Stories of Veganism: An Ecolinguistic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Veganism is an often maligned but ultimately essential way of living if our planet is to have a future. With animal agriculture being the single largest contributor to greenhouse gasses and environmental degradation, veganism is the most immediate and effective way to begin reducing our impact on the natural world before the systems that support life collapse beyond repair. Therefore, encouraging more people to adopt a vegan lifestyle is imperative. It is also understandably difficult. The center of the vegan lifestyle is diet and diet is connected to many aspects of life that are most important for us, including health and nutrition, family, culture, and identity. In addition to that, negative representations of veganism in media help to discourage non-vegans from making that already difficult decision. If veganism were represented in a more positive way, more people may be inclined to consider it in the interest of health: the health of our bodies, the health of our minds, the health of our communities and the health of our planet. To that end, my overall goal in this research is to find positive representations of veganism to replace the negative representations in the interest of encouraging more people to become vegan.

To conduct my ecolinguistic research, I used purposeful sampling to identify sources with a high potential for containing representations of veganism. My sources include full-length online news articles, online user comments, a television program, a podcast, a documentary film and cookbooks. I linguistically analyzed my data using the linguistic theories outlined in the ecolinguistics framework, and subsequently uncovered 67 representations of veganism in total. After evaluating those representations against my ecological value system, I coded 38 representations as destructive (negative) and 29 representations as beneficial (positive). My findings indicate that the most common destructive representation was VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. It was linguistically constructed primarily with facticity patterns and appraisal patterns. Inversely, my findings indicate that the most common beneficial representation was VEGANISM IS HEALTHY, which was linguistically constructed primarily with narrative structures and appraisal patterns. Most of the beneficial representations inversely align with the most prominent destructive representations. Overall, through this research, I was able to identify some of the most useful linguistic constructions to communicate the beneficial representations of veganism, and have offered some real-world evidence of their success.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of this thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other educational institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an ecolinguistic study of the representation of veganism, an often maligned but ultimately essential way of living if our planet is to have a future. Full disclosure: I am vegan. The reason why I am sharing this personal information is because my identity and experiences as a vegan influence my research. They shape it and inform it in meaningful ways and are also sometimes reflected in it. Instead of being understood as traditional 'researcher bias', my identity and experiences have the potential to allow me to see and understand aspects of the research that a non-vegan perhaps could not. As Damaskinidis (2017) notes, 'Qualitative researchers' personal involvement could highlight hidden aspects of social life and provide insight...' (p. 1228). I trust that this will bear out, from data collection to analysis and a discussion of my research findings.

I have been a vegan for about 12 years now. I decided to become vegan around the age of 40 shortly after my first child was born. At the same time, I got my first full-time position at a public university in Japan. I had been contemplating the vegan lifestyle for almost a full decade before finally making the overnight decision. One of the deciding factors was the sudden amount of responsibility that I felt, to my children and to my students. I thought to myself: How could I possibly hold these positions of responsibility as a parent and as a teacher if I wasn't a responsible person as a human being, as a participant in the natural world?

Another deciding factor occurred in the year 2000, about ten years beforehand. I met someone at work who would become a lifelong friend. He was vegetarian at the time and I was that person making meat jokes at lunchtime. He would laugh but he would talk too, telling me about why he became vegetarian and what it meant to him and to the animals. In one of those moments he told me something that I would never forget. He told me that factory farming and the exploitation of animals by humans would be looked at in the future in the same way that we look at African slavery today. If I remember correctly, he was referencing Peter Singer (2002) who said:

> How many Southern slaveholders were persuaded by the arguments used by the Northern abolitionists, and accepted by nearly all of us today? Some, but not many. (p. xxiv)

The thought that I, at the age of 30, could be a willing participant in an atrocity the magnitude of animal exploitation was acutely shocking. I wondered if I would I have been a Southern slaveholder. I would like to think not, yet there I was participating in the abuse and exploitation of literally trillions of animals every year. And it still took me a decade to become vegan. Today when my students tell me that they could never become vegan, I smile and tell them not to worry, that it took me a while to make that change and that after a while they might make that change too. I try planting seeds in their minds. I understand that the decision to become vegan does not happen overnight. Becoming vegan takes time, effort and flexibility. It also takes understanding and support from family members and friends and colleagues. This is one of the reasons why we need more beneficial stories of veganism.

I sometimes wonder if becoming vegan is an act of altruism. I don't know, but I am thinking that it doesn't matter. The results, the effects for animals and ecology and the natural world are the same, regardless of motivation. I admit, though, that being vegan makes me feel good. It makes me feel more alive. I feel empowered knowing that my decision to become vegan has had a beneficial impact on the natural world by removing from it some of the cruelty and abuse. I also feel energized because I feel like I have entered the cycle of life. I feel connected to it now that my impact on it has decreased. When I take a walk through the park, I feel connected to the ducks and the cormorants, to the praying mantids and the cicada, to the tadpoles and the turtles, to the rivers and the bamboo forest. It is a powerful feeling to be a part of such an amazing ecological system of life.

Some people ask me if it is difficult being vegan in Japan, and I answer no, but for others maybe yes. The biggest lifestyle adjustment, I tell them, the biggest challenge in becoming vegan is food and everything else that comes with it. People eat often, with others, and sometimes under strict religious or cultural guidelines. Changing one's eating habits affects more than one's nutritional needs. There are loved ones to consider and the cultural traditions that helped to shape us. Thankfully in some ways my vegan journey began and continues in Japan, a country in which I have no past, no distant relatives, no cultural traditions invested with memories of family, friends and childhood. My partner is Japanese, though, and my two children are American-Japanese, and together we are forging our own place in Japanese society, our own less harmful, ecologically aware vegan life, sharing meals with extended family over the holidays, going to festivals, having picnics, inviting friends over for dinner and drinks. We are, though, admittedly rare.

In the mythological world, transitioning to a vegan lifestyle could be understood as 'accepting the call to adventure', where 'the familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideals, and emotional patterns no longer fit; the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand' (Campbell, 2008, p. 43). The 'familiar life horizon' is eating animals. It is an 'old concept'. And the threshold is that moment of transition from meat consumption to a plant-based diet. It is actually a simple narrative pattern of equilibrium, conflict, and new equilibrium (Todorov and Weinstein, 1969). Every vegan not raised as vegan has experienced this pattern: Life eating animals, deciding to become vegan, life not eating animals.

In a different situation, we might imagine a reality in the distant past, less fraught with technology and the pursuit of material gain. In such a situation, transitioning to veganism might have been considered a 'ritual' in which the participant 'ensures that the relation between human society and the larger society of beings is balanced and reciprocal' (Abram, 2017, p. 7). Becoming vegan does offer the possibility of that intermediary role.

In this contemporary, technology-laden, overpopulated, fast-paced, polluted world that we live in, we have lost those meaningful roles of hero and shaman. I am a linguist, though, and I remember that Halliday (2001) told us, the applied linguistics community, that we may not 'hold the key' to solving the problems of 'classism, growthism, destruction of species, pollution and the like', but that 'we ought to be able to write the instructions for its use' (p. 199). That is one of my more practical goals in writing this thesis: Creating a linguistic 'instruction manual' for future linguists and vegan activists to use and build upon in future research about language and ecology in general, about language and veganism in particular.

Van Dijk (1993) reminded us that 'critical discourse analysts (should) take an explicit socio-political stance' from the perspective 'of those [people] who suffer most from dominance and inequality' (p. 252). This is what I have tried to do here, but not as it may at first appear. I am not taking a stance for vegan people who 'suffer most from dominance and inequality' because vegan people in general do not suffer from dominance or inequality. In fact, vegan people are most likely to be atheist, liberal, female, highly educated urban dwellers (Martinelli and Berkmaniene, 2018). These qualities do not discount suffering in vegan people, but the ones who suffer the most from our consumption of animal products—from our support of industries that exploit animals—are the animals and the ecosystems that all life depends on, and it is primarily their perspective from which I conducted this research.

This is the reason why I have specifically chosen the ecolinguistics framework. Ecolinguistics consists of using linguistic analysis to reveal underlying ideologies that structure unsustainable societies and judging them against an ecological value system, an ecosophy, while also searching for new ideologies, new worldviews, new stories to live by. I used analytical methods like Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk, 2011; Machin and Mayr, 2012), Positive Discourse

Analysis (PDA) (Martin, 2004; Macgilchrist, 2007; Bartlett, 2012) and cognitive linguistics (Lakoff, 2014; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Nerlich, 2010; Nerlich and Jaspal, 2012), among others, because they were useful in revealing those underlying worldviews about the systems of life that sustain us all. I critically analyzed the discourse of veganism not for myself or my vegan community, but for the animals, the natural world and the people whose lives have been ruined by the ecological destruction caused by animal farming, all in the hopes that in the future they are harmed much less, and the ecolinguistics framework has helped me to do this. Toward that end, I have based this ecolinguistics research on the following research question:

1. How is veganism represented discursively online and in other forms of media?

By 'veganism' here, I include representations of the vegan movement itself, vegan lifestyle, vegan diets, and vegan people. In this way, we can read several questions in that one interrogative: How is the veganism movement represented? How are vegan people represented? How is the vegan diet represented? How is vegan food represented? In the rest of this thesis, I will use the term 'veganism' in the same way, but when I think it necessary to make distinctions, I will use the term 'vegan' in adjective form before the requisite noun.

There is also the question of what exactly 'veganism' is. Most writers refer to the definition of veganism on the website of The Vegan Society in the U.K. (2022):

> A philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals.

It is a useful definition and I will revisit it later when I introduce my vegan ecological philosophy. In addition to that definition, the next chapter will look at the social and linguistic construction of veganism, offering other ideas about what veganism is or is not. For this introduction, I would simply like to mention two aspects of veganism that are especially important for me. The first one is that veganism for me is 'aspirational' (Gruen and Jones, 2016; Francione, 2020), meaning that I recognize how impossible it is to avoid all animal products in this modern world. For me, veganism is not a quest for absolute purity but an aspiration 'of doing the best one can to minimize violence, domination, and exploitation' (Gruen and Jones, 2016, p. 156). The Vegan Society definition above recognizes this as well with the phrase 'as far as is possible and practicable'. Second, veganism for me is bound in ethics. It is an explicit moral positioning (Singer, 2002; Francione, 2008) which extends beyond animals to the natural environment and marginalized peoples around the world, including racial, gender and socio-economic minorities. More about my system of values as relates to veganism will be detailed in the methodology chapter in the section about my ecological philosophy, or ecosophy.

I also use the term 'discourse' in this thesis, mostly as a noun but sometimes as the adverb form 'discursively' as in my research question. Defining the concept of discourse is problematic. Fairclough (2010) tells us that discourse is 'a complex set of relations' that 'is not simply an entity we can define independently: we can only arrive at an understanding of it by analysing sets of relations' (p. 3). Jaworski and Coupland (2006) quote ten different definitions of 'discourse' to arrive at 'a core set of concerns' that they attempt to 'unpack' in their edited volume *The Discourse Reader* (p. 2). Stibbe too (2021) notes the extensive variety of discourse theories in the literature. For this thesis, I am going to use a rather simple definition of discourse, adapted from Fairclough (1992, p. 28):

> Discourse is 'language use, whether speech or writing' or other semiotic resources, 'seen as a type of social practice', both representative and constructive.

Fairclough was chosen to define discourse specifically because his definition succinctly captures the power of words not just to reflect a pre-existing reality but also to play a role in the social construction of reality. The underlying theory of ecolinguistics relies on that very role in the creation of stories or ideologies that have the potential to determine how people think about a specific area of life. The term 'ideologies' is defined by Stibbe (2021) in the ecolinguistics framework as follows:

> *Ideologies* are belief systems about how the world was, is, will be or should be which are shared by members of particular groups in society. (p. 21)

This is the central point of my research question: how ideologies about veganism are or were linguistically constructed. I also wanted to discover whether the ideologies were beneficial or detrimental to vegan advocacy, and if they were detrimental, how we could linguistically construct alternative beliefs to make veganism more attractive to the majority non-vegan population. These inquiries introduce additional research questions (I have included the first research question below as well in the interest of coherence):

1. How is veganism represented discursively online and in other forms of media?
2. How are negative representations of veganism linguistically constructed?
3. How are positive representations of veganism linguistically constructed?
4. How are positive and negative linguistic constructions of veganism related to each other?
5. How can our knowledge of the linguistic constructions of veganism be of practical use for vegan people to promote veganism in the real world?

The goal is for vegans and vegan activists to learn how to construct positive representations that promote veganism—due to the values it promotes about ecology and the natural world—while at the same time resisting the negative representations.

While CDA and PDA are the foundational approaches to linguistic analysis in this thesis, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) is the system of grammatical description that I use in explaining my analyses in the Results chapter. Developed by M. A. K. Halliday, SFL presents the grammar of language as a system of social semiotic choices, 'communicating meanings in particular contexts' (Thompson, 2014, p. 7). This system is in contrast to other systems of description which focus on grammatical form as opposed to meaning and function . As Thompson (2014) reminds us, 'By formulating our approach to linguistic description in the kind of terms used above—choices amongst relevant options in context—we are deliberately opening up the path towards grammatically based text analysis' (p. 10). Since my analyses seek to uncover the choices that people make to linguistically communicate meanings about veganism, SFL was the obvious choice for my descriptive purposes.

Before offering a brief overview of the remainder of this thesis, I would like to point out that the data for textual analysis for this thesis was all in the English language. I am neither proficient enough in another language to conduct close linguistic analysis nor willing to broaden this study beyond its already expansive limits. This means that most of the data comes from English-speaking countries primarily in the global north. It is a natural restriction and is by no means reflective of dietary standards or vegan experience everywhere in the world. Most of my data comes from media in the United States and the United Kingdom, but also from Canada and Australia. My literature review is even broader—Germany, France, Spain, India—but again focuses primarily on the US and the UK regarding both textual analysis and participant surveys. What this means is that my research results can only be considered with regards to these limited geographical areas, their primary language of communication and their dietary standards.

Chapter 2, the next chapter in this thesis, critically surveys the literature on the social and linguistic construction of veganism. In addition to a short chapter introduction and conclusion, it is divided into six sections, the first five of which are organized primarily by the different representations of veganism in the literature: vegans as violent terrorists/extremists, the vegan diet as unhealthy and lacking nutrition, vegan men as effeminate, veganism as environmentally destructive, and vegans as mentally unstable and ignorant. My rationale for organizing the chapter in this way was to highlight the specific representations of veganism that are widespread and frequently encountered in popular culture. This is supported by the literature in my reviews and in the data for my analysis, to be addressed in Chapters 5 and 6.

The final section of Chapter 2 looks at five large-scale studies of veganism including the oft-cited 'Vegaphobia' by Cole and Morgan (2011). There are two reasons why I included this section. The first reason is that the large-scale studies serve to highlight the breadth of representations of veganism, sometimes introducing less frequently encountered contexts like vegan stereotypes in Australia or anti-vegan discourse on Spanish Facebook pages. The second reason is that some of the studies have been rather influential in subsequent studies of the representations of veganism. The aforementioned Cole and Morgan (2011) study is one of those. In fact, the ecolinguistics framework is a direct development of it. Stibbe (2021) was undoubtedly inspired by their work.

Chapter 3 introduces ecolinguistics as a field of inquiry. It details the evolution of the field since its inception and the seminal texts that have informed it, starting with *The Ecolinguistics Reader* (Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001) and finishing with the *Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (Fill and Penz, 2018). In between those two seminal works I look at three other early works on language and environment before tracing the development of the contemporary ecolinguistics framework, following the work of Stibbe from his early works (2001; 2003; 2004) where the field of ecolinguistics is not yet part of his theoretical vernacular, to the publication of *Ecolinguistics:*

Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By (Stibbe, 2015). I dedicate a large portion of this chapter to Stibbe's eight theories for linguistic analysis and the concepts of 'stories' and 'ecosophy'. The rationale for this is that the framework is still in development and not yet as widely applied as other theories for linguistic analysis, so I wanted to be clear about its central tenets. Besides, it is the framework that underpins this entire thesis: a clear explanation seemed essential.

Chapter 4 comprises my thesis research design, including data collection and methodology. The Data Collection section introduces how and why I collected the data that is analyzed in my Results chapter. The Methodology section explains how I applied the ecolinguistics framework—addressed in chapter 3—with reference to my own data. The framework has been applied to a variety of discourses about issues that affect ecology and the natural world, but, to my knowledge, never to the representations of veganism. I was exploring a new area for linguistic inquiry and in the Methodology section I explain what that entailed regarding application of the framework. In chapter 4 I also introduce my vegan ecosophy, which is central to my research. It is my own philosophical grounding based in the best information available regarding veganism, animals, animal farming and consumption, the environment, marginalized peoples, and world hunger.

Chapter 5 charts my textual analysis of the destructive stories of veganism selected for this study. It is the first half of my research results. Because destructive stories are so prolific, I initially introduce them according to their source: News articles, user comments, a television program and a podcast. Within the first two of those categories, I organize the analysis by story, similar to chapter 2 on the social and linguistic construction of veganism. I chose this style of organization because news articles and user comments tend to be shorter lengths of discourse. This allowed me to assemble numerous texts in order to reveal their linguistic constructions.

Chapter 6 is the second half of my analysis results and looks at the beneficial stories of veganism. Similar to the television program and the podcast, the sources for beneficial stories were large tracts of discourse that often contained several stories, so Chapter 6 is organized by the kind of source the stories originated in: A documentary film and seven vegan cookbooks.

The last chapter of this thesis is my Discussion & Conclusion chapter. In this chapter I will answer my research questions, discuss some broader insights from the Results chapter, identify a few limitations to this research, and offer some ideas for future research in ecolinguistics in general, on the discursive construction of veganism in particular.

2.0 THE SOCIAL AND LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTION OF VEGANISM

This chapter is a literature review of the social and linguistic constructions of veganism. The representations addressed below highlight the most prolific negative representations of veganism in the available literature. While not specifically planned as such, these negative representations will also be revealed in my Chapter 5 data analysis in my search for destructive stories of veganism (negative representations), and together they point to the need for more beneficial stories of veganism (positive representations) to counter the negative representations. This thesis was designed to address that specific need and begins here in the literature review where negative representations of veganism have been meticulously catalogued by scholars from around the world. This is not the only possible design for a research project of this kind since little is known empirically about the most effective linguistic representations to promote veganism, but it does open up space for research on the topic.

2.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

Veganism has become a powerful cultural force in the 21st century, with influences such as Meat Free Mondays, Veganuary, Beyond Burgers and highly popular documentaries like *The Game Changers*. However, veganism and the avoidance of animal products has been a part of human dietary practice throughout history. Religion offers a window into some of the oldest known vegan and vegetarian societies, specifically on the Indian subcontinent in the 6th century BCE when Jainism and Buddhism 'had perforce to suggest broad principles, such as compassion towards all living creatures, a ban on killing animals, and planting as well as protecting trees. This extreme ethic of non-violence has had a pervasive influence on Indian society [and therefore] a significant proportion of India's population has also come to assume vegetarianism,' including Hindus and Sikhs (Gadgil and Guha, 2012, pp. 78-9).

Around the same time on the European continent, Pythagoras was setting 'an example not only of ultimate sagesse but also [of] kindness toward our animal kin' (Komorowska, 2021, p. 24). We might also look to the 1st century BCE to Plutarch of Chaeronea and his testimonies on animals which are 'of paramount importance for the discussion of vegetarianism', or to the 3rd century CE and the writings of Porphyry for the 'most exhaustive discussion of the vegetarian issue' (Komorowska, 2021, p. 16). Animals, ethics and environmental morality were, at the very least, topics of philosophical discussion and, at times, considerations in mainly dietary social practices.

In the 18th century, John Oswald (1791)—who published *The Cry of Nature; or, an Appeal to Mercy and to Justice on Behalf of the Persecuted Animals*, a book that Carol Adams (2015) has called 'the first British book of [the Romantic period] to champion vegetarianism' (p. 99)—would, in the 19th century, become an inspiration for the Shelleys, both of whom were vegetarians and incorporated their non-violent, anti-oppression values into their writings, Mary Wollstonecraft with *Frankenstein* and Percy Bysshe with *A Vindication of Natural Diet* and *Queen Mab*. Similarly around the turn of the century, Joseph Ritson (1802), notable for 'his attempts to defend texts from the imposition of (male) editors and because of his avid vegetarianism' (Adams, 1990, p. 85), published *An Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food as a Moral Duty*, and, together with Oswald, the Shelleys, John Stewart (1747-1822) and William Lambe (1765-1847), was considered an 'eminent vegetarian' of the period (Morton, 1999, p. 744).

The early- to mid-20th century saw Mahatma Gandhi and his non-violent challenge of British colonial power, informed by the Indian concept of *ahimsa*—non-violence—and 'inspired' by both Henry Stephens Salt 's book *A Plea for Vegetarianism* (1886) and the civil disobedience of the British suffragettes at the end of the 19th century (Adams and Gruen, 2014). And then in 1944 The Vegan Society was established in the UK. It was created as an offshoot of the Vegetarian Society UK in which Gandhi was a member during his time in London. Following decades of feminist protest in

both the UK and the United States for the right to vote and the abolition of vivisection and the oppressive subordination of women—the enmeshed oppression of women, animals and the environment rarely lost on those most affected by it—Australian philosopher Peter Singer published in 1975 what would become a landmark work for the animal rights movement and an inspiration for the academic field of Critical Animal Studies: *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals*.

Peter Singer and American philosopher Tom Regan (1983)—who would publish his seminal work *The Case for Animal Rights* eight years after Singer—would both question the social ethics and morality of animal use in the agricultural, scientific and entertainment industries. While each emerges from a slightly different philosophical foundation—Singer from Utilitarianism, Regan from the concept of intrinsic value—their approaches and goals were essentially the same: establishing the moral significance of animals through identification of human-like cognitive characteristics in the interest of the liberation of animals from the 'tyranny' (Singer, 2002) of humans. McPherson (2018), in the *Oxford Handbook of Food Ethics*, writes that 'arguments like Regan's make an important contribution to the ethical evaluation of veganism' (p. 216). Giraud (2021), in her work on vegan politics, practice and theory, claims that 'Singer has been an undeniable influence upon animal activist movements, offering a framework that justifies activists' attempts to expand the ethical community beyond the human in his emphasis on a shared capacity to suffer that transcends species boundaries' (p. 86). And Francione (2020), in his award-winning book *Why Veganism Matters*, calls Singer and Regan 'arguably the most influential contributors to the field of animal ethics' (p. 47).

While their enduring contribution to the liberation of animals and the field of Critical Animal Studies is undeniable, Singer and Regan are limited in their contributions to modern iterations of vegan practice, an area of life that, according to Wright (2015) and her work on *The Vegan Studies Project*,

'constitutes both an identity category—like those that constitute race, sexual orientation, national origin, and religion, for example—and a practice dependent upon the eschewing of all animal products from numerous aspects of one's life' (p. 6). She claims that the term 'vegan' is 'culturally loaded' and, as an identity, is socially and linguistically reconstructed 'in mainstream print and online media, literary texts, film television shows, and advertising' (p. 1). Wright's work, preceded and inspired by the work of Adams (1990) and Gaard (1993) in the field ecofeminism, expands veganism from its philosophical grounding in ethics and morality and offers more broadly dispersed insight into veganism's social and linguistic construction and how it 'has embodied and continues to embody a profound paradox, at once concerned with the preservation of and a respect for all forms of life' (Wright, 2015, p. 174).

According to Giraud (2021) in her contemporary work *Veganism: Politics, Practice, and Theory*, 'veganism speaks to practices, values, and relationships with animals that have integral socioeconomic or cultural roles, even as these relationships vary significantly between, and indeed within, particular national contexts' (p. 1). Because of this, she maintains that veganism is 'more difficult to define than it may seem' and so recommends consideration of 'a range of informative contexts, including the formation of vegan identity, vegan activism and campaigning, popular commentaries...social justice issues, and the recent popularization of "plant-based" food' (p. 2). Considering these varied contexts and comparing them to the stories of veganism that emerge in this study, it becomes clear that veganism is indeed a 'multifaceted and complex' (Giraud, 2021, p. 2) phenomenon of activism, relationships, lifestyle, value systems, diet and identity. This chapter will therefore loosely apply Giraud's 'range of informative contexts' as a map to explore recently prevalent social and linguistic constructions of veganism, starting with vegan activism and the representation of vegans as violent terrorists.

2.2 VEGANS REPRESENTED AS VIOLENT TERRORISTS/EXTREMISTS

One particular representation of veganism that is discussed in the literature is linked to vegan activism and the idea that vegans are violent. Laura Wright, in her book *The Vegan Studies Project: Food, Animals, and Gender in the Age of Terror* (2015) documents the rhetoric about veganism in the post 9/11 United States and notes 'numerous narratives within mainstream media that utilized the term "terrorist" to refer to specific vegetarian and vegan individuals, groups, and ideologies' (p. 24). She later explains:

> Veganism...became at the dawn of the twenty-first century suspect in its sudden associations with fundamentalism, radicalism, and anti-government protest; in its deviation from the standard American Diet (SAD), it appeared alien and dangerously ethnic, influenced by the dietary and political ideologies of the non-Western world. To be vegan was to be un-American, and it was to be rhetorically and literally elided with terrorism. (p. 42)

Wright also points out that even before 9/11 and the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, veganism was already 'aligned...with anti-American terrorism' (p. 39) and she points to the chef Anthony Bourdain and his depiction of vegetarians and vegans in his best-selling book *Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly* (2000). While Wright fails to offer any kind of rhetorical analysis of the discourse in Bourdain's book, she does offer an excerpt, some of which explicitly highlights this representation of veganism: 'Vegetarians, and their Hezbollah-like splinter-faction, the vegans, are a persistent irritant to any chef worth a damn... Vegetarians are the enemy of everything good and decent in the human spirit...' (p. 70).

This radical image of vegans, 'rhetorically and literally elided with terrorism', is a stereotype commonly found in print media, and not only in the United States. Cole and Morgan (2011) did a study of UK print media for the year 2007 and found six negative discursive representations of veganism, one of which represented vegans as 'hostile'. This discourse, while admittedly 'the rarest

derogatory discourse', contained examples of 'the milder "outspoken vegan"...through "militant vegan"...to the outrageous "vegan terrorists"', including an 'allusion to the connection between veganism and animal rights activism...' (p. 146). Unfortunately, Cole and Morgan fail to offer any clarity on their coding methods other than to write that 'sources were read and broadly categorized as "positive", "negative" or "neutral" according to our interpretation of the overall tone of each source' (p. 137). Despite this, they are frequently referenced in work relating to veganism and its social and linguistic construction because, in their own words, 'Empirical sociological studies of vegans are rare' (p. 135).

The most recent work on the social and linguistic construction of vegans comes from Brookes and Chalupnik (2022) and their corpus-based study of vegan representations in the British broadsheets and tabloids. They find that violence or its implication is a common theme in discourse about vegans, identifying the modifier 'militant' as the most common collocate in their corpora. They then proceed to identify a link in the tabloid corpus between the idea of violence and vegan activism:

> The tabloids also focus more intently on vegan protests (*protest*). The activities of the protestors are presented by the tabloids through ambiguous but loaded transitivity choices which imply force (*launch*), and chaos by metaphorically equating the protestors' actions to severe weather events (*storm*). In the representative example below, the protesters, who are described as 'militant' and collectivised as a 'swarm', 'storm' the property of a 'distressed' farmer. (p. 8)

Notable in Brookes and Chalupnik's (2022) research is the use of the term 'militant' in broadsheets as an attempt to create counter-discourses that communicate the idea that 'militant vegans' are in reality a rarity, these kinds of discourses frequently coming from vegans themselves. Considering the Ecolinguistics framework, counter-discourses would align with beneficial discourses and would work to resist destructive stereotypes present in social cognition.

Another study that looks at representations of veganism in news media is Lundahl's (2020) media frame analysis of vegan deviance in the British newspaper the *Daily Mail*. Lundahl, notably inspired by the work of Cole and Morgan (2011), sought to discover if and how the representations of veganism had changed in the seven years since 'Vegaphobia', discussed previously, was published. While Lundahl's frame analysis notes a remarkable improvement in the image of veganism, he also identifies a lingering negative stigma attached to vegans, particularly with regards to vegan activists. He writes,

> the stigmatising frame, which highlights veganism as a sign of extremism and moral decay, was particularly prevalent in the early years of the current data. [...] The frame itself can be seen as consisting of three related strands. The first one of these is the most extreme one as it associates veganism with terrorists and criminals. These words are associated with vegan animal rights activists... (p. 251).

Here again is the use of the word 'terrorist', most prominently addressed by Wright (2015) but also observed by others in the years after 9/11. Adams (2019) calls our attention to the pre-Trump-era federal government in the United States and its passing of 'Ag-Gag' legislation that criminalized the activism of animal rights protesters. She writes that the '"Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act"...greatly expanded the definition of "terrorism" and focused on animal rights and environmental activism' (p. 52). And Lundahl (2020) addresses this point as well when he addresses the *Daily Mail* article 'Animal activist becomes first domestic terrorist to appear on FBI's "Most Wanted" list,' writing, 'This is a clear instance of the discourse of fear which Altheide (2006) found to have become increasingly pervasive in the post 9/11 world' (p. 253).

Finally, the representation of vegans as extreme is noted by Michel et al. (2021) who conducted a survey in three European countries on the general population's attitude to meat alternatives and factors that have the potential to negatively influence non-vegans, one of which was their attitudes towards vegetarians and vegans. Looking at data from over 1,700 surveys distributed across

Germany, France and the United Kingdom, the authors discovered that 'participants tended to see vegans as extremists' (p. 5), which seemed 'to indicate an unwillingness' for meat consumers to change their meat-eating habits (p. 6). This attitude was reportedly stronger with vegans than with vegetarians and was 'fairly negative in all three countries' (p. 5). The authors conclude that 'ratings of [plant-based] burgers are mainly influenced by consumers' level of meat commitment, their negative attitude towards vegetarians and vegans, and their level of food neophobia' (p. 7). Despite these findings, the authors do find hope in participants' favorable ratings of the burgers regarding nutrition and environmental friendliness, which leaves attitudes and representations of vegans as one of a few remaining hurdles for non-vegans in a potential transition to a vegan lifestyle.

Overall, scholars have commonly noted the social and linguistic representation of vegans as violent terrorists/extremists in popular media and political legislation. Wright (2015) and Adams (2019) identify the representation in American culture, particularly with regards to 9/11, ag-gag legislation, food ideologies, and the alien, non-Western world. Cole and Morgan (2011) also discovered the representation in British print media and noted the spectrum of hostility across which the representation was communicated. Lundahl (2020) sought to follow-up on Cole and Morgan's study in UK print media and discovered that while improvements in the representations of veganism had improved in the decade between their studies, there was still a lingering stigma of extremism attached to vegan activists. And Michel et al. (2021) broadened their research to include Germany and France with the UK while focusing on participant surveys as opposed to textual analysis. This thesis hopes to build on these studies in an attempt to identify effective counter-representations and their linguistic constructions.

2.3 THE VEGAN DIET REPRESENTED AS UNHEALTHY AND LACKING NUTRITION

Wright (2015), again in her book *The Vegan Studies Project*, identifies another common vegan stereotype, that of veganism as unhealthy. In a discussion of 'hegans', masculinity and the vegan

body, she writes that 'the current cultural discourse of veganism has been shaped...to construct the vegan body as a contested, paradoxical, and contradictory site, at once a paragon of physical health and simultaneously compromised by such presumed physical shortcomings as the looming specter of B12 deficiency...' (p. 31). The 'presumed physical shortcomings', she later clarifies, are a consequence of how society views non-normative practices and of vegans having 'to choose such a lifestyle,...to place oneself perpetually on the extreme margins of society' (p. 32). This, she contends, is why being vegan 'has been to be persecuted both implicitly and explicitly in the popular press, in literature, and in mainstream, academic, and scientific media as unnatural, unhealthy, and decidedly un-American' (p. 32).

