6.

Ink not mink: Discourses of Masculinity in Animal Rights Campaigns

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Introduction

In 1990, the American animal rights organization*, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals* (PETA), launched an anti-fur trade campaign titled 'I'd rather go naked than wear fur'. As part of the campaign, dozens of (mainly female) celebrities agreed to be photographed naked by PETA, featuring in a range of campaign materials broadly designed to protest against the use of animal fur products. Originating in the United States, over time, the campaign spread to other countries and languages. PETA officially ended the campaign in 2020, proclaiming 'victory' in the face of a reduced take-up of animal fur products, especially within the fashion industry, as well as tighter regulations being imposed on the animal fur trade across many countries.[1] However, the campaign was not without controversy, and during its lifetime faced criticism – particularly from feminist commentators – about what were perceived to be sexist and objectifying portrayals of women, who tended to be the focus of the campaign. By somewhat of a response to this criticism, PETA later launched a companion campaign, titled 'Ink not mink', in which (mainly male) celebrities would pose for photographs displaying their tattoos in an anti-fur message imploring audiences to wear tattoos rather than animal fur products.

In this chapter, we subject a set of texts from both of these campaigns to a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, underpinned by an ecofeminist perspective, to compare the use of gendered discourses to represent the female and male social actors featured in these parallel campaigns. We demonstrate how the semiotic (i.e. linguistic and visual) choices evident in the designs of these texts both draw upon and perpetuate a traditional and relatively narrow set of oppositional and complementary gendered discourses. Importantly, when viewed from an ecofeminist perspective, these complementary sets of discourses and their attendant representations can be interpreted as circulating masculine identities that are toxic –

[1] https://www.peta.org/features/id-rather-go-naked-than-wear-fur-campaign-ends/

being harmful for our natural world, including all human and non-human animal life within it.

Masculinities, toxicity and animal exploitation

The different theorisations and uses of the term ‘toxic masculinity’ can be traced both to its origins and then its subsequent adoption in different domains of public and academic discourse, each imbuing the concept with its own set of meanings. First used in men’s movements of the late 20th century, the term was coined by Shepherd Bliss to account for his father’s authoritarian and militarised masculinity (for discussion, see Harrington, 2021). The term then entered therapeutic and social policy domains, as well as self-help literature (ibid.). This adoption of the term placed a particular psychological slant on what is meant by ‘toxic masculinity’. Through this psychological lens, the term came to describe traits, characteristics and behaviours that were associated with ‘toxicity’. For example, Kupers (2005: 713-14) describes it as ‘the constellation of socially regressive male traits that serve to foster domination, the devaluation of women, homophobia, and wanton violence’, arguing also that ‘toxic masculinity involves the need to aggressively compete and dominate others and encompasses the most problematic proclivities in men’. However, one of the consequences of defining ‘toxic masculinity’ in this way is the fact that, as argued by Harrington (2021: 346), the notion becomes individualising and essentialising, becoming about ‘character flaw[s] of some men’. Specifically, these accounts would imply that, through possessing specific character traits, individuals would be inherently predisposed to committing ‘toxic’ acts. The causes of problematic aspects of the performance of masculinity thus become reduced here to those that are individualised – even biological – in nature, with little-to-no recognition of the social conditions in which they may take root.

For many critics of this particular conceptualisation of ‘toxic masculinity’ (e.g. De Boise, 2019; Waling, 2019; Harrington; 2021), the psychological understanding of the term therefore engages insufficiently with the broader theoretisation of masculinity and gender order. Comparisons are drawn here between the notions of ‘toxic masculinity’ and ‘hegemonic masculinity’ (Connell, 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). As masculinity interacts with other socio-cultural variables, such as age, social class and sexuality, it is possible to speak of different forms of

masculinity or *masculinities* (Johnson, 1997). Since some masculinities are viewed within society as being more desirable or prestigious than others – being tied to societal 'ideals, fantasies, and desires' about what it means to be a man (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 838; see also Connell, 1995) – they gain a hegemonic, so dominant, cultural status. In global Western contexts, the performance of hegemonic masculinity has been interpreted in expressions of such qualities as autonomy, bravery, physical strength, resourcefulness, the suppression of emotions and the enactment of violence (Baker 2008: 123-124).

The notion of toxic masculinity has been criticised by some for failing to adequately situate harmful expressions of masculinity within the wider societies of which they are both constitutive and by which they are constituted. De Boise (2019: 149), for example, argues that 'unlike structural concepts like hegemonic masculinity, [toxic and traditional masculinity] instead pathologise a cluster of behaviours under a decontextualised, ahistorical label', simultaneously 'reducing systemic problems to decontextualised, interpersonal acts'.

Despite some of the valid critiques of the aforementioned means of defining 'toxic masculinity', we would argue that the term can be useful in certain contexts, though we recognise at the same time the need to revisit how the notion is understood. To us, the deployment of 'toxic masculinity' can be particularly helpful when focusing on, and articulating explicitly, the costs and consequences of the performance of hegemonic masculinity. 'Toxic masculinity', in this case, is understood as an evaluative term, allowing us to emphasise the problematic nature of practices (including discourses) which perpetuate hegemonic masculinity and thus uphold the gender order. We therefore consider the notions of 'hegemonic masculinity' and 'toxic masculinity' to be mutually complementary but not overlapping. We also believe it to be useful to employ these terms in tandem, allowing for the description of specific practices and their social embeddings, but also allowing for their critique. While 'hegemonic masculinity' can help us describe specific social practices imbued with cultural capital – the repetition of which stabilises unequal power relations – the notion of 'toxic masculinity' emphasises the problematic nature of such a fashioning of a hierarchy, according to which the entitlements of one eclipse the rights of others.

