

MELK GOED VOOR ELK?

IS MILK GOOD FOR EVERYONE?

- an ecofeminist exploration on the Dutch dairy industry -

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MELK IS GOED VOOR ELK KALF

Loesje

Koosje de Pooter

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Master Gender Studies

Utrecht University

10th of May 2019

15.322 words



Universiteit Utrecht

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to use this space to thank those who have helped realizing this thesis. First of all I would like to thank Anouk, Beau, Mary and Maurits, who participated in the focus group I organised, in which they shared their lived experiences on the production and consumption of dairy. They were open in discussing their opinions, experiences and willing to watch the, sometimes rather explicit, content I selected. I want to thank them for the data it provided for this thesis, but also for the wonderful experience I had of discussing a subject close to my heart.

I also want to express gratitude to those closest to me. Besides participants in my research Beau and Anouk are also friends who supported me in writing this thesis. Beau for the emotional support of believing in me and the physical support of going for a walk now and then. Anouk, my fellow-feminist, self-care supporter and curious, open minded friend who helped correcting this thesis. Lise and Sven, who were also willing to read and correct my thesis. My parents, papa and mama, who have raised me to be a conscious, open minded human being and who kept supporting me throughout my study-journey for over almost a decade now. Didi, my sister, for pushing my limits, and believing I could do more than just write about 'eating meat'. My boyfriend Justin, for believing in my academic and personal abilities.

I want to thank Domitilla, my supervisor for her ongoing support and believe that this thesis would be finished one day. She gave me the space I needed in writing about this subject, but also the time to take care of myself. I also want to thank the Gender Studies department and my classmates of the 2016-2017 year for being open minded and making me feel welcome and supported.

And last but not least, this might seem a little strange, I want to thank myself. I want to do this because this past year was a rough one, but I also learned what self-care is about. Besides taking care of your community and loved ones it is (maybe even more) important to take care of oneself. It is an ongoing journey, but I am not giving up, just as with this thesis.

KEYWORDS

feminism, ecofeminism, veganism, dairy, The Netherlands, dairy production, dairy consumption, Dutch dairy industry, feminist methods

ABSTRACT

This thesis explore how the Dutch dairy discourse informs (lived) social realities within contemporary Dutch society. I explore this from my position as an ecofeminist, anthropological and vegan (activist) researcher by linking the production and the consumption of animal products (dairy in particular) to the perpetuation of patriarchy. I examine how the Dutch dairy industry mediates dairy production and consumption by looking at audio-visual commercials they produce. I am also interested in how people perceive these commercials and, on the other hand, respond to audio-visual material (such as a documentary) that reveals another reality of dairy production and consumption. The research question that guides this thesis is: *How does the Dutch dairy discourse determine ways of being in Dutch society?* Using the methodology of feminist critical discourse analysis enables me to analyse the Dutch dairy industry as a discourse. I use this method to examine the case studies of two Dutch dairy commercials and use a focus group as a method to uncover the lived social realities that are constructed by the Dutch dairy discourse. This exploration results in the conclusion that the social reality created by the Dutch dairy discourse is one in which the consumption of dairy makes your body strong, healthy, Dutch and ‘normal’. This discourse, in which the production of dairy is disembodied from consumption and consumption is embodied by the ‘disciplined body’, constructs and reinforces ways of being that oppress non-human animals and human animals alike, which is in line with the patriarchy.

INTRODUCTION

Whenever I consumed too much dairy as a child (e.g. too much butter on my bread, drinking a lot of milk and eating loads of *vla* (custard)) I heard my parents joke: ‘*Melk is goed voor elk behalve voor Koosje de Pooter want die wordt zo vet als boter*’.¹ This sentence was said to my father as a child as well because ‘*Melk is goed voor elk*’², is a slogan my parents grew up with in the Netherlands in the 50s and 60s. And it works, because the slogan is still being said today.³ However, these days the slogan and its credibility are often questioned. It is exactly this, questioning the meaning of this slogan, I want to pursue in this thesis. Even though I did consume dairy as a child I am raised questioning mainstream food consumption and production. I was brought up as a vegetarian, with lots of fruit and vegetables from our own garden and organic food from health stores.

As a young child I went along with what my parents told me, slowly noticing that not every child I came into contact with was brought up with the same food and the same food standards as I was. At school there were a lot of likeminded parents and therefore children, but in the small conservative village I lived in the Netherlands, we were the ‘strange, hippie’ family. As an adolescent I was often angry at my parents; ‘why can’t we be a normal family’, ‘why do we always have to eat organic (equals gross) food’ and ‘I want to eat meat’. I started to eat meat, candy, unhealthy food and enjoyed it. When I moved to Amsterdam to study I soon discovered I (my body) don’t like meat, I wanted (and needed) to eat differently. Now, almost 10 years after moving out of my parents’ house I am even more radical, critical and conscious than they were: I am a vegan, a(n) (eco) feminist, activist and an environmentalist.

The believes I have about food consumption and production, the current ecosystems and the environment are not only believes I practice in my private life, they influence my position as a researcher as well. As an anthropologist I learned that I am the research tool, and I am not neutral. As a researcher I can try to be unbiased, but I can also use my bias to be part of my argument (Lazar 2007: 146). The research of this thesis is therefore conducted from a

¹ ‘Milk is good for everyone except for Koosje de Pooter because she will become as fat as butter’

² ‘Milk is good for everyone’ – this slogan was first seen in moving image in 1941 by the ‘Land en Tuinbouwbureau der I.G. Farbenindustrie A.G.: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bo_XiJwoNkU (accessed 10/05/2019)

³ Even during the focus group for example.

critical, feminist and vegan perspective. According to Michelle M. Lazar⁴ (ibid.) critical feminist research is even more ‘objective’ than most others because it ‘includes a variety of social considerations (...) that typically get precluded from other types of research’.⁵ I do believe that milk is good for every calf, as Loesje, the international free speech organisation, explains on the cover of this thesis.⁶ A calf meaning a young animal or a person, who is non-considerate. It is this critical standpoint that helps me analyse the Dutch dairy discourse.

In this thesis I examine the Dutch dairy discourse from my position as a vegan and (eco) feminist. This means my exploration will be critical. I am interested in how the Dutch dairy industry mediates dairy production and consumption. I research this by looking at the audio-visual commercials these companies produced. I am also interested in how people perceive these commercials and, on the other hand, respond to audio-visual material (such as a documentary) that show another reality of dairy production and consumption. The research question that will guide this thesis is: *How does the Dutch dairy discourse determine ways of being in Dutch society?* My approach to the Dutch dairy discourse in this question includes how the Dutch dairy industry commercializes dairy and mediates its production and consumption, as well as how people internalize this discourse and how they ultimately view the production and consumption of dairy.⁷ To explore how people do things and/or how they live and exist the term ‘ways of being’ is sometimes used by anthropologists.⁸ In this thesis ‘ways of being’ is examined by looking at (lived) social realities of people in Dutch society because they determine ‘culture’ (Williams in Barker 2002: 68). This means (lived) social realities explain: how people eat, look, move, behave, think and exist .

The first chapter sets out the theoretical framework used in this thesis and discusses how the research question will be answered. Especially the part about *ways of being in the Dutch society*, which touches upon questions of ontology and epistemology. The feminist methodology and research methods explain how I collected and analysed the data to answer the research question, and how the theoretical framework of ecofeminism and veganism

⁴ Michelle M. Lazar is an associate professor at National University of Singapore who is a linguist who specializes in critical discourse analysis, feminist discourse studies and multimodal discourse analysis.

⁵ By objective I mean that as a feminist researcher you are aware of your own bias and how it influences your research.

⁶ https://www.loesje.nl/posters/schrijf-0806_3/ (accessed 26/03/2018)

⁷ The dairy I am talking about here is cow’s dairy, since this is the biggest dairy industry in The Netherlands.

⁸ See for example ‘Ways of being ethnic in Southwest China’ (2001) by Stevan Harrell or ‘The other side: ways of being and place in Vanuatu’ (2008) by John Patrick Taylor.

support this. Chapter two explores the *how does the Dutch dairy discourse determine* part of the research question. I believe the *how* in my research question is done through mediating the production and consumption of dairy by the Dutch dairy industry, therefore, this chapter will be guided by the sub question: *How does the Dutch dairy industry mediate the production and consumption of dairy?* In exploring this mediation I use two case studies in which I analyse two dairy commercials, one by Campina and one by Milner. The analysis of this mediation in the case studies is supported by feminist theories about Dutch gendered bodies that consume these dairy products. Chapter three explores different lived realities in *Dutch society*, and shows how these challenge the *ways of being* the Dutch dairy industry *determine* as explored in chapter two. This chapter is guided by the sub question: *How do people, who are part of the Dutch society view Dutch dairy production and consumption?* In order to answer this question I conducted a focus group and connected the collected data to ecofeminist theory. To finish the exploration of the Dutch dairy industry from an ecofeminist perspective, this thesis ends with a conclusion in which the research question will be answered.

1

DUTCH DAIRY DISCOURSE



FEMINIST ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

When questions about ‘ways of being’ arise, ontology comes into play. In the broadest philosophical sense ontology is the study of existence, being or reality. This includes social realities according to Alan Bryman⁹ (2008: 18), who argues that ‘questions of social ontology are concerned with the nature of social entities’. The Dutch dairy discourse encompasses many different realities: the reality of the dairy companies (such as Campina), the reality of the farmers, the reality of the animals, the reality of the consumers, and the reality of people who detest this industry (such as many vegans). I am particularly interested in how the Dutch dairy discourse determines social realities, which are created on a phenomenological level ‘through social interaction and transcending thereby individual motives and actions’ (Croteau and Hoynes 2014).¹⁰ In the case of this thesis, the Dutch dairy discourse determines how people should (or want to) look, eat, behave, think or even exist. These realities are not just ‘out there’, they are social phenomena that are being embodied by social actors who live and influence these realities from their own individual position (Bryman 2008: 19). Thus, even this thesis is a specific version of a lived social reality because I write as a researcher, vegan and feminist.

I am writing from an ecofeminist ontological position, but first, what is feminist ontology? As Liz Stanley¹¹ and Sue Wise¹² (2002: 194) describe it, feminist ontology is one in which ‘being’ is theorized and the Cartesian binary ways of understanding are rejected. Feminist ontology challenges these binary fundamentals, in which reality is characterized ‘by two opposing principles, those of masculinity and femininity’, not by denying these differentiations but instead seeing them as ‘neither oppositional nor dualistic’ (ibid.). Treating these opposing principles as stable categories of gender identity, in which ‘sexual difference

⁹ Alan Bryman is Professor of Organisational and Social Research at the School of Management, University of Leicester. He is most known for his book on Social Research Methods (2001) and wider trends in society such as Disneyization - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Bryman (accessed 10/05/2019).

¹⁰ David Croteau and William Hoynes (2012) explain this term in their book ‘Experience Sociology’ and Textbook Key Facts ‘Just the facts101’ reflected a brief definition of their description. Social reality is a term that refers to something that is a product of the ideas of a collection of minds and explored by various sociologists such as Alfred Shütz who talks about ‘social world’, or Emile Durkheim who stressed the distinct nature of ‘social kingdom’ - <https://www.quora.com/What-does-the-term-social-reality-mean> (accessed 22/04/2019).

¹¹ Liz Stanley is Professor of Sociology at the University of Edinburgh and specialized in: historical sociology, feminist theory and sociological theory.

¹² Sue Wise is Professor of Social Justice at Lancaster University and specialized in feminist theory and feminist research methodology.

becomes coterminous with female subordination’, automatically defines a power relation between those who exploit (read: men), and who is exploited (read: women) (Mohanty 1984: 344).

These (gendered) binary ways of understanding ‘being’ are also apparent in different categories such as: human vs non-human, strong vs weak, nature vs culture, light vs dark, human animals vs non-human animals, etc. The eco in my ecofeminist ontological position indicates my challenge to the human vs non-human animal binary and its inherent power relations. Within this binary the human animals have power over the non-human animals, and thus the non-human animals are exploited. By approaching my research from an ecofeminist ontological perspective I hope to uncover this exploitation, not by denying these opposing differentiations but by reconsidering the status of these categories in order to discern the conditions of oppression (Butler 1988: 523).

In order to understand the (lived) social realities determined by the Dutch dairy discourse, I need a ‘framework or theory for specifying the constitution and generation of knowledge about the social world’: an epistemology (Stanley and Wise 2002: 188). The epistemological framework thus indicates how the knowledge in this thesis is established. My framework comes from Donna Haraway’s¹³ (1988) argument that knowledge is always situated and embodied. The knowledge I generate as a researcher is not neutral or objective because it is affected by power structures implicit in the fact that I am a human animal, female, white, Dutch, highly educated, middle class and able bodied. This epistemology is also feminist since it particularly can challenge non-feminist frameworks (Stanley and Wise 2002: 189).

FEMINIST METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

Methodology is the theory behind my chosen methods. In focusing on rules and principles ‘for the production of knowledge’ it gives insight into why I use certain methods (Lykke 2010: 144). Feminist critical discourse analysis as a methodology enables me to analyse the Dutch dairy industry as a discourse. In drawing on the theories and approaches of Michel

¹³ Donna J. Haraway is Professor Emerita in the History of Consciousness at the Department of Feminist Studies at the University of California. She is as prominent scholar in the field of science and technology studies - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donna_Haraway (accessed 19/04/2019).

Foucault¹⁴ (1977), ‘who sought to uncover the representational properties of discourse as a vehicle for the exercise of power through the construction of disciplinary practices’, I am looking to uncover the social reality that ‘is produced and made real through discourses’ (Bryman 2008: 508). A discourse ‘itself is produced’ by a discursive practice, which is ‘the practice of producing meaning’ (Hall in Maaka & Andersen 2006: 165). Traditionally a discourse is seen as ‘an interrelated set of texts’ but feminist critical discourse analysis expands beyond the function of language within the power dynamics in the social world to include ‘other semiotic modalities like visual images, layouts, gestures, and sounds, which makes for an enriching and insightful analysis’ (Lazar 2007: 144). Therefore, I choose to focus on the use of language and text within the context of audio-visual material which includes the TV commercials of Campina and Milner and the two fragments from the documentaries ‘Got the facts on Milk?’ (2011) and ‘Land of Hope and Glory’ (2017) used during the focus group.¹⁵

In focussing on language (among other things) within these audio-visual materials a linguistic transformation between living animals and dead animals for consumption became apparent (van den Berg 2017: 296). It seems that in order for society to accept the eating of animal corpses (etc.) the language around this act needs to be changed to eating ‘meat’. This transformation also takes place in the consumption of other animal products. An excellent example of this linguistic transformation is the video by CRACKED in which they explore what honest milk commercials would look and sound like.



Click on the image to go to the commercial.

¹⁴ Michel Foucault was a French philosopher known for his political activism and concepts such as bio-power, bio-politics and discipline in society - https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michel_Foucault (accessed 30/04/2019)

¹⁵ The description of, and reasons for choosing these particular TV commercials of Campina and Milner, and the fragments of the two documentaries I used during the focus group will be explained in the chapters concerning those materials.

This video displays how the transformation of language affects social realities. According to Carol J. Adams¹⁶ (1991 in *ibid.*: 297) language expresses the often implicit dominant ideology, which is in this case carnist and sexist. Feminist critical discourse analysis is a suitable methodology for exploring the Dutch dairy industry from a vegan and ecofeminist perspective because ‘the central concern of feminist critical discourse analysts is with critiquing discourses which sustain a patriarchal social order’ (Lazar 2007: 145). It is feminist because it challenges ‘gendered assumptions and hegemonic power relations’, but it is also eco because non-human animals and the earth are considered influenced and oppressed by patriarchy as well (*ibid.*: 142). It is critical because my position as a researcher is not neutral or objective. Using this methodology I uncover and analyse the discourses in two audio-visual commercials in the next chapter.

Audio-visual material is one of the main tools of the advertisement industry today. Moving images are all around us: on our smartphones, our computers, our televisions, our streets (e.g. billboards), in public transportation (on screens), etc. These ‘can be seen to work more as a movement-image, a body in process, which can convey and receive a range of affective responses’ (Featherstone 2010: 199). These affective responses are, in the case of the advertisement industry, meant to make you, the viewer, consume more. These audio-visual products are also generally people’s main information source of dairy production and consumption.¹⁷ The visual- and non-visual language in these commercials also structures and mediates how the Dutch dairy industry wants consumers to perceive the production and consumption of dairy.

My analysis of the commercials in chapter two is done in three different phases: denotative, connotative and finally inductively connecting my findings to existing theory. The denotative analysis I use is, as the word suggests, a more literal or primary description of the commercial. This means I take note of the language that is used and describe what is literally said and heard in the commercial. I also describe what is visually communicated, what do we see when we look at the commercials. This gives a concrete description of what is being analysed, in this case the visual commercials. We must bear in mind ‘that however denotative a ‘description’ aims to be, it is always a culturally specific form of interpretation involving at the very least the selection of a focus, the highlighting of key aspects for attention and the

¹⁶ Carol J. Adams is an independent scholar who writes on subjects such as: veganism, feminism, activism and animal rights.

¹⁷ This can also be seen in ‘Got the fact on Milk’ (2008) and in the transcription of the focus group.

consequent marginalisation of other aspects’ (Baxter 2003: 75-76). In my concrete descriptions of the commercials, I am conscious of my own position as a white, Dutch, female, vegan and feminist researcher and I deliberately or less-deliberately left out some descriptions that are not useful for this thesis. As Judith Baxter¹⁸ (2003: 76) describes: ‘the value of description at the denotative level is that it can offer a preliminary order of quite concrete interpretation [...] which provides a springboard for more searching and heteroglossic analysis’.

This more searching analysis is provided in the connotative phase. I use connotative analysis to develop interpretative commentary of the denotative description. The connotative analysis, as the word suggests, makes use of associative meanings that aim to interpret the data, in this case the commercials. This specific type of analysis demonstrates how in this case Campina and Milner, the companies that made these commercials, ‘are continuously positioned or repositioned by a range of competing discourses pertaining to a given social/institutional context (ibid.: 77). This is useful for my research because, according to Stuart Hall¹⁹ (in Durham and Kellner 2009: 168) this reveals ‘the active intervention of ideologies in and on discourse’.

Drawing on my background in anthropology, I consider ethnographic research and its participant observation to be an excellent method to enter ‘as deeply as possible into the social and cultural field one researches’ (Eriksen 2001: 26). Besides the analysis of the commercials it is also important to study how people experience these commercials and how their lived social realities are determined by the Dutch dairy discourse. I chose an anthropological and feminist interview method that addresses the sub question of the third chapter in such a way that it captures the lived social realities that are a crucial field of social significance in this thesis: the focus group. ‘The focus group method is a form of group interview in which: there are several participants [...]; there is an emphasis in the questioning on a particular fairly tightly defined topic; and the accent is upon interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning’ (Bryman 2008: 474).

¹⁸ Judith Baxter was a British sociolinguist and Professor of Applied linguistics at Aston University where she specialized in Gender and Language - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judith_Baxter (accessed 19/04/2019).

¹⁹ Stuart McPhail Hall was one of the founding figures of the school of thought what is now known as British Cultural Studies. He was a Marxist sociologist, cultural theorist and political activist - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stuart_Hall_\(cultural_theorist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stuart_Hall_(cultural_theorist)) (accessed 19/04/2019).

The focus group is a more natural setting than an interview and as such a greater opportunity ‘to derive understandings that chime with the ‘lived experience’’ (ibid.: 487). These lived experiences are an important part of the lived social realities that are played out by the human bodies of my participants. Mary Douglas²⁰ (1971: 387) argues it is the body that ‘communicates information for and from the social system in which it is a part’, or as Haraway (in Price and Shildrick 1999: 211) states (about the biomedical body): it is ‘a complex meaning-producing field’. The focus group, in which I research what the participants bodies eat, think, and how they experience different audio-visual material on dairy production and dairy consumption, is an excellent method to uncover the lived social realities determined by the Dutch dairy industry.