A survey of the attitudes and beliefs of meat eaters, meat avoiders, vegetarians and vegans by Povey et al. (2001) found that the most commonly held belief by the meat eaters about eating a vegan diet was that the vegan diet was 'nutritionally unbalanced' (p. 20). Even one third of the meat avoiders said that they found the vegan diet 'nutritionally unbalanced'. Unexpectedly, the same number of meat eaters considered the *vegetarian* diet 'healthy', a singularity that the authors comment on by saying that 'it was interesting that some meat eaters considered a vegetarian diet to be healthy since previous research...has found that nonvegetarians thought a vegetarian diet to be less healthy than their own... perhaps the results from the present study reflect a trend where public knowledge about vegetarianism is growing, leading to its increasing acceptance' (p. 24). Notable in that observation is the final supposition regarding the correlation between 1) knowledge and acceptance and 2) the potential inherent in a theoretical framework like Ecolinguistics which advances the idea that dissemination of knowledge in the form of positive stories has the ability to alter social cognition in the interest of the environment. In other words, if ecolinguistics can assist in disseminating 'public knowledge' about veganism, then perhaps at some point in the near future, veganism will be 'increasingly accepted' as an ethical alternative to animal agriculture and the exploitation of the natural world.

Sneijder and te Molder (2009), in their work on identity and negotiation of 'the potential negative inferences about...eating practices' (p. 621), claim that 'from a nutritional perspective, veganism is often evaluated as an unhealthy lifestyle' (p. 622) and that they are 'particularly interested if health concerns or other potentially problematic nutritional issues are attributed to veganism as a category or lifestyle and resisted or accepted as such' (p. 622). They conclude that by asserting an identity of 'veganism as ordinary', people are able to 'undermine the potential inference that it is difficult to remain healthy as a vegan' (p. 626), that '"doing being ordinary" (Sacks, 1984) is an important and relevant activity for rebutting the notion of veganism as a complicated and unhealthy lifestyle' (p. 627). While this research sheds some proverbial light on how one might best negotiate the lived experience of veganism as a marginalized identity in mainstream society, the underlying message relevant to this thesis is that the negative worldview of veganism 'as an unhealthy lifestyle' is common and in need of resistance.

Similar to the previous study on identity, a 2020 survey of subscribers to the online newsletter *The Ecologist* conducted by Silva Souza et al. (2020) on the perceptions of veganism found that 'non-vegans who were not considering going vegan believed that veganism is or may be unhealthy' (p. 3) with 'some of them [stating] that it is difficult or impossible to have a balanced or varied vegan diet, sometimes citing the lack of specific nutrients such as protein, iron, vitamin B12, calcium, and "omega"' (p. 23). In addition to the firm non-vegans, 'non-vegans who were considering going vegan also mentioned the idea that a vegan diet may be unhealthy' and 'some of them believed that obtaining correct or sufficient nutrients (in general or specific, e.g., protein, calcium) is a challenge in a vegan diet' (p. 12). Vegans themselves noted the influence of these beliefs, citing 'interactions with people who try to challenge veganism [and] mentions of misinformation, and specifically the ideas shared by non-vegans that veganism would be unhealthy or as bad as meat-eating for the environment' (p. 13). Overall, the authors conclude that 'it is possible to argue that

the beliefs and attitudes described in this report are not isolated elements but in fact participate in networks of meanings for constructing theories of common sense about veganism and vegans, i.e., social representations of veganism' (p. 36). In the Ecolinguistics framework, these 'social representations' are referred to as 'stories' and serve the same function of creating 'networks of meaning'.

More work on identity by Griffin (2017), in his work *Understanding Veganism: Biography and Identity*, supports the idea that vegans tend to have similar experiences with non-vegans regarding health. Referring to an interview participant, Griffin writes, 'Whilst Kaya's journey to veganism was very different from those of many other people I spoke to, there were commonalities in experience. For example, hostility and stigma from others can be identified in how people made assumptions about Kaya's diet, and assume it is excessively restrictive, dull or unhealthy' (p. 47). Key words in that quotation are 'commonalities of experience'—a seeming reference to 'networks of meaning' and the pervasiveness of the assumptions people make about the vegan diet. Another of Griffin's participants relates a similar experience with her parents: '[They] thought it was just a phase or they did for years and then when my mum had cancer, that made her open her mind a bit, and now, if not understanding why I do it, she at least realizes that I'm not gonna fall down dead of rickets or whatever...' (p. 67). The same participant later reflects on her own role in promoting veganism and challenging stereotypes by saying, 'I also think like people need to be around queer people and vegans and left wingers and us not just be like stereotypes in the papers. Yeah, I quite like that people talk about veganism with me and come away with a completely different idea than the preconceptions that they had' (p. 70). 'Assumptions', 'stereotypes' and 'preconceptions' all appear to work synonymously to refer to the worldviews that people have and share about a particular area of life, which, again, are referred to as 'stories' in the Ecolinguistics framework.

In the *The Routledge Handbook of Vegan Studies*, Prorokova-Konrad (2021), in her study of Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy, notes that 'the resistance to veganism can be also explained by the very misinterpretation of veganism and massive spread of such information. For example, veganism is frequently described as unhealthy, specifically so with the reference to B12 deficiency, despite scholars' vehement attempts to prove the opposite' (p. 78). She later concludes that 'the misinterpretation and misuse of veganism and vegan narratives in media have led to a distortion of the notion to such an extent that it has become associated with something abnormal, unhealthy, repulsive, and even evil' (p. 86). In this quotation, Prorokova-Konrad uses the phrase 'misinterpretation and misuse of veganism and vegan narratives' to refer to the stereotypes and misconceptions documented by other researchers. Also prominent in the quotation is the idea that the media bears responsibility in promoting those misinterpretations, as others have duly noted. In the same Routledge handbook, Aguilera-Carnerero and Carretero-González (2021), in their research on the discourse of veganism in three Spanish-language Facebook pages, also find the promotion of the stereotype of unhealthy veganism through a process of rationalization which 'appeals to knowledge claims or arguments.' In fact, they note that the stereotype 'veganism is unhealthy' is 'a general claim that rules over the rest' (p. 359).

Overall, there is a commonly identified falsehood that says veganism is unhealthy, replete with the implications of danger and abnormality. This falsehood is present in 'the popular press, in literature, and in mainstream, academic, and scientific media' (Wright, 2015) and is frequently invoked by meat-eaters while, to their expressed dismay, experienced by vegans. This falsehood is referred to in the literature by several different names—stereotype, misconception, misinterpretation, preconception, assumption, story—but all are an explicit reference to the negative worldview shared by large groups of people and which is, in this case, detrimental to the future of the natural world. Most of the literature about veganism as unhealthy comes from qualitative sociological studies that focus on vegan identity as communicated through interviews and surveys. Very little

knowledge about this prevalent stereotype comes from any kind of linguistic analysis, the closest being that by Aguilera-Carnerero and Carretero-González (2021) and their identification of the rhetorical strategy of rationalization. This gap in the literature is one that this Ecolinguistics study endeavors to fill.

2.4 THE VEGAN MAN REPRESENTED AS EFFEMINATE

This section discusses the literature on the representations of vegan men as effeminate. Femininity in men is often considered a negative character attribute by many who understand hyper-masculinity as a gender norm and femininity in men as a deviation from that norm. To be clear, femininity is not inherently bad but only understood as such by those who value hegemonic masculinity. As shown in the literature below, denigrations of the 'effeminate man' are more reasonably referred to as stereotypical tropes, questionable narratives and patronizing colonial constructions. Veganism, it seems, is in a position to challenge these complex stereotypes of gender appropriateness beyond simplistic dietary concerns in the same way that it challenges speciesism in the interest of non-human animals.

'Tropes of "effeminized" masculinity have long been bound up with a plant-based diet, dating back to the "effeminate rice eater" stereotype used to justify 19th-century colonialism in Asia,' (p. 131) write Gambert and Linne (2018) in their study of 'the recurring phenomenon' of 'plant-food masculinity' (p. 132). They trace throughout history the consumption of meat and milk as indicators of power, prestige and masculinity while noting the simultaneous rise in popularity of soymilk and the 'fear of effeminization' on social media. They write that users of 'YouTube, Twitter, and other social media spaces [link] soy milk to fears of emasculation and effeminization, often using questionable and cherry-picked "science" to create a narrative that soy consumption is scientifically proven to emasculate, weaken, and effeminize men' (p. 146-7). They also identify a counter-discourse in which vegans have reclaimed the #SoyBoy hashtag, writing that

> while a majority of #SoyBoy tweets contain rhetoric that perpetuates sexist and racist stereotypes designed to ridicule men who fail to embody an idealized version of white, meat-eating, conservative masculinity, a number of people – mostly men but some women and gender nonbinary people too – have used the hashtag to celebrate and embrace their identity as vegans, feminists, and #SoyBoys... (p. 154)

Overall, Gambert and Linne see much potential in language and social media to reframe the narratives of veganism and feminism, just as the Ecolinguistics framework seeks to create and communicate positive stories of ecology and the environment to challenge those age-old tropes and stereotypes that threaten the health of the planet. 'That's the power of social media, 'they write, 'and the power of language: to constantly shift and change over time, to assert and reclaim power, to change norms, to reframe tropes in pursuit of a more inclusive and enlightened world' (p. 161).

In his analysis of six issues of *Men's Health* magazine, Stibbe (2004) identifies the 'ideological assumptions' behind the linguistic construction of men's health. Most notably, he found that 'in addition to emphasizing the muscle building properties of meat, the magazine constructs a masculine image of meat' where 'vegetables are not only portrayed as dull, but also as effeminate' (p. 40). As an example in support of his results, he identifies an instance where 'the word "vegetarian" is inserted...gratuitously' but 'does, however, achieve a link between vegetarianism, aerobics (associated with women), and depleted testosterone (symbolic of depleted masculinity)' (p. 40). He concludes by noting that we 'will need to challenge the discourse of hegemonic masculinity and work toward the social construction of a new, healthier form of masculinity' (p. 49).

Nath (2010) conducted interviews with vegetarian and vegan Australian men regarding gendered food and eating at barbecues and discovered that, as a negative aspect of their lived experience, 'vegetarian and vegan men must tolerate having their masculinity questioned, as a direct

consequence of hegemonic masculine norm enforcement' (p. 6) because 'meals without meat are still widely considered by non-vegetarian men to be feminine dietary choices, while meat and animal products are the superior food for a "real" man' (p. 16). On the upside, the authors speculate that if, like some of the participants in their study, vegans and vegetarians claim a legitimate right to a place in traditional meat-consumption spaces, 'then perhaps we can also expect an emergence of competing and alternate masculinities, which resist or challenge static incarnations of hegemonic masculinity' (p. 15) and the idea that men who refrain from the consumption of meat are effeminate. Once again, research highlights the need for resistance of negative stereotypes—as explicitly stated by Stibbe (2004)—as well as its relative success, as exemplified in Gambert and Linne's (2018) research on the #SoyBoy hashtag.

This idea of resistance is echoed by Ecofeminist Adams (1990) as she writes about the role of vegetarians in creating new narratives about consumption practices: 'The vegetarian perspective...stops the story of meat. [...] Vegetarians see themselves as providing an alternative ending, veggie burgers instead of hamburgers, but they are actually eviscerating the entire narrative' (p. 79). One of the stories that she identifies, a story of veganism that upholds the popular narrative of meat, is that of the effeminate vegetarian (the term 'vegetarian' should be understood as 'vegan' in the writing of Adams [1990, p. 63]). She explicitly states that 'men who decide to eschew meat eating are deemed effeminate; failure of men to eat meat announces that they are not masculine' (p. 12). Through the process of establishing a historical, socially-constructed connection between meat, men and strength, Adams (1990) shows that 'refusing meat means that a man is effeminate, a "sissy", a "fruit"' (p. 17), and that these historical, socially-constructed connections equate vegetarianism with 'sentimentality, childish emotions, or "Bambi morality"' (p. 60). Wright (2015), also working within an Ecofeminist tradition, similarly identifies the pervasive media stereotype of the effeminate vegan man. In a discussion of masculinity in the American context, she writes that 'the media...has engendered not only a glorification of red meat and blue-

collar work but also a profound denunciation of vegetarian and vegan diets as indicators of weakness, ethnicity, and femininity, all of which have been constructed as threats to a traditional "American" way of life. Not that this thinking constitutes anything new' (p. 114). Notable here is Wright's use of the word 'construction' and the implication that denigrating stereotypes—like those that equate meat consumption with masculinity—are socially constructed and by no means reflective of real-world experience.

Finally, in his work on beef consumption and 'metrosexuality'—'a masculinity concerned with aesthetics' and other 'feminine interests' (p. 251)—Buerkle (2012) writes that 'meat's importance in masculine culture ultimately plays a role in a resurgence of traditional masculinity against metrosexual effeminization by re-asserting an innate link between males and animal flesh' (pp. 254-5). As an example of this, he analyzes at length the 2006 Burger King commercial 'Manthem' and its reproduction of heteronormative masculine ideals and determines that 'examples of recent hamburger advertising...reify the perception that men's new food choices effeminize them' (p. 256). In other work, Carson (2021) finds the stereotype of the effeminate vegan man in a non-Western, Indian-Asian context. In considering the post-colonial history of the Indian subcontinent, she writes that

> contemporary constructions of masculinity that position hegemonic white masculinity in opposition to subordinated Indian masculinity are historically situated and partially expressed via dietary habits. British colonizers constructed a version of masculinity that emphasized meat eating and other-than-human animal domination in opposition to their construction of effeminate vegetarian Hindu masculinity. (p. 56)

The implications for this, she asserts, include the perpetuation of the patronizing attitude of 'orientalism', the perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity, and the perpetuation of animal farming and its detrimental effects on the climate and the environment. And Hart (2018), in her analysis of 75 vegan blog posts, found that even the language of vegan bloggers is coded to communicate the

stereotypical connection between meat and masculinity, noting that there were 'many instances where traditional gender norms are reinforced' (p. 148). One example is of how food bloggers talk about dishes with mock meat, recommending larger portions for the implied male consumer. 'This type of language describing large portion sizes and aggressive consumption,' she notes, 'was only found on meat substitute-based recipes, effectively making them "safe" for men to eat without jeopardizing their sense of masculinity through consuming "feminine" vegetable-based foods' (p. 143).

Overall, the representation of the vegan man as effeminate is still prevalent and appears to work toward discouraging men from becoming vegan by challenging their masculinity. From the historical British colonies in Asia to the twenty-first-century United States in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, from Australian barbecues to social media, vegan blogs, *Men's Health* magazine and fast-food commercials, the representation persists. As noted, though, it does not go without resistance. Many vegans are challenging these problematic representations and seeking to establish more positive narratives about the real-world experiences of vegan people. As Hart (2018) reminds us, 'there are opportunities for vegan men and women to challenge these norms of what food is appropriate for certain genders' (p. 148). This thesis endeavors to build on that idea of resistance and the search for positive representations of veganism.

2.5 THE VEGAN DIET REPRESENTED AS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE

In a 2015 collection of papers titled *The Moral Complexities of Eating Meat* by editors Bramble and Fischer, Gruen and Jones (2015) contend that 'veganism can only be an aspiration', that 'all aspects of consumption in late capitalism involve harming others, human and nonhuman' (p. 157). They identify the effects of industrialized agriculture on rodents, birds, reptiles and amphibians and submit a long list of consumer goods, both edible and not, that contain animal products, concluding that 'imagining oneself to be [an identity or lifestyle vegan] is an illusion' (p. 158). Only the

'aspirational vegan', they contend, understands the complexities of modern life and of veganism 'as a type of practice, a process of doing the best one can to minimize violence, domination, and exploitation' (p. 156). The authors are equitable in apportioning blame for 'the system of violence' inherent in modern consumerist society, and their acknowledgement of this violence by both vegans and non-vegans alike is an important step toward sifting through the complexities of speciesism and what it means to be a functioning part of society while also aware of one's own negative impact on the natural world. Unfortunately, this complex issue of environmental violence has become yet another negative representation of veganism, that of veganism as environmentally destructive.

Cole and Morgan (2011) encounter the stereotype in their work on the derogatory discourses of veganism. While they do not specifically identify the stereotype as a derogatory discourse unto itself, they do flag it in the discourse of 'ridiculing veganism'. In addressing a letter to *The Times* about vegan flatulence and the irony of environmental concern, they refer to the stereotype as the 'subversion of environmental arguments' (p. 140), noting that similar strategies of ridicule are also used with 'health' when expressed as a motivation for becoming vegan.

In the previously addressed 2020 survey of subscribers to the online newsletter *The Ecologist* regarding the perceptions of veganism, Silva Souza et al. (2020) found that firm non-vegans 'expressed the idea that the vegan diet could be harmful to the environment' (p. 11). When participants were asked about what would convince them to adopt a vegan lifestyle, they 'declared that they needed "proof" that...veganism is better for the environment...' (p. 18), some making 'references to specific issues such as the impact on the environment, carbon dioxide emissions, "the climate", and "scientific proof that it would save the planet"' (p. 19). Their perceptions are worth quoting at length:

> Regarding the environment, [firm non-vegans] stated that it is more important to eat "organic", "free-range" animals, locally produced food and to avoid food waste than to cease the consumption of animal food products. For some participants, veganism is promoting the consumption of food they perceived to be unsustainable such as palm oil, soya and "avocados transported by air", referring to the impact of airfreight on global warming. Participants associated veganism with the industrial production of processed foods and plastic packaging; with the replacement of pasture for crops that increase the release of carbon dioxide; with the use of fertilisers, pesticides; soil erosion and the destruction of the rainforest. Some of them expressed the idea that farm animals are essential for sustainable or "ecological" agriculture.... Referring more specifically to the animal abuse issue, participants stated that not all farms are factories and that the existence of farm animals protect their biodiversity. (p. 23)

Silva Souza et al. conclude that in the social representations of veganism in the minds of firm non-vegans, 'the environment is the greatest victim of veganism' and that participant 'beliefs can be understood as a counter-attack' to veganism as a solution to environmental degradation (p. 36).

Another contributor to the perception that veganism is environmentally destructive and unsustainable is the popular media. A 2020 article from the BBC online titled 'Why the vegan diet is not always green' (Gray, 2020) discusses in depth all of the potential shortcomings of the vegan diet with regard to the environment, including the tilling of fields, the creation and use of synthetic fertilizers, the import of produce and the growing of avocados, mangoes, mushrooms, mycoproteins, cocoa, cashews and almonds. In the concluding paragraphs of the article, Gray acknowledges the role of animal farming in environmental destruction and writes that 'while plant-based foods and meat substitutes can be far better for the environment than livestock production as a whole, if we really want to make a difference to the environment we need to take care about what we choose to replace meat with.'

Also in 2020, the *Harvard Political Review* online published an article by Keselj (2020) titled '"Vegan" Shouldn't Be The Last Word in Sustainability'. The author covers a wide range of issues in

dietary practice and offers several conclusions about the vegan diet in particular, including the idea that 'classifying veganism as an ethically superior diet can have harmful impacts on marginalized communities', that 'veganism's absolutism is also harmful in the pursuit of environmental sustainability' and that 'veganism does not capture...the complexities of sustainable and ethical eating'. The author, as in previous studies in this section of the thesis, acknowledges in the conclusion of the article that 'going vegan is, in many cases, an effective treatment to the disease of exploitative food systems'.

In 2016, research on the sustainability of varying diets (Peters et al., 2016) was published in *Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene*, a journal published by the University of California Press. The authors used a 'biophysical simulation model' for the United States to calculate 'human carrying capacity under ten diet scenarios' (p. 1) and concluded that 'under a range of land use conditions, diets with low to modest amounts of meat outperform a vegan diet, and vegetarian diets including dairy products performed best overall' (p. 13). More notably, this research was picked up by major online news outlets and reported under the following headlines: 'Veganism is not the key to sustainable development – natural resources are vital' (The Guardian, 2016); 'Going Vegan Isn't the Most Sustainable Option for Humanity' (PBS, 2016); 'How veganism may one day become unsustainable' (Business Insider, 2018); and 'Why veganism isn't as environmentally friendly as you might think' (Independent, 2018). The representation of veganism as unsustainable and environmentally destructive is once again communicated without much, if any, acknowledgement of the complexities of the issue.

In summary, the representation of veganism as contributing to environmental destruction is commonly acknowledged in both popular media and academic literature. The environmental shortcomings of veganism, though, as has been noted, are complex and in need of more detailed analysis and explanation for the less discerning media consumer. In this ecolinguistics study, I will

attempt to clarify some of the nuances of this issue by focusing on how exactly the representation of veganism as environmentally destructive is linguistically constructed and sometimes used to communicate disingenuous worldviews about food, agriculture and dietary choices.

2.6 VEGANS REPRESENTED AS MENTALLY UNSTABLE AND IGNORANT

Potts and Parry (2010) published a paper on vegan sexuality in online media and noted the overwhelming amount of negative rhetoric aimed at vegans who sought intimate partners who shared their same vegan values. The majority of the online comments were posted on mainstream websites and blogs and were written by self-professed omnivorous heterosexual men. Potts and Parry write that 'vegans and vegetarians were derided as being both physically and mentally deficient and ultimately undesirable', noting that one respondent claimed that 'most vegan chicks are pale and crazy' (p. 62). They conclude that 'vegansexuals (and more broadly vegans per se) are represented as (sexual) losers, cowards, deviants, failures and bigots' (p. 64), any of which could comfortably indicate people with a perceived mental problem.

Paxman (2021) conducted a series of interviews with vegans in the United States about their identity formation and found that 'participants commonly referenced negative cultural stereotypes of vegans' (p. 7) that played a role in how they 'communicatively negotiate a food-based identity' (p. 14). One participant observed the representation of the vegan as 'a freak or someone that [omnivores] can't kind of relate to', with another participant noting that vegans are often represented as 'crazy and out protesting and breaking into animal labs' (p. 7). The author concludes that the results from the interviews 'indicate that vegans strive to cultivate a positive identity that is well-received by others', which is yet another a strategy of resistance where the positive is established to replace and resist the negative.

Taylor (2012) wrote a paper on the historical characterization of vegetarians and vegans as psychologically unstable and how, even today, 'pathology has been conflated with abnormality in psychiatric discourses and more generally in our culture' (p. 145). As evidence for this, she points to the 1997 'discovery' of a new eating disorder—'orthorexia nervosa'—which 'suggests that most vegetarians and even more vegans are mentally ill' (p. 141). Introducing anecdotes from friends and acquaintances, Taylor explains that she began to 'wonder why more people aren't vegetarian', and found an answer in the people around her who 'attempted to be vegetarian, but gave up because they were asked if they were "crazy"' (p. 145). The most instructive anecdote comes from a female acquaintance who told Taylor that 'she had been vegetarian until she went through a period of depression and a doctor, upon hearing that she was vegetarian and without asking further questions about her life or inquiring into how she meets her nutritional needs, assured her that her diet was the cause of her mental health problems and that the only way for her to not be depressed was to eat meat' (p. 145). Taylor concludes that more people would be vegetarian or vegan if they didn't 'fear being abnormal' and suggests that we reject the idea of normative practices as indicators of a person's worth (p. 145).

In a qualitative study of familial relationships, meat consumption and the vegetarian diet, Roth (2005), through a series of interviews and ethnographic observations, discovers that 'changes in food behavior are initially viewed by family members as deviant, strange, or crazy—a threat to the family's "homeostasis," its traditions, and its group identity' (p. 183). One participant shares that her 'mom just thought I was, you know, a crazy teenager going through a phase, and it would pass' (p. 189). Roth concludes that vegetarian ideology 'subverts the values and beliefs' of the American meat-consuming family and triggers 'contradictory impulses toward the "deviant" family member and [attempts] to maintain the family's homeostasis as manifested through its foodways' (p. 197). By ascribing the qualities of mental instability to vegetarian family members, non-vegetarians are seemingly able to challenge the non-normative practice of 'deviant' meat avoidance.

In her book *Living Among Meat Eaters: The Vegetarian's Survival Guide*, Adams (2009) identifies 'The "Freak"' vegetarian as someone who 'eats strange', who has 'weird beliefs', who 'must be alienated' and whose 'choices are incomprehensible' (pp. 50-51). Many of Adams's observations come from the personal narratives of vegetarian and vegan individuals who share their experiences interacting with meat eaters. One respondent claimed that they were asked if their husband was 'normal' (p. 8), a common occurrence that Adams says results from 'meat eaters...seeing themselves as the normal ones'. Another respondent shared their experience of 'being looked at as a freak or extremist', and yet another complaining of 'meat eaters who want to talk sense into me' (p. 8). This idea of the vegetarian/vegan as mentally unstable appears in other common stereotypes as well. Adams explains the 'The Bambi Vegetarian' as the carnivore belief that 'responding to suffering is *out of place*' (p. 50) (emphasis added) and the 'phobic label' as 'a gravitation toward explaining all food-related concerns as psychological issues' (p. 52). Overall, in a more positive reading of participant experiences, Adams views these negative representations of vegans as 'a sense of life...in the culture at large—when vegetarianism leaks into cultural territory, so too does life' (p. 218).

Rowley (2015) in her research on veganism and equality conducted for The Vegan Society, had 74 vegan respondents write about their positive and negative experiences as vegans. She then categorized those experiences into three 'general categories in which vegans encounter discomfort', one of which was 'attitudes'. She writes that 'a number of participants reported that the "most difficult thing about being vegan" is coping with social attitudes', including 'experiences of vegans being made to feel "crazy", "weird" or "extreme"' (p. 10). She concludes that 'vegans endure a range of unpleasant, unfair and discriminatory experiences' across a wide range of social contexts, all of which reveal 'the more covert manifestations of exclusion and unfairness' (p. 11).

Tellier (2021) wrote about the representation of vegans and veganism in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times* online newspapers. Following the methodology of Cole and Morgan (2011), Tellier's results indicated that the majority of news coverage of vegans and veganism was generally considered positive (42.1%) but that the negative discourses (27.6%) were still problematic from a vegan perspective. In addition to Cole and Morgan's (2011) three dominant discourses—derogatory, favorable and neutral—Tellier identified 12 dominant *sub*-discourses 'to provide a deeper articulation of the dominant discourses in the sample' (p. 42). One of the sub-discourses he identified was 'portraying vegans as irrational'. This sub-discourse, he explains, 'feeds into the stereotype of the "crazy vegan"' (p. 69), a stereotype that he notes was also promoted in the *Washington Times* newspaper in 2017 (Berman, 2017). 'Adherence to veganism,' he concludes, 'is...discouraged by the coverage's...negative discourses' (p. 77), which makes the critical aspect of analysis of the discourse surrounding veganism necessary from multiple perspectives, not least of which is the ecological perspective.

Finally, Katila (2020) discusses the arguments against veganism in a Finnish anti-vegan discussion forum. She identified seven categories of argument against vegans and veganism, each with their own subcategories to clarify nuance. The category of 'Incompetence' introduces 'arguments that doubt a vegan's intelligence and ability of thinking' and includes the subcategories of 'Thoughtlessness', 'Unawareness' and 'Ununderstanding' [sic], the latter describing 'people who do not have enough mental capacity to understand how things should be really done right' (p. 23). In the 'Individual' category—the category with the largest number of comments—the 'Aggressive' subcategory is exemplified by a 'writer [who] categorizes vegans as crazy people'; and the 'Mental Health' subcategory 'describes people's doubts if vegans have some problems with their mind' (p. 24). While Katila's data and analysis were detailed and varied across 28 subcategories, one overall conclusion drawn from the study was that negative vegan representations might be generational due to the frequent reference to vegans as 'young and misunderstanding, even stupid people' (p.

33). This observation offers the possibility of a younger generation offering more positive representations of vegans and veganism in the hopes that abstention from the consumption of animals becomes the normative dietary practice in place of carnism.

In summary, the representation of vegans in the media as mentally unstable and ignorant is frequently commented on in the academic literature. Similar to this thesis, a lot of the research data in the literature comes from online sources. Qualitative survey- or interview-based research with vegan participants tends to be more common for studies on identity and sexuality (Roth, 2005; Taylor, 2012), but research is also being conducted on the discourse of non-vegans and their views on vegans and veganism. This thesis, in comparison, will focus on close textual analysis in an effort to document the linguistic constructions of these negative (and positive) representations. The final section below will briefly address a miscellaneous group of other prevalent representations of vegans.

2.7 LARGE-SCALE STUDIES ON THE REPRESENTATIONS OF VEGANISM

The most well-known study on the representation of vegans in media is 'Vegaphobia: derogatory discourses of veganism and the reproduction of speciesism in UK national newspapers' by Cole and Morgan (2011), mentioned previously with regard to the representations of vegans as hostile and veganism as environmentally destructive. Looking at British news sources, they subjectively evaluated and broadly categorized 397 articles as positive, neutral or negative in their representations of vegans and veganism and found that 74.3 percent of the articles were negative, communicating derogatory discourses. Those derogatory discourses were then placed into 'a routinized set of anti-vegan stereotypes' (p. 139), including, in order of frequency, veganism as ridiculous, veganism as asceticism, veganism as unsustainable, veganism as fad, vegans as oversensitive, and vegans as hostile. Each category was broadly defined and included other representations loosely related to the category head; for example, the category 'veganism as

asceticism' included the representations of 'vegans as strict' and 'vegan food as unappealing', while the category 'veganism as fad' included the representations of 'vegans as hypocrites' and 'vegans as mentally unstable'. Overall, Cole and Morgan conclude that these overwhelming amounts of negative representation have the effect of marginalizing vegans in society, of reinforcing omnivore justifications for not becoming vegan, and of continuing the 'normalization of human [on non-human animal] violence on an unimaginable scale' (p. 149). Of all the studies on the representations of vegans and veganism, the framework of Cole and Morgan's most closely aligns with that of the Ecolinguistics framework and the expectations for this thesis, particularly with regards to the categorization of discourses as positive, negative and neutral. Where these two studies diverge is in their criticality—advocating for real-world action—and in the clarity brought to the methods used for evaluating discourse.

Another broad study of the representations of vegans and veganism is that of the 'Pathways to Veganism' project conducted by researchers at Edge Hill University's Centre for Human Animal Studies and funded by The Vegan Society. The research was established to identify how non-vegans view veganism and some of the obstacles that prevent them from adopting its lifestyle and values. 'A key objective for the research,' write Parkinson et al. (2020), 'was therefore to gain insights into how non-vegans perceive vegans and messages about veganism' because 'veganism continues to be misunderstood, vegan stereotypes remain evident in popular culture and despite its growth, veganism remains a minority practice' ('About the project'). Using a mixed-methods approach of questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with 1674 participants—85.7% of which were non-vegans—Parkinson et al. (2020) discovered that participants believed that 'veganism is restrictive and expensive, that vegans are unhealthy, and that meat and dairy consumption is natural' (p. 1). 'Some participants,' they note, 'also commented on a perceived tendency for vegans to be "biased" and "not balanced"' (p. 8). The vegan diet in particular was considered 'expensive to cater for', 'restrictive or special', 'difficult to adhere to' (p. 18) and 'a form of restriction...a barrier' (p. 19).