Yet as well as employing the – for us, complementary – notions of hegemonic and toxic masculinity, the study reported in this chapter is also importantly underpinned by an ecofeminist perspective. Developed under the premise of recognising the mutual sources of and the interconnectedness between the different forms of discrimination, ecofeminism provides a lens through which to inspect the social conditions that enable such discrimination to take place and to critique them. While a purely feminist perspective often engages predominantly with a single axis of gender, ecofeminism offers a more holistic paradigm, allowing to move beyond this single axis when examining how unequal power relations are constructed and maintained. Ecofeminism provides a critical lens for interpreting cumulative forces of oppression, as it encourages us to recognise parallels between the processes that lead to the oppression of women (and other marginalised groups) and the exploitation of the natural environment, including non-human animals (Adams and Gruen, 2014; Adams, 2000). In doing so, ecofeminism 'addresses the various ways that sexism, heteronormativity, racism, colonialism, and ableism are informed by and support speciesism and how analysing the ways these forces intersect can produce less violent, more just practices' (Adams and Gruen, 2014: 1). Ecofeminism calls for a society in which there are no dominant groups, recognising that, as soon as somebody's rights are perceived as more important than somebody else's, creating a pyramid of unequal power relations, those positioned at the bottom of this pyramid will be exploited and treated unfairly.

In keeping with ecofeminist theorising (Adams, 2000, 2003), we believe the consequences of upholding hegemonic masculinity, and consequently the gender order, to be more far reaching than previously thought. This can entail 'toxic' effects for both those capable of enacting hegemonic masculinity, and also the vast number of groups subordinated by such hegemony, including people, non-human animals and the broader natural world (for discussion, see also Brookes and Chałupnik, forthcoming). Adopting a critical ecofeminist position, our analysis problematises the discourses in our data in terms of how they contribute to the oppression of both humans and non-human animals, warranting in this case – we believe – the deployment of the notion of 'toxic masculinity'. We revisit the concepts of hegemonic and toxic masculinity, as well as ecofeminism, in the next section, where we describe

how each is implemented within the multimodal approach to critical discourse analysis adopted in this study.

Methodology

Data: Campaign texts

The data for this study are two sets of texts, each taken from PETA's parallel campaigns, *Ink not mink* and *I'd rather go naked*. While the main focus of our study is the perpetuation of hegemonic and toxic masculinities, our analysis nevertheless sets out to explicate gendered discourses in the representations of both the male and the female social actors in these campaigns. The main advantages of examining representations of male and female social actors are two-fold. First, gender identity is, in our view, profoundly relational – the gender order, as defined above, is premised on situating some gender identities as being more powerful than others (i.e. masculine identities and feminine identities). Second, analysing the representation of female social actors will help us to *denaturalise* the gendered discourses that underpin the representations of male social actors, since both sets of texts were derived from parallel campaigns, with broadly the same aims and produced by the same organization (PETA).

Sourcing texts from the *Ink not mink* and *I'd rather go* campaigns is not as straightforward a task as it might first seem. Each campaign ran for many years, involving numerous celebrities and modes of communication and, unfortunately for our purposes, the full sets of campaign materials are not stored in any single location. Another complicating factor is that PETA also produces a seemingly hybrid campaigns. For example, while mainly featuring either male or female celebrities, in a very small number of cases, *Ink not mink* contained an image of a female celebrity and *I'd rather go naked* featured one image of a male celebrity, while both campaigns included a small number of images containing men and women (couples). Furthermore, we also encountered images which resembled those produced for the *Ink not mink* campaign, but which were campaigning, instead, in favour of vegan living. In the face of these challenges, we nevertheless tried to develop a principled and repeatable approach to identifying campaign texts for analysis. Specifically, we used the search facility of the PETA website (https://www.peta.org/) to search for the title of each campaign. We then manually

read through each set of results and extracted posters (i.e. static images with text laid over the top) for either campaign. To control for the aforementioned variables, we included texts which:

i.) were written in English;
ii.) contained just one social actor;
iii.) featured a man for *Ink not mink* and a woman for *I'd rather go naked*;
iv.) contained a linguistic reference to the campaign slogan somewhere on the text (allowing for a slight modification of wording - discussed later).

The resulting datasets comprised 28 texts for *Ink not mink* and 22 texts for *I'd rather go naked*. The campaign texts are multimodal, relying on both language and images. Each text features a studio-produced photograph depicting a celebrity social actor who has agreed to feature in the campaign and, thus, to lend their voice to its anti-fur message. The social actors are positioned in the centre of the text and, in most cases, dominate the frame. Sitting on top of the photographic images, the texts are layered with graphical elements. These include the PETA logo and the respective campaign titles. The names of the celebrities featuring in each set of campaign texts are given in Appendix A.

Approach: Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of social actor representation

Our analysis of the representation of social actors in campaign texts was guided by the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 2015). CDA combines close analysis of linguistic choices with theoretically informed accounts of context in order to elucidate the processes through which language and discourse (re)produce social practices and privilege certain practices over others. Since image is the primary mode of these campaign texts, we adopted a multimodal approach to CDA (i.e., MCDA; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Machin and Mayr, 2012; Brookes et al., 2016, 2021). This approach is inspired by a systemic functional perspective on communication (Halliday, 1978), according to which, meaning within texts is viewed as resulting from a series of semiotic choices made by text producers. Crucially, MCDA is underpinned by two key assumptions: (i.) text producers understand that all

communicative processes are, to an extent, rule-based, with modes such as language but also image, font, colour and so on functioning and creating meaning within a rule-based system or grammar and that semiotic behaviours have *potentials* based on prior usage; (ii.) the communicative choices that text producers make are not arbitrary but, rather, are *motivated* by text producers' interests, and in this sense are ideologically significant (see: Kress 1993).

In this chapter, representations of the male and female social actors in the *I'd rather go naked* and *Ink not mink* campaigns are compared and interpreted in terms of the gendered discourses with which they enjoy a dialectal relationship – that is, by which they are constituted but of which they are also constitutive. For this purpose, we adopt a broadly social constructionist view of *discourse*, interpreting *discourses* as 'ways of seeing the world, often with reference to relations of power and domination' (Sunderland, 2004: 6). Gendered discourses, then, are those discourses which carry ideologies relating to gender, and which function to establish the 'boundaries of social practice through which appropriate gendered behaviour is regulated', providing the parameters through which people are 'represented or expected to behave *in particular gendered ways*' (ibid.: 21, original emphasis).