The focus group is also a particularly feminist research method because it avoids social decontextualization of research participants (Bryman 2008: 487). It also helps challenge the power relationship between the researcher and the participants (Wilkinson 1998: 114). In a focus group the participants are more in control of the topic and thus priority is given to the respondents (ibid.). According to Sue Wilkinson²¹ (ibid.: 117-118) it is the interaction between respondents which leads to the production of high-quality data and makes the focus group different from other methods, she argues: ‘it is precisely in the work of explaining and justifying [...] in conversation [...] that interesting data’ emerges. However, this interaction between participants is also a weakness of a focus groups because group members can silence or intimidate each other (ibid.: 116). Nonetheless, since I am studying social realities, the strengths of the focus group outweighed this weakness in the case of my research. For my focus group I selected four participants who were not a ‘natural’ group and diverse in their gender, level of education and especially in their ideas about dairy consumption and production.²² I chose a smaller group because this increases the amount individual participants have to say on the research topic (Morgan 1998).²³

²⁰ Mary Douglas was a British anthropologist who was known for her writings on human culture and symbolism such as in the human body - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Douglas (accessed 23/04/2019).

²¹ Sue Wilkinson is Professor of Feminist and Health Studies in the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University in Leicestershire - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Celia_Kitzinger_and_Sue_Wilkinson (accessed 23/04/2019).

²² A ‘natural’ group is a group that was already a group before they became participants in a focus group, for example a group of close friends, or a group of colleagues.

²³ Since the scale of this study was small, I chose participants I already know. While I introduce the participants in chapter three I will elaborate more on why I chose them to be a part of my focus group.

I recorded the focus group with my phone, as well as with my camera because it is important to capture not only what people say but also the interactions and other inaudible elements. First of all, I transcribed the focus group completely.²⁴ In the transcription I also refer to the video material, mostly to point out where interactions are important. After transcribing I started coding the transcription. Coding ‘entails reviewing transcripts and/or field notes and giving labels (names) to component parts that seem to be of potential theoretical significance and/or that appear to be particularly salient within the social worlds of those being studied’ (Bryman 2008: 542). I identified about nine labels in my transcription from which three main concepts emerged. These concepts are linked to theory in the analysis of the focus group in chapter three.

FEMINISM, ECOFEMINISM AND VEGANISM

There are many different approaches to feminism, they are specific to each individual and change overtime. However, the feminist theory that is fundamental for my research is one that ‘has sought to understand the way in which systemic or pervasive political and cultural structures are enacted and reproduced through individual acts and practices, and how the analysis of ostensibly personal situations is clarified through situating the issues in a broader and shared cultural context’ (Butler 1988: 522). This is the approach upon which Judith Butler²⁵ (1988) built a critique of the binary structures that define gender. Ironically, when I looked up a basic definition of feminism in the largest Dutch dictionary Van Dale, it is defined as ‘the pursuit of equal rights for women and men’ – a binary structure in which men and women have equal rights. What also struck me in this basic definition is the lack of a broader perspective, beyond just humans. But this is not only missing in Van Dale, mainstream feminism and feminist theory is generally only focussed on human animals. However, I would argue it is impossible to speak of human animals without considering our relationship with non-human animals since ‘species exist in taxonomic differences [...] but [...] are also *always already* constitutive of each other through the spaces and places we cohabit – this of course includes language and other semiotic registers’ (Hayward in Stryker

²⁴ The transcription can be found in the appendix.

²⁵ Judith Pamela Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature and the Program of Critical Theory at the University of California, Berkley. Her work as a philosopher and gender theorist has influenced political philosophy, ethics, and the fields of third-wave feminist theory - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judith_Butler (accessed 22/04/2019).

& Aizura: 2013: 181). With her text ‘Lessons from a Starfish’ Eva Hayward²⁶ (ibid.) challenges even the binary system of human animal vs non-human animal.

If feminism and feminist theory is only about human animals, it is androcentric, and since we do not live in a world with only human animals, feminism must address non-human animals as well. If feminism demands the critique of moral dichotomies, why does it stop short of non-human animals or the earth as a whole? As Floris van den Berg²⁷ (2017: 292) pointed out: ‘it is painful to notice how [...] mainstream feminism is speciesist’.²⁸ This speciesism of (mainstream) feminism is particularly striking because ‘speciesism is a concept borrowed from feminist and minority group theory’ itself (Donovan 1990: 354). Every feminist (or human for that matter) who, in one way or another, participates in the oppression of the other animal species is contributing to a harmful binary ideology where not everyone or everything has equal rights. A feminism that truly opposed all destructive binary systems or inequalities would thus include non-human animals, other species and maybe even the earth.

This more inclusive feminism is called ecofeminism. Since the 1970s some feminists started to view the environment as a feminist issue (Warren 1993: 253). Since then, many definitions and interpretations of ecofeminism have been proposed. Some ecofeminists, such as Maria Mies²⁹ and Vandana Shiva³⁰ (2014) do not even consider animals to be a part of the environment per se. ‘Many, if not most, ecofeminist hold anthropocentric views, have never addressed speciesism and they do not endorse veganism’ (Faria 2015: 469). For me, as for van den Berg (2017: 27), feminism is inconsistent without veganism. Adams (1951) is one of the first who linked feminism to veganism, which she explains in her book ‘The Sexual Politics of Meat. A Feminist-vegetarian critical theory’ (1990). She states: ‘Ecofeminism is a dynamic political theory that identifies how oppressions are interconnected’.³¹ For veganism and

²⁶ Eva Simone Hayward is a faculty member of the Department of Gender and Women Studies at the University of Arizona. Her work examines the role of visual representation in scientific knowledge with attention to animal studies and psychoanalysis - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva_Simone_Hayward (accessed 22/04/2019).

²⁷ Floris van den Berg is a Dutch philosopher who is known for his work on atheism, feminism and activism - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floris_van_den_Berg (accessed 22/04/2019).

²⁸ Translation from Dutch to English by Koosje de Pooter – original text: ‘Het is pijnlijk om te merken dat [...] mainstream feminisme, speciesistisch is...’ Floris van den Berg (2017: 292)

²⁹ Maria Mies is a German anarchist and radical feminist sociologist. She wrote a book on ‘Ecofeminism’ in 1993 with Vandana Shiva.

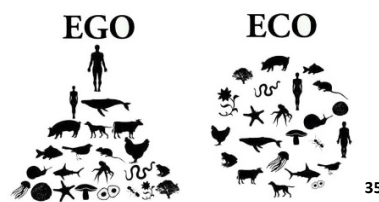
³⁰ Vandana Shiva is an Indian scholar, environmental activist and ecofeminist who is mostly known for her argumentation for the wisdom of many traditional practices - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vandana_Shiva (accessed 23/04/2019).

³¹ <http://caroljadams.com/about-ecofeminism> (accessed 14/03/2018)

feminism the source of oppression is the same: patriarchal ideology. This ‘patriarchal conceptual framework that has maintained, perpetuated, and justified the oppression of women in Western culture has also, and in similar ways, maintained, perpetuated and justified the oppression of nonhuman animals and the environment’ (Curtin 1991: 60).

According to Adams (in van den Berg 2017: 257) eating meat is one of the keystones of patriarchal culture because it maintains oppression within the human animal community and between the human and non-human animal community. Thus, by removing meat the patriarchal structure is threatened (ibid.). Although the ‘eating meat debate’ is ongoing among ecofeminist academics,³² drinking animal-milk or making use of other animal products is often left behind in arguments about the patriarchy and the oppression of animals. Adams (1995: 221) for example does mention that her pancakes are made with non-animal milk and an egg replacer, but overall there is little mention of veganism (instead of/or as well as vegetarianism) as a political or academic position in the feminist academic world until the early 21st century. It is Greta Gaard³³ (2010 & 2011) and Richard Twine³⁴ (2010 & in Adams & Gruen 2014) who finally attempt to argue how veganism has a place in feminism.

According to Twine (2010: 400, 402), non-human animals should be included in our feminist understanding of intersectionality and our research should broaden to ‘theorize our political relations to the more-than-human’. Substantial evidence shows how the consumption of animal products contributes to oppression, violence and maintaining the patriarchal structure. Together, veganism and feminism make a powerful, political critique united in ecofeminism. I hope to contribute to this academic and social debate with this thesis.



³² It occasionally flares up in the Dutch society as well, such as seen in this example in a Dutch newspaper Volkskrant: <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/als-het-aan-het-voedingscentrum-ligt-moeten-mannen-minder-vlees-eten-dus-wordt-met-hippe-t-shirts-aangeprezen-hoe-je-lekker-kan-varieren-met-ei-noten-en-peulvruchten~b1c9a553/> (accessed 22/04/2019).

³³ Greta Gaard is a documentary filmmaker as well as an ecofeminist writer, scholar and activist - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta_Gaard (accessed 22/04/2019).

³⁴ Richard Twine is a sociologist and Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences at Edge Hill University. He specializes in topics such as: gender, environmental social science and critical animal studies - <http://www.richardtwine.com/about.html> (accessed 22/04/2019).

³⁵ This well-known image displays two different worlds (or social realities if you may), one in which ego is the starting point and one in which eco is the base. It is often used by environmental organisations or activists to

RELEVANCE

By linking the consumption of animal produce to the perpetuation of patriarchy, in which humans and non-humans are oppressed, the social relevance of this research becomes evident. This research gives insight in how the Dutch dairy discourse informs our social realities. I explore this from an ecofeminist view because I believe that:

‘Ecofeminism affirms that individuals can change, and in changing we reposition our relationship with the environment. This form of empowerment is precisely what is needed in approaching the issue of where animals stand in our lives. Many connections can be made between our food and our environment, our politics and our personal lives’ (Adams 1991: 140).

Academically there is an opportunity in this research because I am touching what is called ‘the feminist blind spot’: non-human animals, the environment and the earth. Because why strive for the freedom of human animals while eating, and thus exploiting and oppressing, non-human animals. The abuse of non-human animals is not only apparent in eating meat, as Adams (1991) writes a lot about vegetarianism and eating meat, but it is also apparent in consuming dairy and other animal produce. I would say that non-human animals are even more exploited in the production of dairy and eggs because their bodies are (ab)used for a longer period of time.³⁶ The academic relevance of this research thus lies in the fact that I explore what is called the feminist blind spot, by linking the production and the consumption of animal produce, and in particular dairy, to the perpetuation of patriarchy.

explain how our current system (seen as ego) will destroy the world as we know it. I see another layer in this image because on the left it exemplifies patriarchy, in which the human male is on top and everyone and everything that comes below him are or can be exploited. The image on the right exemplifies how I see a world structured by an ecofeminist view in which everyone (including non-human animals) has an equal role in the world as a whole - <https://www.voordewereldvanmorgen.nl/duurzame-blogs/van-ego-naar-eco> (accessed 08/02/2019)

³⁶ As can be seen in the documentary ‘The Ghosts in our Machine’ (2013)

2

MEDIATING DAIRY



³⁷ <https://www.ecosia.org/images?q=melk+maakt+sterk+reclame> (accessed 20/11/2017)

THE M-BRIGADE

Dairy seems to be inextricably linked to the Netherlands. All over the world the Netherlands seems to be known for its dairy products, such as cheese, as well as its cows grazing on flat meadows. According to Pim Reinders³⁸ and Aad Vernooij³⁹ (2013: 16) it is due to several factors that dairy became such a popular product in the Netherlands and an important export product: ‘the favourable location for export, the suitable soil conditions for livestock farming, [...] the high yield from milk from the Dutch and Frisian dairy cattle and also the craftsmanship of the farmers ensured an abundance of milk’.⁴⁰ Especially after 1870, when the industrialization found its way in the Dutch dairy industry by setting up dairy factories which enhanced the milk quality enormously (ibid.: 19). As a consequence of this industrialisation a lot of dairy was produced in the Netherlands. It was the *Crisis Zuivelbureau*, the first Dutch national publicity agency for dairy, who campaigned for an increase in dairy consumption in 1934 (ibid.: 114). They did this with slogans such as: ‘*Alles smaakt beter met boter*’⁴¹ and ‘*Eet kaas bij elken maaltijd*’⁴² (ibid.: 115).

After World War 2 the Dutch economy needed to be revived and what better way to do this than with dairy. Representatives from different dairy companies started a new ‘information office’, for the promotion of the consumption of dairy: *Het Nederlands Zuivelbureau*.⁴³ With the support of the government one of the biggest campaigns of *Het Nederlandse Zuivelbureau* in history was launched in 1958: The M-brigade (Reinders & Vernooij 2013: 175). This campaign particularly interests me because it is one of the first instances where famous sports-people became connected to consuming dairy (ibid.: 176). It is also interesting because children were rewarded with privileges for consuming (extra) dairy (ibid.). For every glass of extra dairy (besides their daily intake of ¾ can) children could fill in their log. If the log was full they received an M-emblem on their sleeve (just like the famous sports people who are also part of the M-brigade) and with this emblem they had

³⁸ Pim Reinders is a historian who is specialized in food – and advertisement history.

³⁹ Aad Vernooij is a historian who worked for ‘*Het Nederlandse Zuivelbureau*’ and the ‘*Nederlandse Zuivelorganisatie*’.

⁴⁰ Translation from Dutch to English by Koosje de Pooter – original text: ‘De voor export zo gunstige ligging, de voor veeteelt zo geschikte bodemgesteldheid, (...) de hoge melkgift van het Hollandse en Friese melkvee en het vakmanschap van de veehouders zorgden voor een overvloed aan melk (...)’ (Reinders & Vernooij 2013: 16).

⁴¹ ‘Everything tastes better with butter’

⁴² ‘Eat cheese with every meal’

⁴³ The Dutch Dairy Office - <http://www.zuivelhistorie.nl/?PageID=54> (accessed 09/01/2018)

access to attractions and performances throughout the country and even in other countries such as Belgium (ibid.).



M-brigade publicity in 1958⁴⁴



Example of the Joris Driepinter campaign⁴⁵

In 1964 a new character for promoting dairy appeared: Joris Driepinter. This little guy could do anything (related to (muscle) power and being strong)) because he drank three glasses of milk per day (ibid.: 178). The milk production was so high that these campaigns were meant to increase the Dutch dairy intake to cover the excesses. However it did not increase significantly (at least not the milk intake) according to Reinders and Vernooij (2013: 177). Despite limited increase in consumption, a lot of dairy was (and still is) being consumed in the Netherlands and it also became one of its most important signatures as well as export products. New campaigns came and went but what is still so significant until today is the idea that physical strongness is related to consuming dairy. In order to explore how consuming dairy is being advertised today I will analyse two case studies in which dairy consumption is being promoted through moving image.

⁴⁴ <http://www.zuivelhistorie.nl/images/html/mbrigade.jpg> (accessed 09/01/2018)

⁴⁵ <http://www.zuivelhistorie.nl/images/html/joris.jpg> (accessed 09/01/2018)

CASE STUDIES

CASE 1: CAMPINA

The first commercial I am analysing is one of Campina, one of the bigger Dutch dairy companies (internationally).⁴⁶ The TV commercial I analyse aired in April 2017 and is still shown today on Dutch television.⁴⁷ It is called *Start je dag sterk met Campina*⁴⁸ and lasts 30 seconds. The reason for choosing this particular commercial is because there are several elements in this commercial that appear in a lot of Dutch dairy commercials such as: strong and fit bodies, a farmer and a cow in the meadow.



Click on the image to go to the commercial.

Denotative Analysis

The commercial starts with a white, blonde woman in bed. Her alarm clock goes off at 7 AM and she pushes the clock away. A male voice narrates: *'We hebben 's ochtends niet altijd een snelle start'*⁴⁹. Meanwhile we see someone opening a newspaper that says: *Dafne Schippers trotse kampioen*⁵⁰. Next to the newspaper are a fork, spoon and a big container of Campina quark. We see a hand reaching for the bowl with quark. The woman (who we saw in bed in the first shot) sits at a table, reading the article (about herself apparently) while eating a bowl

⁴⁶ Campina is part of FrieslandCampina. FrieslandCampina is a merger of two Dutch cooperation's Friesland Foods and Campina since 2008. These two cooperation's have a similar history of origin, which goes back to 1871. To strengthen their market position farmers joined forces and established local dairies to secure the sales of their milk - <https://www.frieslandcampina.com/nl/organisatie/onze-geschiedenis/> (accessed 15/11/2017)

⁴⁷ However, sometimes they come with a slightly newer version of it.

⁴⁸ Start your day strong with Campina

⁴⁹ 'We do not always have a quick start in the morning'.

⁵⁰ Dafne Schippers proud champion.

of quark. At the table are several ‘breakfast items’ such as a carton of milk on which we see a glass of milk, a cow grazing in the meadow and a nice green meadow which is also visible around the glass.

Dafne lifts her arm to check what is sticking to her underarm – the lid from the quark container – with a questionable facial expression. Dafne takes a scoop of quark in a close-up shot. Next, we see a medium close up of Dafne’s face, the bowl with quark and her taking a bite. The male voice narrates: *‘Maar als we eenmaal in beweging zijn..’*⁵¹. Two little, young, white boys in karate uniforms wrestle each other. The next shot is one of a muscled male of colour standing on his head on a yoga mat in the grass. He shouts: *‘Kom op dames’*⁵² to a class of women, all on yoga mats trying their best to stand on their heads. There are different body types amongst the women, but all of them are white. The male voice narrates further: *‘.ja, dan gaan we er ook helemaal voor’*⁵³.

Next we see Dafne running on a road in between meadows.⁵⁴ She crosses a young, blond man, who looks surprised to see Dafne. Dafne runs past an older male – presumably a farmer – and a cow. The cow moos and Epke Zonderland⁵⁵ also passes by the farmer, but a lot slower than Dafne. The next shot is a medium close up shot of the farmer who says to the cow: ‘Epke Zonderland’ while nodding his head in the direction Epke and Dafne went to. The cow also looks to that direction and moo’s again. We hear the male voice narrating: *‘Ontbijt daarom met de zuivel van Campina, rijk aan proteïne en calcium...’*⁵⁶. Meanwhile we see the same table Dafne was having breakfast at with the Campina quark, cartons with Campina milk, yoghurt and buttermilk on the left side and two packages of Campina cream butter on the right side. The voice narrates further: *‘...voor een goed begin van je dag’*⁵⁷. Meanwhile we see Dafne running by Epke, who is doing a ‘flag’⁵⁸ on a signpost pole. He says ‘Hi’ to Dafne

⁵¹ ‘But once we get started...’

⁵² ‘Come on ladies!’

⁵³ ‘...yes, then we go for it!’

⁵⁴ The background is a ‘typical Dutch’ one with wide meadows with water in between and a small village in the background.

⁵⁵ From previous Campina commercials and for people who know a little bit of the Dutch gymnastics world it is clear this is Epke Zonderland, a Dutch gymnastics champion.

⁵⁶ ‘That’s why you should have breakfast with Campina dairy, rich in protein and calcium’

⁵⁷ ‘...for a good start to your day’.

⁵⁸ A position where someone is horizontal in a ‘pole’ – see here for example: https://www.google.com/search?q=flag+pole+dance&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiq3ODwz pDiAhWRMewKHbYeCuwQ_AUIDigB&biw=1920&bih=969 (accessed 10/05/2019)

after which he starts whistling. A text appears which says: *Start je dag sterk met Campina*⁵⁹.⁶⁰
The male voice narrates: *'Start je dag sterk met Campina'*.⁶¹

Connotative Analysis

Pictured next to the word 'champion' in the newspaper is the container of quark which she, the champion, is having for breakfast. This immediately links the concept of 'champion' to dairy from the start. The fact that she is also a 'normal person' who does not always have great mornings is established as well, as the narration confirms. But, the commercial suggests, her morning was probably slow because she hasn't had dairy yet, because once Dafne takes a bite of the quark the voice over affirms that her day has started. This idea continues in the next shot of two young boys doing karate while the voice over says: '... but once we get started', implying that these boys are already strong at a young age because they consume dairy.