Overall, and in contrast to the work of Cole and Morgan (2011), Parkinson et al. advocate for real-world solutions that aim to increase the number of people who adopt a vegan lifestyle. Their primary suggestion is to construct more vegan narratives. They write that 'narratives are an effective way of communicating context and increasing trust and awareness' (p. 38), particularly with regards to vegan celebrities who can 'act as a gateway to learning about a vegan lifestyle...especially for people 18-34', and for athletes, who 'can be important in breaking down perceptions of veganism as unhealthy and challenging stereotypes of vegans as weak, tired, or lacking energy' (p. 27). Overall, they speculate that 'images and stories of healthy vegans at all ages and in different professional contexts could help to change public perceptions' (p. 23). While the research of Parkinson et al. (2020) lacks linguistic analysis and any evaluative system for the representations of vegans and veganism, it does inform this present thesis, particularly with regards to the use of narratives and the focus athletes.

Rodan and Mummery (2019) published a study on vegan stereotyping in Australia. The authors evaluated articles from 405 sources across 11 online genres between 2011 and 2016. They used coding and categorization to identify patterns of words and structures of speaking, and discourse analysis to track 'language-in-use' in order to identify 'putdowns, innuendos, and stereotypical attitudes'. Their interest, they claim, 'lies in how a stereotyped label of veganism (and other associated attributes) is being used across Australian public spheres to challenge the work of animal activists'. They continue:

> For instance, the NFF [National Farmer's Federation], Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), and other farming bodies continue to frame veganism as marking an extreme form of lifestyle... For multiple consecutive years, the [MLA advertising] campaign presented vegans (and vegetarians) as *being self-evidently ridiculous* and *faddish*, representing them as mentally unhinged and fringe dwellers. (emphasis in the original)

The authors also found that vegans were stereotyped as hostile extremists and 'terrorists who engage in criminal activities antagonistic to Australia's democratic society and economic livelihood', an observation that echoes and supports the work of Wright and her study on vegan representations in a post-9/11 United States. Rodan and Mummery (2019) conclude that 'such stereotyping and boundary making—even in their inaccuracies—can be pernicious in the way they entrench identities and divisions, and close the possibility for public debate'. While the authors' broad survey of online material, purposive sampling, and identification of the negative representations of veganism align with the design of this ecolinguistics study, their focus on the representation of the animal advocacy group Animals Australia is comparatively narrow, and their monograph lacks any explicit linguistic analysis, despite the coding of words and structures and the use of discourse analysis. This current research endeavors to fill those gaps in the academic literature.

Aguilera-Carnerero and Carretero-Gonzalez (2021) conducted a corpus analysis of three Spanish-language Facebook pages between January and August 2019 and discovered that 'anti-vegan discourse on social media...contributes to the delegitimization of veganism and vegans' (p. 356). In their analysis, the authors identified three main discursive strategies—nomination, predication and argumentation—and, as a subset of 'argumentation', four 'strategies of legitimation': 'authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis' (p. 358). Of note is the strategy of 'moral evaluation', which found representations of vegans as misanthropes, veganism as a 'radical, intolerant cult', and vegans as 'elitist and arrogant', which includes vegans as 'the new inquisitors looking down on non-vegans from their arguably judgmental, self-proclaimed morally superior position' (p. 359). Vegans were also found to be characterized as both *creators* of 'extreme speech'—which aligns with the representation of 'vegans as arrogant, radical, and cruel to non-vegan citizens' (p. 360)—and the *object* of extreme speech, represented as brainless, ignorant, ridiculous, crazy, rubbish, inhuman, fanatics and psychopaths (p. 360). Overall, Aguilera-Carnerero

and Carretero-Gonzalez conclude that 'online anti-vegan discourse in the Spanish-speaking context contributes to reproduce cultural speciesism [and] is polarized, exclusionary and built upon stereotypes' (p. 363). In addition to offering a survey of the representations of vegans and veganism beyond the English-speaking world, the authors also identify specific discursive strategies that informed their analysis, e.g., nomination, predication, authorization and moral evaluation. Where the research differs is in the breadth of data sources and the explicit identification of linguistic features within the data. This present research once again endeavors to fill those gaps.

In a paper on negotiating relationships and the role of the 'vegan killjoy', Twine (2014) interviewed 40 vegans in three different cities in the UK, asking participants about three prominent aspects of their vegan lifestyle: their transition to veganism, their everyday lived experience of veganism, and the effect of veganism on their relationships, including initial reactions at the time of transition and how they negotiate relationships with non-vegans. Regarding the latter, Twine writes that 82.5% of participants 'reported at least some examples of negative reaction' from loved ones (p. 629). Quotations provided from the interviews exemplify both the negative reactions and the commonly experienced stigma attached to veganism. One participant noted that 'over the years I've had a lot of mickey taking' (p. 629), an experience that Cole and Morgan (2011) call 'ridiculing veganism' (p. 139). Two more participants echo this same sentiment when they recall loved ones calling them 'ridiculous' (p. 630). Other participants evoke the representation of vegans as extreme, claiming family members called them 'too extreme' (p. 629), 'massively extreme' and 'over the top' (p. 630). One participant noted that her grandmother thought she was 'insane' (p. 630)—evocative of the representation of vegans as mentally unstable—and two more noting that health was a concern expressed by their loved ones who instructed 'we do need to eat meat, to get vitamins' and expressing concern that the participant 'was going to waste away' (p. 630). Overall, and on a more positive note, Twine concludes that 'vegan practice can circulate new meanings around food, and around human/animal relations' (p. 637), that the 'vegan killjoy' also has the potential to 'create

new meanings and practices that underline the shared joy in living outside and beyond social norms once thought fixed' (p. 638). In this way, he sees vegans and their lived values as a form of civil disobedience in protest of the destructive normative dietary habits of non-vegans. While Twine's (2014) research lacks linguistic analysis of the discourse surrounding veganism, his work does highlight the common representations of vegans and veganism while offering the presence of the 'vegan killjoy' as a potential source of 'new meaning', a role similar to that of ecolinguistics' beneficial stories.

2.8 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

To conclude this chapter, negative representations of vegans and veganism have been shown to be common and consistent. In the five large-scale studies above in section 2.7, four identify the common representations of vegans as ridiculous and veganism as radical, extremist and cultish. Three of the studies identified the representation of vegans as mentally unstable, crazy, insane and psycho, and two of the five found vegan food represented as unhealthy. Overall, these representations support and expand on the five representations addressed earlier in more detail in sections 2.2 to 2.6. What they all show is that negative representations of vegans and veganism are common and show how negative ideologies associated with veganism can deter non-vegans from adopting a vegan value system and non-normative dietary practices. They also show the breadth of the work being done on the social and linguistic representations of vegans and veganism, the former much more prolific, the latter presenting a gap in the literature that this thesis endeavors to fill.

The studies above, though, represent only a small portion of the academic work being done in the field. In addition to research conducted in North America, Europe and Australia, there are also studies being done on the social and linguistic representations of vegetarians and vegans in Korea (Yoo and Yoon, 2015), Turkey (Altas, 2017), China (Li et al., 2019; You, 2020; Chen and Zhang,

2022), Japan (Bedrichova, 2021) and Vietnam (Ngo et al., 2021), to name a few primarily from the greater Asia area of the globe. South Africa has also seen a recent interest in scholarly studies on veganism with regards to racial issues (Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2021A, 2021B; Galgut and Glover, 2021) and more general attitudes toward health and lifestyle (Jankielsohn, 2015; Tobias-Mamina and Maziriri, 2021). And finally, scholars in Brazil and Argentina, despite the central role of meat in their South-American dietary cultures, are producing work on the representations of vegetarians and vegans, often with regards to identity, relationships and food-system practices (Delessio-Parson, 2013; Ruby et al., 2015; Andreatta, 2015; Niederle, 2020; Paiva and Luiz, 2020). What these studies lack is either the rigorous linguistic analysis and its impact on social cognition, or the critical framework that explicitly advocates for practical, real-world action. This present thesis hopes to fill these two gaps in an already burgeoning area of scholarship.

3.0 ECOLINGUISTICS

In this chapter, I will address the development of the field of ecolinguistics, from its inception in 1990 to the publication of *The Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (Fill and Penz, 2018) and the years following it. I hope to show how that development gives insight into the contemporary theoretical framework and the research undertaken for this thesis, drawing parallels and highlighting differences when applicable.

3.1 THE ACADEMIC FIELD

Ecolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field of academic inquiry with two distinct motivations. The first motivation, which is becoming less recognized in the modern iteration of the field, is an exploration of the metaphorical 'ecology of languages'. As Fill (2001) explains, language ecology is 'the task of investigating, documenting and perhaps saving the many endangered languages on this planet' (p. 44). The metaphorical sense of the word 'ecology' was advanced by Einar Haugen (1972) with the publication of *The Ecology of Language* and has been promoted by academics such as Mühlhäusler (1992; 1996), Fill (1993; 1996) and Finke (1993; 2001). While studies in the metaphorical 'ecology of languages' continue to occupy academic space at the International Conference on Ecolinguistics and in edited anthologies like *The Ecolinguistics Reader: Language, Ecology and the Environment* (Fill and Mühlhäusler, 2001) and the *The Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (Fill and Penz, 2018), it is less prevalent in the field and shares little by way of theory or methodology with this thesis. For this reason, the metaphorical use of the word 'ecology' and its inquiry into the survival of endangered languages will not be discussed in this thesis.

The other motivation—the predominant motivation in contemporary ecolinguistics—understands the term 'ecology' in its literal biological sense and is concerned with the analysis and evaluation of language with the potential to affect our worldview on ecological issues. It is this more prevalent motivation for ecolinguistics research that theoretically grounds this thesis, and all unmarked uses

of the term ‘ecolinguistics’ before and after the previous paragraph should be understood as such. Alexander and Stibbe (2014) define ecolinguistics as follows:

> Ecolinguistics is the study of the impact of language on the life-sustaining relationships among humans, other organisms and the physical environment. It is normatively orientated towards preserving relationships which sustain life. (p. 105)

Stibbe (2014) warns, though, that a study in ecolinguistics need not be concerned solely with discourses of ecology and the environment. ‘Discourses such as neoclassical economic discourse,’ he writes, ‘precisely through their omission of ecological consideration, can encourage people to behave in ways that are ecologically destructive’ (p. 118). He goes on to list a range of topics that have the potential to affect ideologies concerning the natural world and the relationships that sustain it, including fields that are less obviously related to ecology and the environment, like advertising, economics, natural resources, energy, animals and ecotourism (Stibbe, 2014). To this list I would also add animal rights organizations (Zhdanava et al., 2021), academic textbooks (Zahoor and Janjua, 2020; Hamed, 2021), corporate environmental relations (Fernandez-Vazquez, 2021) folktales and folksongs (Perangin-angin and Dewi, 2020; Indriyanto, 2021) and tourism in general (Isti’anah, 2020). One ecolinguistics study that does not currently exist in the literature is one on veganism, and that is a gap that this thesis aims to fill.

Most scholars agree that ecolinguistics in its modern sense began formation in 1990 when M.A.K. Halliday (2001) discussed ‘how language constructs reality: how language evolved as the resource whereby human beings construe experience’ (p. 196). In more detail, he explained how language helps to create a reality that depicts world resources as ‘infinite’, ‘unbounded’, ‘existing without limit’ (Halliday, 2001, p. 194) and the human ambition of ‘growth’ as a persistent aspiration, both unacknowledged as being detrimental to ecology and the environment. He also spoke of how the English language system denies non-human participants agency, explaining how ‘the language

makes it hard for us to take seriously the notion of inanimate nature as an active participant in events' (p. 194), including 'the fundamental distinction made by the grammar of mental processes, where the Senser is always a conscious being: thus a clear line is drawn between entities that understand, hold opinions, have preferences, etc., and those that do not' (p. 195). Overall, he calls grammar 'a metalanguage by which we live' (p. 195)—a turn of a phrase popularized by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and taken up by Stibbe (2015)—presumably hoping to inspire renewed interest in the role of language in social cognition and real-world action.

3.2 EARLY WORK IN ECOLINGUISTICS

One of the earliest collections of work in the field of ecolinguistics is Fill and Mühlhäusler 's (2001) *The Ecolinguistics Reader: Language, Ecology and Environment*. This edited volume, while also containing work on the metaphorical 'ecology of language', is an important source for the early work in ecolinguistics, with a particular focus on theory. At this point in the field, grammatical structures are discussed and examples of language-in-context are offered, but an organized framework for linguistic analysis has yet to be developed.

The first section of the anthology that uses ecology in its literal sense is called 'Language and Environmental Problems' and includes a paper by Shultz (2001) on the commercial use of the environment in Australia and the three linguistic devices that support it: neutral language, euphemism, and pejorative labelling. In the following paper, Chawla (2001) invokes the Whorfian concept of the influence of language on worldviews, comparing the Dene language with English regarding the use of mass nouns, count nouns and concepts of time, making the case that English negatively affects the English-speaker's view of the natural world, a point similar to that of Halliday (2001). A third paper in this section is by Carbaugh (2001) and is concerned with dialectics, discourse and the relations among dialectically opposed participants, specifically with how proponents of land development interact with others more concerned about the impact on local

ecology. In this study, language-as-data is collected from interviews in a more socio-ethnographic tradition and is used to address broader, macro-communication devices that reveal the relationships between the participants as they engage in dialectical communication.

Two more papers complete the section on language and environmental problems. One is an 'exploratory paper' by Penman (2001) concerning her inquiry into how communication studies can 'make a difference to matters of the environment' (p. 143), considering both the representative and constitutive roles of language. Her dual conclusion is 1) that 'the ways of talking and the realities constructed close off options and limit the possibilities for future action [on the environment]', and 2) that 'human beings must be actively involved' in 'the maintenance of our foodstock' through 'foster[ing] genetic diversity' (p. 152). The final paper of the section is 'A Note on the Linguistics of Environmentalism' by Harris (2001) who, like the others in the anthology, emphasizes the need for a theoretical grounding for any effective 'linguistic critique of environmental discourse' and suggests an approach to language from an 'integrationist point of view' (p. 154).

A different section of the anthology called 'Ecocriticism of the Language System' contains Halliday's 1990 AILA lecture and a three-turn exchange between Goatly (2001a; 2001b) and Schleppegrell (2001) on grammatical metaphor, agency, transitivity and green grammar. It also contains a translation of Trampe's (2001) paper on the need for an 'ecologically conceptualized linguistics' to combat the linguistic phenomena of reification, euphemism, negative evaluations and the phraseology of unrealistic opposition. Notable in this section is that Halliday, Goatly and Schleppegrell were all focusing on the language system itself, on the *grammar* of the language, but as it would later become understood that a focus on grammar offered no solutions—grammar being nearly impossible to change—a shift to a focus on *discourse* would eventually occur, as will be shown in later work.

A third section of the anthology is titled 'Ecocritical Discourse Analysis and Language Awareness' and contains four papers. The first is Kahn's (2001) consideration of the passive voice in the science discourse of animal research and management. The second is a slightly less theoretical and more analytically oriented study by Howlett and Raglon (2001) who present their research on the greening of corporate consciousness in North America. Compared to the other papers in the anthology, the authors provide a 'Methodology / Database Description' section to address the collection and evaluation of the 500 advertisements they collected over a period of eight decades, but they tend to focus on methods of collection to the negligence of any information about the methods of analysis.

In the same section, Berman (2001) writes from the field of ecofeminism to discuss the intersection of feminist theory, ecology and the concept of the absent referent, a concept introduced by Adams (1990)—in discussions of women, animals and other marginalized peoples—and later employed by Stibbe (2001; 2012; 2015) who would make the literary devices of 'erasure' and 'salience' two of the ten analytic tools in the Ecolinguistics framework. And one final paper is a translation by Fill of Jung's (2001) paper on the 'empirical observations and theoretical considerations...for an "ecological critique of language"' (p. 281), a work that appears to be misplaced, being as it is a more likely candidate for placement in the section 'Ecology as Metaphor'. I mention this only to highlight how the lack of a theoretical framework early in the development of the field allowed editors to conflate two distinct fields of linguistic inquiry.

Overall, the edited anthology *The Ecolinguistics Reader: Language, Ecology and Environment* (Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001) is one of the first attempts to present the field of Ecolinguistics as a unified field of academic inquiry. Most of the work in the anthology is concerned with theory and much of it invokes the Whorfian concept of linguistic relativity, an important concept for both contemporary

ecolinguistics and critical discourse studies (see Stibbe, 2014). Also of importance is the appearance of some of what would later become key methodological tools for analysis in the Stibbean ecolinguistics framework, most notably metaphor (addressed in Harris, 2001; Penman, 2001), evaluation (in Schultz, 2001; Trampe, 2001) and erasure (in Berman, 2001; Kahn, 2001). Following the publication of the anthology, it would be another decade and a half before Stibbe (2015) developed a clear framework for the field, but not before he and others would lay out their ideas in dozens of published papers across a wide variety of books and academic journals.

3.3 DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK

In 2001, the same year that Fill and Mühlhäusler (2001) published *The Ecolinguistics Reader*, Stibbe (2001) published 'Language, power and the social construction of animals' in the journal *Society & Animals*. In the paper, Stibbe "applies theories of language and power that have been used in the analysis of racism...to the issue of the domination, oppression, and exploitation of animals by animal product industries." (p. 146). He uses a combination of critical discourse analysis and 'Potter's (1996) theory of fact construction' (p. 149) to analyze a corpus of publicly available materials created by and related to the animal farming industry. He concludes that 'language at all levels—from the morphological changes that create the metonymy "broiler" from "broil", through punctuation, semantic classification schemes, grammatical choices, and pronoun usage to metaphor are systematically related to underlying ideologies that contribute to maintaining and reproducing oppression' (p. 158) of animals by humans. While Stibbe does not identify ecolinguistics as the discipline within which his analysis is conducted, his analytical methods and the goals he seeks to achieve are, in retrospect, firmly situated in the contemporary ecolinguistics framework that he would later develop, one of those goals being the identification of how, in the tradition of van Dijk (1993) and critical discourse analysis, 'ideology and social cognition [are] the link between discourse and society' (p. 147).

Stibbe (2003) would again use the framework of critical discourse analysis to analyze the British Pork Industry Handbook to reveal the 'hidden ideological assumptions that...construct pigs in a negative way' (p. 379). While again not explicitly situating his research within the ecolinguistics framework, he again employs similar analytical methods and, for the first time, includes a form of positive discourse analysis to introduce 'alternative discourses' which employ 'language [that] can be used imaginatively to resist dominant discourses and open up new alternatives' (p. 390). This search for alternative discourses—or ecologically beneficial 'stories we live by'—would become one of the central pillars of the ecolinguistics framework.

English language textbooks in Japan then became a new focus for Stibbe (2004) as he questioned their propagation of 'shallow environmentalism' (Naess, 1989). He found that 'EFL textbooks spread [a] form of shallow environmental education abroad' and 'fail to challenge those western cultural values implicated in ecological destruction' (p. 14). More importantly, two more aspects of Stibbe's critical research were introduced and would later become permanent parts of the contemporary ecolinguistics framework. The first is the work of Arne Naess (1989) and the Deep Ecology movement as a value-based foundation for ecolinguistics research. This inclusion would become most prominent in the use of an ecological philosophy—an 'ecosophy'—to clarify one's values with regards to ecology and the environment. Assessment of the ideologies being identified and evaluated would be made based on this ecosophy. The second is his introduction of the concept of 'assumptions' that would later transform into what he would call 'stories', or ways of thinking about the world. It is also worth mentioning that he once again uses critical discourse analysis as a central analytical tool, and he continues his search for beneficial ideologies to replace destructive ideologies.

Stibbe would go on to publish five more articles about language and ecology before using the term 'ecolinguistics' in 2010. In 2004 he wrote about health and masculinity in *Men's Health* magazine

and found that 'the discourse of the magazine contributes to the attachment of symbolic importance to areas such as muscle size, alcohol tolerance, sports, and violence...' (p. 48) by telling readers 'what they want to hear at a time when hegemonic masculinity is being challenged by messages that red meat is harmful, excess alcohol is dangerous, convenience food is unhealthy, sexism is unacceptable, and animals have rights' (p. 49). In 2005 he published the article 'Counter-discourses and the relationship between humans and other animals' and concluded that some of the counter-discourses arising from environmentalism and animal rights are important in challenging the destructive ideologies that contribute to 'the oppression and exploitation of non-human animals' (p. 3), but that they also make it difficult for more empathy-based counter-discourses to encourage more 'harmonious human-animal relationships'. Both of these articles continue Stibbe's analysis of discourses that have the potential to affect worldviews about issues related to ecology and the natural world, namely consumerism, animal rights and hegemonic masculinity, the last of which emerges from the data for this thesis as well.

A special issue of *Society & Animals* 'dedicated entirely to analysis of linguistic representations of animals' (Jacobs and Stibbe, 2006, p. 2) was guest-edited by Stibbe and Jacobs in 2006 and included a contribution by Stibbe on the discursive representation of fish in the 2005 *Millennium Ecosystems Assessment* report and concluded that, in the interest of alleviating our current ecological problems, 'future ecological discourses will [need to] encourage respect for fish as animals with intrinsic value, leading their own lives according to their nature' (Stibbe, 2006, p. 70). In 2007, he wrote about the discourse of Japanese *haiku* and its use of language 'to encourage the reader to go beyond language, beyond the world of intellectual abstraction, and reconnect directly with the more-than-human world' (p. 110); and in 2008 he revisited Japan in an analysis of the Japanese animation *Tonari no Totoro* (My Neighbor Totoro), and, similar to his analysis of Japanese *haiku*, found that the animation 'encourages a form of ecological consciousness closely attuned with local ecosystems, where human needs are met through participation in nature rather than material

accumulation' (p. 481). All three of these works highlight Stibbe's continued search for positive discourses that contribute to the creation of positive ideologies which encourage people to foster their interconnectedness with the natural world.

Overall, a variety of social genres came under Stibbe's analytical lens, all with the potential to affect how we think about ecology, the natural world and the relationships that sustain it. From animals, textbooks and shallow environmentalism to health, consumerism, hegemonic masculinity and counter-discourses, the development of the contemporary ecolinguistics framework can be traced from a focus on grammar by Halliday, Goatly and Schleppegrell in the late 20th century to a focus on the construction of discourse, cognitive structures—symbolic importance, ideological assumptions, social cognition, underlying ideologies—and the introduction of counter-discourses and positive discourse analysis. All of this work would eventually contribute to the contemporary ecolinguistics framework.

3.4 THREE EARLY WORKS ON LANGUAGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Other scholars were also moving in similar theoretical directions to reveal the underlying ideological work being done in the discourse of ecology and the environment. Three specific texts warrant mention here, but are by no means the only research that was done in the field at the time. The first text pre-dates *The Ecolinguistics Reader* (2001) by two years and is one of the earliest texts to address discourse on the environment: Harré, Brockmeier and Mühlhäusler 's (1998) *Greenspeak: A Study of Environmental Discourse*. It is, as the title suggests, a study on the discourse of environmentalism—which the authors have termed 'Greenspeak'—and, as expected in recognizing that Mühlhäusler has worked with both the *metaphorical* ecology of language and the language of *literal* ecology, the text deals with both motivations, similar to *The Ecolinguistics Reader* (Fill and Mühlhäusler 2001). Also similar to *The Ecolinguistics Reader* is the lack of 1) an explicit set of values that supports any evaluative claims to the insufficiency of discourse about the environment, and 2)

a search for positive, counter-discourses with which to resist the 'Orwellian' Greenspeak. Both a value system—an 'ecosophy'—and the search for positive discourses would become central to the contemporary ecolinguistics framework.

Despite that, *Greenspeak* (1998) does contain three topics of interest which are addressed later in the development of the ecolinguistics framework. The first is the idea that the loss of language diversity is detrimental to the contemporary ecolinguistics goal of preserving those bio-diverse, ecological relationships which sustain life. Loss of languages which have evolved distinct ways of talking about distinct ecological and environmental issues can be an obstacle to renewing the human relationship with the natural world. Stibbe addresses this several times in his writing, most notably in his 2010 article 'Ecolinguistics and Globalization' and then again in the co-written article 'From the analysis of ecological discourse to the ecological analysis of discourse' (Alexander and Stibbe, 2014).

The second topic of interest is the authors' discussion of environmental discourse, narrative structures and their role in creating a 'linguistic, psychological, social and philosophical framework for our attempts to come to terms with the nature and conditions of our existence' (p. 70). Narrative structures will later become one of the tools for linguistic analysis in the contemporary ecolinguistics framework, a tool that this thesis will likely employ in its analysis of the discourse of veganism. It is also the topic of Anthony Nanson's (2022) recent book *Storytelling and Ecology: Empathy, Enchantment and Emergence in the Use of Oral Narratives* in the Bloomsbury Advances in Ecolinguistics series.

The third and final point of interest is the authors' discussion of 'metaphors for nature and the environment' (p. 93), most notably how those metaphors can be insufficient, contradictory, 'incoherent' (p. 116) and with 'severe shortcomings' (p. 95). The linguistic resource of metaphor will

also become one of the tools in the contemporary ecolinguistics framework and is the central focus of the next text to discuss in the discourse of ecology and the environment, Brendon Larson's (2011) *Metaphors for Environmental Sustainability: Redefining Our Relationship with Nature*.

Brendon Larson (2011), in his book on metaphor and environmental sustainability, examines the metaphors used in environmental science and how they contribute to communication and understanding in both the scientific and non-scientific worlds. Two of his stated goals are 1) understanding 'how our environmental metaphors operate in context', and 2) reframing some metaphors 'so that they are more consistent with values rooted in sustainability' (pp. x-xi). To an extent, Larson agrees with Harré, Brockmeier and Mühlhäusler 's (1999) conclusion about metaphors, that they tend to be insufficient and part of 'relatively underdeveloped conceptual systems' which fail 'to reconcile the seemingly incompatible accreditations of scientific, moral and economic discourses' (Harré et al., 1999, p. 116); Larson, though, sees those shortcomings as strengths, and, while acknowledging that 'no single metaphor can capture a phenomenon in its entirety', he points out that because of this, 'diverse metaphors provide varied perspectives, and thus different ways of experiencing or relating to phenomena' (p. 224). This, Larson concludes, is the way to an environmentally sustainable future: connecting with each other through metaphor while at the same time 'renew[ing] our relation with the natural world' (p. 226); and part of this renewal is the renewal of metaphor, the searching for metaphors which are 'consistent with values rooted in sustainability' (p. xi). This 'reframing' of metaphor aligns with the search for counter-discourses and new stories about ecology and the natural world that align with the value system laid out in the ecosophy.

The third and final book to address in this section is Richard Alexander's (2009) *Framing discourse on the Environment: A Critical Discourse Approach*. In his introduction, Alexander states his conclusion: that there is 'a façade which occasionally represents what goes on in the world as

'natural', as 'harmless' or even as 'inevitable'. It is the dismantling of the language aspects of this façade which I see as the major objective of critical discourse analysis' (p. 5), and that 'we surely have a 'professional' responsibility as language scholars not to ignore this construction of deceit in which language is massively implicated' (p. 6). Looking at a broad cross-section of society—including politics, media and business regarding agribusiness, oil and energy—and employing both critical discourse and corpus analysis, Alexander offers the reader a large number of real-world examples of how certain linguistic features can do ideological work in the interest of hegemony and to the detriment of the environment. Some of those features are cohesion, argument, thematic patterns, over- and under-lexicalization, 'purr words', lexical items, collocations, omission, metaphor, Orwellian concepts of language, and naming tactics, together constituting an eclectic toolkit for linguistic analysis, similar to, but not as developed or outlined as, Stibbe's contemporary ecolinguistics framework. In fact, Stibbe and Alexander would co-author a paper on the analysis of ecological discourse in 2014, the year before Stibbe published *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (2015).

To summarize, while the term 'ecolinguistics' was not always explicitly used to describe or identify work involving linguistic analysis of ecological issues, parts of the contemporary ecolinguistics framework were indeed being employed and would later be brought together and incorporated into a clearly defined system for linguistic analysis. The linguistic feature of metaphor in particular can be seen as a connective feature from the earliest research to the present ecolinguistics framework, but it is not the only one. Narrative structures were being used in *Greenspeak* in 1999, and they too are part of the contemporary framework; Larson was writing of 'values' and 'reframing', and those two concepts would become integral to the contemporary ecolinguistics framework; and Alexander employed critical discourse analysis which would make up another tool in the contemporary framework next to metaphor. Since 1990 when Halliday delivered a call for

academic responsibility in the service of ecology and the environment, the emerging field of ecolinguistics was in slow but persistent development.

3.5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIELD OF ECOLINGUISTICS

Stibbe (2010) began his article 'Ecolinguistics and Globalization' with the following two sentences:

> Ecolinguistics provides an important dimension for studies of language and globalization because it encompasses the physical globe, or rather the biosphere—the thin outer layer of the planet Earth and its atmosphere, which supports all known life. The need for an ecolinguistics arises only to supplement a discipline, linguistics, which rarely acknowledges the ecological embedding of the animal it investigates, treating humans as existing in isolation rather than in relationship with the rest of the biosphere and the diversity of lifeforms within it. (p. 406)

There are two points of interest in those two sentences. The first is the term 'ecolinguistics' appearing for the first time, placed at the beginning of the article, assigning it a certain amount of importance in the tradition of the clausal 'theme' in Hallidayan linguistics. No less important is the presupposition that begins the second sentence—'The *need* for an ecolinguistics' (emphasis added)—that communicates the field's lack of development at the time and Stibbe's effort to fill that scholarly gap. Stibbe then proceeds to make the case for ecolinguistics by outlining globalization and language and their effect on the natural world through a series of 'waves' throughout history. In consideration of Abram's (1996) work on perception and language, Stibbe takes the reader through early human geographical migrations and the effect of language on novel ecological circumstances; the introduction of writing systems and the ease with which 'exotic', ill-equipped languages move into new bio-regions; and the hegemonic spread of discourses—especially those of neoliberalism—and the rise of counter-discourses of resistance. After reviewing previous attempts to analyze the language of the environment—including previously addressed work by Harre et al. (1998), Fill and Muhlhausler (2001), Halliday (2001) and Goatly (2001)—Stibbe sums up his position by stating the following:

> Ecolinguistics is in an interesting position [as] one of the discourses that it itself criticizes... [It] is well aware of the dangers of overabstraction and rootlessness, so...it can then point beyond itself so as to call for a revaluing of local languages, oral communication, and discourses which are more responsive to and responsible to the ecosystems that support life. (p. 422)

This is the case that Stibbe makes for the field of ecolinguistics, and the goals that he laid out, the theoretical grounding of the discipline—the focus on values, positive discourses and the critical movement toward practical solutions—would remain to become the contemporary ecolinguistics framework.

Two years later a collection of Stibbe's essays was published, *Animals Erased: Discourse, Ecology and Reconnection with the Natural World* (2012). The essays—most of which have already been briefly discussed previously in this chapter—'represent ten years of research into relationships between humans and other animals' (vii) and exemplify the development of an ecological philosophy—Stibbe's own 'ecosophy' with regards to animals and ecology. 'Overall', he writes, 'the argument of this book is that the discourses we use to construct our conceptions of animals and nature have important consequences for the well-being of the animals and the ecosystems that support life' (p. 16), and because of this, we need to be both critical and focused on the search for alternative discourses to open up new perspectives on the natural world.

The following year, Stibbe (2013) published his next paper, 'The Corporation as Person and Psychopath: Multimodal Metaphor, Rhetoric and Resistance', in which he analyzes the multimodal metaphor THE CORPORATION IS A PERSON in the documentary film *The Corporation*. As explicitly stated by Stibbe, the paper is an exercise in Positive Discourse Analysis, 'the purpose of [which] is not just to praise and promote the particular texts that have been analysed, but to reveal the detailed workings of the texts, providing a resource that can be used in the future to help design similar

texts' (p. 133). As pointed out earlier in this chapter, metaphor analysis would become one of the analytical tools in the contemporary ecolinguistics framework, and the search for positive discourses would become one of the framework's primary goals.