We broadly follow van Leeuwen's (2008) MCDA approach to analysing the visual representation of social actors. This involves scrutinising how visual choices (pertaining to distance, angle, gaze and the use of poses and props) work together to construct particular types of relationships between the depicted social actors (or 'represented participants') and the text's imagined audience (or 'reader-viewers'). While our analysis focuses mostly on such visual elements, we do, where relevant, relate these to lexico-grammatical choices in the linguistic messaging which accompanies the images within the texts. The analysis in this chapter begins on a more descriptive footing by considering the choice of celebrity social actors in the campaign texts. We then move from *who* is featured in these texts to consider *how* they are represented in terms of the types of relationships that are constructed between the represented participants and reader-viewers. In particular, three 'dimensions' are considered: (i.) 'the social distance between depicted people and the viewer', (ii.) 'the social relation between depicted people and the viewer', and (iii.) 'the social interaction between depicted people and the viewer' (van Leeuwen, 2008:

137-138). The visual choices pertaining to these dimensions are interpreted as connoting symbolic relationships between reader-viewers and represented participants.

Importantly, the aim of CDA is not only to describe discourses but to also explain and critique the social and ideological conditions which both give rise to and are enabled by them. Our analysis is, as noted, also informed by principles from ecofeminism. While the tools of MCDA allow us to identify the entextualisation of particular gendered discourses, ecofeminism provides, as we have discussed, a theoretical lens for interrogating and explaining the social conditions in which such discourses take root. Adopting a critical ecofeminist position, our analysis will thus seek to problematise the gendered discourses in our data in terms of how they sustain masculinities which can be viewed as toxic in the sense that they contribute to the oppression of both humans and non-human animals.

Selection of participants and settings

We begin our analysis by considering the selection of the celebrity social actors who are the subject of the visual and linguistic representations. While the participants were selected because of their ethical opposition to the fur trade, their identities (at least as represented within these texts) are also likely to have been perceived as congruent with the tone and message of the campaigns.

For the *Ink not mink* campaign, the key visual criterion for the selection of male social actors was that they had tattoos. While not exclusive to male bodies, tattoos can nevertheless be linked closely to the expression of values associated with hegemonic masculinity, such as autonomy and resistance (Howson, 2004). Thus, the decision to make the *Ink not mink* campaign a male-based one suggests an alignment of the men with these values in a way that the women featuring in the *I'd rather go naked* campaign are not.

Other factors guiding the choice of social actors featured in the parallel campaigns are ostensibly less pertinent to the themes of the campaigns themselves. The women and men selected for both campaigns can also be described as being conventionally attractive for Western cultures. As Baker (2008: 7) points out,

> ‘the sorts of bodies and sexual identities that are considered to be most sexually desirable in (current western) society, are strongly linked to ideas about traditional masculinity and femininity. So, an attractive man is tall and muscular, with broad shoulders and a defined chest. On the other hand, an attractive woman would be smaller and thinner, embodying adjectives like “petite” or “dainty”.’

These descriptions could be applied to the vast majority of the men and women featured in these campaigns; the women tend to have petite figures, but for their graphically accentuated curves around their breasts and hips, while the majority of the men have visibly muscular chests, arms and sometimes legs. As will be demonstrated later in the analysis, these gendered physical features are foregrounded through poses, font positioning, edits to shade and lighting, and the angles and distance from which the shots were taken.

As well as aligning celebrities with dominant (gendered) standards of sexual attractiveness, we can also consider the backgrounds (or occupations) of these social actors. The male participants selected for the *Ink not mink* campaign tend overwhelmingly to represent ‘masculinised’ domains within Western societies. Sixteen out of twenty-six men from the *Ink not mink* campaign are from the domain of sport, which in general has been observed to be dominated by men (Adams et al., 2010), but also with a preference for sports that are male dominated (i.e. American football, basketball, motocross, cricket, rugby, skateboarding and soccer). The second most common domain represented in *Ink not mink* is music – accounting for seven of the twenty-eight participants – with a particular focus on musicians from the genres of rap and rock. Rap music has been observed to be a hyper-masculine domain. Not only is the industry a male-dominated one (Perry, 2004), but the culture surrounding it has long been associated with the indexing (and perpetuation) of hegemonic masculine norms (e.g. toughness, subjugation of women, misogynistic and homophobic lyrics, and lack of emphasis on plural differences of masculine identities (ibid.)). The three remaining male participants featured in *Ink not mink* are comedian, tattoo artist and owner of a motorbike manufacturing company.

Turning our focus to the women in the *I'd rather go naked* campaign, and the first thing we should note was that categorising these participants into domains was not as straightforward as it was for the men, as these participants were typically notable for numerous reasons. However, of the nineteen female participants featured in the campaign, ten have a background in acting, seven in modelling, four in pop music, and three can be described as 'television personalities'.

A notable distinction between the campaigns, then, is the dominance among the male social actors of participants from the domain of sport, meanwhile, for the women, we note the presence of models (fashion, glamour) where these are absent among the men. It could be argued that these and other differences between the male and female participants featured in these campaigns merely reflect the gendered dynamics of these domains in the 'real world' beyond the campaigns. However, as will be demonstrated, these differences also lend to different, gendered styles of representation in either campaign.

Social Distance

As in real life, the distance from which we view social actors within images can communicate interpersonal relationships. As van Leeuwen (2008: 138) puts it,

> we "keep our distance" from strangers (if given the chance); we are "close to" our nearest and dearest; we "work closely" with someone; and so on. Distance indicates the closeness, literally and figuratively, of our relationships, whether such closeness is temporary, lasting the duration of a particular interaction, or more permanent, and whatever more precise meaning it gains in specific contexts.

Thus, in visual images, the distance from which participants are shown to us has a symbolic value. Based on film-making training materials, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 124) describe seven broad types of shot available to image producers (types of shot in italics – our emphasis):

> the *close shot* (or 'close-up') shows head and shoulders of the subject, and the *very close shot* ('extreme close-up', 'big close-up') anything less than that.

> The *medium close shot* cuts off the subject approximately at the waist, the *medium shot* approximately at the knees. The *medium long shot* shows the full figure. In the *long shot* the human figure occupies about half the height of the frame, and the *very long shot* is anything 'wide' than that.

Using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006: 124) descriptions of the characteristics of each type of shot as analytical criteria, we examined each image cross both campaigns.