In the next shot we see a muscled male body of a yoga teacher encouraging his female students in a park. These women are all white and have different body shapes, but the focus is not on strength or ability to do yoga, but on their perseverance. They try to stand on their heads, as the teacher is doing, but many of the students fail. The perseverance is reaffirmed by the male voice over who says: '...yes, then we go for it'. This scene reproduces the patriarchal, 'typical' binary gender roles in which male bodies are strong(er) and female bodies are, even though they do their best, not really strong. However, the star of this commercial is a female champion who overtakes the white, male champion Epke Zonderland as we see in the next shot. It is almost as if the commercial is creating a sense that dairy products are so powerful they allow women to overcome (what the commercial thinks is) their 'natural' weakness to beat men.

The quintessential Dutch landscape in which we see them both run is made even more stereotypical when a farmer and a cow appear in the shot, referring to the origin of dairy products. However, this depiction is romanticized: a happy, mooing cow in a wide green meadow. This does not reflect the reality for the majority of cows who are cramped in a stable

⁵⁹ 'Start your day strong with Campina'

⁶⁰ The STERK is really big and it seems the letters are 'filled up with milk'.

⁶¹ 'Start your day strong with Campina'

together with other cows.⁶² By making use of stereotypical Dutch imagery and strong, athletic bodies, this commercial implies that dairy consumption makes you strong (or at least perseverant) and Dutch. The connotative message of this commercial is: if you want to have a great start to your day – or even a successful life – and a strong body, you have to consume dairy. I will now focus on two main aspects of this commercial: Dutchness and a strong/fit body.

THE DUTCH STRONG BODY

A certain notion of Dutchness is something that has been apparent in the mediation of dairy consumption since the beginning of commercialized dairy, as mentioned in the historical overview. Now we see how Dutchness remains an aspect in the TV commercial for Campina. Although there is no literal discussion of being Dutch in the commercial, a certain normative idea of Dutchness is suggested through several aspects including the landscape and the bodies. But what is Dutchness? Following Benedict Anderson⁶³ (2006: 6) I argue that there is no such thing as Dutchness because nations, as well as their nationalisms are ‘imagined’: ‘it is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds each lives the image of their communion’.

This ‘imagined community’ of nationalism is made up of features that, regardless of their accuracy, are considered to communicate belonging to the Dutch nation. As Gloria Wekker⁶⁴ (2016: 7) argues: ‘belonging to the Dutch nation demands that those features that the collective imaginary considers non-Dutch – such as language, an exotic appearance, *een kleurtje hebben*, “having a tinge of color” (the diminutive way in which being of color is popularly indicated), outlandish dress and convictions, non-Christian religions, the memory of oppression – are shed as fast as possible and that one tries to assimilate’. People have to assimilate in order to ‘belong’ to the Dutch nation, but it seems not every immigrant can

⁶² Other facts on cows’ reality will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁶³ Benedict Anderson was a political scientist and historian best known for his book ‘Imagined Communities’ (1983). He explored the origins of nationalism and how this leads to the creation of nations - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benedict_Anderson (accessed 30/04/2019)

⁶⁴ Gloria Daisy Wekker is a Dutch-Surinamese anthropologist who specializes in gender studies, Caribbean studies, sexuality, race and post-colonialism - https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_Wekker (accessed 30/04/2019)

belong in the current climate, such as Muslims, people having a tinge of colour, etc. (ibid., De Leeuw & van Wichelen in Delanty, Wodak & Jones 2008: 277).

Based on what Wekker (2016) states it is only the white body that can be Dutch, or belong to the Dutch nation. This white body is very prominent in the TV commercial by Campina, we only see one 'non-white' body in the yoga instructor who has 'a tinge of colour'.⁶⁵ Apart from his muscular body, the only other bodies we see who are strong and have the willpower to achieve anything (sports related) are white and, the commercial suggests, consume dairy. It is almost as if Campina knows what an ideal Dutch body (and mentality) looks like and they have the recipe to achieve it. This idea of white Dutch bodies with the willpower to achieve the best, be active and thus successful in life is something we can trace back to a nostalgia connected to the Dutch VOC. This might seem farfetched but Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende made a statement 'in November 2006 that "we should return to the voc mentality"' (Wekker 2016: 181). His statement 'was a reference to the old Dutch trading spirit and entrepreneurialism of the United East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie or VOC, 1602-1798/9)' (Kooiman 2015: 42).

This 'imperialist nostalgia' is part of the nostalgia for previous times in the Netherlands, times in which religion had disappeared from the public domain and the neo-liberal self could be constructed, nostalgia for the fifties in which the population was still white and gender relations still clear (Rosaldo 1989, Wekker 2009: 1).⁶⁶ FrieslandCampina romanticizes the 'origin' of its dairy products and like 'imperialist nostalgia', this image of the cow conceals the violence and horror, where cows often stay in packed stables, are impregnated every year and the calves are taken away and fed with artificial milk. Thus, I may presume the cow is not as happy as Campina presents it to be.⁶⁷

Apart from the cow, the landscape, and the farmer, Dutchness is also represented in the perseverance of the sporting bodies and the Dutch athletes. As mentioned in the historical overview, dairy has often been connected to being strong and athletic, but now we have Dutch champions promoting the consumption of dairy. Why is it specifically these strong bodies that are chosen and how do they connect to dairy? In TV commercials in general the bodies of the

⁶⁵ Not surprisingly the yoga teacher is not-white. Him having a 'tinge of color' as Wekker (2016) calls it, is possibly due to the fact that yoga can be connoted as foreign or even 'exotic'. This can also be connected to orientalism.

⁶⁶ Unfortunately a thorough critique of this 'imperialist nostalgia' is beyond the scope of this paper.

⁶⁷ As seen in the documentary: 'The Ghosts in Our Machine' (2013)

models are structured according to the product they have to sell. The gaze that is being constructed is one of fantasy and desire: ‘we are bombarded with images of style, glamour and seduction through magazines, adverts, cinema and television. No wonder these images become objects of fantasy and desire for us’ (Betterton 1985: 8). We are conditioned to desire not just the products, but first and foremost the bodies themselves. In the case of the Campina commercial those are strong and disciplined bodies. According to Susan Bordo⁶⁸ (in Reisher & Koo 2004: 301) the disciplining and managing of the body is intrinsic to consumer culture. The value of control is part of the capitalist ideology in which the body is the demonstration of discipline (Lock 1993: 143).

The (professional) sporting body is the disciplined body par excellence. It is in sport especially that the ‘authoritative promise of self-improvement’ is present, which means that ‘individuals who recognize the necessity of their own discipline freely submit to governing techniques’ (Cole & Giardina & Andrews 2004: 214). Foucault (1979) calls this ‘automatic docility’. By using professional, strong and disciplined bodies, and thereby leveraging ‘automatic docility’, Campina not only tries to sell a romanticized version of their product but also exerts a form of biopower onto their consumers. Biopower appears when the relationship between knowledge and power produce certain bodies (Phipps & Bendelow 2014: 161). In this case, the knowledge Campina claims to have about consuming dairy and the economic power behind its commercial combines to produce an image of a (Dutch), ideal, disciplined body.⁶⁹

CASE 2: MILNER

The second commercial I am analysing is one of Milner, a cheese brand, which is part of FrieslandCampina.⁷⁰ It lasts 26 seconds, aired in 2015 and was broadcasted for about two

⁶⁸ Susan Bordo teaches English and Women’s studies at the University of Kentucky. She specializes in contemporary culture and its relation to the body in which she mainly focusses on modern disorders such as anorexia, bulimia, cosmetic surgery, beauty and evolutionary theory - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan_Bordo (accessed 19/04/2019).

⁶⁹ In theorizing the body as a discourse, a text, that can be read and linking it to the knowledge and power that produces it we speak of biopower. Michel Foucault explored how these discourses create docile bodies, and these docile bodies can be ‘tools deployed in the service of governmentality and self-regulation’ (Phipps & Bendelow 2014: 1). This means biopower is not only exercised over individuals but also over entire populations (ibid.). In this case, the Dutch population which Campina tries to target.

⁷⁰ Before researching the commercials the Dutch dairy industry produces I was not aware of how big the company FrieslandCampina is. From what I have researched I would say that at least about 80 percent of the dairy commercials on Dutch television are from brands that are part of FrieslandCampina, such as: Mona, Vifit,

years on Dutch television. The main reason for choosing this particular TV commercial is a visual one, since it seems visual appearance is also key in this commercial. Only the cheese is shown in colour, the rest of the commercial is in black and white. This TV commercial is also very focussed on ‘the body’, human and non-human (cheese), which also sparked my interest.



Click on the image to go to the commercial.

*Denotative Analysis*⁷¹

The commercial starts with a blonde, slender, white woman who sits naked with her knees up to her chest, her arms wrapped around her knees and her head rests on her knees. The camera rotates around her. The next shot is of a darker, muscled man, also naked, who sits in the same way as the woman. The camera also rotates around him. The next shot is of a yellow cheese (whole) that rotates on its side.⁷² The next shot shows a – I presume – white, female mouth, which opens up to eat a yellow piece of cheese. Next we see a piece of cheese rotating until we see its side. A white woman – in profile – lays down on the floor, naked with her knees and feet under her body. Her arms and head lean backwards while she comes up. The next shot is of a white, bearded male who holds his hands in a rectangle shape in front of the camera so we can only see his eyes. He moves his hands really quick so the rectangle turns 180 degrees and we can also see his nose and mouth.

Valess, Optimel and Chocomel. I was shocked to see that FrieslandCampina has such a strong and dominant role in not only producing dairy commercials but also in Dutch supermarkets, what people consume and thus at large Dutch society.

⁷¹ Since this commercial is very fast paced and a lot of the images tell the same visual story I left some shots out of the description. Shots that are left out are indicated by [...].

⁷² The ‘Milner’ name is clearly visible.

A black male holds his hands in the same way, we can only see part of his eyes and nose. The next shot is a close up from his hands and his mouth. After this we see a stacked pile of yellow cheese cubes. The camera turns quickly around the cheese cubes. Shortly after we see a very muscled, white, male upper body. He leans back a bit and the light shines directly on his 'six-pack'. Next we see a rack with cheese, neatly placed like they would be in a cheesemaking factory. First, the cheeses are just yellow but quickly the word 'Milner' appears on the front of the cheeses.

[...] The next shot shows, with a big yellow cheese as background, two male figures – naked, one black one white – one behind the other who jump in such a way that there is always a figure like Da Vinci's Vitruvian man. Followed by a series of quick shots of a big yellow cheese turning on its side, the mouth of, what I presume to be a black male, who licks his upper lip with his tongue and a laughing female mouth (teeth visible) and an eye that winks (I presume female). Next is a shot of a black, naked male body who jumps in the air and touches his left foot with his left hand. This makes a triangular shape in the air. Next is a shot of a yellow, triangular piece of cheese turning around its axis and placed in such a way it resembles the figure the man made [...].

Next, we see a rectangle piece of yellow cheese turning around its axis, followed by a naked, black upper body and the head of a male who places his hand behind his head which creates a triangular shape. Followed by this is a yellow piece of cheese, also rectangular that turns around its axis. A white female with her hands behind her head smiles and releases her hands. Followed by this shot we see a white, female head in profile with a hand resting on her face. The camera moves from her head to her shoulders, over her naked body, until we see her bum. This is when the music suddenly changes and instead of the two butt cheeks of the female we now see two yellow, round cheeses with 'Milner' written on their sides rolling out of the image. A female voice says: 'Milner' and we see a close up of a white male's head who bites in a piece of cheese. This shot is followed by a shot of, what I presume to be, a male fist which is quickly followed by cubes of cheese who seem to be flying through the air. The same female voice says: '*De pittige 30+ kaas*⁷³'. While the cubes are flying through the air (on a black background) the logo of 'Milner' appears in white letters on the screen.

⁷³ 'The strong-bodied 30+ cheese'

Connotative Analysis

The first thing that stands out when watching this fast paced commercial are the naked bodies. Despite the fact that no genitalia are shown, these bodies are often completely naked, or they at least suggest complete nakedness. In the first shot the naked lower legs of the woman are very prominent, the way she sits and how her legs are placed makes me think about a previous Milner commercial where body parts (such as lower legs) were replaced by cheeses.⁷⁴ In the next shot, and in many of the following shots, the muscles of the men are the most prominent part of the image. Because of the fast pace, the human bodies and the muscles become 'one' with the cheese, the dairy and the human body are linked together. In the next shot we see a woman's mouth biting a piece of cheese, which for me links cheese not only to the human body but also to sex or at least pleasure (another connection to sexuality is seen later in the commercial when a male figure licks his lips and a female winks).

The next shot is of a woman with a lean and strong naked body, which is followed by a male looking through his hands (positioned in a square shape). This suggest the male bodies (there are two following each other) are looking at the naked female body. The cheese cubes in the next shot not only connect to the square shaped male hands but also to the male's 'six-pack', which are square shaped muscles 'on top of each other' on the male body. The six-pack indicates that this is a strong male body, giving this idea of strength to the cheese as well. Next, we see another female biting a piece of cheese and a very muscular male body making triangular shapes followed by triangular shaped pieces of cheese. Again, the strong male body is linked to cheese (or eating cheese).⁷⁵

The shot of the Vitruvian man shape is an interesting one. We presume DaVinci not only wanted to figure out the proportions of the human body with this image, but also wanted to show how the structure of the human body is related to nature.⁷⁶ The cheese is the circle in the case of the Milner commercial and perhaps it represents nature in this way. Possibly Milner wants to convey how the human body is related to nature, and how nature is related to dairy and thus to the human body. There are many more shots I could analyse, but I the general conclusion of this analysis is that Milner connects cheese in different shapes and sizes

⁷⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8qKYo3TA_E (accessed 28/11/2017)

⁷⁵ The connection between the shapes of the human bodies and how they are portrayed and the body of the cheese is something that seems to be very prominent in this commercial, therefore I will not name every shot that does this.

⁷⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/leonardo/gallery/vitruvian.shtml> (accessed 27/11/2017)

to the lean, slender, sexy and naked female body, as well as to the strong, sexy and naked male body.

THE GENDERED NAKED BODY

As mentioned in the previous analysis of the Campina commercial, the body is an important aspect in marketing dairy. However, Milner specifically works with the naked body, which changes the dynamics and the meaning of the commercial. Milner has done this so often that the naked male and female bodies are connected to the Milner cheese. The naked body is in a way the 'natural' body, before it becomes 'unnatural' through the processes of socialization and education in which specific cultural, social and moral and ethical values are ascribed to the (naked) body and its existence' (Jirasek & Kohe & Hurych 2013: 723). By connecting their cheese with the naked body, Milner emphasises the naturalness of the cheese. This idea of naturalness suggests the cheese is a product of nature, without much human interference and thus 'healthy'. By doing this, Milner erases the origin of the cheese: the cow and her milk, the conditions under which this milk is gathered and how the cheese is made. But the naked body does more than just signify an idea of naturalness, it also is 'the key to all enjoyments, the sensations, tastes and activities of consumer culture' (Featherstone 2010: 200).

The 'ideal' bodies that are used by Milner to sell their dairy products are male and female. A distinction is made in how these two different bodies are (re)presented; the female body is one of pleasure, one that is being looked at and the male body is a strong one, that looks (Chaudhuri 2006: 35). Already in the second shot we see a focus on the muscles in the male body that is being displayed. These muscles on display come back many more times (in the six-pack, in the male standing up making triangular poses). This connects directly to the idea of masculinity and the gender binary (Jaggar and Bordo 1989).⁷⁷ How the female body is represented in the Milner commercial also connects to the traditional exhibitionist role women have in the gender binary (Mulvey 1975: 11). She is there to-be-looked-at and displayed for her 'strong erotic and visual impact' (ibid.). Beauty correlates with pleasure and sexuality according to Mike Featherstone⁷⁸ (1982: 21), her body is thus the 'vehicle of pleasure'. This

⁷⁷ As mentioned before, from my feminist ontological position I want to challenge these binary fundamentals.

⁷⁸ Mike Featherstone is a British sociologist and Professor of Sociology at Goldsmiths, University of London. He specializes in social theory, cultural theory, consumer culture and the body - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Featherstone (accessed 30/04/2019)

sexiness and sexuality is very much apparent in Milner's commercial when it shows close ups of female body parts such as: a mouth (that bites cheese), a butt, a winking eye, etc.

Just as Laura Mulvey⁷⁹ (1975) I want to 'uncover the ways in which 'the unconscious of patriarchal society has structured' visual content (Chaudhuri 2006: 33). Presenting the male and female bodies in this way and connecting them to cheese makes the cheese desired by both male and female consumers, for all humans within the gender binary structure. It is exactly in treating these opposing principles as stable categories of gender identity that power is defined (Mohanty 1984: 344). Milner does not only depict these binary ways of thinking in this commercial, it also reproduces them and the patriarchal power structures that come with it.

THE DAIRY, THE BODY AND THE MEDIA

In this part I discuss the two aspects that are connected in these commercials: dairy products and the bodies that consume it. I first want to discuss the products advertised (milk, quark and cheese) and how they are represented in both commercials. In Campina's commercial it is milk and quark that are on display. The quark that is visibly consumed by Dafne Schippers comes in a plastic container which has the brand name 'Campina' in the middle, on the right side of the container is a big spoon of quark and on the left side it says '*Rijk aan proteïne*'⁸⁰. The colours white, green and orange are very striking on the plastic container. On the milk carton, which is to the right side of Dafne, next to a big glass of milk, we see the brand name again and a lonely cow grazing in the meadow. Although I don't have the space for an extended analysis of Campina's packaging, how the product is presented to its consumers is in line with the message they want to convey: the consuming of our products, which are healthy ('*Rijk aan proteïne*'), Dutch (the colour orange, the cow grazing in a meadow) and 'natural' (the cow in the meadow) will contribute to your bodily strength (as Dafne shows). Consuming dairy is (in)directly linked to the body and the strength of the body. This strength is also visible in the bodies seen in the Milner campaign. Here we also see the product in its 'package' but this package is just the outside of the round yellow cheese. It is exactly the look

⁷⁹ Laura Mulvey is a British feminist film theorist who is currently Professor of Film and Media Studies at Birkbeck University of London - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laura_Mulvey (accessed 30/04/2019)

⁸⁰ 'Rich in proteins'

of the cheese, its 'nakedness', how it is cut and into which shapes, that relates to the naked, strong bodies who consume it in Milner's commercial.

What is striking when analysing how dairy products are represented in both commercials is the missing link with the origin of the product. While in Milner's commercial the link is completely absent (apart from its 'naturalness'), Campina does show somewhat where these dairy products come from: the cow in the meadow (on the milk carton and in the commercial itself). However, this representation of the origin is romanticized and in that sense we can say that the reality of the production of dairy is absent in the Campina commercial as well. Adams (1991: 130) would argue that specifically these dualisms characterize patriarchal culture by failing to see 'consumption is experienced separately from production'. This means the production and the origin of the product (in the case of Milner) is disembodied (ibid.). It is exactly this disembodiment that is needed to increase consumption, and thus increase profits.⁸¹ While the commercial attempts to depict the cow in a romanticized way (as something who's happiness matters) it hides the reality of dairy production in which they are seen as mere commodities. The intensive factory farming behind dairy products 'involves the denial of beingness of' [...] 'billion[s] of animals' (ibid.: 134). The absence left by the denial of beingness of the animals is replaced in the commercials by the human bodies. So by disembodiment of the dairy products from their true origin, and then re-embodiment of them in the human bodies that consume them in the commercials the origin of the product is omitted and thus oppressed.

How this human body is represented in both commercials is important because according to Douglas (in Jaggar & Bordo: 1989: 13) the (human) body 'is a powerful symbolic form, a surface on which the central rules, hierarchies, and even metaphysical commitments of a culture are inscribed and this reinforced through the concrete language of the body'. What do the bodies in the Campina commercial and the Milner commercial say? The most prominent body in the Campina commercial is the one of Dafne Schippers, a strong, athletic, female body. Foucault (in ibid.: 14) argues that female bodies are 'bodies whose forces and energies are habituated to external regulation [such as] improvement'. Dafne in the Campina commercial regulates her body with dairy and training, and this regulation has made her a champion.