In 2014, the year before publication of *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (Stibbe, 2015), Stibbe published three more papers, all of them exploring aspects of the ecolinguistics framework and its theoretical foundations. Alexander and Stibbe (2014) co-authored the article 'From the analysis of ecological discourse to the ecological analysis of discourse' in the journal *Language Sciences*. In it, they address the minutiae of the field in its contemporary iteration and are careful to distinguish it from the *metaphorical* ecology of language by noting that 'only when research explores the implications of language contact or linguistic diversity for human behavior and the consequent impact on real, physical ecosystems does it become "ecolinguistics"' (p. 108), meaning that any other metaphorical uses of the word 'ecology' in reference to language and linguistics are separate and distinct from the field of ecolinguistics. The defining aspect of the field of ecolinguistics, they emphasize, is the study of language in the interest of 'protecting, preserving and enhancing the systems that support life' (p. 104), and from this theoretical grounding comes the first coherent definition of ecolinguistics (as stated previously at the start of this chapter but worth repeating):

> Ecolinguistics is the study of the impact of language on the life-sustaining relationships among humans, other organisms and the physical environment. It is normatively orientated towards preserving relationships which sustain life. (p. 105)

Alexander and Stibbe are also careful to note, as stated earlier in this chapter, that 'the scope of ecolinguistics is clearly far wider than the analysis of texts which happen to be explicitly about environmental or ecological concerns' (p. 109). Analysis of any text with the potential to affect ecology and the relationships between interdependent living organisms is firmly situated within the

ecolinguistics framework. Thus, this current thesis, with a focus on veganism—a lifestyle choice commonly associated with diet and human health—is considered ecolinguistics research: Animal farming excessively contributes to greenhouse gasses, loss of biodiversity, water pollution, soil pollution and deforestation among other detrimental effects on life in the biosphere. How those issues are addressed in texts, if they are addressed at all, has the potential 'to encourage people to behave in ways which damage or preserve ecological systems' (p. 109).

One other major point that Alexander and Stibbe (2014) make is that the focus of ecolinguistics research is not at the level of grammar, but at the level of discourse. Grammar, as Halliday (1990) and Chalwa (1991) admit, offers few adequate options and is nearly impossible to change; On the other hand, discourses, in which clusters of grammar and other semantic features play a role (p. 109), 'model or shape reality in a particular way', meaning that *alternative* discourses offer the option of modeling reality in a *new* way, a way of 'greater practical adequacy' (p. 108). This search for alternative discourses is called Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA) and, as stated earlier, plays a central role in the ecolinguistics framework.

In another paper, 'An Ecolinguistic Approach to Critical Discourse Studies' (Stibbe, 2014), Stibbe draws a parallel between ecolinguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis and explains how they both contribute to social change by exposing unequal power relations and the struggle for freedom and equality (p. 4), but distinguishes ecolinguistics for its extended focus on 'societies of others, both human and non-human, close and distant, and present and future generations' (p. 6). Many CDA frameworks, he contends, fail to consider the ecological aspects of social interaction. As an example, in reference to Gavriely-Nuri's (2012) 'culture of peace' framework, Stibbe writes that 'freedom and democracy do not automatically lead to sustainable levels of consumption, and peace in a society that exceeds environmental limits will be short lived' (p. 6). Critical Discourse Analysis,

he therefore concludes, could benefit from the ecolinguistics framework, its focus beyond anthropocentric issues, and its use of an ecological philosophy to guide its work.

His final paper of 2014, 'Ecolinguistics and Erasure: restoring the natural world to consciousness', again revisits the core focus of ecolinguistics: the more-than-human natural world that has been largely ignored in sociolinguistic research. 'Ecolinguistics...' Stibbe writes, 'is a discipline that arises out of erasure—the perception that mainstream linguistics has forgotten, or overlooked, the embedding of humans in the larger systems that support life' (p. 585). After addressing the widespread erasure of nature 'across a large number of discourses that structure industrial civilisation' (p. 585)—including traditional economics, animal product industries and ecological discourse—he introduces the concept of 're-minding' as the opposite of erasure and a way 'to bring ["something important"] back into consciousness' (p. 596), one form of this being the search for positive, alternative discourses. He concludes with a suggestion similar to the one in his previous paper, that Critical Discourse Studies aim 'towards the goal of protecting the systems that support life' (p. 600), and two tools that can be used to that end are erasure and re-minding, both of which are part of the contemporary ecolinguistics framework.

Overall, from 2010 through 2014, contemporary ecolinguistics was becoming clearer as a coherent framework, with a clear theoretical grounding and methods for linguistic analysis. It was also becoming distinguished from other fields like the metaphorical ecology of language and Critical Discourse Analysis. In that time, Stibbe introduced the first coherent definition of the field of ecolinguistics; he repeatedly emphasized the need for linguistic analysis to be grounded in an explicit value-based philosophy—an 'ecosophy'; he advocated for a focus on discourse and clusters of grammatical and sematic features; he extended linguistic analysis beyond negative discourses to counter-discourses and their potential for positive ideological influence; and he introduced erasure into the ecolinguistics analytical toolkit. His 2015 book, *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the*

Stories We Live By, brings together all of the essential elements of the ecolinguistics framework, everything from the previous decade and a half, together in one coherent system.

3.6 THE CONTEMPORARY ECOLINGUISTICS FRAMEWORK

Since Halliday's presentation in 1990, no single work of scholarship has done more to codify the Ecolinguistics framework than *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (2015). The title—*the Stories We Live By*—is suggestive of Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) and serves the same connotative function: to remind the reader that 'stories', like metaphors, play an influential role in thought processes, social cognition and real-world action.

As a prefacing note before discussing Stibbe's book, since its publication in 2015, a second, updated edition of *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By* (2021) has been published. Despite the diachronic idiosyncrasy in a discussion of the field's development, throughout this thesis the second edition (2021) will be prioritized over the first edition (2015), as I expect that Stibbe would want his clarified vision to take precedence over his earlier work.

3.6.1 THE STORIES WE LIVE BY

The term 'stories' is perhaps deceptive in its seeming simplicity. As Stibbe (2021) explains, 'These are not stories...in the usual sense of narratives... Instead they exist behind and between the lines of the texts that surround us' (p. 3). Two prominent examples that he gives are first, the story of unlimited economic growth, a story which Halliday addressed at AILA in 1990; and second, the story of humanity as separate and distinct from 'nature'. These are stories which 'we are exposed to...without consciously selecting them or necessarily being aware that they are just stories' (p. 5), appearing in a variety of discourse contexts that people encounter on a daily basis, e.g., media, entertainment, industry, education and law. The danger, Stibbe explains, is that 'they are deeply

embedded in the minds of individuals across a society', may not be 'immediately recognisable as stories', and so 'need to be exposed, subjected to critical analysis, and [potentially] resisted' (p. 5).

These 'deeply embedded' structures and the worldviews which they influence are not new concepts. As Stibbe points out, Midgley (2011) writes of the same structures as 'myths' and calls them 'detached stories', 'imaginative patterns', 'networks of powerful symbols' and 'particular ways of interpreting the world' (p. 1); Robertson (2014) refers to them as 'paradigms' which he defines as 'a fundamental framework', 'concepts' and 'ways of viewing reality' (p. 57); Berardi (2012) refers to them as 'refrains'—from Guattari's *ritournelle*—and defines them as 'the modality of semiotization', 'reproducible and communicable formats' and 'semiotic filters' (pp. 129-30); and Martusewicz et al. (2011) call them 'root metaphors' and 'discursive patterns', defined as a 'tapestry of exchanged and internalized meanings', 'deeply embedded patterns of communication and belief' and 'deeply ingrained set of ideas' (p. 66). Stibbe (2021) calls them 'stories' and 'stories-we-live-by' and defines them as follows:

> *Stories* are cognitive structures in the minds of individuals which influence how they think, talk and act.
> *Stories-we-live-by* are stories in the minds of multiple individuals across a culture. (p. 6)

Notable in the definitions is the distinction between the cognitive structures of single individuals (*stories*) and those shared among multiple individuals (*stories-we-live-by*), the latter of particular interest because, as Stibbe (2021) writes, 'these models [of multiple individuals] are likely to have a strong influence on how the culture treats the ecosystems that support life' (p. 6). It is also important to clarify that these cognitive structures—*stories-we-live-by*—have the potential to influence real-world action, which is why the role of contemporary, Stibbean ecolinguistics is to reveal these stories of ecology through the linguistic analysis of texts.

3.6.2 ECOLOGY, LINGUISTICS AND THE ECOLINGUISTICS TOOLKIT

The 'eco' of 'ecolinguistics' is literally 'ecology' in its most natural, scientific sense and is defined by Stibbe (2021) as '*the life-sustaining interactions of humans with other humans, other organisms and the physical environment*, with some kind of normative orientation to protecting the flourishing of life' (p. 9) (emphasis in the original). The concern for ecology in the humanities and social sciences, though, is a late-20th-century phenomenon that was born from an 'awareness of the ecological embedding of humans and human societies...as an inextricable and integral part of a larger physical and living world' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 7). This rise of ecological concern can be seen in both popular culture—in 'eco-friendly' products and labelling, ecotourism, eco-villages and Earth Day—and in the formation of new academic fields of inquiry, including ecocriticism, ecopoetics, ecofeminism, ecopsychology, ecosociology, ecocomposition, ecotheology, political ecology and environmental communication (Stibbe, 2021, p. 7).

The 'linguistics' of 'ecolinguistics' then refers to the analytical techniques used to expose the underlying stories-we-live-by—stories which have the potential to affect how we engage with the natural world—thereby 'opening them up to question and challenge from an ecological perspective' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 9). Linguistic inquiry in any branch of linguistics could be considered ecolinguistics if that inquiry considered how language contributes to 'the life-sustaining interactions of humans with other humans, other organisms and the physical environment' (p. 9), but Stibbe (2021) has identified eight methods for linguistic inquiry that tend to be the most practical and effective for unveiling the stories-we-live-by, most of which fall under the expansive umbrella of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2003, 2010; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Martin and Rose, 2007; Kress, 2010; van Dijk, 2011; Machin and Mayr, 2012).

In no particular order, the first linguistic theory in the ecolinguistics toolkit is frame theory and is based on the work of numerous individuals across the academic spectrum, including Goffman

(1974), Tannen (1993), Lakoff (2010, 2014) and Lakoff and Wehling (2012a). Frames are important in revealing the stories-we-live-by because, as Lakoff (2014) explains, they 'shape how we see the world...they shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcome of our actions' (p. xi). They are also important because 1) frames are triggered through language, which makes them accessible for academic inquiry (Lakoff, 2010), and 2) new frames can be made to replace old, normative frames that no longer work to meet a desired end, as in the idea of counter-discourses to replace ineffective normative discourses. For ecolinguistics, Stibbe (2021) defines the three central concepts of frame theory as follows:

> A *frame* is a package of knowledge about an area of life.
> *Framing* is a story which uses a package of knowledge about one area of life (a frame) to structure how another area of life is conceptualised.
> *Reframing* is the act of framing a concept in a way that is different from its typical framing in a culture. (p. 40)

Frames, framing and reframing all emerge in discourse through the use of 'trigger words' which are words or phrases 'used in describing...a particular area of life' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 41). An example of this from some preliminary research is when vegans and their actions are discussed using words like 'claim', 'accuse', 'evidence' and 'plea', all of which trigger the framing VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES.

The second linguistic theory in the ecolinguistics toolkit is metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Müller, 2008) which is so similar to framing theory that, according to Stibbe (2021), 'the two concepts overlap...and are frequently used interchangeably' (p. 58). There is, though, a nuanced distinction between them: metaphor, unlike framing, can accommodate concrete dissimilarities between source frame and target domain. The similarity and difference between metaphors and framing is conveyed in the definition Stibbe (2021) gives for the ecolinguistics framework:

> Metaphors are a type of framing—one where the source frame is from a specific, concrete and imaginable area of life which is clearly different from the target domain. (p. 60)

Essential to metaphor analysis is 'how elements of the source frame *map onto* elements of the target domain' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 62) (emphasis in the original). This 'mapping' of elements reveals 'entailments', or 'reasoning patterns', which can either encourage ecologically responsible behavior or contribute to its dismantling and destruction, as when, as Stibbe (2021) points out, the metaphor NATURE IS A MACHINE reveals the entailment of easy 'repair' solutions that ignore any underlying systemic issues (p. 64). In preliminary research for this thesis, I identified only one conceptual metaphor. While metaphor could be useful in some contexts, my data analysis on veganism has not revealed metaphor as a prominent linguistic device in the construction of stories of veganism.

The third linguistic theory in the framework is appraisal theory (Martin and White, 2005; Martin and Rose, 2007), which identifies patterns in text that consistently represent objects, people and phenomena in a positive or negative way (Stibbe, 2021, p. 78). 'Appraisal patterns are of key interest in ecolinguistics,' writes Stibbe (2021), 'because of their power to influence whether people think of an area of life positively or negatively' (p. 79). Similar to framing and metaphor, appraisal patterns are revealed through language, as Martin and Rose (2007) note, 'a great deal of [appraisal] is realized through lexis as well as grammar' (p. 63). Stibbe distinguishes between 'the mental models in people's minds', which he calls 'evaluations' (p. 79), and the linguistic patterns in text:

> *Evaluations* are stories in people's minds about whether an area of life is good or bad. *Appraisal patterns* are clusters of linguistic features which come together to represent an area of life as good or bad. (p. 79)

Two key aspects of appraisal patterns is 1) how they cluster and create a 'mood' or 'tone' across a text (Stibbe, 2021, p. 81), and 2) how they can consistently occur across a large number of texts, thereby influencing social cognition and how we, as communities and societies, act in reference to ecology and the natural world. As expected, appraisal patterns are commonly used in creating

stories of veganism, especially with regards to stance. As Martin and White (2005) explain, appraisal theory is concerned the 'meaning making process by which the speaker/writer negotiates relationships of [agreement/disagreement] vis-à-vis the various value positions referenced by the text and hence vis-à-vis the socially-constituted communities of shared attitude and belief associated with those positions' (p. 92). For the purposes of this thesis, the 'communities' and 'value positions' are the vegan community and its value system and the community of people who eat animal products and its value system.

The fourth linguistic theory applied in ecolinguistics is identity theory (Giddons, 1991; Benwell and Stokoe, 2006). According to Benwell and Stokoe (2006), identity is 'an "essential", cognitive, socialized, phenomenological or psychic phenomenon that governs human action' (p. 3). More specifically for the ecolinguistics framework, some identities can encourage ecologically responsible behavior while others discourage it, making identity theory a constructive theory for ecolinguistics exploration (Stibbe, 2021). There are two aspects of identity theory that Stibbe (2021) defines:

> An *identity* is a story in people's minds about what it means to be a particular kind of person, including appearance character, behaviour and values.
> A *self-identity* is an evolving story people tell themselves and others about what kind of person they are. (p.100)

'Identity', then, is a shared concept whereas 'self-identity' differs according to the individual, so society's understanding of, for example, the identity of 'CEO' can influence 1) whether individuals wish to self-identify as a CEO, and 2) how they conduct themselves should they choose that self-identity. Also important to note is the role of text and language. As Stibbe (2021) explains, text is not merely descriptive but active in 'establishing, constructing and maintaining...identities over time. In other words, texts build and perpetuate a model in people's minds about what kinds of people there are in society' (p. 101). Therefore, ecolinguistics can explore identities 'through examining how texts within society create labels...for different kinds of people with certain

characteristics, value or behaviour' (p. 101) as relates to ecology and the natural world. For veganism, identity theory can reveal the characteristics of 'authenticity' in 'ethnicity' as they pertain to food, making certain cuisines like African American soul food or Italian food more attractive to people who fear that a loss of meat is also a loss of culture and tradition.

The fifth linguistic theory is that of fact construction (Potter, 1996). As Potter (1996) notes, 'In virtually any situation appeal to the facts, to what really happened and what is only invention, can be a powerful device (p. 1). This is no less so in discourse that can affect how people respond to issues of ecology and the environment. 'Texts...' Stibbe (2021) tells us, 'place descriptions of the world on a spectrum of *facticity*, from absolute truth at one end to absolute falsehood on the other, with a range of levels of uncertainty in between. In doing so, they play a potential role in influencing readers' *convictions*...' (p. 118) (emphasis in the original). 'Facticity' and 'convictions' are defined as follows:

> *Convictions* are stories in people's minds about whether descriptions of the world are true, uncertain or false.
> *Facticity patterns* are clusters of linguistic devices which come together to represent descriptions of the world as true, uncertain or false. (Stibbe, 2021, p. 121)

Therefore, facticity patterns in text can reveal the potential convictions that individuals and larger social groups hold in their minds, and, according to Stibbe (2021), Critical Discourse Analysis provides the guidance as to where those facticity patterns may emerge in the grammar, for example, in modality (Martin and Rose, 2007), in calls to authority (van Leeuwen, 2008), in quantifiers (Machin and Mayr, 2012), in hedging (Machin and Mayr, 2012) and in presupposition (Martin and White, 2005). So when the linguistic pattern of modality in a text says that veganism '*may* be unhealthy', '*can* cause nerve damage' and '*could* contribute to B12 deficiency', ecolinguistics analysis is able to identify the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY' IS PROBABLY TRUE.

The sixth and seventh linguistic theories in the ecolinguistics framework are salience and erasure (van Leeuwen, 2008). Van Leeuwen (2008) refers to salience and erasure as 'exclusion' and notes that 'representations include or exclude social actors to suit their interests and purposes in relation to the readers for whom they are intended' (p. 28), salience being 'inclusion' and erasure being 'exclusion'. These two theories are presented together here because of their obvious complementary nature, being the inverse of each other. According to Stibbe (2021), they are defined as follows:

> *Salience* is a story in people's minds that an area of life is important or worthy of consideration. (p. 160)
> *Erasure* is a story in people's minds that an area of life is **un**important or **un**worthy of consideration. (p. 141) (bold-font emphasis added)

Salience, as Stibbe (2021) notes, is more commonly used in visual, multimodal analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), but can be applied to linguistic analysis where 'patterns of linguistic features can come together to form salience patterns which represent particular participants prominently in a text' (Stibbe, 2021, pp. 160-161), a 'salience pattern' being 'a linguistic or visual representation of an area of life as worthy of attention through concrete, specific and vivid depictions' (p. 160). Salience and salience patterns are important because, from an ecolinguistics perspective, they can 'tell the story that nature is important and worthy of consideration' (p. 180). When this doesn't happen, then 'erasure' and 'erasure patterns' are the primary concern. Stibbe (2021) defines an erasure pattern as 'a linguistic representation of an area of life as irrelevant, marginal or unimportant through its systematic absence, backgrounding or distortion in texts' (p. 141). The concept of erasure has been applied in Adams (1990) and her concept of 'the absent referent' in meat consumption (1990), which was taken up later by Moore (2014) in her work on the identity of non-human animals in vegan ad campaigns, and, in that same year, by Stibbe (2014) and his work on the erasure of the natural world in sociolinguistics research. Overall, Stibbe (2021) specifies that 'the point of ecolinguistics analysis is not only to point out that the natural world *has* been erased in

discourses..., but also to show *how* it has been erased' (p. 158) (emphasis in the original). Understanding the linguistic constructions of erasure, Stibbe (2021) contends, can assist in resisting erasure and increasing the salience of the natural world in the future (p. 158). In the data collected for this thesis, no stories of salience or erasure have been identified.

The final linguistic theory for ecolinguistics analysis is linguistic narratology (Toolan, 2001). Linguistic narratology is the only linguistic theory in the second edition of Stibbe's book (2021) that was not included in the first edition. Despite its novelty in the ecolinguistics framework, Stibbe calls it 'the most powerful form of story that [the] book describes' (p. 182). Dahlstrom (2014), in his work on narrative in science communication, tells us that 'narrative cognition is thought to represent the default mode of human thought, proving structure to reality' (p. 13615). What this means, according to Stibbe (2021), is that narrative offers a complete experiential package of participants, intentions, motivations, causes, effects, actions, consequences, ethics and blame (p. 182). And for the consumer of 'narrative texts', all of this can be done 'in ways that are inspiring, moving and memorable' (p. 182). Stibbe defines 'narrative structure' and 'narrative text' as follows:

> *Narrative structures* are stories in people's minds which involve a sequence of logically connected events. (p. 182)
> A *narrative text* is a specific oral telling, written work, or other expressive form, which recounts a series of temporally and logically connected events. (p. 183)

Narrative texts come in many forms—e.g., novels, poems, advertisements, movies, letters, speeches, jokes—to deliver narrative structure to the minds of individuals or larger groups of people. The importance of narrative for ecolinguistics is the underlying 'narrative entailments' that communicate morals or other instructive messages. As Stibbe (2021) explains, these 'can be extracted, taken outside the narrative itself, and applied to everyday life' (p. 184). The job of ecolinguistics, then, is to expose and resist those narrative entailments that encourage people to behave destructively toward the natural world and to promote those that encourage more

responsible behavior. For veganism, linguistic narratology is frequently used to communicate historical narratives of family and culture indicating authenticity, hero narratives of success on a vegan diet, and transition narratives highlighting health differences between pre- and post-vegan people.

Regarding notation, all stories, regardless of which linguistic theory they are derived from, are written in small caps. For example, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY emerges from my data from a facticity pattern, the story VEGAN DIETS ARE A SOURCE OF ILLNESS from a framing, the story MEAT CONSUMPTION IS A PLACE from a metaphor, and the story VEGANS ARE IRRATIONAL from an identity pattern.

Finally, with having defined and discussed the stories representing cognitive structures in people's minds and the theories that make up the linguistic toolkit used to analyze those stories as they reveal themselves in texts, the only part of the framework left to address is how those stories, once revealed, are assessed and what that means for real-world action.

3.6.3 ASSESSMENT WITH THE ECOSOPHY

The central aspect of the ecolinguistics theoretical framework is the 'ecosophy', which makes explicit the value system of the linguistic analyst. As such, it is intended to guide the analyst in their assessment of stories, 'to open them up to question and challenge' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 11). In many academic disciplines, especially those conducting analysis of language or people in society, analysts work under an implied ethical framework. As Stibbe (2021) points out, 'An analysis of racist language, for instance, is likely to be conducted within an ethical framework which sees racism as something negative that needs to be worked against' (p. 11). Since racism is generally considered negative in most communities around the world—it has inspired, for the most part, a set of shared values—the ethical framework that identifies racism as negative does not need to be explicit. In some cases, though, like with gender equality, climate change, animal rights and veganism, there is

no ethical consensus. With climate change, there is division about its origin and the level of threat that it poses to life on earth. According to a 2018 Pew Research Center survey (Fagan and Huang, 2019), only 59% of the people in the United States see climate change as a serious threat. In the UK, that number is a little higher at 66%, but in Russia, Nigeria and Israel, that number is much lower, at 43%, 41% and 38% respectively. In any analytical research about climate change, the analyst's ethical framework or value system would need to be made explicit. Without it, their research would invite questions of credibility due to a lack of disclosure with regard to evaluation criteria. In ecolinguistics research, since a lot of it deals with many of these same topics, the value system of the analyst—the ecosophy—is essential.

The term 'ecosophy' was developed by the Norwegian philosopher, environmentalist and social activist Arne Naess (1989), who explains it in more detail as follows:

> Etymologically, the word 'ecosophy' combines *oikos* and *sophia*, 'household' and 'wisdom'. As in 'ecology', 'eco-' has an appreciably broader meaning than the immediate family, household, and community. 'Earth household' is closer to the mark. So an ecosophy becomes *a philosophical world-view or system inspired by the conditions of life in the ecosphere*. It should then be able to serve as an individual's philosophical grounding... (emphasis in the original) (pp. 37-8)

In ecolinguistics, this 'philosophical grounding' allows the analyst to assess stories of ecological relevance and then place them along a beneficial-destructive spectrum to identify those stories that need to be resisted and those that need to be promoted in the interest of creating more environmentally friendly and sustainable eco-civilizations. Stories that communicate entailments that align with the values laid out in the ecosophy are assessed as 'beneficial stories' and are promoted as such; stories whose entailments contradict the values of the ecosophy are assessed as 'destructive stories' and are resisted; and stories with entailments that both align with and contradict the ecosophy are assessed as 'ambivalent stories'. Ambivalent stories, like destructive

stories, tend to be resisted due to their misalignment with the ecosophy, although their beneficial elements may be useful in the construction of beneficial stories.

Of particular importance is the need for one's ecosophy to be realistic and supported by verifiable facts; in other words, the ecosophy needs to be 'scientifically possible', 'plausible' and 'aligned with the available evidence' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 14). But the ecosophy need not be simply 'statements of philosophical positions'; it can also include 'a vision of a better society and the concrete steps necessary to achieve that vision' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 12). All ecosophies, then, will be different, and part of that difference depends on the school of thought that informs the analyst. In the next chapter on my methodology, I will introduce my vegan ecosophy—the set of values that informs my analytical research—and the school of thought from which it is derived.

3.7 FROM FRAMEWORK TO PRESENT

Since the publication of Stibbe's ecolinguistics framework in 2015, research in the field has expanded to explore a wide variety of topics with the potential to affect how people think and behave with regards to ecology and the natural world. Stibbe himself has continued to publish and explore the field, with a chapter in *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies* (2018) on Critical Discourse Analysis and ecology; a chapter in *The Routledge Handbook of Ecocriticism and Environmental Communication* (2019) about our experience of weather and the stories we live by; a chapter in *Prioritizing Sustainability Education: A Comprehensive Approach* (2020) about the current educational context and the responsibility of educating students about the stories we live by; a chapter in the *Routledge Handbook of Ecocultural Identity* (2020) about human identity in and interactions with the non-human world; and yet another chapter in *The Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (2018) on Positive Discourse Analysis and the search for beneficial discourses, where he introduces the work of Martin (2004), Macgilchrist (2007) and Bartlett (2012) and their contributions to PDA.

While Stibbe has produced a large quantity of the work in ecolinguistics over the last decade—not all of it addressed in this thesis—he is not the only one exploring the connections among language, social cognition and ecologically responsible behavior. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Fill and Penz (2018) published *The Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* which showcased what was expected to be some of the most up-to-date ecolinguistics research at the time. Unfortunately, the volume offered little by way of theoretical or methodological innovation and seems to be thematically redundant of the 2001 *Ecolinguistics Reader* which also saw Alwin Fill as one of two volume editors. With Part I of the volume addressing the metaphorical ecology of language—titled 'Languages in Their Social and Individual Environment'—Part II of the collection was ostensibly designed to address the language of literal, scientific ecology and was titled 'The Role of Language Concerning the Environment (Biological and Ecological Sense)'. Part III of the volume is titled 'Philosophical and Transdisciplinary Ecolinguistics' and contains work from both motivations.

Overall, while much of the work in the *Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (2018) is important for a greater understanding of the intersections of language and the natural world, I do not consider it to be representative of the contemporary ecolinguistics framework or any organized system for the analysis and evaluation of language. Most of the work lacks an explicit value system and much of the linguistic analysis, if present, is purely descriptive (e.g., Stöckl and Molnar, 2018). For the majority of the articles with no linguistic analysis (e.g., Kuha, 2018), most are reviews of past literature (e.g., Penz, 2018; Cook and Sealey, 2018; Trampe, 2018) and recommendations for future research (e.g., Hansen, 2018). While many chapters conclude by noting the need for linguistic analysis and real-world solutions (e.g., Mey, 2018), few if any deliver either. Unfortunately, the volume lacks creativity and innovation with regards to the 'ecological analysis of discourse' (Alexander and Stibbe, 2014). Two of the more innovative works in the collection are Hansen (2018), who stretches the boundaries of the discipline with his advocacy for visual analysis of texts,

and Goatly (2018) who extends his focus on lexico-grammatical structures to make distinctions between destructive and beneficial discourses—even offering a small linguistic toolkit at the end of the chapter. While *The Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (2018) is a good introduction to past research and theories behind the broad field of language and ecology, I see little value in the collection for theoretical and methodological advances in ecolinguistics over the first decade and a half of the 21st century.

Finally, *The Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (2018) is not the only source of ecolinguistics research. In addition to the freely accessible online course *The Stories We Live By*, the International Ecolinguistics Association and its journal *Language and Ecology*, other journals have also devoted much of their space to ecolinguistics research, including *Journal of World Languages* and *Text and Talk*. In addition to that, Bloomsbury Publishing introduced the Bloomsbury Advances in Ecolinguistics series in 2019 and have published three titles so far—*Corpus-Assisted Ecolinguistics* by Robert Poole (2022), *Storytelling and Ecology: Empathy, Enchantment and Emergence in the Use of Oral Narratives* by Anthony Nanson (2021), and *TESOL and Sustainability: English Language Teaching in the Anthropocene Era* by Goulah and Katunich (eds.) (2020)—with two more forthcoming titles: *Language and Ecology in Southern and Eastern Arabia* by Watson, Lovett and Morano (eds.) (November 2022) and *Multispecies Discourse Analysis: The Nexus of Discourse and Practice in Sea Turtle Tourism and Conservation* by Gavin Lamb (November 2023). Overall, ecolinguistics analysis is being applied in one form or another to examine the intersection of humans, language and the natural world. This thesis hopes to expand that scope to include the discourse of veganism.

4.0 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 DATA COLLECTION

Because of the ecolinguistics theoretical framework and the qualitative, critical examination of text and image, I chose to collect data using purposeful sampling (also purposive or judgement sampling), a kind of non-probability sampling used when random sampling and quantitative questions are not practical (Merriam and Grenier, 2019, p. 13). The primary goal of purposeful sampling is to select texts and images that are 'information rich' and 'illuminative', offering 'useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest' with an 'emphasis on in-depth understanding' (Patton, 2002, pp. 40, 46). The 'phenomenon of interest' for this study is the discourse about and representations of veganism, and the overarching goal is to 'learn a great deal about issues of central importance' (Patton, 2002, p. 46) as identified in my research questions about how veganism is represented discursively online.

In collecting data, my 'purpose' was to find 'fertile exemplars' of the stories of veganism in order 'to bring refinement and clarity to understanding' their linguistic construction (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 140). For destructive stories—negative representations—it was important to seek out sources of data with the most negative representations of vegans and the vegan lifestyle, not to generalize about those representations across all media, but to understand them in more detail because they are a rich source of rhetorical structures and linguistic clusters used to denigrate and marginalize vegan people.

Most of my data for destructive stories comes from online news organizations that span four countries and range from the left side of the political spectrum (*The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Washington Post*) to the center of the spectrum (*NewmarketToday*, *Metro*, *Globe and Mail*) to the right side (*The National Review*, *The Telegraph*, *Mail Online*, *Fox News*). The rationale for choosing these news sources is that they reach a vast audience, so the representations of vegans in

them have the possibility of influencing how vegans are perceived in society at large. Publication dates for all articles range from 2018 to 2022. In total, 34 articles were collected as sources of data, eight of which were analyzed in full and 26 of which were mined for user comments, 141 comments in total. I ceased collecting data when the data ceased to reveal any new insights into the linguistic constructions of veganism, a practice most closely aligned with the concept of 'saturation' (Fusch and Ness, 2015; Beuving and de Vries, 2015; Saunders et al., 2018), which is used 'in qualitative research as a criterion for discontinuing data collection and/or analysis' (Saunders et al., 2018: 1894).