The symbolic values of these shots broadly operate along a scale, whereby 'closer' shots convey a sense of intimacy and of participants as being 'one of us', while the 'longer' shots can communicate the sense in which the represented participants are 'strangers' (van Leeuwen, 2008: 138). Table 1 shows the frequency of use of each type of shot in either campaign. To aid comparison, we also express these figures as percentages of the total images in each campaign and have indicated through bold text which campaign was more likely to use each type of shot. Bold text denotes which group (male / female) exhibited the highest proportion of each shot type.

Table 1. Use of shots in each campaign, expressed as raw frequencies and percentages.

Shot type	*Ink not mink* (male)		*I'd rather go naked* (female)	
	#	%	#	%
Very close	0	0.00	0	0.00
Close	**2**	**7.14**	0	0.00
Medium-close	**15**	**53.57**	1	4.54
Medium	6	21.43	**7**	**31.82**
Medium-long	5	17.86	**13**	**59.09**
Long	0	0.00	**1**	**4.54**
Very long	0	0.00	0	0.00

As this table shows, both campaigns tend to employ medium-range shots but in different ways. While the *Ink not mink* campaign makes more use of the close shots, the *I'd rather go naked* campaign tends to use long shots. In the *Ink not mink* campaign, medium-close shots are used 53.57% of the time (e.g. Figure 1). By comparison, this shot is used only once (4.54%) in the *I'd rather go naked* images. Rather, the *I'd rather go naked* campaign tends to use the medium-long shot (59.09% of cases; see Figure 2), with this shot being used in just 17.86% of the *Ink not mink* images. While neither campaign utilised the very long shot, the *I'd rather go naked* campaign featured one image using a long shot. This shot was not used at all in the *Ink not mink* campaign.

