es-vegan-bis-in-den-tod/13644648.html>
- 10 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/billige-milch-kuehe-sind-keine-waren-wie-fernseher/13562078.html>
- 11 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/medien/frauenzeitschriften-im-wandel-fuer-jeden-typ-ein-titel/13385320.html>
- 12 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/ernaehrung-veganes-essen-boomt-in-berlin/12840594.html>
- 13 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/mode/vegane-mode-seide-wolle-leder-fell-sind-out/12213430.html>
- 14 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/umweltfestival-und-fahrradsternfahrt-fuer-muskelkraft-gegen-atomkraft/11915226.html>
- 15 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/sport/geheimtipp-oder-risiko-immer-mehr-topsportler-ernaehren-sich-vegan/11555584.html>
- 16 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/sport/naturkosmetik-das-geheimnis-der-unsterblichen/10985694.html>
- 17 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/weltspiegel/mode/vegane-boxhandschuhe-auch-veganer-wollen-sich-hauen/10721066.html>
- 18 <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/kultur/moral-in-haeppchen-warum-sich-schriftsteller-ueber-das-recht-der-tiere-sorgen/3691156.html>

## ❖ Appendix 2

## G *roots of compassion*

- 1 <https://www.rootsofcompassion.org/de/ueber-roc>
- 2 <https://www.rootsofcompassion.org/de/how-much-do-you-really-love-animals-t-shirt-klein-taillierter-schnitt>

- 3 <https://www.rootsofcompassion.org/de/ein-neuer-blick-auf-fische-postkarte-ariwa>  
4 <https://www.rootsofcompassion.org/de/fair-flip-collection-ozeanblau>  
5 <https://www.rootsofcompassion.org/de/marxismus-und-tierbefreiung-bundnis-marxismus-und-tierbefreiung>

6



7



schöne Aktion von Dies Irae 😊

^tuki

#adbust #smashpatriarchy #sexismusbekämpfen



8



**roots of compassion**

30 August at 17:55 · 🌐

...

(de) Die Trikots der 2017er Version des Roots Of Compassion Vegan Cycling Teams sind wieder vollständig auf Lager! 😊

^sania





9



roots of compassion

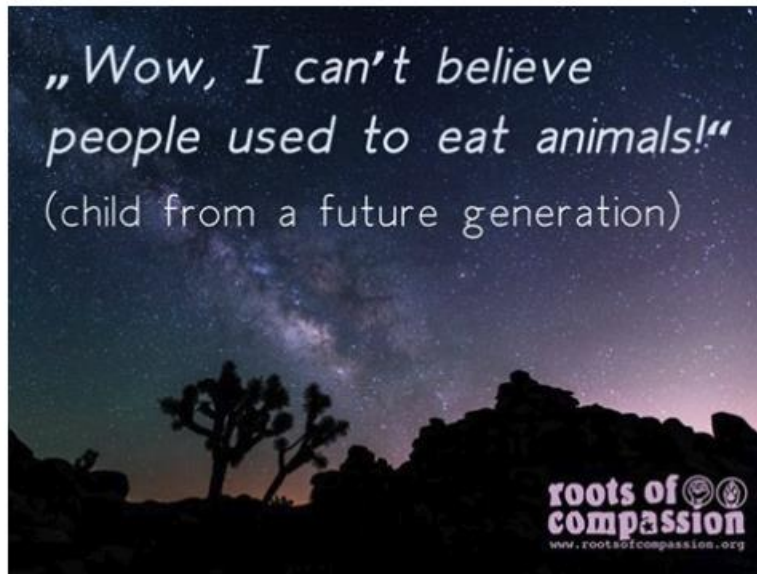
27 August at 10:00 · 🌐

...

The future is vegan!