Two more digital sources for data containing destructive stories of veganism were chosen based on the richness of their content. One source is the British morning television program *Good Morning Britain* (*GMB*) with host Piers Morgan (2018-2021), and the other is the podcast *The Joe Rogan Experience* (*JRE*) (2018-2020) on the audio-streaming platform Spotify. Piers Morgan is well known for his polarizing views on social issues like transgender rights, obesity and veganism, and he commonly expresses his "very strong, honestly held opinions" to his co-hosts, his guests and his wider television audience of 1.9 million viewers (Harrison, 2021). Because of his negative attitude toward veganism, his high-profile position and the possibility for influencing how large numbers of people perceive vegans, six of his interviews with vegan guests were analyzed as potential sources of destructive stories of veganism.

Joe Rogan is an American celebrity known for his work as a stand-up comedian, UFC commentator and podcaster. In May of 2020, the audio-content streaming platform Spotify purchased Rogan's podcasts, *The Joe Rogan Experience*, for a reported 200 million dollars, a purchase that included his 'tens of millions of listeners...in the United States [and] in 92 other markets' (Rosman et al., 2022). In this way, Joe Rogan is similar to Piers Morgan because they both have high-profile platforms that reach a substantial portion of the population in their home countries and abroad. They are also

similar in that both hold polarizing views about certain aspects of society, in Rogan's case regarding race, the LGBTQ community, vaccines and veganism. Because of his views on veganism, his celebrity status and the large number of people that he potentially influences, seven excerpts from four of his podcasts were analyzed as potential sources for destructive stories of veganism.

For beneficial stories, my aim in data collection was similar but inverse: I needed to find the most positive representations of veganism to also understand them in linguistic detail in the interest of promoting them to replace the destructive representations. Because the focus for beneficial stories is on 'promotion' as opposed to 'resistance', broadly disseminated sources were unnecessary. Quality stories—stories 'which can actively encourage people to protect the systems which support life' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 26)—were most desired. Toward this end, I chose one documentary film and seven cookbooks for ecolinguistic analysis. The documentary film *The Game Changers* (2018) was chosen for its status as one of the most high-profile mainstream documentaries to date about veganism and plant-based diets. It debuted at the Sundance Film Festival in 2018 and was later released to the general public on iTunes where it became "the best-selling documentary of all time...within just a week" (Chiorando, 2019). There were, though, criticisms about the film which included accusations of misinformation regarding nutritional science—including those by Piers Morgan, Joe Rogan and *Men's Health* magazine (Kita, 2019)—but they have not gone unchallenged. The producer and star/narrator of *The Game Changers*, James Wilks, has appeared on both GMB (in October of 2019) and JRE (in December 2019)—two of my sources for negative representations of veganism—to successfully defend veganism and his film by resisting some of the destructive stories discovered in my analysis. And Doctor James Loomis, who appears in *The Game Changers* as an authority on plant-based nutrition, wrote a rebuttal (Loomis, 2019) to *Men's Health* defending the nutritional science in the film. Collectively, the success of the film, its focus on plant-based nutrition, and its success in resisting destructive stories of veganism, both in the film and in the real

world, are the primary reasons for my choosing *The Game Changers* as a data source for beneficial stories of veganism.

In addition to *The Game Changers*, seven vegan cookbooks were also chosen for analysis. Publication dates range from 2004 to 2018 and, as with news articles and user comments, I ceased data collection at the point of saturation when I decided that new data was not offering new insights into the linguistic constructions of beneficial stories of veganism. The rationale for choosing cookbooks is that food is central to the vegan lifestyle and, as has been established in the literature, can offer insight into ethnic and cultural identities while communicating behavior and group values. Pursuant to this, I chose cookbooks which conveyed strong cultural identity performances (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006) and the variety of food that they highlighted. Included in my data set are cookbooks of Italian cuisine, Indian cuisine, Japanese temple cuisine, soul food, Mexican cuisine, Tex-Mex cuisine and Cal-Mex cuisine.

Overall, the data offers a rich variety of linguistic constructions that communicate both beneficial and destructive stories of veganism but captures only some of the main stories. Future research will be required to discover more, and I hope that this thesis will provide the necessary encouragement and tools to do so. As climate degradation continues to destroy the natural world and its life-sustaining relationships, we may need to continue the search for newer, more effective, more influential beneficial stories. Hopefully, in such a situation, the documentaries and cookbooks of the future can provide us with new, more effective ways to think about and behave in the natural world.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

As this research is an ecolinguistics study of the representations of veganism and their linguistic constructions, I follow the ecolinguistics theoretical framework (Stibbe, 2021) and the suggested

methods for linguistic analysis and the assessment of ideologies. I conducted my research with critical, explanatory goals in mind, aiming to expose those 'aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 9). For this particular research, those 'ideological representations' are the representations of vegans and the vegan lifestyle, and exposure occurs through the analysis of their linguistic structures and the stories that they communicate to a larger audience. To that end, my research was conducted in the following eight stages:

1) Broadly reading about veganism in general
2) Data collection for beneficial stories of veganism
3) Iterative textual analysis to reveal the underlying stories through their linguistic constructions
4) Evaluation of the stories against my vegan ecosophy in order to place them on a beneficial-destructive spectrum
5) Data collection for destructive stories of veganism
6) Iterative textual analysis to reveal the underlying stories through their linguistic constructions
7) Evaluation of the stories against my vegan ecosophy in order to place them on a beneficial-destructive spectrum
8) Iterative cross-referencing between the beneficial stories and destructive stories

In the first stage of my research, I broadly consumed information about veganism—including academic research, social media, entertainment and mainstream news—in order to gain a better understanding of veganism from multiple perspectives. My own circumstances as a white American male living in Japan limited the extent to which I could understand a broader lived vegan experience. Some of the new perspectives that I gained came from people of various geographical and cultural backgrounds, from a variety of genders and sexual orientations, and from a spectrum of socio-economic statuses. This in turn allowed me to better understand the problems inherent in practicing veganism in the contemporary world at large and some of the mediating solutions people have found to navigate those problems. In a more practical academic sense, I was able to begin

mentally cataloguing the stories of veganism for data collection and analysis. It was at this stage that I decided to begin with the beneficial stories of veganism, which would allow me to later search for destructive stories that would inversely align with them.

The second stage of my research involved searching for and collecting data that linguistically revealed beneficial stories of veganism. After deciding on what kind of media might produce the most useful beneficial stories—an intuitive process gained from my extensive consumption of media in stage one (see also data collection of beneficial stories)—I began the iterative analytical process of stage three of my research.

In the third stage of my research, I began to analyze my data through an iterative process, 'a loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data as additional questions emerge, new connections are unearthed, and more complex formulations develop along with a deepening understanding of the material' (Berkowitz, 1997). As Srivastava and Hopwood (2009) explain, 'The role of iteration, not as a repetitive mechanical task but as a deeply reflexive process, is key to sparking insight and developing meaning' (p. 77). Because the stories-we-live-by are cognitive structures which are 'embedded deeply in the minds of individuals across a society' and 'not immediately recognisable as stories' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 5), identifying them in the linguistic constructions of discourse was sometimes challenging, and engaging in an iterative process allowed me to recognize linguistic patterns over time as I was repeatedly exposed to them with each consecutive reading.

In addition to the process of repeated analysis and the gradual emergence of linguistic constructions, iterative analysis also allowed new stories to emerge later in the analytical process while also helping me to organize linguistic structures and make connections between parts of the discourse that were distant from each other. As Dey (1993) reminds us, the iterative process

involves ‘repeated returns to earlier phases of the analysis as evidence becomes more organized and ideas are clarified’ (p. 239). This was essential in longer texts like the documentary film *The Game Changers* where narrative elements became ‘more organized’ and ‘ideas clarified’ with repeated returns to my ‘earlier phases’ of analysis, making critical connections between early parts of the film and later parts of the film.

Regarding the analytical methods, as mentioned in the previous chapter, some were often more effective than others in revealing certain ideologies, so my analysis was often guided by the data. For example, this occurred with discourse in which participants relate personal anecdotes, and this happened most frequently with vegan ‘transition’ stories. In working with such texts, I looked for narrative structures as identified through temporal sequences, logical connections and kernel events (Toolan, 2001; Bal, 2017). One example of this comes from the documentary film *The Game Changers*, a framing narrative with 19 embedded narratives, one of which is the vegan transition story of Patrik Baboumian, world-record-holding strongman:

> I stopped eating meat in 2005. Up to that time I was 105 kilos, and now I’m 130 kilos. Also, at the same time I set like four world records, so when I stopped eating meat, I got stronger and bigger.

The temporal sequence was initially identified here by the numerals ‘2005’, ‘105’ and ‘130’; the circumstantial adjuncts ‘up to that time’ and ‘at the same time’; the adverbs ‘now’ and ‘when’; and the comparatives ‘stronger’ and ‘bigger’. Together, these linguistic triggers cluster around the kernel event of ‘stopped eating meat’ and communicate any number of possible entailments, one of which is VEGAN FOOD IS HEALTHY.

Another example of data-guided methodology concerns the usefulness of appraisal patterns in data employing oppositional structures in the discussion of veganism and meat consumption. When such

discussions were present in the discourse, I thought to look for words of positive or negative semantic prosody (Cook, 2005; Martin and Rose, 2007), comparative structures (Jones, 2002; Davies, 2013) and expressions of 'affect' (Martin and White, 2005) among other linguistic features. One example of this comes from the cookbook *Sweet Potato Soul* (2018) by Jenné Claiborne. In her introduction, she makes the following claim:

> Besides being ethical, leaps-and-bounds better for the environment, and a more efficient way to consume nutrients, the vegan lifestyle is also the healthiest way to live. (p. 12)

The word 'ethical' has a positive semantic prosody and thus positively appraises 'the vegan lifestyle' while the comparative antonymy found in the modifiers 'better', 'more efficient' and 'healthiest' negatively appraises the comparative opposite, a non-vegan lifestyle. These linguistic structures are found elsewhere in Claiborne's introduction as well, and together they form linguistic clusters that communicate the appraisal patterns VEGANISM IS GOOD and MEAT CONSUMPTION IS BAD.

One final method that was useful in searching for beneficial stories of veganism is that of identity theory. Veganism is a practice of 'complex biographical and social dynamics' and 'people who choose to adhere to veganism do so within a specific personal, social, political and cultural context' (Griffin, 2017, p. 1). Identity labeling and performance are therefore common features in discourse about and by vegan people, respectively. Since identities can be identified through, for example, appraisal patterns (Martin and Rose, 2007), personal pronouns (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Myers, 2010) and biographical narrative (Giddens, 1991), these are some of the linguistic features that I searched for in my data. One example of this is from Chloe Coscarelli's *Chloe's Vegan Italian Kitchen* (2014):

> My family is originally from the Calabria region of southern Italy. However, our roots are Sicilian, as the most distant ancestor we can trace is Caterina Palermo, who was born in 1683 in Sicily. (p. XI)

Coscarelli uses the personal pronouns ‘my’, ‘our’ and ‘we’ to align herself with a group of people she then identifies as having originated in Italy, as revealed through the linguistic triggers ‘Calabria’, ‘Italy’ and ‘Sicily’. Together with other linguistic clusters, they distinguish Coscarelli’s self-identity as ‘Italian’, which has the potential to encourage people to view her vegan Italian food as authentic Italian food.

The fourth stage of my research involved evaluating the stories against my vegan ecosophy and then placing them on a beneficial-destructive spectrum. This part of the research can be considered a kind of ‘coding’, where the stories are coded as 1) beneficial, 2) destructive, or 3) ambivalent, i.e., 1) supporting veganism, 2) subverting veganism, or 3) a combination of both. As an example, upon evaluation, the story VEGAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC aligned with value nine of my vegan ecosophy which rejects an historical precedent for meat consumption and reminds us that many cuisines around the world were primarily plant-based. The story VEGANISM IS AUTHENTIC was therefore considered a beneficial story to be promoted in the interest of ecology and the natural world.

It is important to note here that stories only have to align with one value in my ecosophy to be considered beneficial. In rarer instances, stories will align with two or three values, and this occurred for me in the analysis of discourse about animal farming which relates to animal sentience, consumption, ethics and environmental impacts. Sometimes stories neither align with nor contradict any of the values in my ecosophy. In such cases, the stories were discarded due to a lack of relevance to my overall goal of identifying beneficial and destructive stories. One final possibility, another rare situation, is when a story both partially aligns with and partially contradicts the values of my ecosophy. In those situations, the story would be coded as ‘ambivalent’. In the research for this thesis, there were no ambivalent stories.

Also of note regarding coding, because of my extensive preparation, my familiarity with my ecosophy, and the kinds of texts I chose in my search for beneficial stories, I intuitively assumed that they would align with the values of my ecosophy, but this was not always the case, which is why this evaluation phase of my research was important. This occurred with one of the cookbooks that I chose as a source for beneficial stories of veganism. It contained both beneficial and destructive stories. Without my assessment and coding, this may have gone unnoticed and a beneficial story with destructive elements may have been naively promoted.

The fifth stage of my research involved searching for and collecting data that linguistically revealed destructive stories of veganism. One of my primary goals at this stage was to find stories that inversely aligned with the beneficial stories that I uncovered in the third and fourth stages of my research. The rationale for this was showing that beneficial stories are sometimes promoted in resistance to specific destructive stories. This allowed me to search for specific themes or topics in the news that referenced, for example, the health of vegan people or the authenticity of vegan food. After data collection, I began a second round of iterative analysis.

In the sixth stage of my research, as in the third stage, I began an iterative process of linguistic analysis which, in the search for destructive stories, was important for analyzing multiple texts in multiple formats across multiple sources. For example, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY was revealed in four full-length articles from four different sources, and in 28 user comments across eight articles from five sources. The iterative process helped me to identify and coordinate linguistic structures across all of those texts.

As mentioned previously, certain methods were more useful than others in the search for stories of veganism. One method that was useful for uncovering convictions underlying discourse about the nutritional benefits of the vegan diet was fact construction (Potter, 1996). In analyzing such data

about nutrition and health, I looked for the linguistic features of modality and hedging (Martin and Rose, 2007; Machin and Mayr, 2012; Bloor and Bloor, 2013), calls to authority (van Leeuwen, 2007, 2008) and the 'repertoire of empiricism' (Potter, 1996), all of which have the potential to reveal participant convictions regarding health, nutrition and the vegan diet. One example of this comes from the subtitle of the *Guardian* article 'Doctors warn vegans to take risks of vitamin B12 deficiency seriously' (Boseley, 2019):

> Shortage of vitamin found in milk can damage nerves and is best supplemented, experts say

The use of modality and hedging can be seen in the finite modal operator 'can', which signals low commitment to the claim of 'damage nerves' (Richardson, 2007), and a call to authority can be seen at the end of the second clause in the phrase 'experts say', which creates the impression of knowledge and reliability indicating high facticity. As these linguistic features begin to cluster throughout the article, the facticity pattern 'VEGANS ARE UNHEALTHY' IS TRUE begins to emerge, which contributes to the story VEGANS ARE UNHEALTHY.

Framing theory (Lakoff and Wehling, 2012) was also useful in uncovering destructive stories, especially when the focus of the article was on vegan people. With articles of this type, I would look for clusters of trigger words that indicated a source domain from which a framing was constructed. An example of this is from *The Guardian* article 'Veganism row breaks out after Joaquin Phoenix is told: be kinder to farmers' (O'Carroll, 2020):

> [Minette Batters's] comments were immediately criticised by vegan and animal rights groups, who accused Batters of making claims without evidence and ignoring the ethical problems posed by meat production.

In this excerpt, the trigger words 'accused', 'making claims' and 'evidence' signal an adversarial source frame, in this instance one that resembles a formal judicial trial. As the linguistic trigger words began to cluster, the framing VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES began to emerge from the discourse.

In the seventh stage of my research, I evaluated all of the stories that emerged from my analysis against my vegan ecosophy. If a story contradicted any of the values of my ecosophy, I coded the story 'destructive'. For example, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY undermines value six of my ecosophy and so was categorized as a destructive story. The story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES, though, does not contradict any specific value in my ecosophy but instead undermines veganism as a whole: When vegan advocates are portrayed as aggressive and harmful, veganism as a lifestyle also suffers negative characterizations which tend to discourage non-vegans from considering the vegan lifestyle as a viable way to reduce our harmful effects on ecology and the natural world. In such cases, the story is coded 'destructive', so the story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES is considered a destructive story.

In the eighth and final stage of my research, I cross-referenced all of the stories of veganism to better show how certain beneficial stories can be used to resist certain destructive stories. The clearest examples of this are the beneficial story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY resisting the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY, the beneficial story ANIMAL-BASED DIETS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE resisting the destructive story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, and the beneficial story MEAT CONSUMPTION DOES NOT DEFINE MASCULINITY resisting the destructive story VEGANS ARE EFFEMINATE. Through an iterative process, I discovered that beneficial and destructive stories did not always align methodologically, that new linguistic structures were frequently applied to create beneficial stories in the effort of resistance. One example of this comes from the documentary film *The Game Changers* in which the beneficial story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY appears to be communicated specifically in resistance to the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. As shown above, the destructive story

emerges primarily from a facticity pattern, but the beneficial story employs narrative to contest that representation. Iterative cross-referencing allowed me to discover these kinds of nuances in the linguistic creation of stories. The only aspect of my methodology left to discuss is my vegan ecosophy, which plays an essential role in evaluating the stories of veganism.

4.3 VEGAN ECOSOPHY

My vegan ecosophy informs the assessments I make about stories I discover through the linguistic clusters I identify in text. It is composed of 11 distinct values and is anchored in the principles of veganism. The Vegan Society of the UK, the oldest organization of its kind, defines veganism as follows:

> A philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals. (Vegan Society, 2020)

Of note in this definition is the focus on the exploitation of and cruelty to animals with specific mention of consumer products; dietary needs; the tripartite relationship of animals, humans and the environment; and the implication of flexibility in the phrase 'as far as possible and practicable', as mentioned in the introduction. All of these aspects of veganism can be found in varying degrees in the values of my vegan ecosophy, which is informed by the Deep Ecology Movement established by Arne Naess and outlined in a lecture he delivered in 1972 at the World Future Research Conference (Drengson and Inoue, 1995). In the lecture, Naess outlines seven points that characterize the Deep Ecology Movement, establishing for the first time a clearly expressed vision of ecological harmony and advocation for humanity's renewed relationship with the environment. Naess's vision for the movement—as revealed in his own ecosophy named 'Ecosophy T'—focuses on both environmental and social issues and includes the concepts of natural-world egalitarianism,

symbiosis and cooperation within complex relationships, heightened environmental awareness, and a move toward local autonomy. Many of these concepts can also be found in my vegan ecosophy as all advocates of the Deep Ecology movement observe the values in both Naess's Ecosophy T and in an ecosophy of their own design that expresses their own value system. Each of the 11 values in my ecosophy is given a simplified heading, a more detailed explanation, and some of the more prominent research that supports each value when necessary.

VALUE 1: Animal Sentience and Agency
I consider animals to be sentient beings with feelings and emotions and complex social structures, making them worthy of respect and the freedom to make their own decisions about how to live their lives.

Since the early 17th century and the scientific work of evolutionary biologist Charles Darwin, ethologists have been studying the cognitive, emotional, and social habits of animals, and many have concluded that animals are indeed sentient beings who live complex lives that human animals are only beginning to understand. Most prominently, this includes primatologist Jane Goodall (1971, 1988) and biologist Edward O. Wilson (Wilson and Holldobler, 1990), as well as more recently Dave Goulson (2010, 2013, 2014), Professor of Biological Sciences at Sussex University, and Jonathan Balcombe (2006, 2010, 2016), director of animal sentience at the Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy.

VALUE 2: Animal Farming Ethics
I consider all animal farming—including aquafarming, intensive factory farming, and small, organic, 'sustainable' farming—unethical due to the physical and mental violence perpetrated on the animals and the resultant detriment to the well-being of all ecological communities.

Bio-ethicist and moral philosopher Peter Singer (2002) outlined in his book *Animal Liberation* the case for an extension of equal rights to non-human animals. Singer writes that 'to discriminate against beings solely on account of their species is a form of prejudice, immoral and indefensible in

the same way that discrimination on the basis of race is immoral and indefensible' (p. 243). Tom Regan (1986), philosopher and professor emeritus at North Carolina State University, considers the fundamental problem with the ethics of animal abuse to be 'the system that allows us to view animals as *our resources*, here for *us*—to be eaten, or surgically manipulated, or exploited for sport or money' (p. 179). And Gary Francione, Professor of Law and Philosophy at Rutgers University in the United States, believes that most humans already embrace the ethics of anti-cruelty toward animals (Francione and Charlton, 2015) and advocates for the principle of equal consideration and extending to animals, in an echo of Tom Regan, 'the right not to be treated as the property of humans' (Francione, 2000, p. xxxi).

VALUE 3: Environmental impacts of Animal Farming
I recognize animal farming as the single largest contributor to greenhouse gasses and environmental pollution, making the vegan lifestyle the single most effective way to reduce the negative impact of animal farming on the natural world.

The Humane Society International (2014), informed by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (Gerber et al., 2013), concludes that 'the farm animal production sector is the single largest anthropogenic user of land, contributing to soil degradation, dwindling water supplies, and air pollution [and] is responsible for approximately 14.5% of human-induced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions' (p. 1). Poore and Nemecek (2018) similarly conclude that excluding animal products from everyone's diet has the potential to reduce the impact of animal agriculture on the environment by over 70%, but noting that 'widespread behavioral change will be hard to achieve in the narrow time frame remaining to limit global warming and to prevent further, irreversible biodiversity loss' (p. 991) . And the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 7 (2019) concludes—in an albeit more measured tone—that with 'very high confidence', animal agriculture is the primary driver of land degradation.

VALUE 4: Animal Consumption

In the interest of protecting the physical and mental well-being of all animals, I encourage everyone to abstain from all unnecessary dietary consumption of animal flesh and/or animal secretions, regardless of the avowed nutritional value.

Consumption of animals and animal by-products is, in most circumstances, intricately linked to factory farming and the institutionalized abuse of farm animals, which has been meticulously documented and fought against by both animal rights organizations (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, 2020; Humane Society International, 2020; Cruelty Free International, 2020; Animal Legal Defense Fund, 2020) and individuals (Singer, 2002; Regan, 1986; Francione, 2000, 2015; McWilliams, 2015; Grillo, 2016).

VALUE 5: Animal Exploitation
I encourage people to avoid 1) non-food commercial products made from and/or tested on animals and 2) services employing animals against their will, specifically noting the transportation and entertainment industries.

Veganism is not only about diet. Other lifestyle choices can have a detrimental effect on the lives of non-human animals and are an equal consideration for anyone concerned with the welfare of animals and the health of local and global ecosystems and biodiversity. Peter Singer (2002) was one of the first to address the use of animals outside of the farming and culinary industries, and now most animal rights activists and organizations address the same broader lifestyle issues. Organizations of note are People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (2020), the Humane Society International (2020) and Cruelty Free International (2020) which campaign against the fur and down industry, laboratory testing, entertainment industries like circuses and aquariums, elephant slaughter for ivory, and wildlife trade.

VALUE 6: Vegan Dietary Benefits
I believe that a whole-food, well-balanced vegan diet can be nutritionally abundant and effective in addressing modern-day health risks like obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

One of the largest longitudinal studies on health and plant-based diets was conducted in China in the 1980s as a collaboration between Cornel University, Oxford University and the Chinese Academy of Preventative Medicine and was documented in the book *The China Study* by one of the directors of the project, nutritional biochemist Colin T. Campbell (2005). The study concluded that a whole-food plant-based diet can reduce or reverse the impacts of some of the most problematic illnesses and diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer. More recent research includes the EAT-Lancet Commission report (Willet et al., 2019) by 18 authors from 16 countries who conclude that 'dietary patterns with the following characteristics promote low risk of major chronic disease and overall wellbeing: 1) protein sources primarily from plants... 2) fat mostly from unsaturated plant sources... 3) carbohydrates primarily from whole grains... [and] 4) at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day' (p. 459). The EAT-Lancet Commission report also takes environmental sustainability into consideration when recommending an optimal diet, which supports the second value in this vegan ecosophy. While many studies have mixed conclusions and are reluctant to entirely attribute improved health and lower mortality rates to a whole-food plant-based diet—as revealed in the hedged conclusions of the EAT-Lancet Commission report above—increasing amounts of research are finding that positive health outcomes consistently correlate with plant-based diets, and this is reflected in revised dietary recommendations from national health departments like the Dietitians Association of Australia which advises that 'with planning, those following a vegan diet can cover all their nutrient bases' (2017) and the National Health Service of the United Kingdom which similarly recommends that 'with good planning and an understanding of what makes up a healthy, balanced vegan diet, you can get all the nutrients your body needs' (2018). From research on cardiovascular diseases (Kahleova et al., 2017; Satija and Hu, 2018) and protein intake (Song et al., 2016; Tharrey et al., 2018) to the prevention of chronic disease (Tai Le and Sabate, 2014; Hever and Cronise, 2018) and the link between an ovo-lacto meat-based diet and cancer risks (Rohrmann et al., 2011; Keum et al., 2015), ignoring the benefits of a wholly plant-based diet is becoming increasingly difficult.

VALUE 7: Consideration and community

I assert that dietary and lifestyle habits must recognize the need for social justice in marginalized communities—communities of race, class and gender minorities—and in areas of the world most impacted by environmental issues caused by excessive production and consumption of animal products.

The origins of this value lie in the insights obtained from academic research on neoliberalism, race, and white male privilege (Harper, 2010, 2011, 2012; Mares and Pena, 2011; Greenebaum, 2018; Adams and Messina, 2018; Ko, 2021). It is also inspired by work in ecofeminism which highlights the intersection of speciesism, race and gender (Adams, 1990; Gaard, 1993; Wright, 2015). To understand the importance of this value regarding those impacted by environmental issues, the destruction of the Amazon rainforest is a prime example where 'cattle ranching is the largest driver of deforestation' and conservation groups like The Amazon Conservation Team work 'to protect tropical forests and strengthen traditional culture [alongside] indigenous and other local communities' (*About Us* and *Our Work*, 2018).

VALUE 8: Hegemonic Masculinity

I reject the subordination of marginalized genders through the performance of hegemonic hetero-masculinity and gendered food practices. Instead, I advocate for inclusivity, cooperation, consideration, humility and interdependence.

Hegemonic masculinity has been closely linked to the oppression of animals and marginalized peoples of color, gender and physical ability (Adams, 1990; Gaard, 1993; Adams and Gruen, 2015; Wright, 2015). This value is similar to value seven, but highlights the gender aspect of the oppression, specifically by white hetero-masculine males. This oppression bears out in the literature, from the concept of feminized soy-boys (Gambert and Linne, 2018) and Australian men at barbeques (Nath, 2010), to historical Indian-male feminization (Carson, 2021) and hetero-masculine stereotypes in blogs (Hart, 2018) and advertising (Buerkle, 2012).

VALUE 9: Historical Precedent

I reject the argument that 1) there is no historical precedent for the vegan diet, and that 2) historical consumption of animal products validates modern-day consumption of animal products.

Debate continues about the role of meat in the development of homo sapiens, but modern physical body structure and physiological functioning indicate that humans, while omnivorous, are primarily designed for consumption of plant-based foods (Francione and Charlton, 2015) which most likely made up a majority of the human diet in the distant past as well (Dunn, 2012; Zaraska, 2016). As Adams (2010) notes, 'The emphasis on the nutritional strengths of animal protein distorts the dietary history of most cultures in which complete protein dishes were made of vegetables and grains' (p. 55). Whatever the dietary habits of human ancestors may have been, there is no rationale for supporting the modern-day conditions of the animal farming industry which slaughters 10 billion animals a year in the United States alone (McWilliams, 2015).

VALUE 10: Flexibility

I acknowledge that transitioning to veganism in contemporary society can be challenging and that no vegan lifestyle is perfect. I encourage all people to exercise understanding of the time, effort and flexibility required to undertake such an extensive lifestyle transformation.

This value was inspired by the concept of 'aspirational veganism', where one acknowledges the imperfection inherent in any iterations of vegan practice (Gruen and Jones, 2015). To live in modern society means to participate in the exploitation of animals—willingly for the masses, unintentionally for vegans—making realistic veganism 'a process of doing the best one can to minimize violence, domination, and exploitation" (Gruen and Jones, 2015, p. 156). This value was also inspired by personal experiences confirmed in media discourse about flexitarianism and hypocrisy (see Keay, 2019), where stating the former frequently triggers accusations of the latter.

VALUE 11: World hunger

I assert that the vegan diet is a viable option for alleviating global hunger issues.

According to a study by researchers at the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment, immediately 'growing food exclusively for direct human consumption could, in principle, increase available food calories by as much as 70%, which could feed an additional 4 billion people (more than the projected 2–3 billion people arriving through population growth)' by the year 2050 (Cassidy et al., 2013). This research is more recently supported by the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America which has found that 'plant-based replacements for each of the major animal categories in the United States (beef, pork, dairy, poultry, and eggs) can produce twofold to 20-fold more nutritionally similar food per unit cropland' (Shepon et al., 2018, p. 3804), therefore feeding more people. And a study at the University of Lancaster (2018) has similarly concluded that the 'current production of crops is sufficient to provide enough food for the projected global population of 9.7 billion in 2050, although...radical changes to the dietary choices of most (replacing most meat and dairy with plant-based alternatives, and greater acceptance of human-edible crops currently fed to animals, especially maize, as directly-consumed human food) would be required' (Berners-Lee et al., 2018).

Most importantly for ecolinguistics research is the impact of animal farming on the environment—addressed in values two and three above—but any story of veganism that contradicts any of the values in my ecosophy is considered destructive due to its lack of support for one of the most effective ways to reduce the human-animal impact on life-sustaining ecosystems. The potential for negative worldviews to detract from the positive benefits of veganism is too great and therefore needs to be resisted.

5.0 DESTRUCTIVE STORIES

5.1 FULL-LENGTH ARTICLES: VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY

Veganism as a health concern is a common story in the news media. In this thesis, it is the most frequently encountered story, and in the literature it is frequently addressed as a common issue as well. Laura Wright (2015) talks of the vegan body's 'presumed physical shortcomings' (p. 31). Povey et al. (2001) discovered that the most common belief held by meat eaters regarding the vegan diet was that it was 'nutritionally unbalanced' (p. 20). Souza et al. (2020) found similar results from a survey conducted with *The Ecologist* subscribers. And Griffin (2017), in his research on vegan identity, found that there exists a pervasiveness to the belief that veganism is unhealthy. The results from my analysis of the following four news articles bear similarities to the idea that the vegan diet is unhealthy and deficient in proper nutrition.

According to my data analysis, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is identified through facticity patterns, identity and metaphors that communicate poor vegan judgment in health and nutrition without clearly establishing any proof of such depictions. The first and most clearly delineated linguistic clusters are facticity patterns which are often predicated on the presupposition of danger and the notional possibility of 'risk'—as opposed to a more neutral recommendation for optimal health. Along with descriptions of poor health, they have the potential to discourage non-vegans from considering the vegan lifestyle. As Stibbe (2021) explains, texts 'place descriptions of the world on a spectrum of *facticity* [and] in doing so they play a potential role in influencing readers' *convictions*...' (emphasis in the original) (p. 118). Linguistic clusters that identity facticity patterns in the following examples include modal verbs, modal adverbs, quantifiers, disclaimers, appeals to authority and the impression of balance.