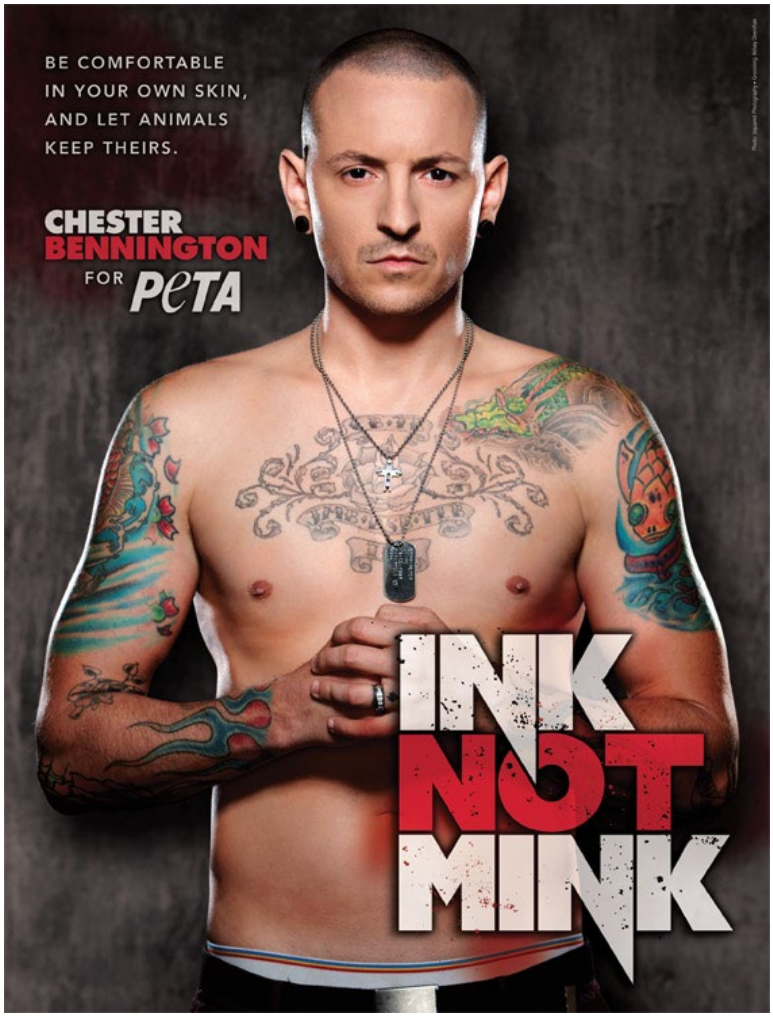

Figure 1: Chester Bennington text

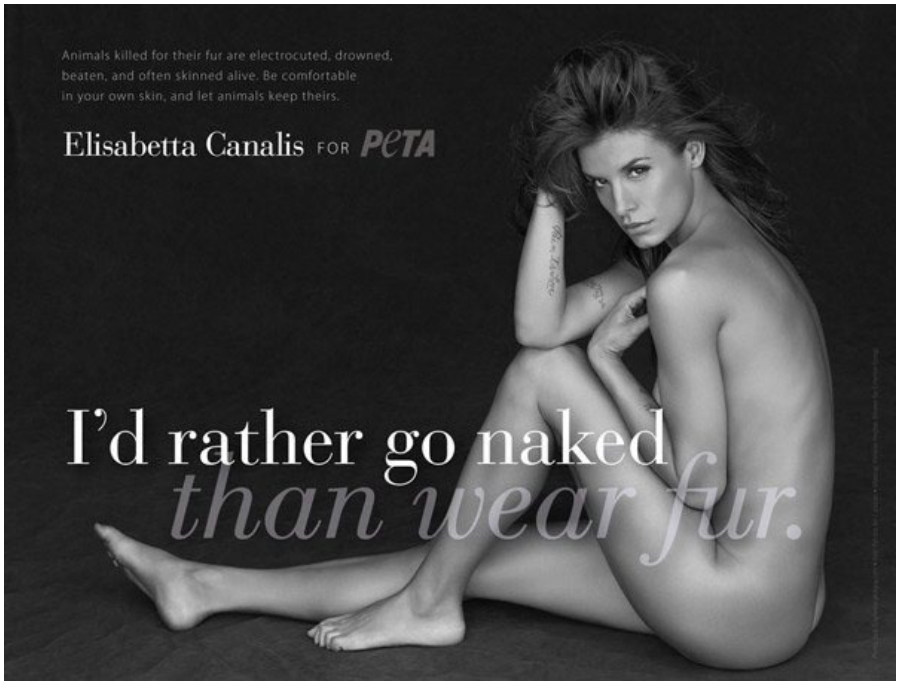

Figure 2: Elisabetta Canalis text

As noted earlier, closer shots can function to invite reader-viewers to empathise with participants and their emotional states (Machin, 2007) and to view them as "one of us". The closer shots used in the *Ink not mink* campaign, therefore, appear to invite reader-viewers to view models as "one of us". On the other hand, the longer shots which tend to be used in the *I'd rather go naked* images arguably create a sense of social distance, inviting reader-viewers to observe their whole bodies and focus less on their countenances and, as such, their individuality and emotional states. In this sense, we would argue that the *I'd rather go naked* campaign's characteristic use of medium-long shots provides an objectifying representation of the female participants by displaying their entire bodies to the reader-viewer.

Social Relation

Following our analysis of social distance, we now examine the social relations that are constructed between the represented participants and reader-viewers through the use of viewing angles. Van Leeuwen (2008: 139) highlights two important sets of variables in this regard (types of angle in italics – our emphasis);

> the vertical angle, that is, whether we see the person *from above*, at *eye level*, or *from below*, and the horizontal angle, that is, whether we see a person *frontally* or *from the side*, or perhaps *from somewhere in between*.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and van Leeuwen (2008) argue that these angles can convey two aspects of the social relation between represented participants and reader-viewers – namely, power and involvement. The vertical angle, suggests van Leeuwen (2008: 139), is related in some way to power differences:

> To look down on someone is to exert imaginary symbolic power over that person, to occupy, with regard to that person, the kind of "high" position which, in real life, would be created by stages, pulpits, balconies, and other devices for literally elevating people in order to show their social elevation. To look up at someone signifies that the someone has symbolic power over the viewer, whether as an authority, a role model, or something else. To look at someone from eye level signals equality.

Semiotic choices along the horizontal angle, meanwhile, can realize different degrees of symbolic involvement or detachment. Its real-life equivalent, van Leeuwen (2008) suggests, is the distinction

> 'between coming "face to face" with people, literally and figuratively "confronting" them, and occupying a "sideline" position. From such a position, we may be doing the same thing, e.g., listening to a lecture, but we don't actually communicate with each other'
>
> (ibid.)

The vertical and horizontal angles can work in conjunction, then, and the precise meanings created through these combinations will be shaped by the contexts of their use, as well as other, co-occurring semiotic choices.

Our analyses of the uses of vertical and horizontal angles in the campaign images are given in Tables 2 and 3, which show correlations between choices of vertical and horizontal angles in participant representations. The 'total' rows and columns (in

shaded fields) show the total uses of the given angles along the vertical or horizontal axes for each campaign.

Table 2. Use of horizontal and vertical axes in *Ink not mink*, expressed as raw frequencies (and percentages).

		Horizontal axis			
		Frontal	In-between	Side	Total (vertical)
Vertical axis	From below	6 (21.43%)	4 (14.29%)	2 (7.14%)	12 (42.86%)
	Eye-level	10 (35.71%)	3 (10.71%)	1 (3.57%)	14 (50.00%)
	From above	2 (7.14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (7.14%)
	Total (horizonal)	18 (64.29%)	7 (25.00%)	3 (10.71%)	

Table 3. Use of horizontal and vertical axes in *I'd rather go naked*, expressed as raw frequencies and percentages.

		Horizontal axis			
		Frontal	In-between	Side	Total (vertical)
Vertical axis	From below	0 (0%)	1 (4.54%)	1 (4.54%)	2 (9.09%)
	Eye-level	5 (22.73%)	3 (13.64%)	12 (54.55%)	20 (90.91%)
	From above	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Total (horizonal)	5 (22.73%)	4 (18.18%)	13 (59.09%)	

In terms of horizontal angles, the *Ink not mink* campaign makes more use of the more involved frontal angle (e.g. Figure 1) while the *I'd rather go naked* images make more use of the more detached side angle (e.g. Figure 2). The *Ink not mink* campaign made slightly more use of in-between angles, but the difference here was much narrower. The preference for frontal angles in the *Ink not mink* campaign and the preference for side shots in the *I'd rather go naked* campaign is consistent with the social distance created through the use of different shots in either campaign explored in the previous section. In particular, the use of frontal angles provides further evidence of the *Ink not mink* campaign inviting reader-viewers to engage – and even empathise – with the male social actors at an individual level. On the other hand, the preference for side (or 'oblique') angles in *I'd rather go naked* does not invite such personal engagement with the female represented participants – or at least not to the same extent – but, rather, creates a relationship of detachment

(Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), with reader-viewers instead being encouraged to observe and contemplate these comparatively socially passive participants.

Considering the use of angles along the vertical axis, and we can see from Tables 2 and 3 that the male social actors in *Ink not mink* are shown at eye-level in half of cases (e.g. Figure 1), with the remaining texts mostly showing us the represented participants from below (42.86%) and, in a small minority of cases (7.14%; e.g. Figure 3) from above. The *I'd rather go naked* campaign displays a strong preference for eye-level depictions (90.91%; e.g. Figure 2), with the remaining images showing us the participants from below and none showing them from above.