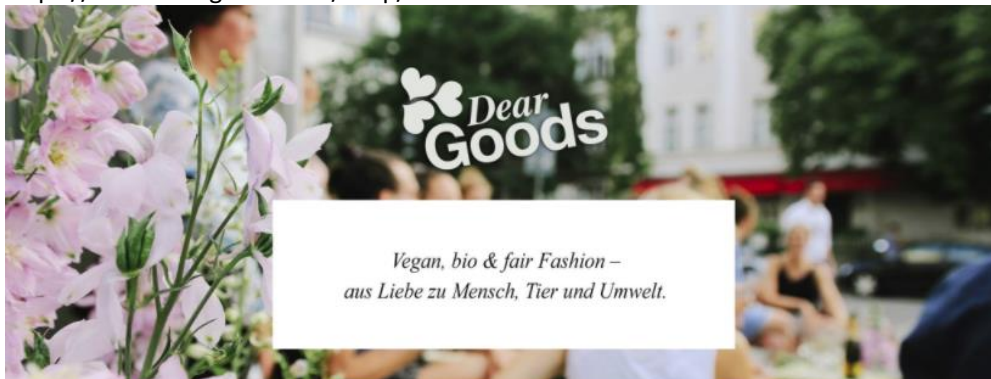
^tuki

#veganfuture #zukunftsstvegan #endofmeat



H DearGoods

- 1 <https://www.deargoods.com/ueber-uns/unsere-philosophie>
- 2 <https://www.deargoods.com/shop/votch-armbanduhr-the-black-and-gold>
- 3 <https://www.deargoods.com/shop/komodo-t-shirt-kawala-nude>
- 4 <https://www.deargoods.com/shop/armedangels-hoodie-ingo-wood-navy-melange>
- 5 <https://www.deargoods.com/shop/antonio-verde-sonnenbrille-trento-ecosun-braun>
- 6



7



DearGoods

10 August at 09:44 · 🌐

...

Ethical is the new black ❤️





8



DearGoods added 3 new photos.

...

22 July · 🌐

♥ SchlussFAIRkauf-Alarm! ♥ Die letzte Woche haben wir fleißig vorbereitet: Kamill verzierte bereits einige Schaufenster und alle Summer-Sale-Produkte sind jetzt mit dem typischen pinken Herz markiert – es gibt bis zu 40% Rabatt!

Also: LOOK OUT FOR THE PINK HEART! Kommt uns in unseren Stores in München, Berlin und Augsburg besuchen ♥ #sale #fairfashion #ecofashion #vegan #fairtrade



9



DearGoods is at DearGoods.

29 May · 🌐

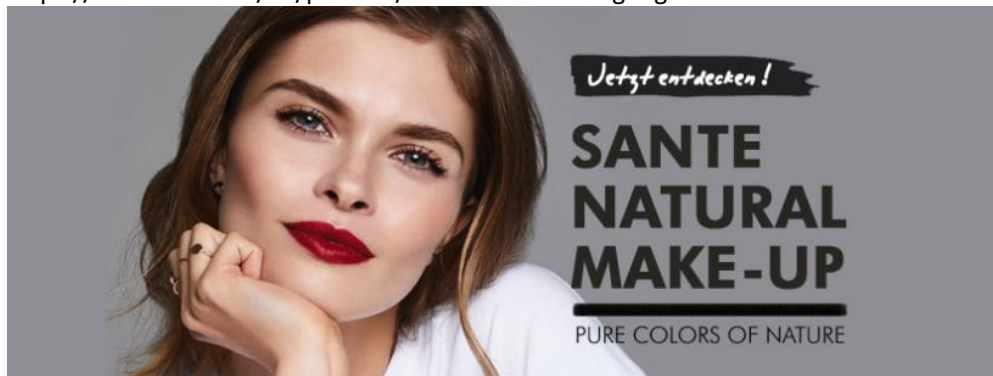
...