The first facticity pattern identified is 'VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY' IS PROBABLY TRUE and comes from a *Guardian* article titled 'Doctors warn vegans to take risks of vitamin B12 deficiency seriously'

(Boseley, 2019). The subtitle of the article 'Shortage of vitamin found in milk *can* damage nerves...' (emphasis added) offers the first of ten modal finites used to manage commitment (Richardson, 2007; Stibbe, 2021). According to Fairclough (2003), modality is 'seen in terms of what authors *commit* themselves to, with respect to what is true and what is necessary...' (p. 164) (emphasis in the original). The modal finite 'can' here signals low modality and thus low commitment by the writer to the action of the predicator ('damage') and its complement ('nerves'). The effect of this modality, according to Conboy (2007), is 'to actively form opinion among readers and it therefore has at least the aspiration of acting on the world' (p. 63). Conboy's reference to speech acts is particularly relevant here where the title of the news article—'Doctors *warn* vegans...'—is a literal function of the speech act as described by Austin (1962). Examples 1 through 10 below highlight all ten modal verbs with their predicators and complements.

1. Shortage of vitamin **can** damage nerves
2. [Vegans] **must** take B-12 supplements
3. Young festival-goers on a vegan diet **may** be at particular risk
4. [Inhaling laughing gas]**can** cause vitamin B-12 deficiency
5. [Going vegan] **could** tip the balance [of getting serious neuropathy]
6. [The low amount of B-12 in mylk] **could** be remedied
7. Levels [of B-12] **should** be higher
8. [Vegans] **may** have lower cancer rates
9. [Bone fractures] **might** have something to do with calcium
10. [Vegans] **may** have higher rates of...stroke

Within the article, as highlighted in the examples above, there is an emphasis on the potential for health complications due to a lack of the vitamin B-12, something that Wright (2015) calls 'the looming specter of B12 deficiency' (p. 31). Of the ten modal finite verbs used, eight are specifically related to health, and of those eight, seven can be construed as warnings to vegans about the possibility of health complications from eating a vegan diet. This is seen most clearly in the high-facticity modal finite 'must' in the second example. The one remaining example of the seven—'[vegans] may have lower cancer rates'—while seeming to offer a positive effect of the vegan diet,

still delivers the information with a low-commitment modal finite, which can be conversely expressed as the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS HEALTHY' IS UNCERTAIN. Overall, eight of the ten examples employ low-commitment modal finites to deliver health warnings to the reader.

In addition to the modal finite verbs in managing commitment, there are combinations of other linguistic elements and rhetorical devices which assist in supporting the facticity patterns. The first example is from the lead, the part of the article which 'succinctly and subtly condense[s] the values and viewpoints of the newspaper' (Conboy, 2007, p. 17). In this paragraph, the writer combines the use of a hedging adverb in a disclaimer, a high-commitment modal finite, a presupposition and a call to authority, all of which work to offer the impression of balance while undermining facticity:

11. A vegan diet is **generally** healthy, low in cholesterol and protective of heart disease, **but** its followers **must take** vitamin B12 supplements or risk a condition that causes permanent numbness in their hands and feet, **experts** say.

In the disclaimer, the adverb 'generally' is used to hedge a more positive description of the vegan diet, which is expressed as the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS HEALTHY' IS UNCERTAIN. This is then dismissed by the conjunctive 'but' (van Dijk, 1993) and the introduction of a high-commitment presupposition that vegans do not take B-12 supplements. All of this is contained within the reported element of a verbal process of the genericized authority 'experts'. This construction occurs three more times throughout the article, each time slightly different but always seeming to further undermine facticity:

12. Most people get their vitamin B12 from milk, but the plant-based substitutes do not have high enough levels to protect adults and children from peripheral neuropathy, which is irreversible.
13. [Vegans] have low rates of type 2 diabetes and diverticular disease of the colon. They have low cholesterol and low rates of heart disease and they may have lower cancer rates. However, bone fractures are about 30% higher as a result of lower bone density. "That might have something to do with calcium and possibly even B12," said Key. They may also have higher rates of hemorrhagic stroke.
14. A vegan diet that is high in fruit and vegetables and pulses is likely to be healthy, but vegans can still overdo the biscuits, confectionery, cakes, chips and beer, said the scientists, and some meat substitutes, such as vegan sausages, are high in salt.

Examples 2 to 4 all contain a positive evaluation of the vegan diet which is then mediated with the conjunction 'but' or the conjunctive adverb 'however'; In examples 13 and 14, there is an appeal to authority, 'Key' having been identified earlier with the lengthy appositive 'professor of epidemiology and deputy director of the Cancer Epidemiology unit at Oxford University'; and in examples 12 and 14, hedging occurs in the disclaimer with the quantifier 'most' in example 12 and the adverb 'likely' in example 14. These disclaimers can be understood as part of what Stibbe (2015) refers to as giving 'the impression of balance', where co-occurrence of contradictory information 'gives the impression of a balanced account, while undermining the certainty of the description...' (p. 140).

Of particular concern here is the contradiction to value six of my vegan ecosophy which asserts that 'a whole-food, well-balanced vegan diet can be nutritionally abundant and effective in the prevention of modern-day health risks', and for this reason the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is a destructive story and must be resisted. When veganism is portrayed as nutritionally uncertain or placed on the destructive end of a health spectrum, undermining its health benefits with warnings of presuppositional danger, it raises the potential for non-vegan readers to dismiss veganism for the perceived risks outlined in the article. Even more destructive is the potential for stories like this to be shared widely among large numbers of people through the phenomenon of social cognition (van

Dijk, 1990), where worldviews become unconscious, commonsense knowledge about how the world is or should be. While B12 deficiency is a legitimate concern for vegans, the overemphasis on its negative health effects while downplaying the ease of access to B12 supplements detracts from the ecological benefits of the vegan lifestyle and so needs to be replaced with more beneficial, and accurate, stories of veganism.

A similar facticity pattern emerges in the *Independent* article 'A surge in the number of vegans is storing up health problems for the wealthy West' (Elliot et al., 2018). This article initially conveys the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY' IS CERTAINLY TRUE, beginning with the noun phrase 'A surge in the number of vegans' in the headline. The noun 'surge', with its negative semantic prosody, is used to modify 'vegans', semantically aligning it with the top three 'surge' collocates from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (2021)—'storm', 'power' and 'troop'—all three of which anticipate a kind of destruction. The destruction foreshadowed by 'a surge...of vegans' in the headline is identifiable in the noun phrase 'health problems' and then again in the lead as 'hidden hunger', a hyponym of 'health problems'.

In addition to the negative semantic prosody, a high level of commitment to the claim in the headline is expressed through the unqualified finite-predicator 'is storing up'. This amount of conviction with regards to the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY' IS CERTAINLY TRUE is particularly damaging in the headline, which is considered an abstract or summary of the entire article, the lead in particular (Bell, 1991; Bednarek & Caple, 2017). Aside from the headline's semantic and pragmatic duties, Conboy (2007) also identifies a third function of headlines: to 'provide an initial indicator in their content and style of the news values of the newspaper [which] are an important part of the way in which the newspaper appeals to its audience' (p. 13). At the very least, this level of commitment in the headline conveys a destructive potential.

The high level of commitment is then later reduced throughout the body of the article, primarily through the use of low-commitment modality. As with the previous article, modality here plays a big role in lowering facticity by communicating the presupposition of 'danger' and the notional possibility of risk without commitment to specific numbers or verifiable statistics from reliable sources. It should also be noted that despite the low modality expressed in the finite verbs, the severity of the proposed danger is elevated in the complement through the use of negative terms of evaluation. In this sense, the severity of the danger tends to mitigate the reduction in modality, making the drop in commitment from the headline and the lead less substantial than initially thought. Examples 15 to 23 below identify all nine uses of finite modality in the article and five evaluative terms in the complement.

15. Poorly managed diets **can** leave some open to fractures and nutrient deficiencies
16. The effects of this **may** not be seen immediately
17. the consequences **can** be **severe**
18. eating a plant-based diet **may** lower the risk of **chronic** disease
19. poorly planned vegan diets **can** lead to **serious** micronutrient deficiencies
20. The symptoms **can** be **serious**
21. It **can** cause **irreversible** nerve damage
22. a more modest lack of the vitamin **may** be bad for your health
23. other supplements **may** be largely inactive

Of the nine modal finite verbs, only one is used to lower the facticity of a positive statement about the vegan diet ('may lower the risk'). The other eight examples are used to introduce the notional possibility of risk about poor nutritional habits while reducing both the facticity of such warnings and any commitment to the certainty of the claims. It should be noted that some of the studies about non-vegan perceptions about veganism use similar kinds of modality in facticity patterns when communicating the concerns of meat-eaters (see Silva Souza et al., 2020).

In addition to the modal finite verbs, the article also uses several modal adverbs:

24. potentially severe consequences
25. likely to become another major contributor
26. nearly a third higher among vegans

Several hedging verbs also contribute to a reduction of facticity:

27. we believe the surge of interest in veganism is likely to become another major contributor
28. there appear to be fewer micronutrients available than was once the case
29. Vegans are consistently reported to have lower intakes of calcium and vitamin D

Hedging like this discloses a lack of 'directness or commitment to something, although...this can often be used to give the impression of being detailed and precise' (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 192). Without the hedging, vegans are portrayed as unhealthy without qualification; with the hedging, vegans are still portrayed as unhealthy, despite the reduction in commitment. Together, the hedging and layered modality help to establish patterns of reduced facticity, potentially affecting the way non-vegans view, understand, and act upon the vegan lifestyle.

As with the previous article, there are also two hedged disclaimers used in this article:

30. For the record, eating a plant-based diet may lower the risk of chronic disease and is good for the environment. However, poorly planned vegan diets, that do not replace the critical nutrients found in meat, can lead to serious micronutrient deficiencies.
31. Vegans can prevent micronutrient deficiency by taking care to consume fortified foods (food with added vitamins and minerals) and by taking supplements. But supplement use is often resisted by those on a plant-based diet and they have been reported to interfere with the absorption of other important nutrients.

Example 30 begins with a disclaimer of a positive but hedged description of the vegan diet. This description is then dismissed with a conjunctive adverb which introduces the thematic

presupposition of ‘poorly planned vegan diets’ followed by a low-commitment modal finite and the notional possibility of risk. Example 31 follows a similar pattern but with the hedging adverb of frequency ‘often’ and the hedging predicator ‘reported’. Once again, these patterns of low-commitment modality, hedging, disclaimers and the notional possibility of risk work to contradict value six of my vegan ecosophy, potentially discouraging non-vegans from considering the vegan lifestyle as healthy, compassionate and ecologically beneficial.

A third article that exhibits the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is from NewmarketToday.ca, a digital news source run by the Canadian media conglomerate Village Media. The text is in the organizational format of an advice column and is titled ‘Here's why vegans have “one of the most unhealthy diets”’ (De Long, 2019). The story is revealed through the facticity pattern ‘VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY’ IS TRUE and the appraisal pattern THE VEGAN DIET IS BAD, together creating an undesirable image of vegan people and the vegan diet. Most of the evaluations come in the form of adjectives, adverbs and predicators and work to undermine any health, ecological or moral benefits of a vegan lifestyle. Examples 32 to 46 below highlight the more prominent linguistic markers of the appraisal patterns and the evaluations that they denote.

Appraisal pattern THE VEGAN DIET IS BAD

32. vegans have one of **the most unhealthy** diets
33. [the vegan diet] **makes** people **ill**
34. a vegan diet **removes** some of the foods that are **most nutritionally dense**
35. Eating **a poor diet**...is simply going to create **imbalances and poor health**
36. I am **incredulous** when I read information that espouses a vegan diet
37. I **cannot recommend** a plant-based diet **to anyone**
38. **infant and childhood deaths** and **malnourishment** related to vegan diets

Appraisal pattern VEGAN FOOD IS BAD

39. grains and vegetable oils provide **cheap, nutritionally empty** calories
40. I have **never** in my life **met a healthy, vibrant vegan**
41. I **suffered** the health **consequences** [when I tried raw food veganism]

Appraisal pattern VEGANISM IS BAD

42. [vegans] can run into **numerous deficiencies**
43. it is based on **bad science under pressure**
44. [online information espousing veganism] is **blatant misinformation**

Appraisal pattern MEAT DIETS ARE GOOD

45. **eating meat is essential** for good health
46. the dietary recommendation to cut red meat has proven to be an **absolute sham**

As Martin and Rose (2007) explain, 'interpersonal meanings...tend to sprawl out and colour a passage of discourse, forming a "prosody" of attitude. By looking at phases of attitude, we can explore how readers are being aligned rhetorically as a text unfolds' (p. 31). The fifteen negative evaluations in the examples above work together to create an appraisal pattern which is used to lower convictions about the vegan lifestyle regarding health, illness, nutrition, sincerity and worth. This 'prosody of attitude' has the potential to rhetorically align non-vegans with the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY, discouraging both individuals and larger groups of people through social cognition.

In addition to the appraisal pattern, the author of the text also uses positive self-representation through the use of professional titles and other specialist vocabulary to impart experience and expertise. These linguistic devices have the effect of raising the status of the anti-vegan author while undermining the position of vegans in relation to health and nutrition. The examples below highlight some of the more prominent linguistic triggers, communicating for non-specialist readers the implications of professionalism, skill, experience, education, intelligence, trust, reliability, establishment, science and rigor.

47. Dear **Nutritionist**,
48. You seem **sensible**
49. In my **professional** opinion
50. I have **observed** over and over again
51. when I **treat clients**

52. I **frequently see** the common denominator
53. I speak from **years of experience**
54. in **my industry**
55. I have even **tried** raw food veganism **for myself**
56. A **science-based approach** means I have to look at all the **data**—**clinical** and **empirical**—when I'm giving **recommendations**.
57. I cannot **recommend** a plant-based diet to anyone
58. I would **strongly recommend**
59. Nonie **Nutritionista**
60. Nonie De Long is a **registered orthomolecular nutritionist** with a **clinic** in Bradford West Gwillimbury, where she offers holistic, integrative health care for **physical and mental-health issues**

Together, the negative appraisal pattern about the vegan diet and the elevated status of the anti-vegan author work to portray the vegan diet as nutritionally deficient and thus undesirable to a non-vegan audience who may otherwise be interested in veganism for its ecological benefits. Most importantly, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY contradicts value six of my vegan ecosophy, making it a destructive story that needs to be resisted and replaced with more beneficial stories that promote the vegan lifestyle and its benefits for all ecological communities.

A fourth and final example of how the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY has the potential to negatively influence ideologies about veganism comes from a *Metro* article about a vegan influencer who adopted and then later rejected the vegan lifestyle. The article is titled 'Man claims vegan diet made him sick but so desperate to avoid meat–started to drink his own urine' (Pearce, 2019). The story becomes manifest through a framing, a metaphor and an identity pattern: VEGAN DIETS ARE A SOURCE OF ILLNESS, VEGANISM AND MEAT CONSUMPTION ARE PLACES and VEGANS ARE IRRATIONAL.

The framing appears in the title where the man claims that the 'vegan diet made him sick', made apparent through the agency afforded veganism in the predicator 'made' and the source frame of viral infection. Table 5.1 below identifies the framing trigger words and the source frames.

TRIGGER WORDS →	SOURCE FRAME
vegan diet **made him sick** →	manifest symptoms of illness
the diet **made him sick** →	manifest symptoms of illness
he found himself **suffering health issues** →	manifest symptoms of illness
my whole body felt like it was **shutting down** →	digital viral illness
extreme ways to try and **manage it** →	living with illness
I...**broke free from** that [and] I was **able to get better** →	recovery from illness
did not include **seeking professional help** to **aid his health problems** →	going to the hospital, seeing a doctor

Table 5.1 Mapping VEGAN DIETS ARE A SOURCE OF ILLNESS

Aiding in the establishment of this framing is the lack of any other clearly identified medical cause for the man's health complications, like vitamin, protein or calorie deficiency. The metaphor MEAT CONSUMPTION IS A PLACE also plays a role in promoting the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. The trigger words for this spatial metaphor are four different predicators that identify both veganism and meat consumption as distinct places:

61. attempts to not **go back to** meat-eating
62. eventually **returned to** eating meat
63. he **dove into** the new lifestyle 'feet first'.
64. it wasn't until I sort've **broke free from** that that I was able to [get better]
65. him **abandoning** the vegan diet
66. felt the benefits upon his **return to** eating meat

The 'return' maps onto movement toward a place of origin and refuge; the act of 'abandoning' conversely maps onto a place that was left with no intent of return. As such, this metaphor helps to create the worldview of meat consumption as original, authentic and prototypical while veganism is portrayed as a place of impermanence with its entailments of insufficiency, neglect and withdrawal. This idea is further supported by the idiom 'dive into feet first' in example three above, where the object of the preposition in the idiom is typically an intimidating, unsettling or fearsome place, in this case 'the new lifestyle', or veganism. Combined with 'breaking free' and the 'eventual' return to

meat consumption—whereupon Tim Shieff 'felt benefits' and 'ensured he felt no regrets'—the elevation of meat consumption over veganism with regards to health and nutrition contributes to the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY and the potential for broad dissemination.

Another aspect of the article that helps to establish the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is the main participant's identity. The ex-vegan, Tim Shieff, is portrayed as being unbalanced, confused, immature and out of touch with mainstream society. In the title of the article alone, he is portrayed as being 'so desperate' that he 'started to drink his own urine'. That last unconventional material process of 'drinking one's own urine' is mentioned four times in the article:

67. Man...started to drink his own urine.
68. A former vegan...drank his own urine...
69. Tim Shieff attempted to fix his ailments [by] drinking his own wee.
70. ...he drank his own urine.

Compare those four instances of irrationality to the following quotation from Tim Shieff in the last sentence of the article: 'If I'm going to consume an animal, I feel it is my duty as a human to face that, embrace it myself and feel whatever emotions come up, and then that will make me, at least consume, more consciously.' This quoted material appeared only once in the article despite its portrayal of Tim Shieff as a more rational, compassionate and informed individual, in turn telling a more beneficial story of ecological responsibility. The following example from the body of the article (example 71) has a similar effect when reduced and repeated as a photo caption (example 72):

71. Body: he drank his own urine, took B12 supplements and did yoga
72. Caption: Tim Shieff attempted to fix his ailments with yoga and drinking his own wee

In the transformation of this clause from article body to photo caption, the most medically sound action taken to improve one's health—taking B12 supplements—has been omitted, which is likely to affect how Tim Shieff, and thus vegans in general, are portrayed with regards to their health. Also of note is the change of terminology from the formal medical term 'urine' to the informal and diminutive word 'wee'; and the retainment of yoga, which serves as a potential identity marker, often with a negative connotation for men due to its prevalence among women (Biswas, 2012; Bahalla & Moscowitz, 2020), its feminine stereotype (Le Gall & Morchain, 2012) and the reluctance of men to engage in it despite its health benefits (Cagas et al., 2021). In fact, the inclusion of yoga combined with Tim Shieff's stated preference for alternative therapies—'real extreme ways to try and manage it', 'the avant-garde realm of healing' and 'on the edge doing alternative things'—invokes an alternative therapy frame that tells the story VEGANS ARE HIPPIES. With 'hippy' as a marginalized identity, the story of Tim Shieff as a hippy is inconsistent with my vegan ecosophy which, in value seven, 'promotes dietary and lifestyle habits that recognize the need for social justice in marginalized communities...' The hippy identity and the alternative therapy frame help to create the destructive story veganism is unhealthy which must be resisted and replaced with beneficial stories that promote compassion, consideration and community in the interest of ecology and the natural world.

Finally, Tim Shieff is referred to only by his given name in seven of eleven references, a custom that lowers the formality level and thus the perceived status of the referent. As van Leeuwen (2008) explains, 'Nomination is typically realized by proper nouns, which can be *formal* (surname only, with or without honorifics), *semiformal* (given name and surname...), or *informal* (given name only...)' (p. 41) (emphasis in the original). Tim Shieff's full name is used twice—once in the paragraph after the lead and once in a photo caption—and the terms 'man' and 'former vegan' are used once each in the title and lead, respectively. The two hosts of the television program that Tim Shieff appeared in

get one reference each in the article: 'Host John Barrowman' and 'Rochelle'. Notable is the male host, John Barrowman, receiving the high formality of an honorific, given name and surname.

Both of these elements together—given-name references and the emphasis on unhinged solutions to health problems—tell a story about what it means to be a vegan: immature, irrational, impetuous and unhealthy, and this identity, together with the metaphor VEGANISM AND MEAT CONSUMPTION ARE PLACES, detract from the potential of readers to change to a vegan diet and lifestyle. When people are discouraged from veganism through tales of health complications and extreme curative measures, the story contradicts value six of my vegan ecosophy which states that a whole foods, well-balanced vegan diet can be nutritionally abundant and effective in the prevention of modern-day health risks. Because of this, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is a destructive story. These kinds of destructive stories about veganism are what Griffin's (2017) research participants flag as 'assumptions', 'stereotypes' and 'preconceptions', noting how talking to non-vegans can be an effective way to resist them. For this ecolinguistics research, those destructive stories—those assumptions, stereotypes and preconceptions—must also be replaced with stories that are more beneficial for the planet and all of her inhabitants that participate in the life-sustaining systems of ecology.

5.2 FULL-LENGTH ARTICLES: VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES

Another common story of veganism is revealed through the framing VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES. The adversarial framing can be identified through trigger words from the source frame of the adversarial process. These trigger words activate conceptualization of a formal process for conflict resolution and the associations of crime, wrongdoing, accusations, guilt, defense, doubt and violation of rights. At times, the framing more clearly maps onto the frame of a formal judicial trial with elements of the accuser, the accused, the infraction, the arguments, the counter-arguments, the evidence and sometimes a remedial action. At other times, the framing takes the form of a

more private, informal dispute. Both conceptualizations include a binary opposition where opposing roles in the adversarial process are aligned in an "X versus Y" framework.

One example of this story comes from a *Guardian* article (O'Carroll, 2020) about the vegan actor Joaquin Phoenix. In the article the writer states that '...Joaquin Phoenix [has] been accused of causing mental health problems for British livestock farmers'. In this instance, the trigger word 'accused' has been used in characteristic passive voice, signaling a dispute and accusations of wrongdoing by an unidentified agent. Then, five paragraphs later, the same trigger word is used again, this time from the opposing side of the dispute and with two new trigger words:

1. [Minette Batters's] comments were immediately criticised by vegan and animal rights groups, who *accused* Batters of making *claims* without *evidence* and ignoring the ethical problems posed by meat production. (emphasis added)

This second use of the trigger word 'accused' unveils more of the framing structure, which is then strengthened through the introduction of two additional trigger words, 'claims' and 'evidence', both of which are common parlance in the adversarial process. As the article continues, the source frame and its customary associations become clearer as participants are assigned implicit roles within the story. Table 5.2 below shows all trigger words from the article in bold and how they map onto the source frame from the target domain.

TRIGGER WORDS IN CONTEXT	SOURCE FRAME	TARGET DOMAIN
Claim that celebrity campaigns cause 'enormous damage' draws ire from animal rights groups	Plaintiff: injured party	HMU farmers
Joaquin Phoenix [has] been **accused** of causing mental health problems for British livestock farmers.	Defendant: the accused	Joaquin Phoenix
The National Farmers' Union (NFU) president, Minette Batters, changed all that, opening a **new front against** the US actor by *claiming* that...	Counsel for the plaintiff	Minette Batters, NFU President
vegan and animal rights groups...*accused* Batters of **making claims without evidence**	Counsel for the defense	Vegan and animal rights groups
"There are many causes of mental health issues and stress in farming and I haven't seen **evidence**, a piece of research, showing that veganism is one of them."	Evidence to support the plaintiff's claims	Research and proof
Phoenix...**made a plea** for tolerance and equality...	Defense makes a plea to the court	Request for tolerance regarding animal exploitation
Phoenix...[said] no race, gender or species **had rights** over another.	Defense makes a reference to the legal doctrine of rights	A reference to the lack of power and authority over others
Batters...**argued that the debate** around animal products had become so binary...	Counsel argues on plaintiff's behalf	Expressions of opposing views

Table 5.2 Trigger words, source frame and target domain for VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES

As seen in Table 5.2, the adversarial frame unfolds with a plaintiff and a defendant, both of which are furnished with counsel who make arguments on their behalf. Of note is Joaquin Phoenix, a vegan, who is cast as the defendant with the burden of first accused. This is the problem with the story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES: it presents vegans as receivers of initial accusations, having to defend their positions to non-vegans. As such, it has a strong association with criminality and wrongdoing, which presents vegans and the vegan lifestyle as doubtful, dangerous and deceptive. This representation of vegans is destructive to the image of veganism and, by extension, to the way that individuals and large groups of people think and act with regards to ecology and the natural world. This story also seems to reflect Cole and Morgan's (2011) representation of vegans as 'hostile' with

references to animal rights activism (p. 146), both of which contradict the values of my vegan ecosophy—values one through four in particular with a focus on animal farming—and are thus considered a destructive stories that needs resistance and replacement with beneficial stories of veganism.

One notable aspect of the framing VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES is that when the framing is reversed—when representatives of the meat industry are mapped onto the first-accused in the source frame, e.g., by animal rights organizations and activists—the framing is considered beneficial since it highlights values one through four in my vegan ecosophy. This story is fairly common in the media, and determining whether the stories are destructive or beneficial depends on which participants map onto which roles in the source frame and what exactly the accusations of wrongdoing are.

Another example of the story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES comes from the *National Review* article titled 'Is the Future Vegan?' (Dougherty, 2019). In an excerpt that appears at the head of the article, the writer asserts, 'Some of us do *consider* vegan *arguments* and *find them unpersuasive*' (emphasis added), which engages the source frame of the adversarial system through the use of the italicized trigger words and the alignment of actors with traditional adversarial roles. The trigger words form the predicator-complement collocations 'consider... arguments' and 'find [arguments] unpersuasive', which are commonly used for expressing the events of deliberation and judgement. At the same time that the collocations activate the frame, participants in the text are aligned with specific roles in the adversarial process through the use of the personal pronoun 'us' and the pre-modifier 'vegan', the former establishing an explicit contrast to the latter, a discursive strategy referred to as 'othering' (Machin & Mayr, 2012; Davies, 2013) and used to delineate two opposing groups.

In addition to the two previous collocations, here are four more examples of trigger words and phrases (in bold) used to activate the source frame while establishing opposing roles for vegans and those who oppose them:

2. [vegan] convictions **challenge** us
3. vegans **pursue one line of** ethical **argument**, that animals **have rights**, until the point at which their **opponent points to a hole in it**
4. The vegan will then shuffle toward an **argument**
5. Even the soft **defense** Manjoo offers, that we all must become a little more like vegans, is **open to serious challenge**

In all of these examples, in varying degrees of explicitness, opposition is established through trigger words and phrases in combination with grammatical structures. In example 2, 'vegan' as pre-modifier for the subject is cast in opposition to the complement 'us' through the predicator 'challenge'. In example 3, 'vegans', in presenting an argument based on 'rights', are cast in opposition to 'their opponent' who attempts to dismantle that argument. In example 4, the use of the definite article 'the', which denotes an understood singularity, allows vegan people to be collectivized and genericized into an aggregate representative of all vegan people, thus establishing a simplified binary to facilitate opposition (van Dijk, 1993). In example 5, Farhad Manjoo, who writes elsewhere in defense of vegans, is accused of offering a weak defense open to debate by an undisclosed other; Manjoo's opposition presumably includes the writer of the article, part of the 'us' group, who evaluates Manjoo's defense as 'weak' and a potential rebuttal as 'serious', establishing a conceptual opposition in evaluative terms (Davies, 2013) and an implicit opposition in actor roles.

As with the first example from *The Guardian*, the story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES presents veganism as a debatable topic. Through the application of the adversarial frame, the story questions the legitimacy of the vegan lifestyle and the values of my vegan ecosophy, creating in the minds of non-

vegans a worldview that potentially discourages them from considering a transition to the vegan lifestyle and its positive ecological benefits. As such, the story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES is considered a destructive in need of resistance.

A third example of the framing VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES comes from a *Telegraph* article (Horton, 2019) in which vegan activists are explicitly 'accused of killing piglets', 'accused...of causing two piglets to be crushed to death', "accused...of crushing two piglets', 'accused of causing distress to the animals', and 'accused of...causing the death of two'. Once again the trigger word 'accused' activates conceptualization of the source frame while grammatically identifying vegans as its goal. To assist in the framing is the explicit denial of the accusations—'[The organization] Meat the Victims *denied* that the activists caused the animals stress'—and the negatively evaluated actions with vegans as actors of violent material processes or violent goals, which facilitates conceptualization of wrongdoing and culpability, and which detracts from the violence perpetrated by the farmer, a clear violation of value two of my ecosophy. Examples 6 though 17 below highlight those violent material processes.

6. [vegans] **storming** the farm
7. [vegans] **crushing** two piglets
8. [vegans] **causing** a stampede
9. vegans **stormed** a farm
10. [vegans] **causing** distress
11. [vegans] **causing** death
12. vegans **terrified** her family
13. vegans **caused** damage
14. [vegans] **piled into** a farrowing house
15. [vegans] **caused** the death of two young piglets
16. [vegans] [**created**] all the noise and commotion
17. [vegans] **were putting back** piglets in the wrong pens

Note the violent material processes of ‘storming’, ‘crushing’, ‘terrifying’, and ‘piling into’, and the violent goals of ‘a stampede’, ‘distress’, ‘death’, ‘damage’, and ‘noise and commotion’. Even example 17, the seemingly innocuous ‘putting piglets back’ is betrayed as a negative process by the appraisal item ‘wrong’ in the circumstance of location ‘in the wrong pens’. These violent material processes were also noted in Brookes and Chalupnik’s (2022) research on British tabloids where they found the representation of vegan as ‘militants’ who ‘swarm’ and ‘storm the property of a distressed farmer’ (p. 8).

Contrastingly, the farmer—the accuser—is depicted positively, which assists in the establishment of opposition and an imbalanced power dynamic. Positive representations include ‘Farmer Sylvia Hook, from Sandilands Farm on Newark Road in Laughterton’, ‘her family and...the farm’, ‘the farm is a family-run business’ and ‘the farm...is Red Tractor assured’. The establishment of this opposition contributes to the destructive framing VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES and the negative ideology that it creates through social cognition.

In one final example of the story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES, an article from the *Mail Online* (Keay, 2019) contains a report about a confrontation between television personality Piers Morgan and Green Party Deputy Leader Amelia Womack. The confrontation is referred to as a ‘heated debate’ in which Morgan makes ‘claims’ about Womack and her ‘arguments’, ‘probes’ Womack, and ‘interjects’. Womack, for her part in the adversarial frame, ‘confesses’ and ‘argues’ about government policy and agricultural practices. In addition to these trigger words, other linguistic features help to invoke the adversarial frame: the metapropositional and prosodic verbal processes (Caldas-Coulthard, 2005) with Morgan as sayer and Womack as target and key element of negative verbiage. Examples 18 to 27 below highlight these verbal processes and how they depict Morgan at the power end of the confrontation and Womack in a defensive, less powerful position.

18. Piers Morgan **lays into** ‘flexitarian’ Green Party deputy [Womack]
19. Piers Morgan **Branded** [Womack] a hypocrite
20. Piers Morgan **branded** a 'flexitarian' Green Party leader [Womack] a hypocrite
21. Piers Morgan **claimed** [Womack’s] argument is ‘pure Hypocrisy’
22. [Piers Morgan] **asked** if [Womack] was a vegan or vegetarian
23. [Piers Morgan] **probed** further on whether she ate turkey
24. Piers [Morgan] **interjected**
25. [Piers Morgan] **laying into** her further
26. [Piers Morgan] **claimed** flexitarians are the same as meat-eaters
27. [Piers Morgan] **labelled** [flexitarians] the 'gender fluid of meat eaters'

As seen in the examples above, Morgan is frequently the sayer of violent descriptive verbal processes—'lay into’, ‘probe’, ‘brand’—with Womack as a target or a prominent part of the reported speech or verbiage. Even when the verbal processes are more metapropositional (Caldas-Coulthard, 2005, p. 306), such as ‘claim’ and ‘label’, Womack is still negatively appraised with an appeal to hypocrisy and offensive analogies about meat and gender-fluid individuals. These violent verbal processes help to establish an imbalanced power dynamic between the two individuals with Womack—a flexitarian with vegan sympathies—on the side of weakness. The link between veganism and flexitarianism here can be understood by how Morgan interprets flexitarians as failed or hypocritical vegans.