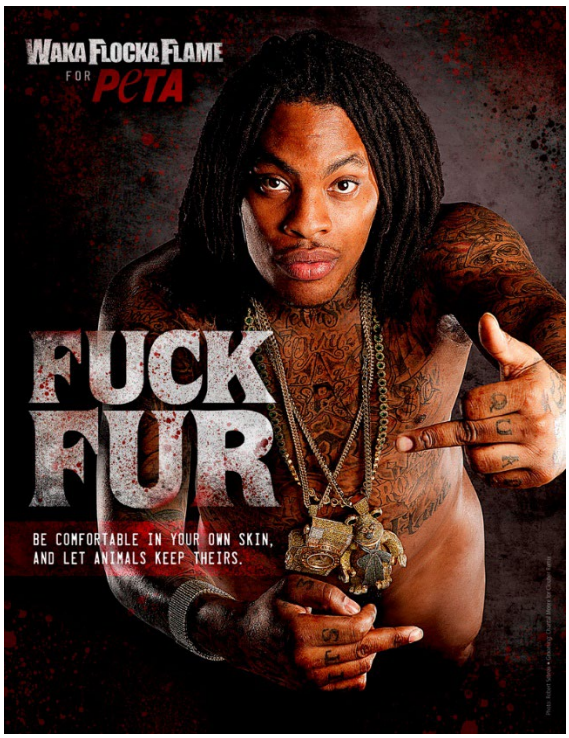

Figure 3: Waka Floka Flame text

As described earlier, the choice of angles along the vertical axis can construct relationships of power – including power differences – between represented participants and reader-viewers. Both campaigns use eye-level angles most frequently, which can be interpreted as communicating a relatively equal power relationship between the represented participant and the reader-viewer. But the preference for using this angle is stronger in the case of the *I'd rather go naked*

campaign, while the *Ink not mink* campaign was almost as likely to show the represented participants from below. The use of this angle has, as noted, been associated with the construction of an uneven power relationship between reader-viewers and represented participants, whereby the former is positioned as subordinate to the latter, with the represented participant literally ‘looking down’ on reader-viewers. While this shot was used in just under half the images of male social actors, it featured in just two (9.09%) of the female social actors. We can observe a gendered trend, then, according to which the male social actors were more likely to be shown from angles which express power over reader-viewers.

Furthermore, in the small number of cases where female actors are shown from this angle, the power afforded to them is arguably mitigated. While the male social actors who are shown from below also tend to be displayed using a frontal angle, the use of the ‘from below’ angle in depicting the female social actors never occurs in conjunction with the frontal angle but, rather, are shown from the side of ‘somewhere in-between’. This is because, we would argue, the ‘from below’ angle is chosen for female social actors as a way of drawing focus to their naked buttocks, which are located in the centre of the shot through the contorted bodily poses, and are visually foregrounded through the use of artificial light and shading (e.g. Figure 4). Rather than constructing the represented participants as holding symbolic power over reader-viewers, as is the case for the images of the male social actors, the function of the ‘from below’ angle in such cases is thus to contribute to the objectification and disempowerment of the female represented participants.

Figure 4: Bethenny Frankel text

As discussed earlier, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) contend that the 'from above' angle can construct a relationship of power for reader-viewers over the represented participants. Perhaps surprisingly – considering our analysis to this point – this potentially disempowering angle was not used in the depiction of the female social actors at all but was used in two (7.14%) of the images of the male social actors. Again, though, it is important in this case to consider the horizontal angle with which this occurs. In both cases, the 'from above' depictions of the male social actors are used with frontal angles which invite social involvement with the participants. However, in both of these images, the involvement is one of conflict. Both images are of rap star, Waka Flocka Flame. In one of these images, the represented participant displays an aggressive gesture (raised middle finger), accompanied by a modification of the campaign slogan, to the more aggressive 'Fuck fur' (see Figure 3), while in the other he clenches his bicep in a show of physical strength. Thus, while the angle is a potentially disempowering one for this social actor, this effect is arguably mitigated by his display of aggression and physical dominance, both of which are directed at the reader-viewer.

Analysis of both angles and the design choices that co-occur with viewing angles are, therefore, important when considering the multimodal construction of social

relations. We turn to such choices in more detail in the next and final section of our analysis as we consider social interaction.

Social Interaction

The 'crucial factor' when considering social interaction, according to van Leeuwen (2008: 141), is 'whether or not depicted people look at the viewer'. Here, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 119) distinguish between 'offer' and 'demand' images. Broadly speaking, if the represented participants do not look at us, as reader-viewers,

> they are, as it were, ***offered*** to our gaze as a spectacle for our dispassionate scrutiny. The picture makes us look at them as we would look at people who are not aware we are looking at them, as "voyeurs," rather than interactants. If they do look at us, if they do address us directly with their look, the picture articulates a kind of visual "you," a symbolic *demand*
>
> (van Leeuwen, 2008: 141; our emphasis).

Both sets of campaign images tend to use demand rather than offer images. Specifically, 24 of the 28 *Ink not mink* texts (85.71%) and 21 of the 22 *I'd rather go naked* texts (95.45%) utilise demand images.

Demand images, in which the represented participants direct their eye gaze towards reader-viewers, have thus been likened to a visual speech act which requires reader-viewers to act (Machin, 2007; Chałupnik and Brookes, forthcoming) as these images literally 'demand' something from the audience. What that 'something' is, is signified by other semiotic choices – including some of those we have considered so far in our analysis, like angles – but also the represented participants' facial expressions, gestures, props and potentially by accompanying linguistic elements (van Leeuwen, 2008: 141).

The (visual) *demand* in these texts appears to be clearly related to the raison d'être of these campaigns: to persuade reader-viewers to cease purchasing animal fur products However, this demand for action on the part of reader-viewers is realised in different ways between the two campaigns. As well as being realised through a visual demand, the specific action being demanded is also entextualised

linguistically. This is accomplished most consistently through the respective campaign slogans which, in addition to other awareness-raising linguistic messages, are attributed to the celebrity subjects of the texts, in some cases through the choice of pronouns (e.g. '*I'd* rather go naked…'), but always through the naming of the celebrity, typically beneath the attributed messages in a visual syntax that is associated with the format of quoted speech; the name of the speaker is positioned broadly beneath the attributed quote, sometimes preceded by a hyphen. Yet these campaign slogans represent distinct grammatical moods which encode differing levels of directness in the delivery of the speech act (i.e. the demand not to use animal fur products). The slogan, 'I'd rather go naked than wear fur', is pitched in declarative mood as a statement of the (female) represented participants' personal preference to wear nothing at all rather than to wear fur products. If this is a request it is a relatively indirect one, and can be contrasted against the directness of the more grammatically flexible (if incomplete) 'Ink not mink'. Through omission of the subject and verb, the phrase 'Ink not mink' functions as an imperative or command in this context. It is a command issued by the (male) represented participants to reader-viewers, instructing them not to wear fur products (where 'mink' functions as a metonymic stand-in representing 'all animal fur'). The difference in how this request, or command, is issued by either campaign thus encodes different relationships between the represented participants and reader-viewers. The male participants assuming a position of power which is not only indexed by, but indeed felicitous of, their direct command to the audience. Meanwhile, the indirectness of the female participants' requests function to down-tone the imposition associated with that request and can thus be associated with a subordinate power position (relative to the reader-viewer).