⁸¹ Indirectly the government also makes money from this, by subsidising these companies heavily they can produce more milk and better working campaigns, which results in more consumption. This results also in more money for the government at last.

The ideal of femininity has long been one of slenderness, which leads to anorectic behaviour according to Bordo (in Jaggar and Bordo 1989: 19). But I believe the ideal, as can be seen in the Campina commercial, has shifted from slenderness to being strong and in that way ‘the construction of femininity [still] intersects with the requirement for women to embody the “masculine” values of the public arena’ (ibid.). While being muscular and strong has always been seen as a masculine ideal, it is increasingly part of the female ideal as well. Bordo (ibid.: 24) calls this the new ‘power look’ of female body builders with influence beyond the world of body builders. Having a strong female body, or aspiring to, is increasingly important in society overall, as we can see in the yoga class Campina shows in their commercial. Dafne Schippers also has a powerful and strong female body, something Campina presents as the ‘ideal’ and thus desired body. This transition towards the ideal of the strong female body does not mean women are escaping restrictive feminine body ideals, they are simply shifting to a new form of ‘hierarchical, dualistic construction of gender’ (ibid.).

Although much more could be said about the Milner and Campina commercials, this analysis made clear how these dairy companies connect the human body to the consumption of dairy through a discourse in which the human body is made strong by consuming dairy. Within this discourse the production process of dairy is erased, and the non-human animal body is commodified by romanticizing its reality. It conveys to the consumers that cows are happy, grazing in the meadow, and the result of their happy grazing is the dairy, which makes you (the consumer) active and strong – which conforms to the ‘ideal’ body – and thus happy. But this is the discourse created by dairy companies in order to sell dairy, what if we look at other (lived) social realities?

3

DAIRY REALITIES



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⁸² <http://www.theghostsinourmachine.com/watch-the-ghosts-in-our-machine/> (accessed 17/07/2018)

LIVED SOCIAL REALITIES

In order to understand the meaning of the different lived social realities of people on dairy production and dairy consumption within the Dutch dairy discourse, I decided to conduct a focus group. With this focus group I explore people's lived realities on: the production and consumption of Dairy in The Netherlands in general, the commercials I analysed in the previous chapter and I exposed them to what I call 'different dairy realities'. With these different dairy realities I mean the realities of dairy production and dairy consumption that most consumers are unaware of. Consumers are unaware of these realities because they are twisted, hidden or just because they don't get into contact with them in their daily lives. These different realities are however part of the lived realities of many farmers and more importantly, the cows that provide the dairy.

In order to produce milk, a cow must first give birth to a calf. In order to keep the milk supply continuous, dairy cows are impregnated every year, which is (mostly) done through artificial insemination.⁸³ Once the calf is born it is separated from its mother within 24 to 72 hours after birth, a traumatic experience for both, since naturally calves would feed from their mothers up to 9 months a year.⁸⁴ When the calf is male it is of no use for the dairy industry and most likely shot soon after birth to be discarded as a by-product.⁸⁵ 'Dairy cows have been modified to produce up to 10 times more milk than they would naturally' and therefore, their lifespan is shortened with approximately 20 years.⁸⁶ Dairy cows cannot talk in the same language as we do, so it is difficult to really grasp their lived realities, but Earthling Ed, a well-known vegan activist who made the documentary 'Land of Hope and Glory' (2017), makes a good attempt to do this in his documentary. This documentary is made from his vegan-activist perspective, and describes factual realities in UK and EU farming.

To grasp the lived realities of farmers is unfortunately beyond the scope of this research. Instead, I specifically focus on how the industry of big dairy companies portray milk production and consumption to their consumers and how this relates to people's lived social realities within the Dutch dairy discourse. It is also a fact that most farmers are in dairy production to make money, and as such they view their cattle as products who provide them

⁸³ <https://www.landofhopeandglory.org/facts> (accessed 17/07/2018)

⁸⁴ <https://www.landofhopeandglory.org/facts> (accessed 17/07/2018)

⁸⁵ <https://www.landofhopeandglory.org/facts> (accessed 17/07/2018)

⁸⁶ <https://www.landofhopeandglory.org/facts> (accessed 17/07/2018)

their money and livelihood. This reason is also the main reason to be in the dairy industry for big companies such as Campina. Their reasons do not stretch so far as making their consumers stronger or even a champion, like seen in the Campina commercial. To accumulate this persuasive visuals in the forms of TV commercials are produced and that is why I believe these visual products are reflecting the social realities big dairy companies want to portray and possibly believe in themselves.

The last shackle in the 'dairy industry chain' is the consumer, and with the focus group I conducted, I tried to grasp their lived social realities. Every consumers' lived social reality is different, and I am aware that my focus group does not nearly touch upon the many lived social realities there are within the Dutch society, and this has also not been my intention. I do not wish to represent the Dutch consumers as a whole (if there even is such a thing), but I do believe that the lived social realities of the participants I selected do give an indication of multiple lived social realities out there.

FOCUS GROUP

As explained earlier, a focus group is an excellent feminist research method to uncover and analyse the lived social realities on dairy consumption and dairy production as seen in the TV commercials and documentary fragments. The focus group was held on the 6th of July 2018 at my home in The Hague. There were four people attending, whom did not know each other (or just a little bit) before this focus group. Three of the four people are native Dutch speakers, as am I, and one of them is a native Hungarian speaker but she does speak Dutch well (Mary). Next I will introduce the participants shortly and explain why I selected them to attend the focus group.

PARTICIPANTS

Beau Gunst is a 30 year old woman, who grew up in the same rural area in the south of the Netherlands as I did. Here the food choices are quite 'traditional': meat, milk, bread, cheese, boiled potatoes and vegetables. Despite our close friendship we are different in food choices (she is an omnivore), political preference, and many other things and this is why I think her contribution to the focus group will be valuable.

Anouk Houtman is a 25 year old woman who is a fellow feminist and visual anthropologist. She is an omnivore, but her meat and dairy consumption is very limited she says. The food choices during her upbringing were ‘traditional’, as they ate meat every day. I selected Anouk for the focus group because she is familiar with feminism, veganism and despite that she has a clear opinion on many things, she is eager to always learn more.

Marietta (Mary) Lencsés is a 32 year old woman grew up in a poor, ‘traditional’ village in Hungary where they mostly ate vegetables grown in the garden, drank milk from the neighbours cow and ate meat once in a while (because meat was expensive). Two years ago, she suddenly made the switch to a vegan lifestyle and ever since she has been passionate to share her opinion about it. I selected Mary because she made the switch to veganism so passionate and sudden, she is capable to articulate her choices clearly and she is from a different national, and social economic background than the rest of the participants.

Maurits Kersten is a young man in his thirties and national champion in the ‘senior male’ category pole dancing of 2018. Being in top sport while maintaining a vegan life style is questioned by many of his peers he acclaimed. His position as a male-vegan (generally speaking veganism and masculinity are often seen as non-compatible) top sportsman definitely contributes another perspective to the focus group.

DIFFERENT DAIRY REALITIES

I prepared the focus group to be centred around the lived social realities of my participants and how these are indicated by the Dutch dairy discourse. In order to uncover these I prepared a set of questions in relation to their personal lives and Dutch society in general.⁸⁷ I also made use of visual material because I believe in the power of audio-visual storytelling, as I described earlier. On the one hand, I confronted them with the TV commercials by Campina and Milner. Additionally, I used two fragments of two different documentaries that critically question today’s milk production and milk consumption.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ See appendix.

⁸⁸ It is not my intention to analyse these fragments in the way I did analyse the TV commercials. These fragments are used to shine a different light on the (Dutch) dairy industry during the focus group and to question the dairy production and consumption in the TV commercials and Dutch society in general.

Fragment 1: 'Land of Hope and Glory' (2017)⁸⁹



Click on the image to go to the fragment – password: fragment1

This documentary, created by vegan activist Earthling Ed, shows the reality of UK farming in relation to these specific animals. The fragment I chose was the chapter about cows. It shows a reality of UK dairy production. There are three reasons why I use this fragment of this film specifically for the focus group and this thesis. The first reason is because almost all of the vegan activist documentaries that exist nowadays are from an North-American perspective. The existing visual content about animal protection, environmentalism and health related to veganism are centred around North-America. What is interesting about 'Land of Hope and Glory'(2017) is that this documentary solely focusses on UK farming, which is bound to EU rules and regulations. It is a 'relief' to see a vegan activist perspective on the production of animal produce which is closer to 'home', The Netherlands. The second reason why I chose to make use of this documentary is because it mostly shows farms that are labelled organic, free-range, high-welfare, red-tractor⁹¹ and RSPCA⁹² approved. I believe the images shown in this documentary reveal the misconceptions consumers have about the living conditions of the animal products they purchase. Consumers are often misled to feel 'better' when they purchase an animal product that has a label like this as this documentary shows with graphic

⁸⁹ The full documentary 'Land of Hope and Glory' (2017) can be accessed through this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvtVkNofcQ8&t=2432s> on Earthling Ed's YouTube channel, a well known vegan activist and the maker of this film.

⁹⁰ Image from: https://www.google.com/search?q=the+land+of+hope+and+glory+earthling+ed&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiShd-Fw5HiAhVP_qQKHeTcDIQQ_AUIDygC&biw=1920&bih=920#imgrc=D_HOEZWz3ryL7M: (accessed 10/05/2019)

⁹¹ <https://www.redtractor.org.uk/choose-site> (accessed 18/09/2018)

⁹² Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - <https://www.rspca.org.uk/> (accessed 18/09/2018)

images of UK animal farming conditions. These graphic images and audio material are the third reason I chose to use a fragment from 'The Hope of Land and Glory' (2017). The chapters are build up in such a way that we follow the animal product from birth to death. In the case of cows from the artificial insemination until being shot as veil, used as a dairy-cow or dying in the slaughterhouse as meat. The audio visual material this documentary uses is almost all shot secretly with security and hidden cameras. All the images are accompanied with the geographical place where they are shot and when. These two aspects, the graphicness, violence and suffering that are seen are making it strong and convincible audio visual content. I personally cannot watch it without crying, being angry and getting upset.

Fragment 2: 'Got the facts on Milk?' (2011)



Click on the image to go to the fragment – password: fragment2

This documentary, created by director and filmmaker Shira Lane, questions conventional knowledge of milk and dairy products. It not only shows why the consumption of milk and dairy products has increased the last decade but also how hard it is to eat dairy free in restaurants or even to buy dairy free groceries all over the USA.⁹⁴ It shows the consequences of dairy intake for a human body. These consequences are results from academic research that was not funded by the dairy industry. 'Got the facts on Milk?' (2011) debunks a lot of myths concerning dairy consumption by countering them with academic research results, which is

⁹³ Image from:

https://www.google.com/search?q=got+the+facts+on+milk&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwixKGowpHiAhVKKewKHXnXBfEQ_AUIDygC&biw=1920&bih=920#imgrc=rAI3mcDX8O2qoM:
(accessed 10/05/2019)

⁹⁴ Bear in mind that this documentary was produced eight years ago, and that veganism has become an increasing trend all over the world the last few years. However, it does not rule out the fact that it still is hard to eat dairy free or vegan in a lot of public spaces.

also done in the fragment I chose for the focus group. There are three reasons why I chose this particular fragment of this specific film. The first reason is because it talks about the quality of milk to make things grow, which is also suggested in the commercial by Campina. But, instead of making people stronger, the researchers in the fragment talk about how cow's milk protein makes cancer cells grow. The fact that cancer cells actually grow when cow's milk protein is added is a shocking result of research done over many years by academics such as T. Colin Campbell, Neal Barnhart and Jennifer K. Reilly. The fact that this documentary makes use of academic knowledge and research done on dairy consumption is the second reason why I chose to use this film and in particular this fragment. I believe the independent research results that are shown in this documentary are most likely credible facts on the negative effects of consuming dairy, something that is seldomly shown in 'mainstream' media outlets such as television. The third reason why I chose this fragment is because the facts that are presented about the effect of consuming dairy are applicable worldwide, because cow's milk does contain protein everywhere.

REFLECTION

Leading the discussion and discussing in general during the focus group went quite well. I noticed that even though I do not have any experience with focus groups and I was very nervous, I do have an anthropological background to rely on in which I am trained to interview people. This gave me the confidence to lead the discussion the way I wanted to, without overpowering the discussion too much. However, there were two major things I could have done better, which have to do with probing and prompting (Bryman 2008: 206-207). Probing is when the researcher wants to know more and asks a follow-up question to get more information or to more in-depth during an interview. I realised, especially during the transcription process of the focus group that this is something I could have done better, for example on page 6 and 7 of the transcription:

Koosje: wat is er zo typisch Nederlands aan?

Beau: Koe in het weiland, ontbijtje, ...

Koosje: Dus het kan niet ergens anders zijn?

Beau: In India zal je dit niet zien nee.

Anouk: Ik vind het wel heel stereotyperend Nederlands.

Beau: Stereotyperend Nederlands inderdaad.

Koosje: Heeft het ook een soort van effect, ik heb nu ook zin om kwark te eten bijvoorbeeld?⁹⁵

In discussing what is so ‘stereotypical’ Dutch about the commercial of Campina Beau suggests it’s about the cow in the meadow and the breakfast in the morning. I did try to probe with saying this could not be anywhere else, but this leads to Beau comparing it to India. Anouk picks up on this by saying it is stereotyping The Netherlands, which Beau agrees with, but the next thing that happens is me asking the next question. I struggled with what makes the Campina commercial so typically Dutch as well in my analysis, so this insecurity of me also not knowing how to define it exactly might lead to me not probing. Another factor of why I did not probe at certain moments during the focus group might have to do with the fact that the group I selected is not a natural group and I felt I could not go into depth sometimes as much as you can when you are talking amongst friends who all know each other.

Prompting is when the researcher suggests a certain answer the participant is supposed to give (ibid.). Problematic during an academic research for the obvious reasons. What I noticed during the conduction of the focus group is not that I wanted to hear a specific answer, but when the participants did not have enough knowledge about the topic they were discussing they looked at me, or I jumped in and provided the knowledge I have about the topic. Such as in the following example on lactose intolerance on page 2 of the transcription:

Beau: Ze zeggen toch eigenlijk dat iedereen ook lactose-intolerant is maar dat we er gewend aan zijn geraakt omdat we ermee opgevoed zijn?

Iedereen: Klopt!

Maurits: Over de generaties.

Koosje: In de buikjes van baby’s zit een enzym wat bepaalde stoffen in melk afbreekt, volwassenen hebben dat

⁹⁵ Translation to English:

Koosje: what is so stereotypical Dutch about it?

Beau: Cow in the meadow, breakfast...

Koosje: So it could not be somewhere else?

Beau: In India you won’t see this no.

Anouk: I think its stereotypical Dutch.

Beau: Stereotypical Dutch indeed.

Koosje: Does it also have some sort of effect, do you feel like you want to eat quark now for example?

eigenlijk niet want als je opgroeit heb je die melk niet meer nodig. Maar omdat we het zo gewend zijn blijven we het drinken.⁹⁶

I do not see this as being problematic for the research results, but in the future it might be more interesting to let the participants figure out the answers to their own questions themselves. This because the answers, or possible options to their questions will be answered in their own words and own context.⁹⁷

REALITIES ANALYSED

As mentioned in Chapter one, I analysed the focus group through coding the transcription. In writing-up, coding and analysing the focus group, the power role of the researcher is apparent again (Wilkinson 1998: 114). I paid attention to certain themes and subjects that corresponded to the research question and the sub question of this chapter: *How do people, who are part of Dutch society view Dutch dairy production and dairy consumption?* The following labels occurred: consumption of dairy (focussed on participants' own experience), production of dairy, reactions to the two commercials and the two video fragments, veganism, feminism and ways of being. Besides focussing on those subjects, I also remained open to other subjects or themes that might occur when reading the transcript. I identified three more labels during the process of coding: knowledge, the body and normalisation. In looking at where the labels intersected, three concepts emerged, which will be analysed and connected to ecofeminist theory in the next part.

⁹⁶ Translation to English:

Beau: They say everyone is lactose intolerant, but we can handle it because we grew up with it?

Everyone: Indeed!

Maurits: From generation to generation.

Koosje: In baby bellies an enzyme is present which breaks down certain components of milk. Grownups don't have this anymore, because you don't need milk anymore when you are grown up already. It's because we are so used to drinking it.

⁹⁷ When I asked the participants to reflect on the focus group at the end of the evening they all agreed it was very *gezellig* and it was a pleasant evening. Despite the fact that she felt free to speak her mind, Anouk said she answered the questions in the awareness of the context, which means: there were three vegan people in the room and my research is set up from this particular perspective. This sometimes made her feel like her consuming dairy products is 'wrong', even though nobody judged her for doing so. Her reflection made me wonder and think about how this 'vegan perspective' is indeed creating a certain context, which is only one context amongst many.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

The concept of knowledge often intersected with the concept of dairy consumption during the focus group discussion: knowledge about certain (dairy) products, how these products are produced, and where this knowledge originated. Not-knowing or ignorance and the denial of knowledge were also touched upon. First of all, I want to look at how the knowledge about the production of dairy is communicated through the commercials according to my participants. Some examples about the Campina commercial⁹⁸:

Maurits: Koe in de wei...

Anouk: Ik denk dat mensen dit wel allemaal voor lief nemen. Ook over die koeien, ja zo lopen die koeien daar.

Maurits: 1 koe, 1 boer...

Anouk: Ja dat is helemaal in verhouding ja..

- Iedereen lacht – ⁹⁹

My connotative interpretation of this example is that Maurits and Anouk are sceptical about the fact that it is one cow and one farmer and sceptical about the cow even being in the meadow. Even though Anouk believes people easily ‘buy’ this romanticized image created by Campina, she herself doubts it is the case. The fact that everyone laughs suggests they agree with her doubt. When I asked what they think the situation is for a cow – of for example Campina – they all thought it is probably not a good situation, but they don’t know exactly what it is (or they would rather not know).¹⁰⁰ What my participants demonstrate here about the Campina commercial and their own ideas about dairy production is described by Adams (1991: 130, 131) as disembodied production. This is a result of the ‘fetishization of commodities associated with capitalist production’ in which we cannot see animals as part of nature because they are invisible animal machines (ibid.: 132).

⁹⁸ Found on page 5 and 6 of the focus group transcription.

⁹⁹ Translation to English:

Maurits: Cow in the meadow..

Anouk: I think people take this for granted (believe this). Also about the cows, yes of course this is how it is.

Maurits: One cow, one farmer...

Anouk: Yes it is all in proportion..

- Everybody laughs -

¹⁰⁰ Found on page 15 and 16 of the focus group transcription.

To counter-balance the Campina commercial, I selected the fragment about cows from ‘Land of Hope and Glory’ (2017). The reactions to this fragment were, to say at least, extreme. Beau walked away crying after only a few minutes, Maurits and Mary both turned their head and Mary cried as well, and Anouk tried to watch it the longest. Halfway through the fragment I stopped it because I thought they all got the point. After she was calmed down, Beau expressed a few times how she really did not know all this and asked around if the others knew. Anouk expressed as well that she did not know how cows have to get pregnant every time in order to give milk. Mary shared how she found out about this when she was 25 years old and after this decided to become a vegan.¹⁰¹ When I asked them why they think they did not know this they said:

Beau: Dat wordt niet gepromoot door de overheid omdat ze er nog steeds geld aan verdienen. Daarom is het: geld, geld geld geld geld.

Koosje: Je hebt wel je eigen keuze om ernaar te kijken, het wordt niet afgeschermd.

Anouk: Mensen weten het ergens echt wel, net als ik. Ik wist dit ergens ook, nouja, dit wist ik niet precies maar ik wist heus wel...

Beau: Dat het kut was.

Anouk: Dat het niet oke was.

Maurits: Hmmhmm

Anouk: Dat wil je 'n soort van niet zien.