In additional to the verbal processes of power, the use of scare quotes works to marginalize flexitarians and, by association, vegans. Scare quotes are used to instill doubt with regards to the meaning of the term ‘flexitarian’, which thereby extends into an appeal to hypocrisy. This specific aspect of the story undermines value ten of my vegan ecosophy in which I advocate for aspirational veganism—which could also be interpreted as flexitarianism as an option for navigating the difficulties of veganism in the contemporary world—and the understanding of the time and effort required to make such an immense lifestyle transition. Relegating that effort to simple hypocrisy

overlooks the complexity of veganism as a modern-day lifestyle option, and such a story is considered destructive and in need of resistance.

Finally, the use of the gender-fluid analogy also works to marginalize flexitarians for trans-phobic readers. As Adams (1990) reminds us, when men decline to consume meat, they are considered effeminate, making any plant-based diet seem sentimental or childish (p. 60) and thus unattractive for non-vegans, especially men. Overall, with trigger words to activate the adversarial frame, violent verbal processes with Piers Morgan in the powerful sayer position, and Womack in a position of defense as a structural opposite to Morgan, the destructive story of VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES questions the vegan lifestyle and challenges the values of my vegan ecosophy, thereby deterring non-vegans from considering veganism as a sound, viable lifestyle choice with benefits for the planet.

5.3 USER COMMENTS: VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY

In addition to the articles themselves, user comments are another source for large numbers of destructive stories of veganism. As Barton and Lee (2013) note, 'Commenting is an important act of positioning oneself and others, that is *stance-taking*...' (emphasis in the original) (p. 10), which they later go on to explain as articulating one's 'opinions, feelings or attitudes towards something or someone...' (p. 86). The following comments were attached to the *Fox News* article '"That Vegan Teacher" says TikTok ban won't silence her following petition, controversies' (Puhak, 2021) (spelling and grammatical mistakes have been retained):

1. Pale, gaunt, and wacky, I can't imagine a more appropriate representative for vegans.
2. She is only 56? Yea, being a vegan is real healthy...
3. This woman looks far from healthy, pale translucent skin, I have noticed this with many vegetarians, sometime the iron you get in a good steak is the best thing for you.
4. She looks sallow and unhealthy. Veganism shrinks the brain.
5. That lady looks like she in serious need of some animal protein in her diet.....
6. That crazy loon feeds makes her poor dog eat a vegan diet... ignorance. I wonder if her dog looks as sickly as she does.

7. Vegannazi. The few vegans I've come across announce they're vegan like it's something to be proud of. They don't look healthy, they are way under weight, they have no muscle tone. Meat protein is what builds healthy muscle tissue. Look at this woman, I don't know how she looks in a mirror and thinks she looks healthy. Put a group of Vegans together and they resemble concentration camp survivors.

Most of the comments are directed at the vegan woman at the center of the article, referencing her image in the embedded YouTube video (That Vegan Teacher, 2021), and most use appraisal patterns to communicate negative attitudes about her appearance and, by extension, her health. To accomplish this, most comments contain the copula "look" with the woman as subject and theme and with a complement of negative appraisal. The negative appraisal items targeting her appearance include 'pale', 'gaunt', 'sallow', 'unhealthy' and 'sickly'. She is also negatively appraised as looking 'far from healthy, pale translucent skin [sic]', 'in serious need of some animal protein' and, through the rhetoric of sarcasm, being 'only 56 [and] real healthy'.

Even more important to note is that some of the comments use a negative appraisal of the woman as an opportunity to generalize about the health of all vegan people. Comment 1 claims that the negative appraisal of the woman is a superlative 'representative for vegans'; comment 3 claims that they have noticed 'far from healthy, pale translucent skin' with 'many vegetarians'; and comment 4 claims that veganism in general 'shrinks the brain'.

The starkest example above is comment 7 which negatively appraises 'the few vegans I've come across' as not looking healthy, being underweight and lacking muscle tone. It then claims that any random 'group of Vegans' resemble the starved and abused Jewish concentration camp prisoners of World War II. That last claim is notable in that the comment begins by referring to the woman as a 'Vegannazi', making vegans both the abusers and the abused, embodying all of the worst aspects of Nazi Germany during WWII. Finally, an irony should be noted in that the Nazi/WWII analogy—more specifically the analogy of speciesism to racism—is commonly referenced in vegan

communities where it invokes the tragedies of World War II by comparing the treatment of animals to that of Jewish people in the Nazi concentration camps (Singer, 1975; Francione, 2000; Dunayer, 2001; Patterson, 2002; Joy, 2010).

These comments are problematic because the appraisal pattern VEGANS ARE BAD contributes to the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY, which, as previously noted, does not align with value six of my vegan ecosophy about the benefits of a vegan diet. The real danger, as Stibbe (2021) notes, is that 'in many cases, groups are keen for their stories to spread out into the larger culture and become the normal way that people think about an area of life' (p. 21). The destructive 'group story' VEGANS ARE UNHEALTHY, as has been shown, is frequently communicated in online media like news articles and comment sections, and because of this the potential is high for the story to become a 'normal', shared ideology among non-vegans.

Two more examples, also from *Fox News*, comes from the comments attached to the article 'Vegan butcher opens slicing fake meat in London' (Settembre, 2020):

8. Sadly Vegans suffer from nutrient deficient diseases and have mental problems on a much higher scale than people on more of a Paleo diet.
9. I love how in order to promote their "healthy lifestyle"... they are forced to put the focus on the very thing they're against -- MEAT. LOL !!!!

The first comment puts 'Vegans' in the subject position with predicators, complements and adjuncts containing lexical items of negative discourse prosody indicating a negative appraisal pattern: 'sadly', 'suffer', 'nutrient deficient diseases' and 'mental problems', the last of which is then negatively compared to 'people on more of a Paleo diet', paleo diets advocating consumption of meat and fish. Also of note in the first comment is the combination of both physical appraisal ('nutrient deficient diseases') and mental appraisal ('mental problems'), the latter of which forms another story of veganism—VEGANS ARE MENTALLY UNSTABLE. This dual story of vegans with physical and

mental defects bears out in the literature as well, where representations of vegans as 'physically and mentally deficient' (Potts and Parry, 2010, p. 62) is not uncommon.

Finally, comment 8 uses 'specific, official-sounding terms that help to convey authority' (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 42) —'nutrient deficient diseases' and 'on a much higher scale'—and which work to raise the facticity of the claim by conveying a supposed knowledge of dietary and health issues. In combination with the lack of hedging or the use of modal finites indicating degrees of possibility, this linguistic construction helps to build the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY' IS TRUE.

Comment number 9 above communicates the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY through sarcasm and the use of scare quotes, lowering the facticity of the phrase 'healthy lifestyle' through contextual negation of the quoted text (Predelli, 2003), thus calling its accuracy into question. This use of scare quotes is more common with other representations of veganism, most notably with the idea that vegans view themselves as progressive and more aware and concerned about social issues than meat eaters, an idea frequently expressed—and derided—as being 'woke'.

A third set of comments is associated with the article 'Nutrients vegan teens need to focus on' (Beck, 2020) in *The Globe and Mail* from Canada:

10. My understanding is vegans must eat a considerable volume of food in order to obtain sufficient protein and iron (in less absorbable forms than from animal sources) which can result in either the intake of lots of calories or insufficient nutrition due to eating less than needed. Is this really practical? As I understand it, animal sourced food is far more absorbable and nutritionally complete.
11. Ironically, a lot of them might be eating less healthily than before. Actually getting all the nutrients you need - as described in this article, for example - is in fact a lot of work.

In comments 10 and 11, we can see the use of comparatives—also present in comment 8, 'on a much higher scale than people on...Paleo'—to compare a vegan diet to 'animal sourced food' (comment 10) and to compare a pre-vegan diet to a post-vegan diet (comment 11). The use of comparisons is what Jones (2002) refers to as 'comparative antonymy' (p. 76), a syntax-based form of opposition which can be 'an effective way of promoting a group of people, a policy, or a broader ideological viewpoint' (Davies, 2013, p. 1). Comment 10, through the use of comparison, negatively appraises vegan food by placing it on the less 'nutritionally complete' end of a nutrition spectrum, communicating the destructive ideological viewpoint that a vegan diet is not as healthy as 'animal sourced food'; Comment 11, using a similar 'indirect comparison' (Jones, 2002, p. 76; Davies, 2013, p. 68), negatively appraises vegan teens as 'eating less healthily' by putting them on the negative end of a spectrum of healthy eating.

In addition to the comments above from U.S. and Canadian news organizations, the 18 comments below contain the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY and are associated with news articles from the UK and Australia.

from Dailymail.com Reporter (2021) 'Ex-vegan says her plant-only diet left her BALDING and looking like a 'middle-aged man' with cystic acne - and claims that eating RAW ANIMAL ORGANS saved her health' *The Daily Mail*

12. Not being rude but truthful; every vegan I know looks like they have preaged by 15-20 yrs. They look tired and worn down, they look like hell.
13. Yeah you need meat and protein. I had a friend who tried that whole nonsense before. She was left riddled with health problems and anxiety and she ate a cheeseburger and immediately felt better. Promise.
14. Tried the non-meat diet myself was a complete disaster even with taking supplements I still dropped 20kg and ended up in hospital getting blood and iron transfusions. Some people are not meant to be vegan or vegetarian.
15. I was a vegetarian for 3 years, my skin turned gray, my hair fell out, and my skin broke out just like this lady's.

16. I know a girl who went vegetarian and the same thing happened to her. Hair was falling out and got acne, tired all the time, etc. She simply started eating meat again. No need to eat raw organs. The human body needs meat.
17. I had an aunt... She had to give up her strict vegetarian diet because it was effecting her health negatively. One of the lasting affects of this diet was that she lost her hair...
18. Yes, I was a vegetarian when pregnant with my first child and ended up severely anemic. Thank God my baby was healthy. Humans are designed to be omnivores...
19. I've seen videos of vegans and after some time they look emaciated, hollowed cheeks and sunken eyes.. They lose hair because they lack protein.
20. My father is vegan and looks 200 years old. I think he's missing so many nutrients...

from Cockburn, H. (2021) 'Climate crisis: Can going vegan save the world?' *The Independent*

21. People who turn vegans...often get nutritional deficiencies.
22. I was vegetarian for 4 years, vegan on and off. It totally destroyed my health... Plant-based diets don't seem to have any good science backing them up as healthy.
23. Vegan food is insipid, bland and devoid of a full complement of nutrients.

from Preskey, N. (2021) 'Going Vegan is Crucial to Help Halt the Climate Crisis and Could Prevent Future Pandemics, Says Report' *The Independent* Online

24. FYI, there are nutrients including certain amino acids and fatty acids that you cannot get in a plant based diet alone.
25. If you think you need to live on a diet of grass and then need vitamin and mineral supplements to prevent malnutrition that is your decision...

from Prentice, A. (2021) 'Small business owner breaks down in tears after receiving a vile email from a vegan 'Karen' who questioned why she was given FREE lollies with her online order when she can't even eat them' *Daily Mail Australia*

26. My daughter is vegan... However she looks ill all the time. Personally I dont think its healthy...
27. If only that vegan would have some meat their cognitive function would return. Just proves that going without meat isn't good for you.

from Taylor, R. (2021) 'So is milk from a potato the cream of the crop? Potato milk is said to be better for the planet and also full of protein' *The Daily Mail*

28. Milk is a good good source of calcium. Otherwise children especially can suffer from rickets. These alternative milks may look like the real thing but do not have the same health benefits.

In some of the comments above, veganism is negatively appraised through material processes with negative predicators used in reference to physical appearance: *hair fell out*, *skin broke out*, *hair was falling out*, *lost her hair*, *lose hair*. Similar comments also focus on a negative physical appearance but did so through negative appraisal patterns communicated through complements, attributes and pre-noun modifiers: *skin turned gray*, *got acne*, *look emaciated*, *look tired and worn down*, *hollowed cheeks*, *sunken eyes*. Other comments highlight potential health complications through a variety of grammatical structures, all employing trigger words that contribute to a negative appraisal pattern: *nutritional deficiencies*, *destroyed…health*, *devoid of nutrients*, *malnutrition*, *suffer from rickets*, *riddled with health problems and anxiety*, *a complete disaster*, *ended up in hospital*, *effecting* [sic] *her health negatively*, *severely anemic*, *missing so many nutrients*. Overall, these comments create an appraisal pattern that tells the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. As mentioned, this story does not align with value six of my vegan ecosophy about the dietary benefits of a vegan diet and so is considered a destructive story with the potential to affect large groups of people, both cognitively and behaviorally, with regards to ecology and the natural world.

As can be seen, the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is present in both news articles and in the comments that accompany them. It is probably one of the most prolific destructive stories of veganism and will be seen again in this chapter in conjunction with other destructive stories as the negative values associated with veganism tend not to occur in isolation and are not restricted to one or two forms of media communication.

5.4 USER COMMENTS: VEGANS ARE IGNORANT

A third common story about vegans and veganism is VEGANS ARE IGNORANT. This story appears as an ideology that is predicated on the idea that people who have a vegan lifestyle and adopt a value system aligned with veganism are not educated about their own lifestyle, particularly with regards to health, agriculture, the environment and social issues like food justice. The following two

representative comments are associated with the *Fox News* article 'Vegan butcher opens slicing fake meat in London' (Settembre, 2020):

1. Little do most vegans know how many animal based products they still use like soap, makeup and leather.
2. The more vegans there are the more meat there is for those of us too smart to be vegan. Let their health deteriorate while us herbivores stay healthy.

Both comments presuppose vegan lifestyle choices that naively involve the use of animal products. Comment 1 presupposes the use of toiletries ('soap', 'makeup') and apparel material ('leather') that contain animal products, both of which imply hypocrisy or ignorance on the part of vegans. Comment 2—in reference to faux meat—presupposes the consumption of food that may not be beneficial for one's health, which would indicate a lack of nutritional knowledge or poor decision-making in general. This story is explicitly referenced through the phrases 'little do most vegans know' and 'too smart to be vegan', both indicating an amount of knowledge for vegans on the 'insufficient' side of a knowledge or intelligence spectrum. This story is problematic because it ignores the values of a vegan lifestyle and implies that vegans make poor, uninformed choices concerning ethics and health. The story also contains several discouraging entailments, including VEGANS ARE HYPOCRITES, VEGANS ARE DISINGENUOUS, VEGANS ARE UNEDUCATED, VEGANS ARE CARELESS and VEGANS ARE UNHEALTHY, none of which are considered attractive lifestyle qualities. The next comment is associated with the *Independent* article '"Going vegan" should not be the go-to answer for sustainable eating—consider this' (Holden, 2021):

3. One of the deeply disturbing things going on at the moment is the use of the climate crisis by the vegan movement to promote their cause. Yes, there are very close connections between some forms of livestock farming and climate change, most notably in the felling of tropical forest to grow soya which is consumed here in the UK either directly or, in much greater quantities to feed chickens and pigs and to a lesser degree, dairy cows. Despite the fact that we don't import beef from such countries and the vast majority of UK beef is grass-fed from the pastures which are by far this country's greatest natural carbon store - ill-

> informed people like George Monbiot attack our traditional family farmers and graziers . As a result he ignorantly diverts attention both from the fossil-fuel industry and the factory-farming of chicken and pork.

In comment 3, well-known journalist, environmentalist and avowed vegan George Monbiot is negatively appraised as 'ill-informed' and 'ignorant', both of which communicate the story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT. Both appraisal items come after a long concession—a form of rhetorical mitigation (van Dijk, 1992)—that prefaces the story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT with an admission of the harm that 'some forms of livestock farming' have on the environment. As van Dijk (1992) explains about mitigation and concession,

> Such apparent concessions are another major form of disclaimer in discourse... [I]n the example [of race relations] from the *Daily Telegraph* the mitigation...appears...in the redistribution of responsibility, and hence in the denial of blame. [...] Apparently, one effective move of denial is to either dispute responsible agency, or to conceal agency. (p. 107)

In his later work on ideology, van Dijk (1998) again addresses how disclaimers and mitigation 'redistribute responsibility': '...denial or mitigation...not only serves within the strategy of self-preservation, but at the same time may be used, by turning the accusation around...' (p. 308). In comment 3 above, the accusation of contributing to the climate crisis is 'turned around' and 'redistributed' away from the larger portion of the population that participates in the consumption of animal products and toward George Monbiot. In this way, George Monbiot is portrayed as not only 'ignorant' and 'ill-informed', but also harmful and thus hypocritical.

Also of note in the concession itself is the hedging with the quantifier 'some' in the noun phrase 'some forms of livestock farming' and the reference to farm animals as 'livestock', a term that Stibbe (2001) identifies as part of a 'discourse of resources [which] includes metaphors, from dead metaphors such as "live*stock*" to novel metaphors such as the "animal are plants" metaphor... Since inanimate resources cannot suffer, the discursive construction of animals as resources contributes

to an ideology that disregards suffering' (p. 155). While this linguistic device does not directly contribute to the linguistic construction of the story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT, it does perhaps betray an ideology that potentially informs the writer's motivations and value system, which does not align with value one of my vegan ecosophy regarding animal sentience and agency.

The story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT, as understood from comment 3, is also related to the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE which attempts to portray veganism as a lifestyle of apparently similar environmentally destructive potential (addressed in detail in the next section). Both stories ignore the values of my vegan ecosophy and so are considered destructive stories that need to be resisted and replaced with beneficial stories.

Comments 4 through 12 below are from five different sources, each one communicating the destructive story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT. Trigger words are highlighted in bold font.

from Holden, P. (2021) '"Going vegan" should not be the go-to answer for sustainable eating – consider this' *The Independent*

4. The last laugh against these **idiots**, will be when the Government is forced to ban protests, owing to the disruption, that they are causing.

from Miller, K.L. (2021) 'My boss refuses to offer vegan options at business events' *The Washington Post*

5. There are very few factory farms that abuse animals. Most people who sound off **don't know much about** farming. Every hen is much better off in a cage than on the free range getting snatched up by a hawk, for example.

from Settembre, J. (2020) 'Vegan butcher opens slicing fake meat in London' *Fox News*

6. The hypocrisy is deafening! These **idiots** protest meat, deride people that eat meat, but clamor for "fake meat", that looks, and tastes just like it! (however, it is disgusting!) As Bugs Bunny would say, "What a **maroon**!".
7. Good for them. Make money off of those **morons** who eat the unhealthy fake meat.

from Dennett, C. (2020) 'Veganism and eating disorders: Is there a link?' *The Washington Post*

8. Plant: "ugh"
   Plant spouse: "what is it dear?"
   Plant: "this article in Plantlife magazine, about these humans called Vegans, thinking we don't exist on the same level as animals. Like we dont feel or communicate, as if we are unaware of our existence"
9. Vegan- the name given the village idiot who couldn't hunt or make fire.

from Rogan, J. (2018, April) Michael Hunter (#1105) *The Joe Rogan Experience*

10. Smart phones, computers, routers, servers, asphalt roads, vehicles, televisions, refrigerators, microwaves, etc are all made with and contain animal products. You were never vegan. Just another uneducated ignorant person lying about who he is for attention.

from Chadwick, J. (2022) 'How going vegan could 'save the planet': Eliminating all meat from our diets would slash global carbon emissions by 68 per cent, study claims' *Daily Mail*

11. Vegan is in fact an ancient English term which discribes the village idiot who could not fish or hunt
12. The study was authorised by 2 idiot vegans people pushing thee ideology

Most of the comments above include explicit appraisal items that reference vegans and their imagined lack of intelligence: *idiot*, *moron*, *uneducated* and *ignorant*. The derisive term 'idiot' is the most commonly used appraisal item, occurring in five separate comments, twice in the same joke about inept people in an imagined past. Two more comments use vegans as sensors in mental processes that indicate a lack of intelligence: '[vegans] don't know much about farming' and '[vegans] thinking [plants] don't exist on the same level as animals'. Overall, the comments tend to be built around an imagined ignorance about how the world works regarding a variety of topics, including protesting, factory farming, animal abuse, health, botany and life skills.

To summarize, the story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT communicates an unflattering image of vegans in which they are portrayed as stupid, deceptive and ill-informed, all of which contradicts the values of my vegan ecosophy which is built on facts and careful research about ethics, ecology and social justice. To disregard the education, knowledge and critical thinking skills of vegans is to ignore the

entire value system of the vegan lifestyle, and for this reason, the story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT is considered a destructive story. Due to the story's potential for distribution through mass social cognition and its effects on the thoughts and behavior of large groups of people, the story VEGANS ARE IGNORANT needs to be resisted and replaced with beneficial stories that more accurately represent vegans, veganism and the concern they have for the natural world.

5.5 USER COMMENTS: VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE

A more recent story of veganism is VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. As the climate crisis worsens and as more people are inspired to reduce their consumption of animal products (Vegan Society, 2021), some people have begun telling a dubious story about veganism's negative impact on the environment. Intensive plant-agricultural systems can be damaging to the environment, especially in consideration of monocultural farming, chemical applications and habitat destruction. Plant agriculture on the whole, though, is less destructive of ecology and the environment than animal agriculture and more ethically defensible regarding animal rights—as established in values one through three of my vegan ecosophy. Portrayals to the contrary conflict with my vegan ecosophy and are considered destructive stories. The following comment is associated with the *Daily Mail* article 'Hundreds of eco protestors descend on Smithfield Market in London holding "Meat is Murder" placards in protest against animal cruelty' (Davies, 2021):

1. It's not just meat. They want you to stop eating all eggs and dairy products which can only be replaced by tearing down vast tracts of forest to grow sufficient protein rich vegetables.

Comment 1 uses an argument strategy referred to as 'whataboutism', 'whataboutery' or 'tu quoque', all of which attempt to introduce parallel topics in the interest of highlighting a perceived hypocrisy in order to distract or to offer justification. Ganguly (2017) explains this strategy in a discussion of human rights:

> This term does not refer to protesting inconsistencies by making a reasoned argument that presents opposing facts. Rather, whataboutery is used as a much more sinister challenge to human rights: the practice wherein perpetrators of violations, or their supporters, do not deny the abuses, but instead justify them and shout down criticism by citing the wrongdoings of their victims. All too often, they absolve collective punishment through whataboutery. (p. 39)

Applied to comment 1, the argument against the claim that animal farming is destructive to the environment appears to be that veganism is also environmentally destructive. In other words, comment 1 does not make 'a reasoned argument that presents opposing facts', nor does comment 1 'deny the abuses' of animal farming; comment 1 instead 'shouts down criticism' of animal farming and its environmental abuses and attempts to 'cite the wrongdoings' of veganism. In this way, people who consume animal products—and thus contribute to environmentally destructive animal farming—appear to be 'absolved' of their responsibility toward the environment. Dash et al. (2021) explain this same strategy as is used in Indian social media to breed extremism:

> 'whataboutery' [is] a common strategy used to misdirect attention from a controversy and shift the debate to accusations and counter-accusations... Fundamentally, the employment of a counter-instance against an opponent, draws charges of hypocricy [sic] against them, as they are said to be inconsistent in their concerns [3]. Thus, whataboutism can lead an audience to dismiss the speaker's initial argument, on grounds such as inconsistency, while the speaker is forced to defend on a newer plane of arguments [3]. (p. 2)

What Dash et al. (2021) add to the analysis are the strategies of 'misdirection' and 'dismissal' of the original issue—in the case of comment 1, 'dismissal' of the negative environmental impact of animal farming, and 'misdirection' toward a perceived negative impact of veganism on the environment. This same strategy of misdirection and dismissal is also present in the academic literature regarding perceptions of veganism, where non-vegan participants often listed the detrimental effects of veganism on the environment but rarely if ever addressed similar environmental effects from animal farming (Souza et al., 2020; Gray, 2020; Keselj, 2020).

Comment 2 below, associated with the *Washington Post* article 'Veganism and eating disorders: Is there a link?' (Dennett, 2020), engages in a similar whataboutism strategy of misdirection while also not denying the abuses of animal farming or engaging in reasoned argument:

2. I'm an omnivoritarian, I feel very strongly about eating a balanced diet including meats, vegetables, fungus and such. I think anyone that doesn't eat exactly like I do is morally perverse, and out to destroy the world. Vegans in particular are wont to destroy paradise with their avocado tree farming, leaving vast swaths of temperate climates unusable for producing food, and polluting their streams with plastics because they refuse to wear leather shoes. It makes me upset at a geopolitcal level to walk into a pizza shop and not order a peace of pizza that doesn't have BOTH vegetables and meats as toppings!

In comment 2, the whataboutism occurs with 'vegans' as actors in three material processes and one relational process, all indicating destructive potential related to the environment. The first process is a relational process in structure but arguably a material process in content, the argument being that the habitual nature communicated by the literary adjective 'wont' presupposes 'vegans' as actors in previous material processes with 'destroy' as predicator and 'paradise' as goal. In the second material process, 'vegans' is again arguably the actor of the predicator 'leaving' with a goal of 'vast swaths of unusable temperate climates'. And the third material process uses the predicator 'pollute' with a goal of 'streams' as a synecdoche metaphor for the environment. The fourth process, a relational process, contains the predicator 'is' with the carrier 'anyone that doesn't eat exactly like I do' (i.e., vegans) and the attribute 'out to destroy the world'. To simplify, the four processes in the comment are 1) vegans destroy paradise, 2) vegans leave vast swaths of temperate climates unusable for agriculture, 3) vegans pollute streams with plastics, and 4) vegans intend to destroy the world. All four processes fail to engage in reasoned argument about animal agriculture and instead deflect the issue to veganism and the supposed harm it has on the environment, in the process communicating the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE which contradicts value three of my vegan ecosophy.

Also of importance in comment 2 are two more mental processes with the copula 'is', both with the sensor 'anyone that doesn't eat exactly like I do', i.e., vegans. The first mental process uses the adjective phrase 'morally perverse' as phenomenon, and the second one uses the adverb phrase 'out to destroy the world' as phenomenon. Both phenomena negatively appraise vegans and, in addition to contributing to the destructive story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, introduce another destructive story of veganism, VEGANS ARE MENTALLY UNSTABLE (addressed briefly in the previous section and in more detail in a subsequent section).

The following 12 comments communicate the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. The comments are associated with four separate articles from two distinct sources, one in the UK and one in the US.

from Chadwick, J. (2022) 'How going vegan could "save the planet": Eliminating all meat from our diets would slash global carbon emissions by 68 per cent, study claims' *Daily Mail*

3. Twaddle. How many animals and insects die due to pesticides and land used for farming. Being vegan causes as many problems as it solves.
4. All those tractors spewing diesel fumes to grow and harvest vegetables / plants
5. This is rubbish. Where do most vegan products get grown? How do they get here? How are they grown?. The large scale industrial farms, GM Crops, often grown in different climates overseas and shipped here via polluting container ship will have a much more negative impact then a few organic cows in a field with hedgerows etc. The Mass farming required to support a 'plant based' planet will be far more damaging.
6. What the Vegans dont tell u is that if everyone went vegan more forests would have to be destroyed to grow more crops which would increase global warming.
7. hahahahahaha...and what about the emissions plant based food produce, and the damage to the environment, the amount of water required and all the other environmental damages it takes to farm, harvest and process crops. plant based diets are no more sustainable than one that contains meat.
8. If everyone went vegan it wouldn't save the planet. Imagine all the extra farmland that would have to be planted to cope with demand and the terrible damage it would do to wildlife. Vegans are a little bit contradictory on this subject. It would be OK to wipe out whole species of insects, destroy the habitats of field mice, foxes, badgers and hedgehogs

and flatten bird nesting sites as long as we don't actually eat meat. That's not even considering the damage to the river ecosystems with all the extra chemicals that would be needed to make the over farmed land more productive.

from Settembre, J. (2021b) 'Taco Bell testing vegan meat alternative' *Fox News*

9. Picture if you will....A fake meat manufacturing plant belching out pollution through it's smoke stacks from burning fossil fuels as it's energy source to manufacture the fake meat. Then also consider foraging animals consuming grass that utilizes energy from the sun as it's sole energy source. Why would anyone even consider eating factory produced fake meat?

from Sorace, S. (2019) 'PETA asks Ocasio-Cortez to promote "healthy vegan" food policies' *Fox News*

10. So vegetables do not require acres of farmland to produce? No water required? No pesticides? No compost and fertilizer? No tractor using diesel to plough and harvest? How do the above requirements compare to produce the same amount of protein that is found in meat?
11. Yeah don't eat animals... because they create methane... which is a greenhouse gas... But if we eat the animals they can't create those gases... It's a paradox we live in huh libbies?

from Calicchio, D. (2019) 'Cory Booker says meat-centric "Standard American Diet" not sustainable' *Fox News*

12. Misguided liberals as usual, it takes irrigated land to grow crops very expensive to build and consumes an incredible amount of energy. However most grazing animals like cattle need no irrigated land where they are raised far less expensive and requires no energy at all to use that land and we still get food. Booker's Doctrine sounds more like it is from India rather then the USA.
13. Vegan diets are far less sustainable and damage the environment more than any meat based diet ever could.
14. There's actually data gathered by experts that suggest the only sustainable diet for humans is to be omnivorous. They also said Veganism is the least sustainable if I recall correctly. Most things you could want to know is on the internet, you just have to know where to look.

Most of the comments above engage in whataboutism or tu quoque arguments and communicate the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. The story sometimes comes in the form of

interrogatives, many of which are rhetorical and intended to introduce the issue of veganism's alleged negative impact on the environment:

- How many animals and insects die...?
- Where do most vegan products get grown?
- So vegetables don't require acres of farmland...?

One of those rhetorical questions uses the very phrase 'what about':

- ...and what about the emissions plant based food produce...?

Some of the comments introduce an imagined world, either through hypotheticals or through imperative structures:

- ...if everyone went vegan more forests would have to be destroyed...
- If everyone went vegan it wouldn't save the planet.
- Imagine all the extra farmland...
- Picture if you will....A fake meat manufacturing plant belching out pollution...

And some of the comments use indicative structures and serve to educate:

- Misguided liberals as usual, it takes irrigated land to grow crops very expensive to build and consumes an incredible amount of energy.
- Vegan diets are far less sustainable and damage the environment
- There's actually data gathered by experts that suggest the only sustainable diet for humans is to be omnivorous.

Within all of the whataboutism structures, there is a negative appraisal pattern that relates veganism to environmental destruction: *animals and insects die*, *many problems*, *spewing diesel fumes*, *polluting*, *negative impact*, *damaging*, *destroyed*, *increase global warming*, *environmental damages*, *terrible damage*, *wipe out whole species*, *belching out pollution*, *damage the environment*,

least sustainable. This appraisal pattern, VEGANISM IS BAD, contributes to the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, and because this story disregards value three of my vegan ecosophy, it is considered a destructive story with the potential for mass social cognition and thus in need of replacement by beneficial stories that show how veganism is a viable, healing alternative to the current consumption habits that center on animal-based diets.