Grün, grün, grün sind alle meine Kleider... 🌿 Die Farbe grün mischt diesen Sommer überall mit. Passt ja irgendwie zu fairer, veganer und GRÜNER Mode, oder? 🌱 🍏



## / SANTE

- 1 <https://www.sante.de/de/ueber-sante.html>
- 2 <https://www.sante.de/de/produkt/energy-duschgel.html>
- 3 <https://www.sante.de/de/produkt/beautifying-highlighter-02-rose.html>
- 4 <https://www.sante.de/de/produkt/mini-makes-mega-lashes-01-black.html>
- 5 <https://www.sante.de/de/produkt/5in1-tonerde-reinigung-und-maske.html>
- 6





**Sante Naturkosmetik**

7 July · 🌐

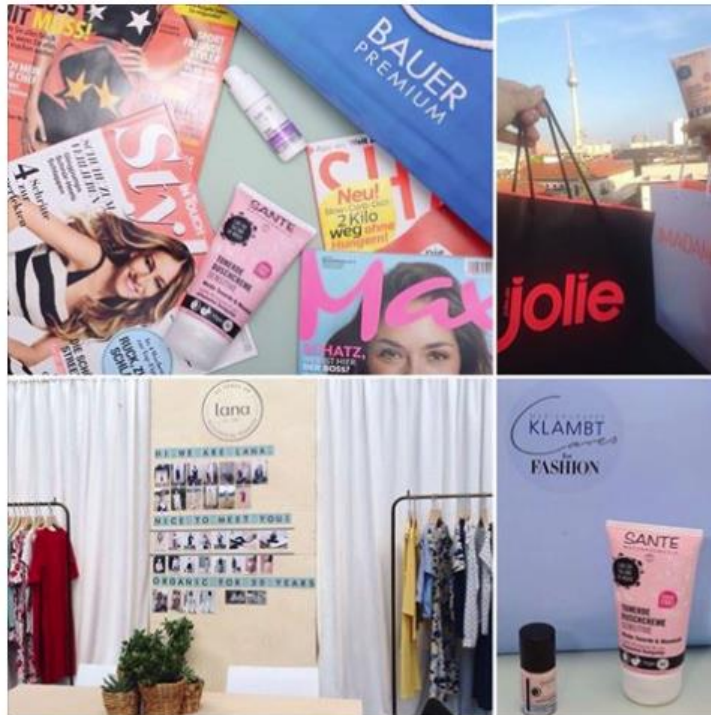
...

Merci, Berlin Fashion Week! 🐰

Wir hatten spannende Tage mit tollen Menschen in der Hauptstadt. Es war schön, mit dabei zu sein: beim Klambt Style Cocktail, bei LANA organic auf der Ethical Fashion Show Berlin, dem Bauer Fashion Brunch und natürlich beim Summer Fashion Cocktail von Jolie und Madame Magazin. Wir sehen uns im nächsten Jahr wieder!

Unsere Lieblingsprodukte von der Fashion Week findet ihr natürlich auf [www.sante.de](http://www.sante.de) ❤️

#SANTENaturkosmetik #BerlinFashionWeek #EthicalFashionShow  
#KlambtStyleCocktail #BauerFashionBrunch #SummerFashionCocktail  
#NaturalTalents #Tonerde #NaturkosmetikOhneKompromisse





Hier unsere kleine Erfrischung für den Teint 🍃

Die vegane ALL DAY MOISTURE 24h FRESH SKIN FOUNDATION mit Bio-Gurkenfruchtextrakt und dem patentierten 24h Hydro-Depot (DayMoist CLR™) sorgt für das Plus an Feuchtigkeit. Hinzu kommt der zarte Duft von frischen Avocados 🥑

Leichte bis mittlere Deckkraft, erhältlich in den drei Nuancen "Ivory", „Sand, „Sun Beige".

Weitere Infos findet ihr unter <https://goo.gl/yPCztT>.

#SANTENaturkosmetik #NaturalMakeUp #Foundation #vegan #avocado  
#NaturalTalents







Habt ihr schon eure passende Handcreme gefunden? 🙌

Die veganen Handcremes sind ab sofort in den Varianten "BALANCE", "EXPRESS", "ANTI AGING" und "INTENSIVE REPAIR" im Handel erhältlich.