Beau: Uhu.

Koosje: Waarom wil je het niet zien?

Beau: Te confronterend!¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Found on page 18, 19 and 20 of the focus group transcription.

¹⁰² Translation to English:

Beau: It does not get promoted by the government because they still earn money from this (meaning: the dairy industry). That's why: money, money, money.

Koosje: You do have a choice to watch this, it does not get censored.

Anouk: Deep down people know this I think. I knew this, not in detail, but I knew it.

Beau: You knew it was fucked up.

Anouk: I knew it was not ok.

This example demonstrates that my participants' knowledge about dairy production doesn't really extend beyond the romanticized version presented in (paid) advertisement.¹⁰³ Even though they know, deep down, something is wrong with the production of dairy and the way it is being promoted, they do not actively expand their knowledge about the subject because it is too disturbing. In considering why my participants did not have, or did not want to have, knowledge about dairy production it is good to consider that knowledge is situated as well as embodied (Haraway 1988). This means the knowledge each and every one of us has is formed by power structures such as class, race, gender and sexuality. It also means the production of knowledge is always connected to power. This is apparent in the case of Campina, a big, subsidised company in a position of power. Through advertising, consumers get to know the dairy products, and 'frequently the only information on these "animal machines"' that produce those products 'comes from paid advertising' (Adams 1991: 132). With their commercial, centred around the fit and strong human body (that consumes dairy), they produce and re-produce structures in which power and knowledge intersect. Within this intersection there is only place for a romanticized image of how dairy is produced. An image that is, even knowing it might not be true, worth maintaining for some participants in my focus group because the reality might be:

Beau: Te confronterend!¹⁰⁴

THE BODY

Often talked about during the focus group, and also a clear focus in the commercials is the human body. The body of the consumer, the ideal, fit and sexy body in the commercials, it almost seems the human body is some kind of 'playground' for production of knowledge and power over the consumption of dairy. When the relationship between knowledge and power produce certain bodies, as we have seen in the commercials and talked about in the focus

Maurits: Hmhmhmhmhm

Anouk: You don't want to know.

Beau: Uhu.

Koosje: Why don't you want to know?

Beau: It is too confronting.

¹⁰³ This is my connotative interpretation of what Beau says about the government promoting the dairy industry.

¹⁰⁴ Found on page 20 of the focus group transcription.

Translation to English:

Beau: Too confronting!

group, biopower comes into play (Phipps & Bendelow 2014: 161).¹⁰⁵ But what are these bodies according to the participants of my focus group, and why do they come into play in the production and consumption of dairy in The Netherlands?

When I asked my participants why they would consume dairy, some of them said the consumption of dairy (and milk in particular) was always related to having a strong and healthy body when they grew up, but now their reasons for consuming dairy are more related to taste.¹⁰⁶

Beau: Het zat natuurlijk heel lang in de schijf van 5, net als kaas. Je had vroeger ook zo'n reclame altijd van drink elke dag een glas melk want dan krijg je sterke botten. M'n broer dronk altijd een jerrycan helemaal leeg. Ik had er nooit zoveel mee, maar ik drink het wel graag in m'n koffie. Ik drink 'm ook weleens met haver melk maar dan vind ik 'm toch niet zo lekker. Dus bij mij gaat het meer om smaak echt.

Koosje: Dus je drinkt het niet omdat je denkt: dit is wat mijn lichaam nodig heeft?

Anouk: Vroeger wel inderdaad toen had je al die reclames van melk is goed voor elk enz. en dat het heel goed was voor je botten maar nu denk ik nee.. nee.¹⁰⁷

It struck me that the consumption of dairy is so intertwined with how it influences the human body, how it does a body good, how it makes it strong and keeps it healthy. Beau and Anouk say this is something from the past, but Maurits, who is a professional pole dancer, talked about how during the World Championships 95% of the sports association allowed and

¹⁰⁵ See footnote 28.

¹⁰⁶ Found on page 4 and 5 of the focus group transcription.

¹⁰⁷ Translation to English:

Beau: For a very long time it was part of the basic food groups, just like cheese. In the past there was an advertisement to drink milk everyday in order to have strong bones. My brother always drank a jerry can of milk. But I never did that, I do like it in my coffee. I sometimes drink my coffee with oat milk, but I don't like that taste. So for me drinking milk is about the taste.

Koosje: So, you don't drink it because you think your body needs it?

Anouk: In the past I did, when there used to be advertisements about how milk is good for everyone, etc. and it was good for your bones, but now I think not, no.

recommended proteins are animal-milk based.¹⁰⁸ After watching the Campina commercial together, it was very clear the consumption of dairy is still related to a strong (and thus healthy) body.¹⁰⁹

Koosje: Misschien hebben jullie dit al een keer eerder gezien? Wat is het eerste wat jullie opvalt?

Anouk: STERK

...

Anouk: Ja, je wil ook zo lekker fit zijn en hardlopen...

Mary: Sneller rennen!¹¹⁰

As mentioned earlier in chapter two, the disciplining and managing of the body is valued in capitalist ideology (Lock 1993: 143). The sporting body especially, which is the most disciplined of all, becomes an object of desire. By connecting the human sporting body to the consumption of dairy, the dairy becomes a way to achieve this ideal 'disciplined' body. This is also something Milner tries to communicate according to Beau, Anouk, Mary and Maurits¹¹¹:

Maurits: Dit is het lichaam wat je krijgt als je deze kaas eet.

Anouk: Wat een perfecte mensen allemaal.

Koosje: Wat is de boodschap die hier gecommuniceerd wordt?

Beau: Milner, dit lichaam.

Koosje: Dus het is echt de bedoeling om te communiceren met dit lichaam, dat je dit krijgt?

¹⁰⁸ Found on page 5 of the focus group transcription.

¹⁰⁹ Found on page 5 and 7 of the focus group transcription.

¹¹⁰ Translation to English:

Koosje: Maybe you have seen this one before? What is the first thing that comes to mind when you see this?

Anouk: STRONG

...

Anouk: I want to be really fit as well and go running.

Mary: Running faster!

¹¹¹ Found on page 8 of the focus group transcription.

Anouk, Beau en Mary: Ja!¹¹²

The human body is not only malleable, but also a form and image to which every consumer can relate according to Anouk and Maurits.¹¹³ This relatability of one human body to another human body increases the effect of the commercial; people are more easily convinced that if they consume dairy they will become more like those ideal bodies in the commercial. By connecting the ideal human body in the commercial to the human consumer body in a capitalistic way (i.e. consuming dairy), the human body becomes not only a symbol that reflects the society it lives in, as Mary Douglas (1970) states, but also a vehicle of its ideology on which biopolitics has control. ‘In the *Society* lectures Foucault defines biopolitics as the power of the European state to “make live and let die”’ (Weheliye 2014: 57). The Dutch dairy companies, who are subsidized by the Dutch government, try to exert control over the consumers bodies by managing the discourse around dairy products and promoting their consumption.

NORMALIZED CONSUMPTION

By romanticizing production, as in the Campina commercial, and connecting it to the human body, as in both Campina’s and Milner’s commercials, the production of dairy products becomes disembodied from the consumption. By focussing on the consumption through the human body, the animals that provide the product are made absent.¹¹⁴ Thus, an ideology is created where we see animals as ‘usable and consumable’ and in which the consumption of ‘their’ products is normalized (Adams 1991: 136). This normalization was also talked about during the focus group¹¹⁵:

Beau: Het is een stuk gemak, wat ze net zeiden. We zijn opgevoed in een maatschappij waarin je geconfronteerd wordt met deze producten.

¹¹² Translation to English:

Maurits: This is the body you will get from eating this cheese.

Anouk: All perfect human beings.

Koosje: Is that the message that is communicated?

Beau: Milner, this body.

Koosje: So they mean to communicate you will get this body by eating Milner?

Anouk, Beau and Mary: Yes!

¹¹³ Found on page 11 of the focus group transcription.

¹¹⁴ During the focus group all participants stated how they almost never associate the dairy products they buy (or bought in some cases) with the animal: cow (focus group transcription page 14 and 15).

¹¹⁵ Found on page 4 of the focus group transcription.

Terwijl, als het normaal was dat we er niet mee geconfronteerd zouden worden, er zouden plantaardige opties zijn dan zou je dat gewend zijn.

Anouk: Gewoonte, gemak en dat er minder kennis is over wat er achter ligt of wat andere manieren zijn.¹¹⁶

The control of knowledge within the discourse around dairy production and consumption in The Netherlands constitutes a kind of power which creates a ‘regime of truth’ (Hall in Maaka & Andersen 2006: 169). As both Anouk and Beau state, the consumption of dairy is ‘normal’ and thus an ‘easy’ option. Because it is so normalized other ‘ways of being’ are seen as inconvenient or non-existent. The ‘regime of truth’ around dairy also suppresses knowledge of any negative impacts of dairy consumption. Anouk, Beau and Maurits, for example, did not know about the research that links dairy consumption to cancer as seen in ‘Got the facts on Milk?’ (2011). It is the dairy industry that creates the knowledge about dairy consumption, which subjects bodies when exercised in practice, and it seemed during the focus group that it is also the same industry that yields the power to change this discourse (Hall in Maaka & Andersen 2006: 169):¹¹⁷

Maurits: Wachten tot de industrie op z’n gat ligt. Volgens mij is dat al zo, het zijn alleen subsidies die het nog levend houden.¹¹⁸

When I asked about our own agency to change the discourse both Anouk and Beau believed it was possible:¹¹⁹

Beau: Ja, zelf het verschil maken.

Anouk: Als steeds meer mensen het niet meer willen en niet meer kopen, in het ideale geval levert het dan niks meer op en weet ik veel

¹¹⁶ Translation to English:

Beau: It’s convenience, what we talked about before. We have been brought up in a society where you are confronted with these products (dairy products). If it were normal for us not to be confronted with it, and there would be plant based options only we would get used to these.

Anouk: Habit, convenience, and also there is less knowledge about what’s behind all this or are other ways.

¹¹⁷ Found on page 32 of the focus group transcription.

¹¹⁸ Translation to English:

Maurits: Wait until the industry dies. I think this is already happening, it’s only alive because it gets subsidised.

¹¹⁹ Found on page 32 of the focus group transcription.

dan gaat de hele industrie op z'n gat en dan hebben we gewoon in onze achtertuin een koe en dan heeft die af en toe alleen maar melk over.¹²⁰

Despite the fact they believed change was possible, and even happening right now, it struck me how the consumption of dairy (by having our own cow) was still apparent in this 'new' discourse.

I believe we, as 'consumers', can change the (Dutch) dairy discourse because as Foucault (in Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983: 224) states: 'it would not be possible for power relations to exist without points of insubordination, which, by definition, are means of escape'. We have the agency, we have the knowledge, we have the power. Ecofeminism is where feminism, veganism and activism intersect and 'this form of empowerment is precisely what is needed in approaching the issue of where animals stand in our lives' (Adams 1991: 140).

¹²⁰ Translation to English:

Beau: Yes, make a difference yourself.

Anouk: If more and more people don't want it (consume dairy), and don't want to buy it, ideally it is not profitable anymore and the industry dies and we have a cow in our backyard for our milk supply.

CONCLUSION

With this thesis I wanted to explore how the Dutch dairy discourse determines ways of being in contemporary Dutch society, how it mediates the consumption of dairy and how this is understood by members of Dutch society. To answer these research questions I made use of feminist critical discourse analysis as a methodology which enabled me to see the Dutch dairy industry and its power in Dutch society as a discourse. This discourse exerts power through the construction of disciplinary practices that connect the consumption of dairy to the human body by producing knowledge about the production and the consumption of dairy. This is seen, for example, in the commercials of Campina and Milner where the production of dairy is stereotypically Dutch and romanticized or absent, and the consumption of dairy is directly related to the strong, healthy and fit human body.

To uncover the social realities that are made real within the Dutch dairy discourse, or the ‘regime of truth’ according to Stuart Hall (in Maaka & Andersen 2006: 169), I analysed two case studies, the commercials of Campina and Milner, and conducted a focus group. I used (eco)feminist critical discourse analysis to examine these commercials. This feminist research method enabled me to uncover destructive binary systems and challenge ‘gendered assumptions’ (for example in the Milner campaign where the female body is the one ‘being looked at’). The ecofeminist perspective and my position as a vegan activist and researcher allowed me to extend that critique of binary systems to the larger binaries of human animal and non-human animal. Despite my critical position, by starting with a more ‘neutral’ denotative analysis I was able to pursue a more heteroglossic critical analysis, for example in my examination of the Campina commercial where the strong white bodies are connected to Dutchness and what it means to belong to Dutch society.

The focus group as a research method gave insight into the lived social realities or frameworks of understanding that surround the production and consumption of dairy in Dutch society. It made clear how little my participants knew, or wanted to know, about the production of dairy or what effects the consumption of dairy can have on the human body, besides the positive effects the commercials show. A large part of their knowledge about dairy seemed to come from the commercials from the Dutch dairy industry they grew up with and watched over the years. However, they were also aware that commercials are made to sell products and are not necessarily telling ‘the truth’. They all claimed they had become more

aware about what they consumed (being vegan or non-vegan) over the last few years, but they were also unsure if the Dutch dairy discourse in which the consumption of dairy products is seen as ‘normal’ can be changed.

The lived social realities of my focus group participants can be recognized in and connected to the analysis of the case studies of Campina and Milner, particularly in relation to the sub questions in chapter two and three. Chapter two is guided by the following sub question: *How does the Dutch dairy industry mediate the production and consumption of dairy?* Using the audio-visual content of the commercials by Campina I argued that the Dutch dairy industry presents the production of dairy as romantic, natural, or completely hid it from consumers. In the commercials the consumption of dairy was very much connected to the disciplined human body; strong (Campina and Milner), sexy (Milner), healthy (Campina), Dutch (Campina and Milner), fit (Campina and Milner) and natural (naked bodies with Campina).

Chapter three aimed to answer the following sub question: *How do people, who are part of Dutch society, view Dutch dairy production and dairy consumption?* To answer this research question I conducted a focus group with four participants. The analysis of this focus group revealed to my participants had little knowledge of the production of dairy. They all knew the cow in the meadow had to be milked, but they would rather did not think about it too much because the production was ‘probably not so good for the cow’. The consumption of dairy products was not often linked to how it was being produced, a disconnect that was also apparent in analysing the case studies. The participants of my focus group connected the consumption of dairy very much to the human body, as can be seen in the case studies. They connected it with a strong and healthy body, also seen in the case studies, and thought of it as something very ‘normal’. Everyone grew up with these ideas about the consumption of dairy and it is only in these last few years they have started to question them.

Unravelling these sub questions has helped me to answer the research question that guided this thesis: *How does the Dutch dairy discourse determine ways of being in Dutch society?* In this thesis the Dutch dairy discourse made up by the Dutch dairy industry determines a way of being by for example by advertising. With these commercials, such as the case studies I analysed, the Dutch dairy industry links the consumption of dairy to the (Dutch) human body. This body is a disciplined body, and if you want this body you will need to consume dairy too. The discourse that is created on the production (romanticized or ignoring the non-human animal bodies) and consumption (linked to the strong human body)

of dairy by the Dutch dairy industry. The social reality created by the Dutch dairy discourse is one in which the consumption of dairy makes you strong bodied, healthy, Dutch and ‘normal’. The disciplining and controlling of the body (human and non-human animal alike) implicit in this discourse is also an expression of ‘social control’ (Douglas 1970: 78). This discourse, in which the production of dairy is disembodied from consumption and its consumption is (re)embodied by the disciplined body, reproduces ways of being in line with the patriarchy.

As the title of this thesis implies, I question the famous slogan: *Melk is goed voor elk*¹²¹, which, as my focus group showed is still being used. This slogan, that was developed by the Dutch dairy industry in the 1940s, lives on in the commercials I have analysed in this thesis. The commercials of my case studies go even further by claiming dairy makes you stronger, faster, better. Although this discourse, in which dairy consumption is normalized, is still in place in Dutch society, questioning of the slogan, and this discourse is on the rise. This came up during my focus group but can also be seen in Dutch society overall with veganism on the rise. With this thesis I wanted to not only challenge this slogan, but also show how the Dutch dairy discourse mediates the knowledge around dairy, reinforcing destructive binary oppositions, hiding the abusive practices of production, and controlling the behaviour and thus ‘ways of being’ of consumers. As Loesje explains on the poster of my title page: *Melk is goed voor elk kalf*¹²² meaning: cowmilk is good for calf’s or human ‘cows’ (read: not very smart animals).

¹²¹ ‘Milk is good for everyone’

¹²² ‘Milk is good for every calf’

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FILM

Got the facts on Milk

2011 directed by: Shira Lane

Land of Hope and Glory

2017 directed by: Earthing Ed a.k.a. Ed Winters

The Ghosts in our Machine

2013 directed by: Liz Marshall

APPENDIX

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- Wat doet melk voor het menselijke lichaam (welke voedingsstoffen zitten erin die je nodig hebt)?
- Zitten deze voedingsstoffen ook in andere voeding?
- Hoe weet je deze informatie over melk?

➔ Commercial 1 – Campina

- Wat proberen ze te communiceren naar de consument?
- Wordt je echt sterk van zuivel? (Zoja, hoe weet je dat?)
- Hoe weet je dat deze commercial zich in Nederland afspeelt en wat is er typisch Nederlands aan?
- Welk effect heeft deze commercial op jou? (Heb je zin om zuivel te eten, zoja waarom, zoniet waarom niet?)

➔ Commercial 2 – Milner

- Wat wordt er gecommuniceerd naar de consument in deze commercial?
- Wat heeft kaas met naakte lichamen te maken denken jullie?
- Is deze commercial typisch Nederlands?
- Welk effect heeft deze commercial op jou? (Heb je zin om zuivel te eten, zoja waarom, zo niet waarom niet?)
- Zijn er andere informatiebronnen m.b.t zuivel beschikbaar, zoja, welke en waar vind je die?
- Zoek je überhaupt informatie op over de voeding die je eet? Zoja, waar, etc.
- Wat is de weg die zuivel aflegt voordat het in de schappen komt?
- Hoe stel je je die situatie voor waarin een koe de melk afstaat?

➔ Melk productie – Land of Hope and Glory

- Wat vonden jullie van dit filmpje? Emotie, interessant, doet me niks?
- Was dit informatie die al bekend was bij jou? (waarom wel/niet)
- Wat ga je doen met de informatie die je net hebt gezien?

➔ Melk consumptie

- Wat vonden jullie van dit filmpje? (Geloofwaardig, schokkend, wist ik al)
- Was deze informatie al bekend bij jou/jullie?
- Wat ga je doen met de informatie die je net hebt gezien?

- Kijk je anders tegen zuivel aan nu je deze informatie hebt gezien?
- Wat vind je nu van de commercials van Campina en Milner?
- Moet er iets veranderen aan de situatie, zo ja, wat? Wat kan je zelf doen?

➔ Feminisme en veganisme

- Zijn jullie bekend met feminisme?
- Wat is feminisme?
- Wat heeft het te maken met veganisme?
- Zou elke feminist veganist moeten zijn?

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE FOCUS GROUP

- Introductie door mij, over mijn scriptie, eigen positie als veganist en feminist
- Wie van jullie drinkt er melk?

Mary: I am vegan, as you know, and for me the reason why I became vegan was milk, first of all. I have seen milk industry first of all. And before I became vegan I did not know a cow is also pregnant for 9 months, just as a woman. I was shocked by a lot of facts I have seen. And then I said that first of all I don't want to be part of this and second of all I don't think this is for us why don't we drink dog-milk or cat-milk? Why aren't we doing that? Once it is pointed out to you you think oh yeah that is true. And I started to not drink cow-milk anymore so I started to drink coconutmilk, almondmilk. All super nice! I just went on with it and stayed vegan.

Maurits: How long ago was this?

Mary: Two years ago.

K: Voor de duidelijkheid, het gaat hier om alle soorten zuivel: ook kaas, room, boter en alle producten waar zuivel in verwerkt wordt zoals chips.