The interaction between the represented participants and reader-viewers is also achieved through visual (photographic) choices in the design of the campaign texts, especially those pertaining to the roles that the participants are shown as occupying. This includes choices pertaining to the represented participants' poses, their facial expressions, and use of any props. Van Leeuwen (2008: 142) points out that visually represented social actors 'may be depicted as involved in some action or not, and, if they are involved in an action, they may be the "agents," the doers of that action, or the "patients," the people to whom the action is done'.

Beginning with *Ink not mink*, and consistent with the more direct, imperative tone of the linguistic messaging, the male social actors in these campaign texts consistently display poses and facial expressions which connote action-orientation but also anger. Of the twenty-four demand images in this campaign, 17 represent participants as clearly frowning at reader-viewers, including in two cases displaying anger by bearing their teeth. These angered expressions are further compounded by poses and gestures which further convey this reader-viewer-directed anger (Machin, 2007: 111), such as folded arms (five cases), clenched fists (four cases) and a raised middle-finder (one case; Figure 3). These poses, we argue, contribute to a sense in which the majority of the male social actors in the *Ink not mink* campaign are at the very least angry, but perhaps even aggressive or violent. A large body of research has described in great detail the close relationship between violence and expressions of masculinity, especially in Western society. Indeed, Connell (2005) describes how physical violence underpins hegemonic masculinity, while Kimmel (2001) notes the link between violence and authentic masculinity (see Lawson (2015) for a review).

In 8 of the 28 (28.57%) *Ink not mink* texts, the male social actors engage in active sporting poses, typically holding props such as footballs, basketballs and a skateboard, which help to create the impression of action-shots. If they do not adopt literal action shots, then at the very least such participants stand with their chests visibly puffed out which not only maximises their physical size but also resembled a type of pose that is ‘often now used in sports photographs to show teams or team members as powerful, proud and invincible’ (Machin, 2007: 30). The male social actors in such images, which include all four ‘offer’ images in this campaign, bear expressions which convey anger or a sense of determination (e.g. Figure 5). These sporting action shots are further anchored within the domain of sport by the settings which tend to locate these men in arenas such as football fields and boxing rings. Such anchoring is also achieved through the use of linguistic metaphors which reflect the highly masculinised domains in which these men are based. For example, the campaign text featuring basketball player Ty Lawson also contains the use of a sporting metaphor to frame an – again, imperative – instruction to reader viewers to ‘Make the winning choice: Never buy fur or fur trim’. Meanwhile, the text featuring

American football player Antoine Bethea implores reader-viewers to ‘Play hard and make kind choices’.

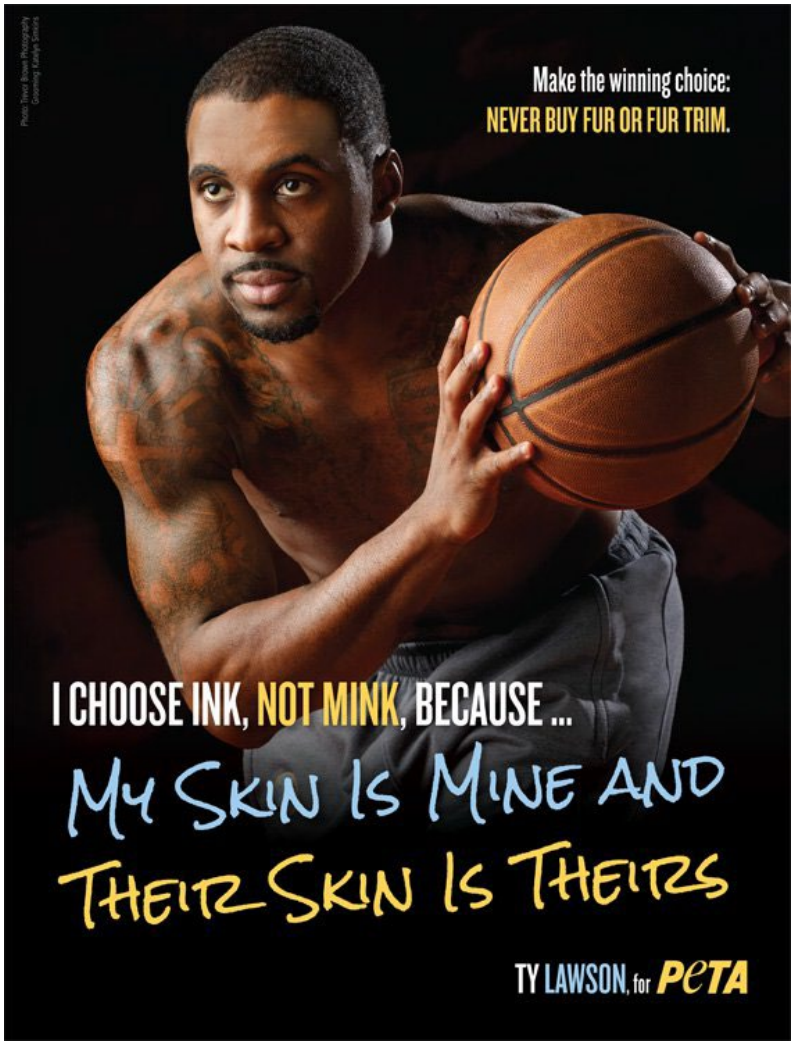

Figure 5: Ty Lawson text

In other cases, the props and settings used in the visual depictions of these men index material means, perhaps as a sign of their wealth and power, for example holding jewellery and being situated in a luxurious dressing room.

By contrast, the female social actors in *I’d rather go naked* tend to be portrayed in relatively passive roles. These participants do not perform actions in the ways that the male ones in *Ink not mink* do. Rather, they are depicted either as sitting (5 cases; e.g. Figure 2), or in more explicitly sexualised poses, such as laying on a bed (2 cases; e.g. Figure 6), leaning against an object (2 cases; e.g. Figure 7), standing

with their arms aloft (2 cases; e.g. Figure 7), playing with their hair (1 case; e.g. Figure 2) and blowing a kiss (1 case; e.g. Figure 6).