Für stark beanspruchte Hände eignet sich die INTENSIVE REPAIR Handcreme mit Bio-Sheabutter & Macadamianussöl. Die leichte BALANCE Handcreme pflegt mit Bio-Aloe & Mandelöl z.B. am Strand nach dem Schwimmen. Die ANTI AGING Handcreme hellt auf natürliche Weise vorhandene Pigmentflecken auf, und die besonders schnell einziehende EXPRESS Handcreme mit weißer Tonerde eignet sich für jeden Tag.

Weitere Infos zu den Handcremes findet ihr unter [www.goo.gl/1Nv28X](http://www.goo.gl/1Nv28X).

#SANTENaturkosmetik #Handcreme #vegan #Tonerde #AntiAging



J das veganmagazin

- 1 <http://veganmagazin.de/ueber-uns>
- 2 <http://veganmagazin.de/magazin/veganmagazin-juni>
- 3 <http://veganmagazin.de/magazin/veganmagazin-mai-2017>
- 4 <http://veganmagazin.de/magazin/veganmagazin-april-2017>
- 5 <http://veganmagazin.de/magazin/veganmagazin-maerz-2017>

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Veganmagazin

23 June · 🌐

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Tag des Cholesterins – Gewinne ein MyEy-Set

Wusstet ihr schon, dass heute der »Tag des Cholesterins« ist? Nun, mit erhöhten Cholesterinwerten haben VeganerInnen ja eher weniger ein Probleme... 😊 Auch weil es tolle pflanzliche Alternativen gibt! Aus diesem Anlass verlosen wir heute 3 x Sets von [MyEy.info](https://myey.info) (1 Set = 1 x MyEy Eyweiß + 1 MyEy Eygelb), dem einzigen bio-zertifizierten Ei-Ersatz mit der gesamten Bandbreite an Funktionalität.

Du möchtest [MyEy.info](https://myey.info) ausprobieren? Dann kommentiere, warum gerade DU ein MyEy-Set gewinnen möchtest!

Die GewinnerInnen werden nach dem Zufallsprinzip ermittelt und via Email verständigt. Teilnahmeschluss: 26.06.2017, 23:59 Uhr. Der Rechtsweg ist ausgeschlossen. Viel Glück!



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Veganmagazin Video:

Veganismus-Debatte (Ausschnitte) auf dem Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag #Kirchentag #DEKT in der Sophienkirche in Berlin-Mitte mit Christian Vagedes (veganmagazin-Herausgeber, Vegane Gesellschaft Deutschland, Ernährungspsychologe Dr. Thomas Ellrott, Dr. Kai Funkschmidt (Evangelische Zentralstelle für Weltanschauungsfragen). Thema: »Veganismus. Religionsersatz oder Christenpflicht?«.



10k Views

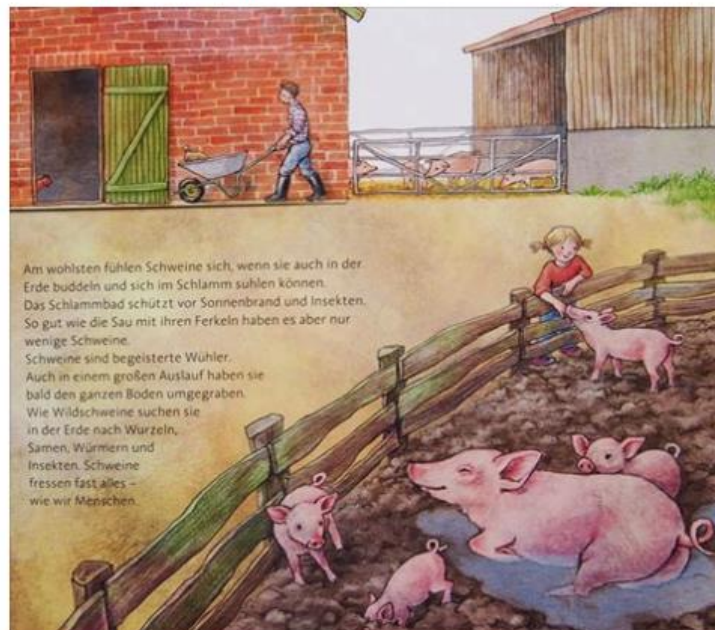
Richtig ist: Schweine sind hochsensible Tiere mit vielen Bedürfnissen. Da sie nicht schwitzen können, benötigen sie eine Schlammuhle, um sich Abkühlung zu verschaffen und sich vor Insekten zu schützen. Außerdem leben sie in Rotten (komplexen Familienverbänden) zusammen.