Beau: In chips?

Mary & Maurits: Ja! Mary: Paprikachips!?

K: Er zijn heel veel producten waar melk in verwerkt zit.

Anouk: Waarom zit het in chips dan?

Koosje: Kan ik een hele uitleg over geven maar dat ga ik nu niet doen.

Beau: melkpoeder.

Anderen: ja!

Koosje: melk drinken is misschien nog wel de meest bewuste consumptie van zuivel, kaas is bijvoorbeeld veel minder bewust, dat gaat steeds verder.

Mary: Als je de eerste paar keren [als vegan] naar de supermarkt gaat, en je gaat kijken, serieus in bijna alles zit melkpoeder.

Anouk en Beau: wow..

Anouk: Wat je zegt over melk drinken en kaas eten, melk drinken doe ik dan bijvoorbeeld niet, en kaas eten wel. Koemelk drinken doe ik al lang niet meer, vooral omdat ik dan heel veel last heb van mijn buik altijd. En toen, door jou eigenlijk (bedoeld Koosje) heb ik ontdekt dat ik havermelk ook heel chill vind en veel lekkerder vind. De reden is dus niet dat ik het niet eens ben met de industrie, wat dus eigenlijk wel waar is, wat dus een beetje een gekke paradox is. Het is meer dat ik er fysiek last van heb.

Beau: Ze zeggen toch eigenlijk dat iedereen ook lactose-intollerant is maar dat we er gewend aan zijn geraakt omdat we ermee opgevoed zijn?

Iedereen: klopt!

Maurits: Over de generaties.

Koosje: In de buikjes van baby's zit een enzym wat bepaalde stoffen in melk afbreekt, volwassenen hebben dat eigenlijk niet want als je opgroeit heb je die melk niet meer nodig. Maar omdat we het zo gewend zijn blijven we het drinken.

Maurits: in Oosterse landen zoals Japan en China is iedereen lactose intolerant.

Beau: Ze kopen het wel allemaal van Nederland.

Maurits: -verbaasd- Goh dat wist ik niet.

Koosje: Even terug komen bij wat je zei Anouk, heeft het een bepaalde reden dat je kaas wel eet?

Anouk: Dat weet ik niet zo goed, ik vind het lekker daarom eet ik het. Ik weet niet waarom ik, los van dat ik er last van krijg, wel heel bewust andere soorten melk drink..

Beau: En boter bijvoorbeeld?

Anouk: Daar heb ik de alpro soya variant van.

Beau: Okee... okee..

Anouk: Best wel vaak dat ik weet dat er een andere optie is, zonder de dierlijke producten en dan kies ik toch als die er is die dus ergens ben ik er wel mee bezig maar ik eet wel kaas.

Maurits: In mijn overgang naar veganist was kaas het laatste wat ik opgaf, puur voor het gemak. Omdat het heel makkelijk is om naar een pizzeria te gaan en een pizza te halen. Veel makkelijker om zelf aan de haal te gaan met allemaal veganistische kazen. Dus ik snap het wel een beetje. Kaas is heel makkelijk.

Beau: Klopt!

Anouk: Ik woon met mijn zusje en zij houdt heel erg van kaas dus we hebben het ook altijd in huis. En het is een soort van heel makkelijk iets om op je brood te doen ofzo.

Koosje: Ja, dat snap ik wel.

Mary: Hummus!

- Iedereen lacht -

Beau: Hoe lang ben jij vegan (aan Maurits)?

Maurits: Volgens mij ben ik nu 7 a 8 jaar vegan. Ik heb ook niet een precieze datum bijgehouden. Het was ook niet een onmiddellijke transitie. Het was nu geen eieren meer, nu geen melk.

Mary: I never had a problem with milk (or cheese) but then I saw these movies...

Beau: Toen je je er echt bewust van werd?

Mary: Ja, I just really said I want to go vegan for a month. If I like it can be more months. Then it was already 1,5 years and I thought, oh I really did not drink milk for a long time so I went home to my mom, we live in a small village, they don't even know what soy is. My mom cooked something for me, it contained milk and the next day I went with a lot of red dots on your skin, it was not normal.

Beau and Anouk: What??

Mary: It is a poison.

Beau: I do eat milk. Drink milk. Met name in de koffie enzo, dat vind ik gewoon lekker, een latte machiato ofzo. Of cappucino. Maar ik merk het altijd wel. Koffie merk ik natuurlijk sowiso wel. Maar ik koop ook de kokosmelk.

Maurits: Omdat het lekker is?

Beau: Ik krijg er een minder opgeblazen gevoel van. Dan denk ik ik eet ook nog steeds vlees en vis dus als ik af en toe zin heb in een koffietje met melk dan drink ik het gewoon. Maar net als roomboter, kaas, ik eet het allemaal maar niet heel veel. Als ik een stuk kaas koop daar doe ik makkelijk drie weken mee.

Koosje: Voor diegenen die wel zuivel consumeren, ik ben benieuwd naar waarom jullie het wel doen.

Beau: Het is een stuk gemak, wat ze net zeiden. We zijn opgevoed in een maatschappij waarin je geconfronteerd wordt met deze producten. Terwijl, als het normaal was dat we er niet mee geconfronteerd zouden worden, er zouden plantaardige opties zijn dan zou je dat gewend zijn.

Anouk: Gewoonte, gemak en dat er minder kennis is over wat er achter ligt of wat andere manieren zijn. Sinds ik jou ken ben ik me daar bewuster van, we hebben het er best wel vaak over. Over simpele dingen wat jij in plaats van doet, waar jij je chocolademousse van maakt.

Koosje: Je hebt er niet eerder bij stil gestaan...

En wat denken jullie wat melk doet voor je lichaam, wat zit daar in eigenlijk?

Beau: Ik word nu echt een beetje bang hoor jongens... Ik heb net dat filmpje gezien over kanker (zag filmpje staan op TV).

Koosje: Nee, je hoeft echt niet bang te zijn. Waarom zou je, los van dat het cultureel gebonden is, consumeren?

Beau: Het zat natuurlijk heel lang in de schijf van 5, net als kaas. Je had vroeger ook zo'n reclame altijd van drink elke dag een glas melk want dan krijg je sterke botten. M'n broer dronk altijd een jerrycan helemaal leeg. Ik had er nooit zoveel mee, maar ik drink het wel graag in m'n koffie. Ik drink 'm ook weleens met haver melk maar dan vind ik 'm toch niet zo lekker. Dus bij mij gaat het meer om smaak echt.

Koosje: Dus je drinkt het niet omdat je denkt: dit is wat mijn lichaam nodig heeft?

Anouk: Vroeger wel inderdaad toen had je al die reclames van melk is goed voor elk enz. en dat het heel goed was voor je botten maar nu denk ik nee.. nee.

Maurits: Een jaar geleden toen ik meedeed aan het WK kregen we een informatiesessie van de sportbond over doping maar wat allemaal toegestaan qua supplementen is en wat allemaal niet. Dan krijg je ook een lijst met allerlei voedingsmiddelen wat toegestaan is en wat niet. Waaronder eiwitpoeders. Wat echt 95% alleen maar melkpoeder is. Dus als veganist heb je dan een heel klein raam van wat toegestaan is door de bond en wat vegan is.

Beau: Maar je hebt wel genoeg vegan opties toch nu?

Maurits: Je hebt het wel, maar die zijn niet allemaal toegestaan door de bond omdat die zich focussen op wat de meerderheid gebruikt en dat is melk.

Koosje: Vanuit jouw oogpunt denk ik dat het ook interessant is omdat vaak wordt gedacht dat sporters (topsporters) melk etc. nodig hebben om een bepaald niveau te kunnen bereiken.

Allen: Ja inderdaad. – Mary zucht –

Beau: Er is nu een beweging op gang dat je die eiwitten ook uit andere voedingsmiddelen kan halen zoals bijvoorbeeld quinoa, peulvruchten, ze maken daar gewoon shakes van en daar heb je dan genoeg aan. Ook voor sporters. Vegan bodybuilders zijn hartstikke gespierd, het kan gewoon maar het is inderdaad wat we gewend zijn.

Maurits: Het is wat de maatschappij ons... Absoluut.

Koosje: We gaan beginnen met de eerste commercial.

→ BIJ COMMERCIAL VIDEO BEELDEN BEKIJKEN

Maurits: Koe in de wei...

Koosje: Misschien hebben jullie dit al een keer eerder gezien? Wat is het eerste wat jullie opvalt?

Anouk: STERK

Beau: Je moet je dag beginnen met een melkproduct.

Koosje: Geloof je deze boodschap dan ook makkelijk?

Beau: 10 jaar geleden had ik het misschien nog geloofd, maar nu niet meer omdat je sowieso niet meer weet wat je kan geloven van eten. Wat vandaag goed is is morgen weer slecht en wat dan weer goed is is het jaar daarop weer slecht.

Maurits: Het is sowieso een reclame waar je je vraagtekens altijd bij moet zetten.

Koosje: Dat is een heel goed punt, maar ik denk dat heel veel mensen dat dus niet doen.

Beau: Je ziet en olympische speler, dus je denk he, ...

Anouk: Ook die lekker Nederlandse setting met zo'n wei, waar de koe lekker in staat...

Maurits: Oh ja... - zucht -

Beau: Ja - lacht heel hard -

Anouk: Ik denk dat mensen dit wel allemaal voor lief nemen. Ook over die koeien, ja zo lopen die koeien daar.

Maurits: 1 koe, 1 boer...

Anouk: Ja dat is helemaal in verhouding ja..

- Iedereen lacht -

Koosje: wat is er zo typisch Nederlands aan?

Beau: Koe in het weiland, ontbijtje, ...

Koosje: Dus het kan niet ergens anders zijn?

Beau: In India zal je dit niet zien nee.

15 MINUTEN

Anouk: Ik vind het wel heel stereotyperend Nederlands.

Beau: Stereotyperend Nederlands inderdaad.

Koosje: Heeft het ook een soort van effect, ik heb nu ook zin om kwark te eten bijvoorbeeld?

Beau: Ik denk het wel, als ik kijk naar mensen in mijn omgeving, die eten allemaal nog best wel veel kwark. Ik vind het zelf niet zo lekker maar ze kwamen toen met deze kwark met kokos smaak bijvoorbeeld, dat vinden heel veel mensen lekker. Ik ken genoeg mensen die nog elke dag kwark eten.

Anouk: Ik denk wel dat het goed werkt.

Beau: Dit is ook weer iets wat geplugd is in ons hoofd, van he dit is normaal.

Mary: Ja dat is het, je hoort het van je dokter, van je moeder van iedereen...

Beau: Precies, dat is je referentiekader.

Koosje: Ja, dat zie je bij jou ook (Maurits) met de sportbond.

Maurits: Ja!

Anouk: Ja, je wil ook zo lekker fit zijn en hardlopen...

Mary: Sneller rennen!

Beau: Wat me opvalt is dat de nadruk altijd ligt op dierlijke eiwitten, omdat mensen denken dat dat de voornaamste bron is voor eiwitten.

Koosje: Hoe kan dat dan dat mensen dat zo massaal denken?

Beau: Ik ben er pas achter gekomen toen ik een speciaal dieet moest volgen van he er zijn ook andere opties. Maar als ik dat dieet niet hoefde te doen had ik het nooit geweten. Ik kwam er toen pas achter dat sommige peulvruchten veel meer waarde hebben dan zo'n hele bak kwark.

Koosje: Maar hoe komt dat dan dat wij dat over het algemeen niet weten?

Beau: Het is een industrie waar ze geld aan verdienen!

Maurits: Yes!

Mary: Uhu!

Beau: Bakken, en ze weten waarschijnlijk al lang wat voor consequenties het heeft, het leed wat het met zich meebrengt. Op gebied van gezondheid en dieren, maarja het verdient geld. Als ze er niet meer omheen kunnen dat mensen het allemaal weten dan gaan ze pas met andere opties komen, dat gaat nog jaren duren Dat hoop ik niet maar ik denk het wel. Hypocrisie.

Maurits: Even terzijde, wat je Epke ziet doen, dat wordt niet goedgekeurd door de bond want hij hangt scheef.

Koosje: En dat kan jij ook trouwens, maar dan zonder melk!

- Maurits doet flag in de paal, iedereen onder de indruk -

Koosje: Ok, nu gaan we naar de volgende commercial, die gaat over kaas.

Anouk: Waarom zijn hun altijd naakt?

Beau: Ja, dat is Milner he.

Anouk: Maar waarom?

Beau: Ja, puur. En seks sells.

Maurits: Dit is het lichaam wat je krijgt als je deze kaas eet.

Anouk: Wat een perfecte mensen allemaal.

Koosje: Wat is de boodschap die hier gecommuniceerd wordt?

Beau: Milner, dit lichaam.

Koosje: Dus het is echt de bedoeling om te communiceren met dit lichaam, dat je dit krijgt?

Anouk, Beau en Mary: Ja!

Anouk: Dat je er heel gezond van wordt, ofzo.

Koosje: Het is eigenlijk best gek als je erover na gaat denken, wat heeft een naakt lichaam...

Beau: Te maken met kaas...

Koosje: Ja inderdaad.

20 MINUTEN

Beau: Ze willen beweren dat het puur is.

Anouk: Dat het heel natuurlijk is.

Mary: I have no idea how they are putting the commercials together sometimes, like what the fuck.

Koosje: Ik ook niet.

Beau: Dat het puur en natuurlijk is.

Anouk: En het verkoopt want het is natuurlijk heel sexy.

Maurits: Tegelijkertijd heb je ook heel veel andere reclames die meer representatief willen zijn, we moeten meer vormen, meer groottes laten zien [meer diversiteit] en hier is het maar gewoon 1 beeld van een slanke vrouw en een gespierde man.

Beau: Ja, perfectie.

Anouk: Ja inderdaad.

Mary: You know, if you think about it if you sit at home like a normal person and you don't think about veganism or anything, like a person in my family, you believe this.

Anderen: Uhu, ja, ja.

Mary: And that is like.. wow!

Beau: But like 10 years ago I would also believe it. Milner, deze reclame, hoe lang is dat al niet, ...

Anouk: Ja, dat heel sensuele in de mond leggen.

Beau: Ja, dat weet ik gewoon nog, hmm lekker puur. En ik weet het gewoon nog wel. Alleen ik vind het gewoon niet lekker.

Koosje: Ja, Milner is inderdaad altijd met naakte lichamen.

- Gesprek over andere reclames van Milner -

Beau: Nu hebben ze ook zo'n reclame met groente en kaas van Milner.
- legt uit -

Mary: Lekker gezond...

Koosje: Maar dit is ook weer dezelfde boodschap denk ik.

Beau: Brainwash.

Koosje: Het blijft gewoon steeds dezelfde boodschap.

Beau: Maar dan anders verpakt.

Maurits: Het is eigenlijk ook gewoon een wetenschap he adverteren.

Koosje: Is deze commercial ook typisch Nederlands?

Mary, Maurits, Beau: Nee, zou ik niet zeggen nee.

Beau: Nouja, het naakte misschien wel. En de kaas dan.

Koosje: Heb je ook zin om kaas te eten nu?

Beau: Ik vind Milner gewoon niet lekker.

Koosje: Ok, dit weet je nu al maar als het een soort kaas was die je nog niet kende?

25 MINUTEN

Maurits: Als ik kaas zou eten wel. Ik vind het een goeie reclame en ik zou wel om geweest zijn.

Anouk: Het is zo'n esthetisch mooie reclame dat ik minder zin heb in die kaas dan in die kwark van daarnet bijvoorbeeld.

Maurits: Ik heb dat juist andersom, ik heb dat veel meer met deze dan met de vorige.

Anouk: Oh, waarom? Ik weet niet...

Beau: Ik vind dit helemaal niet zo van, ooh lekker kaas!

Anouk: Voor mij is het meer dat die andere commercial een setting was waar je je in kon verplaatsen, dus voor mij werkt dat beter.

Maurits: Ik verplaats me in de dansers, misschien is dat het dan wel. Veel meer dan in die hardlopers.

Anouk: Oh, dat heb ik niet.

Koosje: Zijn er ook andere informatiebronnen over zuivel, behalve deze commercials?

Beau: Voedingscentrum.

Anouk: Ja.

Beau: Je hebt een soort organisatie bijvoorbeeld voor suiker en die komen dan met feiten over suiker, dat zal je ongetwijfeld ook voor de zuivelindustrie hebben.

Koosje: Stel dat je dan informatie zou gaan opzoeken op zulke websites, denk je dan gelijk o dat klopt wel die informatie.

Beau: Lastig.

Anouk: Ik denk dat ik dat wel snel zou denken ja, je hebt toch een soort vertrouwen dat ze niet liegen.

Koosje: Bij reclames heb je dat misschien minder omdat je weet ze proberen iets te verkopen?

Allen: Ja!

Mary: Ja heel vaak.

Beau: Ja!

Maurits: Heel weinig.

Beau: Maar wel toen je vegan werd toch, was je heel benieuwd wat kan ik dan eten.

Maurits: Nee... nee.

Beau: O wauw!

Maurits: Groente eet ik voornamelijk, daar is weinig onderzoek voor nodig.

Beau: Dat je dan denkt van goh ik wil toch die variatie misschien, niet de kaas maar wat kan ik dan wel eten in de plaats?

Maurits: Ik ben vegetarisch opgevoed dus ik heb nooit vlees moeten missen. En kaas heb ik nooit lekker gevonden, dus dat mis ik ook niet.

Anouk: Maar dat was wel het laatste wat je nog wel at...

Maurits: Ja, dat was door gemak.

Anderen: Ohja.

Beau: Dat herken ik wel ja.

Koosje: Maar jij zei Mary dat je heel veel opzoekt?

Mary: Ja, inderdaad gewoon omdat ik nieuwsgierig ben. Als ik iets wil weten, nu had ik voor een maand lang een programma meegedaan uit Hongarije en ik moest een shake drinken en ik wou weten of er iets inzit van dieren en wat er allemaal inzit. Die vrouw zei van niet, maar... aha!

Beau: Ja, toch?

Mary: Ja

Beau: Oh, schandalig.

Koosje: Maar voordat je veganist werd deed je dat dan ook?

Mary: Nee, echt niet.

Koosje: Het is gekomen toen je die keuze hebt gemaakt.

Mary: Jij let op wat je eet en je hebt een keuze gemaakt bewuster te eten.

Koosje: En jij zoekt eigenlijk nooit informatie op zei je (Anouk)?

Anouk: Ja, nou ik zat even te denken ik doe het soms wel maar waar, daar heb ik eigenlijk geen antwoord op. Ik zoek wel bijvoorbeeld regelmatig dingen op want mijn zusje is vegetarisch en vlees en vis eten we dus sowieso al niet en we eten dus eigenlijk heel weinig dierlijke dingen behalve kaas. Wat ik wel opzoek is welke dingen zijn goed om te eten als je vegetarisch bent. Zoals bijvoorbeeld wat zit er in peulvruchten...

30 MINUTEN

Beau: Dat je genoeg voedingsstoffen binnenkrijgt.

Anouk: Ja, maar ik weet niet waar ik dat dan vandaan haal. Random websites denk ik.

Koosje: (tegen Maurits) En jij zoekt nooit informatie op zei je?

Maurits: Nee..

Koosje: Terwijl je bent wel veel bezig met sport.

Maurits: Ik luister gewoon naar mijn lichaam. Als het te veel spierpijn heeft moet ik meer eiwitten nemen. Daar luister ik naar. Ik heb bijvoorbeeld jaren geen B12 bijgeslikt, terwijl dat het eerste is wat je moet doen als veganist, puur omdat mijn lichaam er niet om vroeg of tenminste niet met een signaal wat ik kon interpreteren. Nu doe ik het wel meer en beter, omdat je B12 tekort pas merkt jaren nadat je het tekort hebt opgebouwd.

Beau, Anouk: Hoe merk je dat dan?

Maurits: Dat weet ik niet, want zover is het niet gekomen.

Beau: Merk je ook verschil met dat je ze inneemt?