Figure 6: Gemma Collins text (credit: Karl Grant)

Figure 7: Christian Serratos text

Such sexualised depictions are also accomplished through choices pertaining to the facial expressions of the represented participants, for example by pouting, with their lips parted or biting their bottom lip. In other cases, and in contrast with the depictions of the men in *Ink not mink*, the female social actors are depicted as fun through smiling or laughing. In the remaining cases, where the female social actors do not display sexualised poses, they scarcely occupy any role at all. Rather, they are simply being or existing within the images, at most using their arms to obscure sight of their intimate body parts or, in two cases, a purse (we should also note that these are the only uses of any props in the *I'd rather go naked* campaign). The relative passivity of these participants can also be viewed as contributing further to the sexualisation of these social actors. As Machin and van Leeuwen (2007) point out, when individuals are represented as inactive as their identities are crafted through what they *look like* and what they *wear* rather than what they *do*. In other words, rather than the actions or surroundings of these social participants, it is their

bodies that are foregrounded and offered for reader-viewers' attention and contemplation.

Conclusions

Our MCDA of texts produced as part of PETA's *Ink not mink* and *I'd rather go naked* campaigns has explicated important differences in the representations of the male and female celebrity social actors featured in both campaigns. The social actors in these campaigns are afforded identities and relationships with reader-viewers which are underpinned by oppositional yet complementary gendered discourses. While men are represented in ways that foreground hegemonic masculine ideals such as muscularity, physical strength and aggression, women are depicted according to a Western feminine ideal which emphasises their physical beauty, petiteness, and sexual availability. While we as reader-viewers are invited to engage with the men in this campaign as equals, or even as our superiors, we are invited to view the women in relatively objectifying and disempowering terms, and in ways that invite us to observe their sexualised bodies rather than empathise or otherwise engage with them in any emotionally or socially meaningful way. These sets of discourses and representations are complementary in the sense that they position men as powerful 'lookers', while women are positioned as the less powerful, even power*less*, 'looked on'.

These representations thus reify a series of traditional and relatively narrow set of gendered discourses, based on how men and women 'ought to be'. On this basis, these campaigns can be viewed as reflecting but also sustaining the patriarchal gender order described earlier (Connell, 1995; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). When viewed through an ecofeminist lens, this patriarchal gender order has, as noted, been attributed not only to gender inequality but to the exploitation of all living things and to the wider destruction of our natural world (Adams, 2000, 2003). Thus, we would argue that the gendered discourses and identities recycled by these campaigns propagate masculinities that are toxic – toxic not only for human life but for all life on our planet.

Of course, we are not arguing that PETA and the specific campaign designers intend to promote such harmful gendered discourses. One might even mount a defence of

these campaigns on the grounds that their designers did not invent the gendered discourses reified in the texts analysed here, and that the decision to draw upon them in this campaign may help PETA to target their anti-fur message towards men – in other words, to 'fight fire with fire'. After all, being a man has widely been observed to be statistically the strongest predictor that a person will engage in activities associated with animal exploitation, such as meat consumption and blood sports, among others (Luke, 2007). However, we would counter such an argument on several grounds, not least because these campaigns, in circulating discourses which prop up a harmful gender hierarchy, also support a patriarchal system, deeply rooted in which are the forms of animal exploitation which PETA's primary purpose is to challenge. Therefore, we would argue that as well as potentially sustaining a harmful system of patriarchy, in uncritically reproducing the types of hegemonic gendered discourses we have observed in these campaign texts, PETA have missed a valuable opportunity to challenge such gender norms and the system of inequality they sustain.

If animal rights organizations such as PETA are determined to produce gender-based campaigns – and we would urge critical reflection as to whether such an approach is indeed necessary – then we would argue that an animal rights agenda would be better served by discourses and representations which challenge the established gender order. This could be accomplished, for example, by subverting the 'rigidity' of gender norms which prop up patriarchal power systems the world-over. But at the very least, any gender-based campaigns should draw on and represent a wider range of gender identities. Such an endeavour might not only better reflect the intersectional complexity of gender identities in contemporary societies, but could help to destabilise the gender order and, with it, the hegemony of particular forms of masculinity whose articulation is toxic for all life and the natural world we share.

Further Reading:

Adams, C. J. (2000) ***The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory: Tenth Anniversary Edition*****. New York: Continuum.**

This is a seminal book which elucidates and critiques the parallels between the oppression of women and the oppression of non-human animal life.

Paxton George, K. (2000) Animal, Vegetable, or Woman?: A Feminist Critique of Ethical Vegetarianism. New York: State University of New York Press.
This book addresses similar topics to Adams's but offers an alternative perspective by problematising the conceptualisation of 'equality' in that work and by others.

Luke, B. (2007) *Brutal: Manhood and the Exploitation of Animals*. Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
This book provides a detailed analysis of the connection between constructions of masculinity/manhood and the exploitation of animals.

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Appendix A

Ink not mink texts	*I'd rather go* texts
Amar'e Stoudemir, Ami James, Antoine Bethea, Carey Hart, Chad Ochocinco, Chester Bennington, Chris Andersen, Danny Cipriani, Dave Navarro, Dennis Rodman, Gilbert Arenas, Jade Dernbach, Kid Ink, Le'veon Bell, Marcus Walz, Mario, Mario Barth, Ryan Sheckler, Shawne Merriman, Terrell Suggs, Tim Howard, Tommy Lee, Trace Cyrus, Ty Lawson, Waka Floka Flame (3 texts), Willis McGahee	Alexandra Burke, Alicia Silverstone, Bethenny Frankel, Christian Serratos, Cornelia Guest, Elisabetta Canalis (2 texts), Eva Mendes, Gemma Collins, Gillian Anderson, Ireland Basinger-Baldwin, Jhené Aiko, Joanna Krupa (3 texts), Lucy Watson, Olivia Munn, Pamela Anderson, Pink, Suzanne McCabe, Taraji P. Henson, Wendy Williams