Fakt ist: In der sogenannten Nutztierhaltungsindustrie werden die Grundbedürfnisse dieser Tiere systematisch missachtet. In der Schweinefleischproduktion ist weder eine Schlammuhle noch ausreichend Platz vorgesehen. Auch soziale Gefüge spielen in der Industrie keine Rolle. Die meisten Schweine bekommen im Laufe ihres Lebens nicht einmal Tageslicht zu Gesicht.

Bild: "Das große Bauernhofbuch" - Carlsen Verlag

Mehr zum Thema: "Propaganda im Kinderbuchregal" jetzt im neuen Veganmagazin

<http://veganmagazin.de/aktuelle-ausgabe/>



## K Veganz

- 1 <https://vegan.de/de/unternehmen>
- 2 <https://shop.vegan.de/448/bio-vegan-hanfprotein-pulver-200g?c=1000>
- 3 <https://shop.vegan.de/176/bio-vegan-reis-drink-1l?c=1000>
- 4 <https://shop.vegan.de/254/vegan-vegan-pfeffersteak-210g?c=1000>
- 5 <https://shop.vegan.de/260/vegan-hello-coco-mango-125g?c=1000>



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**Veganz**

4 September at 13:00 · 🌐

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Zugegeben, auf den ersten Blick sind sich Mensch und Schwein – so rein äußerlich – nicht sehr ähnlich. Aber: Biologisch betrachtet sieht es schon ganz anders aus. Wissenschaftler sprechen von bis zu 98% genetischer Übereinstimmung mit dem Menschen. Ist das nicht faszinierend?! Umso schlimmer, wie mit diesen sehr empfindsamen Lebewesen, die in ihrer Intelligenz Hunde übertreffen, umgegangen wird. Lasst uns gemeinsam daran etwas ändern! Werdet vegan ❤️



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Veganz

25 August at 08:00 · 🌐

Manchmal ist es gar nicht so einfach für seine vegane Lebensweise einzustehen. Doch denkt immer daran: Gemeinsam können wir die Welt zu einem besseren Ort machen, denn wir sind viele!

#velove 🐶 🐱 🐹



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Veganz

22 August at 18:30 · 🌐

Straight Edge - Kein Alkohol, keine Zigaretten, keine Drogen, kein wahlloser Sex. Einige Straight Edger leben zudem vegan und verzichten sogar auf Koffein. Nicht unbedingt das, was Außenstehende von einer Bewegung aus der Hardcore-Punkszene erwarten.

Was haltet ihr von der Einstellung dieser Szene? Findet ihr das zu krass oder könntet ihr euch auch vorstellen so zu leben? #veganzwillswissen 🤔



- 1 <https://likemeat.de/de/ueber-likemeat>
- 2 <https://likemeat.de/de/produkte/pulled-pork>
- 3 <https://likemeat.de/de/produkte/schinkenbratwurst>
- 4 <https://likemeat.de/de/produkte/bratwurst>
- 5 <https://likemeat.de/de/produkte/gyros-streifen>
- 6



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LikeMeat

26 August at 06:17 · 🌐

+++ Wir wachsen weiter! 🍌 +++

Damit wir weiterhin mit voller Power 🍌 durchstarten können, wollen wir unser Team vergrößern. Hast du Lust Teil unseres Teams zu werden? Dann bewirb dich bei uns 😊

Hier geht's zur Stellenanzeige: <http://bit.ly/2v8IPEP>



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Für alle Sportler unter euch: Sojaprotein hat die höchste biologische Wertigkeit unter den pflanzlichen Proteinen! 😊







Hättet ihr gewusst? Unsere LikeMeat Filetstücke Döner-Art haben rund 5x weniger Fett als das Original!