Maurits: Nee. Dat is het nadeel.

Koosje: Hoe weet je dan waar dat in zit (eiwitten)?

Maurits: Ik neem gewoon eiwit-shakes.

Koosje: Het is niet dat je kijkt van bepaalde groenten?

Anouk: Waar komt B12 uit?

Koosje: – legt uit B12 –

- Gesprek over B12 –

Koosje: Als jullie zuivelproducten zien liggen in de supermarkt, weten jullie, of denken jullie soms na over de weg die het heeft afgelegd tot de supermarkt?

Anouk: Well first there is a cow ...

Maurits: Is that what you think when you see a carton of milk? With meat, it is visualizing the animal for me. But with milk and cheese I don't immediately think animal as much as I do with the meat.

Anouk: Yeah that is true.

Mary: You might think of a cow, but that's it.

Koosje: Dus dan heb je een koe en het eindproduct, maar wat daartussen zit weet je dat niet?

Anouk: Nee.

Maurits: Je staat er gewoon niet bij stil.

Beau: Ik denk er wel steeds meer over na.

Koosje: Hoe komt dat?

Mary: Omdat je Koosje kent he, haha.

Beau: Nee, daarvoor al. Ik zal je eerlijk vertellen de eerste reden dat ik eigenlijk gestopt ben met vlees eten is dat vegetariërs dunner zijn dan mensen die vlees eten. Het is messed up ik weet het maar dat was in eerste instantie een reden om minder vlees te eten. Daarna kwamen documentaires over dat vlees. En dan denk ik we gaan naar de winkel

en daar koop je een kilo vlees. Je denkt er niet bij na. Terwijl als je een koe in de tuin had staan denk je wel 10 keer na voordat je dat beest gaat slachten. Maar je bent het zo gewend, als alle schappen vol zouden liggen met plantaardige vleesvervangers dan is dat standaard. Maar wat hij zegt met melk en kaas en boter, dat heb ik ook, daar denk ik dan weer niet zo aan, maar bij vlees wel.

Koosje: Dus je denkt niet van hoe is het nu eigenlijk in dit pakje gekomen?

Beau: Ik koop wel biologische eieren enz. Dat dan weer wel. Maar bij boter of kaas...

Koosje: Dan denk je niet na over hoe dat daar gekomen is?

Beau: Nee, nee.

Mary: Met melk heb ik dat wel, maar met boter en kaas helemaal niet.

Anouk: Met melk het meest, met kaas ook wel maar ook weinig en met boter eigenlijk niet.

Koosje: Omdat het eigenlijk steeds verder afraakt van... de bron ofzo?

Beau: Verder van het product, bij boter denk je niet meteen aan een koe.

Anouk: Nou koop ik dus bijvoorbeeld niet zo vaak melk, maar wel bijvoorbeeld yoghurt en dan denk ik wel dat ik dat koppel. Ik denk wel koe ergens. Niet van ok ik ga dit kopen want dit komt van een koe, maar wel dat de associatie er is. Maar niet zo bewust.

Koosje: Als je je even voorstelt, die koe geeft dus de melk wat uiteindelijk in de winkel komt, maar hoe is die situatie van een koe? We hebben bij Campina gezien, die staat lekker in de wei.

Beau: Niet goed, er wordt een machine onder haar gezet en het beest wordt helemaal leeggezogen. En omdat ze elke keer leeggezogen wordt blijft die melkproductie natuurlijk aangemaakt worden en die beesten hebben geen leven, nee.

Maurits: Na jaren te zijn doorgefokt om zoveel mogelijk melk te geven wilt het lichaam niet meer...

Beau: Gatver, sorry hoor ik heb even een soort bewustwording.

Koosje: Ja, ik denk dat weinig mensen er bij stil staan wat voor situatie die koe heeft.

Anouk: Ik denk dan te weten dat het een kut situatie is maar eigenlijk weet ik niet wat het is. Ik weet niet precies...

40 MINUTEN

Beau: Wil je het ook niet zien ergens?

Anouk: Ja...

Beau: Het is makkelijker om gewoon te kopen.

Anouk: Makkelijker niet, maar wel anders bij melk en bij vlees omdat bij vlees toch 1 en 1 is 2 en bij melk lijkt het een soort een stap verder te staan waardoor het makkelijker is om verder te staan en er niet over na te denken.

Maurits: Wat het ook kan zijn, dat was bij mij jarenlang het geval dat het voorbeeld van net van het doorfokken van dieren, ik had er niet bij stil gestaan dat het kon omdat het me zo vreselijk leek. Ik had niet gedacht dat mensen daartoe in staat zouden zijn, dus ging ik ervanuit dat mensen zoiets niet doen. Maar nu, ja tuurlijk kunnen ze dat want als er geld mee verdient kan worden dan proberen ze het.

Anderen knikken, ja ja.

Koosje: Je gaat soort van naïef vanuit dat dat niet gebeurt want mensen doen dat gewoon niet..

Maurits: Nee!

Mary: I heard from my colleague this morning that there is a bike route you can do with your partner or whatever in Rotterdam and they give you tasks to do, and one of the tasks is to go to a farm where they explain you how everything is going and she was telling me oh this is so nice you could see how they take away the little cow from the mother cow, this is so good and they tell you... And I told her, don't you realise, how can that be nice to you? She did not even think about it, because they explained it to her like this is really good for the mother cow because she can rest, and she does not have to feed the

little one. We just take the milk from here because she does not need it, and they just stood there and believed it. And she said to me: Oh my god you are right, Jesus shit... She was standing there and liking the whole story.

Anouk: But you assume they are telling the truth.

Mary: Yes, yes.

Maurits: You have this little cow which is cute.. and..

Koosje: Yes, you also have these Campina boerderijdagen where you can visit some farms and see how nice the cows are living.

Beau: My father has this story, which is messed up, he is not vegan or anything, but the milk the cow gives is for the baby so why should we drink it? It is the same as if we put all women in a stall on a machine on their tits and sell it.

Maurits: I like your dad.

- Anderen lachen -

Beau: But it is weird. Maar dat is omdat wat ons wijs is gemaakt. Geld.

Koosje: Ik wilde dus een kort filmpje laten zien waarbij het proces van melk produceren wordt uitgelegd.

Beau: Nou, je wordt vegan hierna.

Koosje: Nee, dat is niet de bedoeling ofzo.

Beau: Nooit meer roomboter!

- Iedereen lacht -

45 MINUTEN

➔ KIJK VIDEO VOOR REACTIES MENSEN:

50 MINUTEN

Koosje: Sorry, ik doe dit niet om jullie te schockeren ofzo.

Mary: You don't have to say sorry!

Beau: Ik wist dit echt niet hoor, wist jij dit?

Anouk: Niet in detail.

Beau: Ik vind dit echt heel erg.

Mary: The first time I sat down to watch earthlings I got to 10 minutes and I stopped it and was depressed for weeks. What I still don't get now is how people can fucking do this.

Anouk: Yeah, yeah.

Mary: How humans, intelligent beings can do this. That's what I don't get. If they would put machines do to it all ok.

Beau: Het is gewoon dierenmishandeling eigenlijk, nog erger dan dat. Gatverdamme ik wist dit echt niet.

Koosje: Er zijn minder heftige filmpjes, maar hij behandelt de UK maar dit gebeurt dus wel in Europa.

Beau: Dit is echt niet normaal man. Als ik dit ooit eerder had gezien.. Ik ga morgen echt geen latte machiato meer drinken, of een cappuccino. Dan denk ik echt van dit is toch niet normaal.

Koosje: Ik vind dit ook niet normaal, maar ik ken genoeg mensen die dit hebben gezien die alsnog zuivel consumeren.

Beau: Die vinden dit normaal? Of ze willen het niet meer zien?

Mary: Die willen dit niet weten.

Beau: Ik denk van je kunt ook gewoon een industrie hebben waarin je wel gewoon, nee.. ook niet.

Anouk: Ik merk wel dat als ik dit kijk dat ik zo erg schrik, dat ik in eerste instantie soort van iets ertussen zet zodat het niet meer...

Beau: Binnenkomt

Anouk: Zoiets...

Maurits: Wat misschien de boodschap minder effectief maakt omdat je een soort van weg schakelt?

Anouk: Nou, dat weet ik niet, ik denk dat dit nog lang door mijn hoofd gaat malen.

Mary: Ik heb een paar collega's die denken dat veganisme extreem is, maar...

Beau: Dit is extreem.

Mary: Ja inderdaad.

Beau: Ik wist dit echt niet hoor, wist jij dit?

Anouk: Nee, nee, ergens wist ik het wel maar niet zo extreem denk ik.

Beau: Hoe erg, dat een koe gewoon haar hele leven vanaf dat ze geboren wordt uitgebuit wordt. Pfffff...

Anouk: Nee, ik wist ook niet dat koeien de hele tijd kalveren moeten baren. Dat wist ik eigenlijk niet.

Mary: I did not know, before, that a cow has to be pregnant to give milk.

Beau: Precies, maar nu ga je er bij stil staan.

Anouk: Dat wist ik ook niet.

Mary: I was 25 when I realised it was not how I thought it was.

Anouk: Nee maar als je het dan zo hoort is het best wel logisch dat ze eerst een kind moet krijgen voordat ze melk kan geven, duh.

Koosje: Ja, eigenlijk werkt het bij elke species zo dat je moet zwanger worden om melk te krijgen en die melk krijg je eigenlijk voor een baby natuurlijk.

Beau: Tenzij ze denkt dat ze schijnzwanger is ofzo. Kunnen ze dat niet doen, dat koeien denken dat ze schijnzwanger zijn? Dit is echt fucking gestoord man, jesus!

55 MINUTEN

Mary: There is also a doctor that is doing research about veganism and vegetarianism that the milk you feed your baby is milk for the baby cows and it is actually growth food. Why the fuck would you eat that? And people get surprised why they get boobs, and why they get (fat).

Beau: And why they get cancer.

Koosje: Deze documentaire en heel veel andere informatie staat gewoon gratis online, waarom denken jullie dat niet meer mensen dit weten?

Beau: Dat wordt niet gepromoot door de overheid omdat ze er nog steeds geld aan verdienen. Daarom is het: geld, geld geld geld.

Koosje: Je hebt wel je eigen keuze om ernaar te kijken, het wordt niet afgeschermd.

Anouk: Mensen weten het ergens echt wel, net als ik. Ik wist dit ergens ook, nouja, dit wist ik niet precies maar ik wist heus wel...

Beau: Dat het kut was.

Anouk: Dat het niet oke was.

Maurits: Hmmhmm

Anouk: Dat wil je 'n soort van niet zien.

Beau: Uhu.

Koosje: Waarom wil je het niet zien?

Beau: Te confronterend!

Mary: Nu ga je dat niet meer doen denk ik, meeste mensen.

Maurits: Maar mensen houden niet van verandering.

Beau: Dat is wel grappig dat je zegt want ik ben vorige week naar een ding geweest waar ze longen lieten zien van mensen die rookten en ik zag dat en ik dacht ik steek geen peuk meer op, maar de volgende dag zat ik daar weer gewoon met een sigaret.

Koosje: Precies. Dat zijn dingen die ik persoonlijk heel interessant vind, want toen ik dit zag ben ik van de een op de andere dag overtuigd. Maar er zijn heel veel mensen die dat niet hebben.

Anouk: Ja dat is waar.

Koosje: Ik vind het interessant hoe je dat dan soort van blokt, of ik weet niet wat er gebeurt.

Beau: Mensen gaan dat toch een beetje negeren, ze denken het is er toch al. Ik kan nog steeds melk kopen. Ik ben er echt een beetje beroerd van hoor.

Koosje: Sorry Beau. Dat was niet de bedoeling. Ik denk dus dat het ook te maken heeft met dat je bijvoorbeeld kaas ziet in de supermarkt en je ziet melk...

Beau: En niet waar het vandaan komt.

Maurits: Uhu!

Koosje: Die scheidslijn is... heel duidelijk.

Beau: Heel groot ja. Ik denk dat met alles wat van dieren af komt, en dat heb ik nu wel met vlees maar ik denk als je het, hoe meer je je er bewust van bent. Stel je voor je zou met z'n alleen koe hebben, ga je echt niet zomaar die koe slachten hoor als je die elke dag staat te voeren.

Maurits: Inderdaad.

Koosje: Nou, ik moet zeggen dat doen ze dus nu in Gent in verschillende wijken, dat ze varkens hebben, die voeren en knuffelen ze en dan gaan ze aan het einde van het jaar die varkens met z'n allen opeten.

Anouk: Ja?

Koosje: Ik snap dat echt niet. Terwijl sommige mensen zeggen van het is juist goed dat je een andere soort connectie hebt met het vlees wat je eet.

Beau: Ik zou dat toch wel heel apart vinden.

Maurits: Er zijn geweldig interessante cijfers tussen de mensen verantwoordelijk voor het doden van dieren en depressies en mentale gezondheidsklachten die zij ondergaan.

Anouk: Ja?

Maurits: Ja, wij kunnen het amper kijken. Er zijn mensen die het doen, dag na dag na dag. Ze worden zo emotioneel afgestompt als het maar kan.

Beau: Ja, jezus, pfffff!

Koosje: Nu dat jullie dit hebben gezien, is dat iets waar jullie iets mee gaan doen die informatie. Zo ja, wat? Jij zegt ik ga nooit meer latte machiato drinken Beau...

Beau: Morgen zou ik het bijvoorbeeld niet doen, maar ik ken mezelf en het heeft ook te maken met kijk, jullie zeggen soja is een optie maar voor mij is dat in principe geen optie want ik mag dat niet hebben.

Koosje: Maar haver wel.

Beau: Haver wel, maar dat zou ik dan alleen bij de coffee company kunnen halen.

Anouk: Nee hoor op heel veel plekken.

Beau: Echt? Dat is dan ook zo iets, dat weet ik niet.

Mary: Coconutmilk, almond,... cashewmilk.

Beau: Roomboter vind ik heel moeilijk. Dat vind ik echt.. Maar als je dan biologische roomboter zou kopen is het dan ook nog steeds?

Koosje: Ja. Hij zegt het helemaal aan het begin van die film hoor, maar ze hebben bijna alleen maar uitsluitend gefilmd op UK organic farms. Dit is 'beter leven'.

Maurits: Ja.. beter leven, dat slaat ook nergens op.

Beau: O, my god!

Koosje: Nee dat weet ik wel, maar je hebt zo'n keurmerk.

Beau en Anouk: O, wauw!

Koosje: Ik wil niet zeggen dat dit de standaard is, dat probeer ik ook niet maar dit is natuurlijk wel een deel van de realiteit.

Anouk: Hoe heeft hij toegang gekregen daar?

Koosje: Dit is allemaal stiekem gefilmd.

Beau: Door mensen die daar werken.

1 UUR

Mary: Bijna niemand mag daar komen. I've seen this guy who was in jail 9 times because he got into these farms. I really like the guy and all the documentaries he did. I really tried as a normal person, when I became vegan I wanted to go into a farm like this but you cannot get in. Whatever you lie, I also made up I am a journalist but no, no, no, no, no.

Anouk: That also says a lot.

Mary: You cannot. Go try.

Beau: That is really weird. Dat betekent dat het niet transparant is en er dus iets is wat je niet mag weten. Ik wordt hier voornamelijk heel erg boos over. Ja. Wie zijn die mensen om te bepalen hoe een dier z'n leven leidt. Uitgebuit.

Mary: It's in the law.

Koosje: Ja het is in de wet natuurlijk hoe mensen mogen omgaan met dieren.

Beau: Ik schrik er heel erg van want we hebben een vertekend beeld over biologisch. Dat je denk o ja als het biologisch is dan is het verantwoord.

Maurits: De Campina reclame he.

Beau: Ja. Maar dat was niet biologisch toch?

Maurits: Nee, maar dat is wel een bepaald beeld.

Beau: Precies. En dan zeg je nu van dit is bij biologische bedrijven, dan denk ik WHAT THE FACK. Kan je nagaan hoe het er bij de reguliere instellingen er aan toe gaat.

Koosje: Dat is ook zijn punt, dat mensen denken o bij biologisch valt het vast beter mee.

Beau: Ik vind dit al niet aan te zien.

Anouk: Uhu.

Mary: I also told Koosje that my brother was here for 8 years and he worked in a meat company. Do you know what a biologisch chicken is? CHANGE THE STICKER. That's it. More air, more colour on it.

Koosje: Daar wordt dus duidelijk ook veel mee gesjoemeld eigenlijk. Maar goed ik wou ook nog iets anders bespreken, want dit gaat over de productie maar we hebben het ook gehad over de consumptie van melk, wat dat met je doet. Daar wil ik ook een kort dingetje over laten zien.

Maurits: Gaat 'ie? (tegen Beau)

Beau: Ja.

Koosje: Sorry, ik heb al vaker zulk soort filmpjes gezien en ik kan er ook nog steeds niet aan wennen.

Beau: Eerlijk gezegd denk ik dat ik wel vaker zulk soort filmpjes zou moeten zien eigenlijk voor mezelf. Want dan weet ik alweer, dan gaat het drie dagen goed en daarna denk ik aaaaah joh, of mensen in mijn omgeving, aaah joh drink gewoon lekker die koffie met melk dat is toch lekker en dan denk ik ja inderdaad het is heel erg ik heb het 1 keer gezien, maar hup daar ga ik weer.

Anouk: Daarom bleef ik een soort van expres wel kijken omdat ik dacht dat is goed voor me.

Maurits: Jij hield het het langst vol van ons allemaal.

Anouk: Ja..

Beau: Ja ik trok het echt niet.

Anouk: Nee, nee snap ik wel.

Beau: Wat gebeurde er nog, wat hebben jullie nog gezien?

Anouk: Nou, het neerschieten...

Beau: In het hoofd?

Anouk: Ja.

Maurits: Het is ook heel suf trouwens maar ik heb helemaal niet van zulk soort documentaires gezien en dat verantwoordde ik door het feit van nou, ik ben al om. Ik hoef dit niet te zien omdat ik al veganist bent.

Beau: Dat is mooi.

Maurits: Nouja, je kan altijd meer doen. Je kan ook zeggen van ja je kan harder mensen proberen overtuigen. Je kan mee proberen die slacht dingen...

Beau: Ja maar het komt altijd uit die persoon zelf. Jij kan nog zo hard iets willen maar het moet altijd uit die persoon zelf komen.

Maurits: Nouja goed maar kijk wat Koosje heeft bereikt puur door jou dit te laten zien.

Beau: Ja... Dat is wel waar.

Maurits: Je kan meer effect hebben puur...

Anouk: Je kan ook effect hebben puur door te zijn, want zeg maar neem mij en Koosje als voorbeeld. Ik ben geen veganist, Koosje wel. Koosje heeft nooit gezegd, mensen die niet veganistisch eten die haat ik en die zijn super dom.

Maurits: Dat klinkt niet als Koosje nee.

Anouk: Maar gewoon puur omdat ik weet dat zij veganistisch eet en dat zij dan daar vragen over stelt of wij gesprekken daarover hebben en ik daar meer over te weten kom. Niet dat zij mij lectures geeft maar gewoon er zijn ofzo.

Maurits: Ja!

1 UUR 5 MINUTEN

Anouk: Ik ben er wel veel meer over gaan nadenken en ik maak andere keuzes dan een paar jaar terug. Terwijl je kan ook denken ik ga het zelf googelen, dat kan ook maar ik denk dat het wel helpt, in mijn geval dan, om iemand van dichtbij te kennen en daar iets meer op persoonlijk niveau over te horen wat er dan weer voor gaat zorgen dat je zelf meer gaat opzoeken. Tot een paar jaar terug was dat iets in mijn hoofd wat, ik wist niet wat het was, het was heel ver weg.

Koosje: Ja ik kan me wel voorstellen dat als iemand die je niet kent het daar over heeft je denkt van...

Anouk: Het zal wel.

Koosje: Het is nooit mijn bedoeling om mensen per se te overtuigen, maar wat ik wel graag doe is mensen aan het denken zetten.

Beau: Nou, dat is gelukt hoor.

Koosje: En dan bedoel ik niet alleen met dit maar met alles wat je eet. Wat ben je eigenlijk aan het eten en dat vind ik leuk om te doen.

Beau: Dit is alleen maar van zuivel...

Maurits: Ja... precies.

Beau: Kan je nagaan van alle andere shit. Dit is echt misselijk makend.

Koosje: Ik vind dat gewoon persoonlijk interessant en ik vind het ook interessant dat weinig mensen daar eigenlijk over weten. Ik weet er zelf ook nog niet alles over maar ik vind het interessant om daar samen over na te denken.

Anouk: Wat denk je van, vind jij persoonlijk van mensen die bijvoorbeeld wel bewust mee om gaan maar zeg dat ze 1 keer per week kaas zouden eten.

Koosje: Ik heb daar niet per se een oordeel over, ik ben niet de vegan-police maar wat ik wel, ik ga dan wel denken van goh als jij aan de ene kant een verhaal vertelt aan mensen en dan 6 dagen per week een beeld uitdraagt en ook naar jezelf toe maar die ene dag niet, hoe je dat naar jezelf en naar anderen toe kunt verantwoorden. Als iemand dat kan en als iemand daar gelukkig mee is, ik ga daar niks over zeggen maar ja.. Ik persoonlijk snap niet helemaal hoe dat met elkaar verbind.

Maurits: Ik was vroeger actiever dan ik nu ben lid van de Partij voor de Dieren, en die gaf dan als voorbeeld van liever inconsequent goed dan consistent slecht. Als 6 dagen per week veganist, en dan die ene dag niet, is nog steeds beter dan helemaal niet. Terwijl de jongeren partij, die was net radicaler zegt van je kan toch niet goed praten van nou die ene keer in de week dat jij vreselijke daden verricht, prima hou dat vol. Sla jij je vrouw maar 1 keer in de week, wat super! Je bent bezig met iets slechts en dat kan je niet aanmoedigen. Dat kan ik ook snappen.

Koosje: Het is allebei heel begrijpelijk.

Maurits: Alle leed wat dieren minder hebben met 6 dagen... voor de dieren maakt het niet uit. Jouw beweegredenen maakt hen niks uit. Het is het moeilijke.

Mary: It's also about how you grow up. When I am home with my mom, she cooks something I am not going to disrespect her and no teat it. When I am going home I have my own choice.

Beau: Het is maar net wat we gewend zijn.

Mary: Yeah, and she even cooked for me without meat and everything. But I'm not going to say no.

Beau: Het is maar net wat we gewend zijn. Als ze gewend was geweest dat niet te doen dan...

Mary: It's because I respect her.

Beau: Als alles in de schappen plantaardig was geweest dan is dat normaal, dan is dit niet normaal. Ik ben er echt wel een beetje van geschrokken, bah.

1 UUR 10 MINUTEN

Anouk: Doet me een beetje denken aan zo'n documentaire die draaide bij etnografilm over een varkensboer, was ook naar, alles gefilmd tot het slachthuis. Over transitie dat de boer er mentaal zoveel last van had. Verantwoord vlees was zijn idee. Toen hij het proces doorging dat hij zich steeds meer vragen ging stellen waarom stuur ik wel mijn varkens maar niet mijn hond. Hij kapte er dus mee. Daar moest ik aan denken. De mensen die dat doen, hoe kun je dat doen. Dat kan dus ook helemaal niet.

Koosje: Dit filmpje gaat over de gevolgen die het kan hebben voor je lichaam.

Anouk: O dat is beter, dat zijn cijfers.

➔ KIJK FILMPJE VOOR REACTIES

Beau: Ik geloof het wel als hij het zo zegt.

Mary: He is really good.

Beau: Geef maar een keer die naam door.

Koosje: Er zit natuurlijk van alles in melk, ook minder positieve dingen, zoals jullie net zagen.

Beau: Ze zeggen dus eigenlijk dat in melk een groeihormoon zit die kanker veroorzaakt.

Koosje: Ja, het zorgt ervoor dat cellen gaan groeien, we gaan groeien door melk en als we al gegroeid zijn gaan andere dingen groeien. Die oudere man die je net zag heeft onderzoek gedaan naar kankercellen, en die gingen groeien wanneer ze melk (of een bestanddeel uit melk) hieraan toevoegden en het werd weer kleiner als ze het wegnamen.

Anouk: Echt?

Koosje: Ja.

Beau: Dat zit dus ook in onze kaas, onze boter? Wat een eye opener.

Koosje: Vinden jullie dit wel geloofwaardig zo'n filmpje?

Beau: Ja, ik vind dit autoriteiten als ik ze zo zie.

Anouk: Ja, ja.

1 UUR 15 MINUTEN

Maurits: Ik ben een beetje sceptischer.

Koosje: Dat mag.

Maurits: Ook al hoort dit mijn kamp te zijn, denk ik dat ik wel... Ik weet niet ik geloof mensen niet meer zo snel. Ik denk ook dat beide kanten van dit issue bereid zijn de waarheid een beetje te draaien om gelijk te krijgen. Ik denk niet dat het kamp veganist nu zoveel heiliger is. Ongetwijfeld zullen ze goeie punten hebben maar ik geloof ze niet direct.

Mary: Maar wat geloof je niet?

Beau: Denk je dat het aangedikt is?

Maurits: Ja, ik geloof dat er genoeg wetenschapper zijn die bereid zijn te vertellen dat melk geen enkel probleem heeft.

Beau: Dat is altijd het ding, dan zeggen ze van nu, was pure chocola super gezond, suiker was slecht maar daar komen ze nu allemaal een deel van terug. Dus op een gegeven moment weet je niet meer wat je moet geloven.

Maurits: Dat is met wetenschappers inderdaad, maar die koe is echt.

Beau: Maar wat is hun belang?

Maurits: Ja, tuurlijk heeft het altijd met geld te maken.

Beau: Maar die koe, inderdaad ja.

Maurits: Dat is moeilijker om te ontkennen.

Anouk: Ja.

Maurits: We zijn allemaal bereid om te geloven dat dat gebeurt.

Anouk: Ja, ja want je ziet het.

Maurits: Je ziet het inderdaad. Dit zijn mensen die een theorie hebben, weet ik veel hoe celgroei werkt.

Anouk: Je kan het ook moeilijk checken.

Maurits: Ja precies, maar dit dat die koeien dat doormaken dat wil ik wel geloven.

Anouk: Ik denk dat dat ook wel goed is om sceptisch te blijven.

Beau: Bah, wat vies.

Mary: Yeah, it is about money.

Beau: Altijd, met alles.

Mary: The town I come from, the neighbours had a cow, who was probably pregnant and my brother and I walked there and got 1 liter milk and when we got there we always got a glass. The baby cow looked good, they only had one cow and one calf and we all got milk. So a cow has a lot of milk, but since we are with a lot of people there is not enough for everybody.

Beau: Ze zeggen toch dat als een koe zwanger is dat de uiers zo vol zijn dat ze afgemelkt moet worden, is dat ook zo?

Mary: Dat is ook zo.

Beau: Dan zou je dus in principe die melk wel kunnen gebruiken.

Koosje: Dat is pas na de bevalling, dat is bij mensen ook.

Beau: Oh, ok. Dus dan zou je dat eigenlijk ook aan het kalfje moeten geven?

Mary: Yeah, yeah.

Koosje: Dat is bij de meeste mensen ook zo, je kan lang doorgaan met borstvoeding.

Mary: Yes, with humans it is the same. My mom had a lot of milk, and the neighbour did not have so she gave milk to her baby. So we are like milk sisters, because she had my mom's milk.

Beau: Jeetje!

Koosje: Was deze informatie al bekend bij jullie? Jij wist het niet, jij wist het ook niet, jij wist het wel (Mary), jij wist het ook niet of wel (Maurits)?

Maurits: Nee ik wist het niet, maar nog steeds zet ik er mijn vraagtekens bij.

Koosje: Gaan jullie iets doen met deze informatie?

Beau: Ik zat gelijk aan mijn koelkast te denken, roomboter heb ik nog, ik had nog room die ik nu dus ga weggooien. Spek ga ik weggooien.

Anouk: Ik denk wel dat ik het erover ga hebben want voor mij was het een heel nieuw feit, met Merel mijn zusje ga ik het er dus over hebben want ik vind het interessant want zij is streng vegetarisch.

Beau: Dus geen vlees en vis, maar wel melkproducten?

Anouk: Ja. Ze zegt ook letterlijk, daar wil ik niet over nadenken want dat kan ik niet aan. Ik wil niet, ik weet dat er films zijn maar ik wil daar niet over nadenken. Ik denk dat ze dit bijvoorbeeld ook helemaal niet weet.

1 UUR 20 MINUTEN

Koosje: Ok, nu gaan we nog een keer hier naar kijken.

→ KIJK REACTIES FILMPJE

Koosje: Hoe denken jullie nu over deze commercial?

Anouk: Hypocriet!

Beau: Ik weet niet meer wat ik moet denken. Maar je kan niet ontkennen wat we net hebben gezien van die koe.

Anouk: Ja, het was al een gelikte commercial sowieso maar als je het nu nog een keer kijkt is het een soort van extra fucked up.

Beau: Bijna of ze je gewoon in de maling zitten te nemen, stelletje viezerikken!

Mary: I am really curious about who makes these commercials. Do they know about this?

Anouk: Exactly!

Mary: Or do they really think that this is fucking good for you?

Koosje: I think they do...

Anouk: That would be interesting.

Koosje: Denken jullie dat er iets kan veranderen?

Beau: Ja zeker wel.

Maurits: Ja.

Anouk: De consumptie bedoel je?

Koosje: Ja. En productie, alles.

Beau: Alles kan veranderd worden.

Anouk: Jawel, maar moeilijk.

Mary: Ja.

Beau: Het is zo stom, wat is zeg want we gaan naar de supermarkt, je koopt vlees, kaas en melk en als het allemaal plantaardig was geweest was dat normaal geweest. Het is helemaal uit de hand gelopen door een stelletje teringleijers die geld willen verdienen.

- Iedereen lacht -

Koosje: Ja, ok, maar kan je zelf ook iets doen?

Beau: Ja, zelf het verschil maken.

Anouk: Als steeds meer mensen het niet meer willen en niet meer kopen, in het ideale geval levert het dan niks meer op en weet ik veel dan gaat de hele industrie op z'n gat en dan hebben we gewoon in onze achtertuin een koe en dan heeft die af en toe alleen maar melk over.

Maurits: Hmm...

Beau: Ja, dan heb je af en toe een kaasje en dan woohooooow we hebben een kaasje!

Maurits: Wachten tot de industrie op z'n gat ligt. Volgens mij is dat al zo, het zijn alleen subsidies die het nog levend houden.

Beau: Maar het is wel aan het veranderen, er veranderd steeds meer.

Anouk: Waarom wordt het gesubsidieerd?

Maurits: Omdat er heel veel banen in zitten denk ik. Daar hebben we aan CDA te danken.

Anouk: Ok.

Mary: Even if people can go vegan, but I think it is not going to change. There is so much money involved, taxes, government. It just cannot.

Beau: Als we met z'n alles planten gaan eten.

Mary: Yeah, but that are a lot of people.

Beau: Ja, maar als je alle mensen in zou zetten, die ook nodig zijn om die melk te produceren, hoeveel water en grond. Steek dat in groente ofzo.

Anouk: Zijn er cijfers van hoeveel veganisten er zijn?

Beau: In Nederland zijn het er nu 100.000, geregistreerd.

Anouk: Ik heb het idee dat het bekender is dan vroeger.

Maurits: Absoluut!

Beau: Ik stond dus op een markt en ik had een spel gemaakt over veganisme o.a. en Pitagoras was een veganist, de Romeinen waren veganist.

Anouk: Hoe weet je dat?

Beau: Heb ik opgezocht. Het is ons dus gewoon ingeprent dat we vlees nodig hebben om sterk te worden.

Maurits: O, ja dat absoluut.

Anouk: Zeker jij als man zijnde toch?

Maurits: Ja, het wordt enorm gekoppeld aan mannelijkheid, dat klopt.

Beau: Bij ons in het gezin was het heel normaal om koolhydraten, groenten en vlees. Bij jullie ook?

Anouk: Nee, niet altijd. Mijn vader hield er wel heel lang aan vast want het was toch wel super goed en lekker. Op een gegeven moment werden m'n zusjes vegetarisch en toen aten we het minder en ging mijn vader altijd zitten mokken aan tafel.

Maurits: Ja, mannen gaan altijd als laatste om.

Beau: Ja!

Koosje: Hoe komt dat denk je?

Maurits: Ik denk oprecht dat wij gewoon veel minder empathisch vermogen hebben, het duurt bij ons veel langer om de connectie te leggen tussen dit en leed.

Mary: Yes, I also see it with my brother who says, don't think I'm gonna be a vegetarian, I am not a woman. It is also mentaliteit.

Beau: But he stoped eating meat?

Mary: No, my other brother.

Anouk: Maar waarom is het matcho?

Mary: Yes, it is matcho.

Beau: Dat is toch ook als je naar zo'n steakhouse gaat, ik hou niet eens van biefstuk. Dat deed ik vroeger ook wel eens hoor. Dan nam ik 500 gram steak, ik frat het helemaal op. Ik at evenveel als de mannen, we hadden altijd een wedstrijd, ik dacht als hun het kunnen dan kan ik het ook. Die namen een T-bone steak van een kilo, we konden niet meer lopen, maar haha wat was het lekker. Ik moet de hele avond plat maar haha wat was het lekker.

Maurits: Ik zie het al helemaal voor me.

Beau: Belachelijk, belachelijk.

Mary: We also did not eat a lot of meat because we did not have a lot of money. So poor families also eat not a lot of meat because it is a luxury, in Hungary at least, not in Rotterdam.

Anouk: True, true.

Beau: Nou, dankjewel hoor. Intressant hoor!

Koosje: Ik wou nog dingen vragen over feminisme, dus ik ga er toch nog een paar vragen over stellen. Kunnen jullie, wat jullie weten van feminisme, linken aan wat we net hebben besproken?

Beau: Als er genoeg vrouwen waren in de top in de overheid zou dit nooit gebeuren.

Koosje: Denk je dat?

Maurits: Er zijn ook vrouwen die vlees eten...

Beau: 100%, want vrouwen, jawel, maar er zijn genoeg vrouwen in functies die blijven achter. Er komen er wel steeds meer maar op hele hoge bepalende functies zijn er geen vrouwen. Die worden gewoon niet toe gelaten. Waarom denk je dat vrouwen gemiddeld 500 minder betaald krijgt dan een man?

Koosje: Denk je dat dit dan niet aan de hand zou zijn?

Maurits: Waarom?

1 UUR 30 MINUTEN

Beau: Ik geloof dat want een vrouw, zij geeft zelf, als een vrouw dit ziet, tenzij ze ijskoud is. Ze heeft kinderen zelf en ze ziet dat er op deze manier een koe uitgebuit wordt, bevalt en dat het kind gelijk wordt afgenomen dan denk ik dat die vrouw empatisch is en kan inleven, dan denkt ze, dit gaan we niet doen, dat gaan we anders doen. Dat geloof ik wel.

Maurits: Dat weet ik niet hoor, wie is de huidige minister van landbouw?

Beau: Dat is een man toch?

Maurits: Ik zoek het op, het is een vrouw.

Beau: Maar weet ze dit?

Maurits: Tuurlijk weet ze dit!

Beau: Maarja, die wordt gewoon omgekocht.

Koosje: Maar goed, ik bedoel, wij hebben genderstudies gedaan, een grote feministen-club, waar maar 2 mensen veganist waren. Mijn visie is dat dat dieren er ook bij horen qua gelijkheid.

Beau: Dat zeggen ze toch ook dat als dieren naar de slacht gaan dat ze dat voelen.

Koosje: Ik vind dat dat er dus bij hoort, bij feminisme.

Anouk: Ik snap heel goed waarom het er goed bij past, of hoort. Omdat het in feminisme vaak gaat over dat de mens het centrum van alles wordt gezien en dat toch ook een vreemd uitgangspunt is. Er wordt veel gewerkt aan mensen buiten de, antropocine. Dat je dan de mens ziet als de baas, dat is een groot iets in feminisme, dat je de mens niet per se ziet als de baas.

Beau: Ja, dus het hoort wel bij feminisme, omdat je het niet zo ziet dat zij de macht hebben dan.

Anouk: Ja, de machtsverhouding. Dus ik snap het heel goed.

Maurits: Ik was bij VegFest en die gaf hetzelfde verhaal vanuit het opzicht over discriminatie, dat het gaat om mensen die dingen als objecten zien en dat was vroeger ook zo met de slavernij, hoe we vrouwen benaderen en nu hoe we dieren benaderen. Dus slavernij was een moeilijke strijd, feminisme was een moeilijke strijd en dit zal ook een moeilijke strijd worden.

Beau: Over 50 jaar eet niemand meer vlees.

Koosje: Ik zou het mooi vinden.

Beau: Wat gebeurt er dan met alle dieren?

Koosje: Die zijn er niet, want die zijn er nu zoveel voor ons natuurlijk.

Maurits: Als er nu in een grote hak iedereen veganist is zal je een moment hebben van wat doen we hier mee. Maar het zal altijd een geleidelijk proces zijn.

Koosje: Hebben jullie nog vragen? Of willen jullie vertellen wat jullie ervan vonden?

Beau: Ik ben echt emotioneel ervan. Ik ga straks nog een potje janken in mijn bed.

Maurits: Had je dit verwacht?

Beau: Nee, helemaal niet want ik had wel een beetje meegekregen wat ze ging doen maar ik dacht ik ben best bewust. Gewoon kaas is lekker dacht ik, nu voel ik me belazerd. Ik vind het heel misselijk. Walging.

Maurits: Je bent misschien ook emotioneel verrast? Mary en ik wisten dit al.

Beau: Ik had geen idee. Je weet wel het zal niet chique zijn maar dit is dierenmishandeling en uitbuiting. Dit is niet meer ethisch. Dit kan je niet meer goed praten.

Mary: Dit kan ook niet iedereen kijken hoor (documentaires). There are also documentaries with more factual things, because people don't want to see the gross stuff. I can understand them, but it is important.

Anouk: Ik vind het ook interessant als we het over feminisme en veganisme hebben, de weerstand die het bij allebei oproept. Allebei ingaan tegen normen, gewoontes.

Beau: Mensen denken ook vaak aan de stereotypering als ze denken aan feministen en veganisten. Hoe we denken dat het is maar dat weten we helemaal niet.

- Gesprek over een film maken samen -

Anouk: Ik vond het eigenlijk heel kut, maar dat had ik wel verwacht. Maar ik vind ook dat ik zulke dingen moet weten. En ik moet blijven kijken.

Beau: Jij bleef wel doorkijken ja. Denk je dat je dit nog meeneemt?

Anouk: Ja, als ik in een gezelschap ben doe ik de knop uit ik kan m'n reactie beheersen. Ik vond het interessant.

Maurits: Ik vond het best wel een gezellig avond, afgezien van de minder leuke gedeeltes.

- Gesprek over mening opdringen -

Anouk: Ik merk wel omdat ik weet dat jullie alle 3 veganistisch eten dat ik dan bewust wordt van wel soort van wat ik dan dus niet zo doe.

Koosje: Ja een gesprek met allemaal vleeseters zou het anders zijn natuurlijk.

Anouk: Ja, ik denk dat ik me dan de genuanceerde persoon zou voelen terwijl ik me nu de barbaar voel. Je vertelt het toch anders, of anders antwoord geeft.

Maurits: Feminist en veganisten worden echt aangevallen altijd. Een ander schiet gelijk in de aanval als hij dat hoort.

Anouk: Ja het is confronterend, want ik ben het eens met de redenen die jullie noemen en ik snap het maar ik doe het niet. Dat zorgt dat je toch andere antwoorden geeft. Niet dat ik daardoor dingen niet heb gezegd, maar je formuleert je antwoorden anders.