As a final note on the comments communicating the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, there are other unaddressed linguistic aspects in those comments that deserve mention and perhaps a closer analysis in later work on this subject, including the use of sarcasm ('Yeah don't eat animals... because they create methane...'), the conflation of vegans with liberals ('Misguided liberals as usual...', 'It's a paradox we live in huh libbies?') and the 'semi-admission' of the destructive potential of animal farming ('plant based diets are no more sustainable than one that contains meat', 'Vegan diets...damage the environment more than any meat based diet').

5.6 USER COMMENTS: VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE

Another common stereotype of vegans is communicated in the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE. This story is often conveyed through comparisons of vegans to stereotyped homosexual men or with heterosexual women. It idealizes the traits of hegemonic masculinity—linking them to the consumption of meat—and equates feminine traits with a perceived weakness. As Donaldson (1993) notes, 'Heterosexuality and homophobia are the bedrock of hegemonic masculinity...' (p. 645). When veganism is ascribed feminine traits—whether through comparisons to homosexuals or to women—the intention is derogatory and aims to place vegans, along with homosexuals and women, on the lower end of a hierarchy with heterosexual men at the top. This story is sometimes combined with the story VEGANS ARE FAKE when the comparison involves references to homosexuality, the implication being that homosexuality—and thus veganism—is not real or authentic (Chung, 2007; Fjelstrom, 2013; Rodriguez, 2018), an idea rooted in heteronormativity.

The following two comments are from the *Fox News* article 'Vegan butcher opens slicing fake meat in London' (Settembre, 2020) and contain comparisons in the form of analogies:

1. Vegan butcher is like homosexual marriage, a figment of liberal imaginations.
2. More fake than Anderson Cooper manhood. [sic]

While both of these comments explicitly question the authenticity of vegan butchery through comparisons to a supposedly inauthentic homosexuality, they also indirectly communicate the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE through an implied association. As van Leeuwen (2008) notes, 'Another common method of expressing moral evaluation is the analogy: comparisons in discourse almost always have a legitimating or delegitimating function' (p. 111). The analogy in comment 28 works to delegitimize an aspect of veganism through the association of a stereotyped effeminate homosexuality and its perceived inauthenticity.

In a similar way, comment 2 compares vegan meat to Anderson Cooper's manhood, placing both on the 'fake' end of an authenticity scale. As in the analogy of comment 1, both authenticity and masculinity are brought into question for both Anderson Cooper (i.e. homosexuals) and vegans. Comment 2, unlike comment 1, is more explicit about the association of feminine qualities through the use of the trigger word 'manhood' and the appraisal item 'fake'. The next three comments are associated with the same article and use similar linguistic strategies to communicate the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE.

3. As they talk about their planned gender reassignment surgery.
4. Same if they are gay or do crossfit...
5. I'm opening a store selling "Transgender vegetables" next week!

Comments 3 and 4 are responses to the joke ‘How do you tell someone is vegan? They will tell you every 5 minutes!’ Comment 3 explicitly identifies vegans as pre-op transexuals with ‘they’ (vegans) as subject of a material clause with the possessive ‘their’ (vegans’) in the complement ‘about their planned gender reassignment surgery’. Comment 4 invokes the LGBTQ community through the potentially derogatory trigger word ‘gay’ and a hypothetical comparison using the shared quality of ‘over-disclosure’. And finally, comment 5, in an effort to deride the concept of a vegan butcher, uses the idiosyncratic example of selling ‘transgender vegetables’ to communicate inauthenticity. Overall, the associations between vegans and the LGBTQ community are clear and persistent, communicating the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE.

In comments 6 through 25 below, there are twenty more examples of the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE with linguistic triggers highlighted in bold font.

from Settembre, J. (2021a) ‘Nathan's Famous adds plant-based, vegan hot dogs to menus’ *Fox News*

6. We don't need anymore **femme soy-boys** around.
7. CNN is reporting by a reliable unnamed source with very close ties to Sheppard Smith that **Don Lemon** prefers the **bun-less hotdog** and scratch n sniff tater tots, film at eleven.
8. Is this a **LGBTQ** thing?
9. Do they have extra **estrogen** in them for all the men that think there **women**…
10. I'm sure once the border opens back up, all the **gay** Canadians will flock to Brooklyn for their fake hot dogs.
11. Alternate headline: 'Nathan's sells weiners for the New York **pus*ies** who can't eat meat'

from Lewis, O. (2021) ‘REVEALED: Paul Pogba is wearing the world's first VEGAN football boots as Manchester United star teams up with fashion designer Stella McCartney for eye-catching £236 adidas shoes’ *Daily Mail*

12. When's **the Men's version** coming out??
13. 236....working class **mans game**, yeah right
14. Look just like my **8 year old daughters** slippers
15. All it needs is for the front to have **an upward curl with a bell on the end** and his costume is complete

from Pearson-Jones, B. (2021) 'Vegans haven't killed off the butcher! As report reveals Britons are spending more on meat, local shops report an influx of business as customers seek better quality cuts' *Daily Mail*

16. Vegans are so limp because of all the estrogen in soya products.
17. Silly little girl

from Randall, I. (2021) 'Men like meat because it makes them feel more MANLY: Gents consume more beef and chicken than women "to enact and affirm their masculine identity", study claims' *Daily Mail*

18. I wonder how many of these so called experts are powder puff vegans?
19. Men eat meat because we don't want to be little bitchy soya boys.
20. And what types of men eat cupcakes ?
21. Look at the anti meat agenda that has really ramped up I the last year. You will own nothing, eat bugs and be happy. And youll be unable to stand up for yourself because your hormones will be suppressed.
22. More of the change men to be more feminine narrative.
23. Let the genderfluid man-haters fill up on those yummy insects. I'm going to keep eating steak.
24. This Daniel Rosenfeld is a gamma male!
25. Whatever you say, buttercup.

Some of the linguistic triggers for the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE are explicit references to females, including anatomy and physiology: *femme*, *estrogen*, *women*, *eight-year-old daughters*, *silly little girl*, *bitchy*, *feminine*. Other triggers are references to the LGBTQ community: *Don Lemon*, *LGBTQ*, *gay*, *gender-fluid*. Four more triggers use slang to reference men with feminine qualities: *pus*ies*, *powder puff*, *cupcakes*, *buttercup*. A couple of triggers reference soy products and the belief that they contain female hormones: *soy-boys*, *soya boys*. And a couple more triggers imply the absence of masculinity: [not] *the men's version*, [not a] *man's game*, *gamma male*. Notable is the use of the term 'soy-boys', which was also highlighted in Gambert and Linne's (2018) study on 'plant-food masculinity' and how soy became an indicator of 'effeminization'. Stibbe (2004) also noted the focus on hormones in his work on the linguistic construction of men's health in *Men's*

Health magazine where the magazine makes a link between 'depleted testosterone' and 'depleted masculinity' (p. 40).

Overall, the linguistic triggers communicate the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE. This story is considered a destructive story because it dismisses value seven of my vegan ecosophy about community and social justice and value eight about hegemonic masculinity. With the potential for social cognition and the shared ideology of inauthentic veganism derogatorily linked to other marginalized peoples, the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE needs to be resisted and replaced with beneficial stories about vegans, veganism and gender minorities. As it stands, the story has the potential to discourage readers from considering a change to a vegan lifestyle and the ensuing benefits for all communities in the natural world.

5.7 USER COMMENTS: SEVEN STORIES AT-A-GLANCE

While the most repeated destructive stories involve health, manhood, authenticity and environmental destruction, there are many more destructive stories in need of resistance and replacement with beneficial stories. This final section on the destructive stories of veganism will introduce seven more user-comment stories at-a-glance. I will introduce each story with a table of user comments highlighting some of the most common linguistic constructions with linguistic triggers highlighted in bold. Sources are also provided to show the modest geographical and temporal breadth of the discourse.

Comments 1 through 8 below introduce the story, VEGANS ARE AGGRESSIVE. This story portrays vegans as pushy and persistent in communicating the vegan lifestyle to non-vegans and shares space with representations of vegans as violent terrorists/extremists (Wright, 2015) with Cole and Morgan (2011) identifying the range of violence in which this representation can manifest, from the 'outspoken vegan' to the 'militant vegan' to the 'vegan terrorist' (p. 146).

from Dennett, C. (2020) 'Veganism and eating disorders: Is there a link?' *The Washington Post*

1. My problem with too many vegans is they **insist** on informing you of their beliefs ad nauseam.
2. My issue is that they...will go to great lengths to **push** that view... Just stop trying to **make** everyone around them **comply** with their diet choices.
3. So many of them are preachy, or even **bullies** about their diet choices.

from Puhak, J. (2021) '"That Vegan Teacher" says TikTok ban won't silence her following petition, controversies' *Fox News*

4. Actually, having her banned because of her **extreme "activism"** stance would have been more reasonable.
5. If you want to promote something, great. Just don't get so **fanatical** that you try to **impose** your will on others, that's all I ask.
6. If one is vegan, great, their choice! This cannot be **pressed onto** others, not by **scaring**, **grossing out**, or **insisting**. No has the right to **dictate** to others their religion, their diet nor their politics.....

from Taylor, R. (2021) 'So is milk from a potato the cream of the crop? Potato milk is said to be better for the planet and also full of protein' *The Daily Mail*

7. I wish they'd stop trying to **force** this vegan muck on people.

from Prentice, A. (2021) 'Small business owner breaks down in tears after receiving a vile email from a vegan "Karen" who questioned why she was given FREE lollies with her online order when she can't even eat them' *Daily Mail Australia*

8. Get a grip, and stop **forcing** your food ideology on people who are not interested, this is the equivalent of unwelcome cold calling

Most of the linguistic triggers are violent predicators in material and verbal processes with some form of 'vegans' as actor or sayer: *insist*, *push*, *make comply*, *impose*, *press onto*, *scare*, *gross out*, *dictate*, *force*. Two trigger words come in nominalized form, one as attribute in a relational process (*bullies*) with 'vegans' as carrier, and the other with a vegan possessive as modifier (*her extreme activism*); and one trigger word comes as an appraisal item—*fanatical*. This story, VEGANS ARE AGGRESSIVE, contradicts values seven and eight of my vegan ecosophy—values that promote

compassion, consideration and community—and so is considered a destructive story that portrays vegans as socially disagreeable and veganism as an unattractive lifestyle option.

Another common story of veganism is VEGANS ARE MENTALLY UNSTABLE. This story attempts to portray vegans as atypical members of society and veganism as their aberrant lifestyle. It too aligns with the literature that identifies derogatory representations of vegans as 'deviants' (Potts and Parry, 2010), 'freaks' (Paxman, 2021) and 'crazy' people (Roth, 2005; Twine, 2014). Comments 9 through 20 below contain 12 examples from seven different articles in five different sources.

from Settembre, J. (2020) 'Vegan butcher opens slicing fake meat in London' *Fox News*

9. Vegans....." baycon "...ugh..... they sound like a bunch of nuts.....

from Holden, P. (2021) '"Going vegan" should not be the go-to answer for sustainable eating – consider this' *The Independent*

10. Someone needs to remind the Vegans that most of us wont be joining them with their bizzare lifestyle choices.

from Settembre, J. (2021a) 'Nathan's Famous adds plant-based, vegan hot dogs to menus' *Fox News*

11. because some of these wacko vegetarians were present at the academy awards nobody got meat on their plate. outrageous!!
12. These things are a lot worse health wise than a real hot dog. It all leads to one conclusion, vegans are liberals, and liberals are nuts.

from Cockburn, H. (2021) 'Climate crisis: Can going vegan save the world?' *The Independent*

13. Vegan is insanity from Western ultra-urban pasty-faced inadequates. And the idea that removing the ruminants from the world is rational, relevant, decent, sane, consequential is....madness in itself.

from Prentice, A. (2021) 'Small business owner breaks down in tears after receiving a vile email from a vegan "Karen" who questioned why she was given FREE lollies with her online order when she can't even eat them' *Daily Mail Australia*

14. Who cares, vegans are losers anyway. They act as if everyone should know that they're vegan and now down before them. Bunch of **wackos** really.
15. Veganism is a **mental disorder**. It's like believing you can fly. It's just fantasy.
16. Being Vegan usually comes with **"other" issues**. It is to be expected.
17. Well shes clearly **insane**, I love a free gift.
18. VEGANS are society's plague. **Seriously mentally deficient** like most lefties.

from Davies, J. (2021) 'Hundreds of eco protestors descend on Smithfield Market in London holding 'Meat is Murder' placards in protest against animal cruelty' *Daily Mail*

19. Veganism is a state of mind actually. It's a **mental aberration**.

from Eng, J. (2021) 'Vegan barbecue is carving out a place in traditional meat-smoking regions' *Washington Post*

20. There have been studies that suggested that vegan/vegetarian diets can cause **mental health issues** such as depression and anxiety.

Some of the linguistic triggers in the comments above literally reference the perceived 'mental instability' by using the adjective or adverb form of the word 'mental' with an adjective or noun head denoting a problem: *mental aberration*, *mental disorder*, *mentally deficient*, *mental health issues*. Other trigger words are offensive noun or adjective references to people with a mental disability: *nuts*, *whacko*, *insanity*, *madness*, *bizarre*, *insane*. And one trigger word is an implied reference, in scare quotes, to a mental disability: *'other' issues*. Overall, these trigger words communicate the story VEGANS ARE MENTALLY UNSTABLE, and because this story ignores the values of my vegan ecosophy, value ten in particular, and because it has the potential to discourage non-vegans from considering the lifestyle as a viable choice to help combat climate change and environmental degradation, it is considered a destructive story and should be resisted.

A third common story of veganism is VEGANS ARE SANCTIMONIOUS. The message communicated with this story is that vegans consider themselves morally superior to non-vegans, putting themselves at the top end of a morality hierarchy. This story was also identified by Aguilera-Carnerero and Carretero-Gonzalez (2021) who found that vegans were sometimes represented as 'elitist and

arrogant' on Spanish Facebook pages. Comments 21 to 28 highlight some of the more common linguistic triggers for this story.

from Beck, L. (2020) 'Nutrients vegan teens need to focus on' *The Globe and Mail*

21. But veganism is like wearing a hair shirt and pounding yourself on the back for all the virtue you exhibit.

from Miller, K.L. (2021) 'My boss refuses to offer vegan options at business events' *The Washington Post*

22. You are why people hate Vegans. The smug superiority is comical.
23. Exactly. Nobody is more self-righteous than vegans. Except maybe cord-cutters.
24. Typical 'holier-than-thou' vegan.

from Holden, P. (2021) '"Going vegan" should not be the go-to answer for sustainable eating – consider this' *The Independent*

25. For all the moral superiority modern veganism has taken on regarding climate change, I find a lot of people may not have understood veganism can be as bad for the climate as eating meat.

from Settembre, J. (2021a) 'Nathan's Famous adds plant-based, vegan hot dogs to menus' *Fox News*

26. It almost draws tears to think that after starting in 1916 with two Nathan hot dogs for a nickel, that the American favorite will bow to snooty vegan anti-cow fart elites.
27. Vegans make life miserable at family outings. Lectures, insults at meat eaters. Moral scolds all.

from Cockburn, H. (2021) 'Climate crisis: Can going vegan save the world?' *The Independent*

28. I was making reference to the holier-than-thou [vegans] who make demands but don't explain how to manage the implications.

Most of the linguistic triggers for the story VEGANS ARE SANCTIMONIOUS are appraisal items in a variety of noun or adjective forms that indicate the high moral ground that vegans allegedly stand upon: *virtue*, *smug*, *superiority*, *self-righteous*, *snooty*, *elite*, *holier-than-thou*. Of note is the use of the appraisal items 'holier-than-thou' and 'wearing a hair shirt and pounding yourself on the back',

together communicating the story VEGANISM IS A RELIGIOUS CULT. There is also the use of the trigger words 'lectures' and 'moral scolds', both of which appear to place vegans in an undeserved position of knowledge and power. This story associates vegans with the socially undesirable characteristic of treating people with disdain or contempt, which ignores values seven and ten of my vegan ecosophy, but ultimately all of the values which are built on acceptance and respect through kindness, empathy and compassion. For this reason, the story VEGANS ARE SANCTIMONIOUS is considered a destructive story of veganism and needs to be resisted and replaced with beneficial stories.

The fourth story in this section is the story VEGANISM HAS NO HISTORICAL PRECEDENT. This is a story that will find resistance in beneficial stories communicated in vegan cookbooks in the following chapter on the beneficial stories of veganism. Comments 29 to 32 below highlight some of the more prominent linguistic triggers.

from Beck, L. (2020) 'Nutrients vegan teens need to focus on' *The Globe and Mail*

29. Veganism is a **new experiment**. **Nowhere in history** have human beings survived without some animal foods.

from Dailymail.com Reporter (2021) 'Ex-vegan says her plant-only diet left her BALDING and looking like a "middle-aged man" with cystic acne - and claims that eating RAW ANIMAL ORGANS saved her health' *The Daily Mail*

30. The human body is not meant to just eat Vegetables. I mean humans have been **eating meat since the beginning of man**, and a vegan diet is **very new**.

from Miller, K.L. (2021) 'My boss refuses to offer vegan options at business events' *The Washington Post*

31. Vegetarian diet **can exist only** because humanity has created such a fantastic wealthy economy based on meat. [...] For the **100,000 or 200,000 years** up until modern times, humans hunted and wanted **only meat**.

from Dennett, C. (2020) 'Veganism and eating disorders: Is there a link?' *The Washington Post*

32. Well, since archeologists and other scientists in the field all concur that prehuman **brains started to increase in size** rapidly once they became **meat eaters**, and that **meat-eating essentially is what made modern humans** "human," the absurdity of veganism and even vegetarianism was made clear.

The story VEGANISM HAS NO HISTORICAL PRECEDENT generally uses both explicit and implicit linguistic triggers. The explicit triggers tend to refer to a vegan diet as a 'new experiment', as having existed 'nowhere in history', as being 'very new'. The triggers that rely more on implication tend to emphasize the supposed dominance of meat throughout history: *eating meat since the beginning*, *can exist only because [of] meat*, *for...100,000 or 200,000 years...hunted...only meat*, *meat-eating essentially*. This story is considered a destructive story of veganism because it contradicts value nine of my vegan ecosophy, a value specifically about historical precedent, and it ignores the prevalence of an historically plant-based diet in many cultures around the world.

The next story is VEGANS ARE PRIVILEGED. This story can sometimes occur with the story VEGANS ARE SANCTIMONIOUS and contains the additional entailments of VEGAN FOOD IS EXPENSIVE and VEGAN FOOD IS INACCESSIBLE. It also reflects the findings of Parkinson et al. (2020) who found that survey participants thought veganism was 'restrictive and expensive'. Comments 33 to 38 below identify some of the more common linguistic triggers.

from Miller, K.L. (2021) 'My boss refuses to offer vegan options at business events' *The Washington Post*

33. I think this inquiry is where the phase **"first world problem"** could be readily applied. Man oh man, guessing not a fun colleague.
34. The whines and **self-indulgences** of **the well-fed**. People across the globe are starving and would eat her scraps with gratitude.

from Dennett, C. (2020) 'Veganism and eating disorders: Is there a link?' *The Washington Post*

35. I would love to sit in on a conversation between a vegan and a starving African mother trying to find food for her kids and listen to the vegan rationalize turning away from certain

foods as the African mother stares at her in disbelief that there are places in the world where **such people** exist.

36. you won't find a vegan on a foodline in Somalia, you will only find them in **rich countries** who have the **luxury** of not fearing where and when their next meal is coming from.

from Reiley, L. (2020) 'The fastest-growing vegan demographic is African Americans. Wu-Tang Clan and other hip-hop acts paved the way.' *Washington Post*

37. To be a vegan is to be one of the **most arrogant** humans one can possibly choose to be. It is the ultimate expression of gross human **excess** and **indulgent**. I can just imagine trying to explain to the poor and hungry of the world, the concept of being able to turn away food.
38. In other parts of the world, people eat what they can to survive. It would be wonderful if vegans were less **preachy** and more empathetic. [...] There is a world outside your **food mecca**, a world where people have never seen an almond, much less almond milk. A world where people earn in a day, **what you spend** on half a gallon of almond milk.

The story VEGANS ARE PRIVILEGED is most commonly communicated through linguistic triggers that reference a perceived high socio-economic status for vegans. These trigger phrases sometimes identify an environment available only for the wealthy and privileged—*first-world*, *rich countries*, *food mecca*—and sometimes they reference associated qualities and actions related to wealth—*excess*, *indulgence*, *luxuries.* All considered, the linguistic triggers and the story they communicate assume that only a small percentage of people can live a vegan lifestyle and that those who make that choice are neglecting communities at a lower socio-economic status. Because the story VEGANS ARE PRIVILEGED ignores values seven, nine and eleven of my vegan ecosophy—values about community, social justice, historical precedent and world hunger—it is considered a destructive story and should be replaced with beneficial stories about realistic possibilities for access and inclusion for all.

The fifth story in this section is VEGANS ARE FAKE. This story is often communicated in discourse about faux meat products, but can also be seen in conjunction with the story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE where veganism is compared to homosexuality as an inauthentic lifestyle. Comments 39 to 43 below highlight some of the more prominent linguistic triggers.

from Settembre, J. (2020) 'Vegan butcher opens slicing fake meat in London' *Fox News*

39. Why do vegans have to immerse themselves in fake imagery? Why do they mill about in a world of illusion that they created for themselves?
40. If you're a Vegan, own it, be a Vegan and just eat vegies. A vegan pretending to eat meat is pathetic and just a wanna be.
41. vegans are posers, othewise theyd replace their K9s and incisors with molars.

from Summers, J. (2021) 'How to turn watermelon into "TUNA": Food blogger reveals four simple steps to transform fruit into vegan sashimi' *Daily Mail*

42. Why? In order to appear 'normal' is my guess. Any vegan worth their sea-friendly salt would be eating grass.

from Reiley, L. (2020) 'The fastest-growing vegan demographic is African Americans. Wu-Tang Clan and other hip-hop acts paved the way.' *Washington Post*

43. Sure Laura. The whole of the vegan concept is a con. That's all I know. And don't correct me. My opinion.

Most of the linguistic triggers for the story VEGANS ARE FAKE are explicit references to fraudulent, phony or imitation food or lifestyle habits: *fake*, *illusion*, *pretending*, *wannabe*, *posers*, *'normal'*, *con*. Three of the trigger words have negative semantic prosody—*wannabe, posers, con*—which makes them negative appraisal items as well. It should also be noted that the seemingly positive trigger word 'normal' loses its prosody within the scare quotes which render the original meaning invalid. All considered, the linguistic clusters for the story VEGANS ARE FAKE create an image of vegans and veganism as impossible to achieve and inauthentic, that the only real, authentic dietary habits are those involving the consumption of animal products. The story also undermines values eight, nine and ten of my vegan ecosophy about hegemonic masculinity, historical precedent and flexibility. For these reasons, the story VEGANS ARE FAKE is considered a destructive story of veganism and in need of resistance through the application of beneficial stories that more accurately portray veganism and vegan people as common and carefully considered.

The final story in this section is VEGAN FOOD IS UNAPPEALING. Cole and Morgan (2011) also identified the representation of vegan food as unappealing within the broader category of 'veganism as asceticism'. The linguistic triggers for this story are revealed in comments 44 to 51 below.

from Taylor, R. (2021) 'So is milk from a potato the cream of the crop? Potato milk is said to be better for the planet and also full of protein' *The Daily Mail*

44. All for alternatives to dairy milk and as soon as they make one that doesn't look and taste like baby vom I'll buy..

from Wootson, C.R. Jr. (2019) 'Vegans are beefing with Hyundai over a Super Bowl ad that made fun of vegan dinner parties' *Washington Post*

45. Haha, I'd rather pull my nose hairs out one at a time than eat beet loaf.
46. Vegan foods are like eating sawdust. Tasteless and useless for the human body.
47. I've experienced vegan bread - it's more like a bread-like product. Maybe they should just name it something else to lower people's expectations.
48. I've eaten "vegan" dishes that are alleged to emulate dishes normal people eat, and invariably they taste like crap.

from Bussel, R.K. (2018) 'Vegan food options may be required by law at venues in California' *Fox News*

49. I found a great Vegan Vegetable Soup recipe online.....and it tasted great....of course the 1 1/2 lb of well seasoned ground beef I added to it may have had something to do with that.
50. Tofu=the eraser off the end of a 10 year old pencil.
51. If veganism is so great, why do they try to make all their stuff taste like meat?

Some of the linguistic triggers for the story VEGAN FOOD IS UNAPPEALING are explicit appraisal items that form the appraisal pattern VEGAN FOOD IS BAD: *vomit*, *sawdust*, *tasteless*, *crap*, *eraser*. Other linguistic triggers are more implied than explicit, one comment suggesting that unattractive activities are more desirable than eating vegan food ('pull my nose hairs out'); another claiming that adding animal products to vegan food improves taste ('ground beef I added to it'); a third suggesting certain food groups are inauthentic if vegan ('more like a bread-like product'); and yet a fourth one

questioning the practice of recreating animal-based foods with plant products ('If veganism is so great, why...taste like meat?'). Together, these clusters of linguistic features portray vegan food as unattractive and discouraging to non-vegans. In addition to that, the story VEGAN FOOD IS UNAPPEALING ignores values six, nine and eleven of my vegan ecosophy, all three specifically about food and diet. This kind of story is considered a destructive story of veganism and in need of resistance.

Overall, I have tried to show that these destructive stories of veganism are not only broadly disseminated across online news media—in both the news articles themselves and in user comments—but that they also reflect past research on the representations of veganism (Cole and Morgan, 2011; Twine, 2014; Rodan and Mummery, 2019; Parkinson et al., 2020), which makes them persistent across time and media, and thus important for resistance and replacement with beneficial stories. In the final two sections of this chapter, I will address two more media, both with very high potential for broad dissemination of the destructive stories of veganism, and both communicating multiple stories of veganism that overlap and interconnect: The morning television program *Good Morning Britain* with controversial host Piers Morgan, and the podcast *The Joe Rogan Experience* with the equally controversial celebrity Joe Rogan.

5.8 GOOD MORNING BRITAIN

In addition to news articles and their associated comments, destructive stories of veganism can be found across a wide range of media, some of which reach millions of people daily. One such medium is the morning television program *Good Morning Britain* (hereinafter *GMB*) with television personality Piers Morgan. As noted in the Data Collection chapter, Morgan is well known for his polarizing, antagonistic views on veganism, and because of this, combined with his high-profile position, six of his interviews with vegan guests were analyzed as potential sources of destructive stories of veganism.

Morgan commonly communicates his ideology about veganism through, among other linguistic features, a discourse of negative appraisal and militant-terrorist framings. The topic of conversation for the following excerpt (*Good Morning Britain*, 2020) is about the legal rights afforded ethical vegans in a British court of law in January 2020:

1. If my belief is that eating meat is good for the planet, which I think it is, and it's good for sustainability, and a strict vegan diet is bad for you and all those things, and actually is hypocritical and unethical...

Two explicit appraisal patterns have begun in this excerpt. One is MEAT CONSUMPTION IS GOOD and the other one is VEGANISM IS BAD. Both appraisal patterns help to create the stories VEGANS ARE HYPOCRITES and VEGANISM IS UNETHICAL, and since both stories contradict the values of my vegan ecosophy—values two and three in particular—they are considered destructive stories. Morgan positively appraises meat by saying that meat is 'good for the planet' and 'good for sustainability'. At the same time that he appraises meat with the modifier 'good', he negatively appraises the vegan diet by using the appraisal items 'bad', 'hypocritical' and 'unethical', the latter two items emphasized through the use of the adverb 'actually', which can be, according to Lenk (1998), an intensifier or

> a multifunctional discourse marker...[which] functions as a personal opinion marker...[and] expresses that the following will be slightly (moderately/definitely) different from the expected normal course of the conversation. (p. 160)

In this case, the use of the adverb 'actually' has the potential to mark Morgan's negative attitude about veganism and to intensify and emphasize the difference from a potentially more expected attitude about veganism that considers the lifestyle ethical and not hypocritical. The use of this discourse marker with appraisal patterns about meat consumption and veganism are common in the discourse of Morgan, who frequently shares his attitude on these topics.

In another *GMB* program in which the discussion centers on the claim that 'vegans make better lovers' (Good Morning Britain, 2021), Morgan communicates the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY with the following:

2. ...a lot of medical experts say that actually a vegan diet is not that great for you, and that actually missing out on meat can actually have a detrimental effect on your general health and well-being...

In excerpt 2, Morgan uses 'heterogloss' to deliver the attitude of 'a lot of medical experts' who he claims think that veganism is 'not that great for' and 'detrimental' to health. The term 'heterogloss' is from Bakhtin's (1934) term 'heteroglossia' and, according to Martin and Rose's (2007) work on appraisal and negotiating attitudes, is 'where the source of an attitude is other than the writer' (p. 49). By referencing 'a lot of medical experts', Morgan invokes what Van Leeuwen (2008) calls 'authorization', in this case the authorization by 'expert authority' (p. 107) to claim legitimation for the attitude expressed. This is also what Prince (1982), as reported in Rowland (2007), identifies as an 'attribution shield' hedge which involves 'attribution of information to some third party, specified or not' (p. 83). This kind of unspecified 'authorization' or 'attribution shield' helps Morgan to build facticity around his attitude that veganism is bad, which is particularly useful when the potential for suspicion surrounding the expressed attitude exists—as it does when considering my vegan ecosophy and the noted consensus from the world's leading medical and dietary authorities on plant-based diets and their beneficial effect on health and longevity. As such, and as noted previously, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY contradicts value six of my ecosophy and is considered a destructive story.

In addition to the use of heterogloss in excerpt 2, and to assist in building facticity around the negative attitude about veganism, Morgan again uses the adverb 'actually' as a potential intensifier and marker of unexpected opinion. He initially uses the adverb before the appraisal item 'not that

great for you', and then uses it two more times: the second time at the head of the clause as theme before the subject 'missing out on meat'—notable here is the lexical choice of 'missing out' which presupposes unrequited desire—and a third time in a pre-predicator position that intensifies the attitude of veganism as 'detrimental' to 'health and well-being'. According to Tognini-Bonelli (1993), '*actually*...is probably the most common device available to a speaker who wishes to make his/her own perspective stand out with respect to the general, and more common, consensus-based view, or to other preceding textual claims or events' (203). The effect of this linguistic device has the potential to make Morgan's negative attitude about veganism 'stand out' in contrast to 'a more common, consensus-based view' that veganism is in fact good for one's 'health and well-being'.

Supporting the negative heterogloss attitude of veganism and the use of the discourse marker and intensifier 'actually', three instances of hedging in excerpt 2 above help Morgan to avoid any precise claims about veganism and health. He uses the quantifier 'a lot of' to indicate a large-yet-unknown number of 'medical experts'; he employs the vague modifier 'not that great' when appraising the vegan diet; and he uses the vague modifier 'general' in the phrase 'general health and well-being'. All of this hedging helps Morgan to build the facticity pattern 'VEGANISM IS BAD' IS TRUE around the appraisal pattern VEGANISM IS BAD, the latter supporting the former.

Morgan also frequently uses linguistic triggers of violent extremism to create the militant-terrorist frame VEGANS ARE VIOLENT, a framing which intensifies the negative appraisal pattern and creates the cognitive story VEGANS ARE MILITANTS. This story is similar to the representation of vegans as violent terrorists found in the academic literature (Wright, 2015; Michel et al., 2021; Chalupnik, 2022) and to the destructive story VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES which emerged from the data in section 5.2. Morgan played a role in the linguistic construction of that story as well. The following excerpt from Morgan is from a discussion on *GMB* about Veganuary (*Good Morning Britain*, 2018c):

3. My argument about Veganuary is that every month now has to be something. We're all being terrorized into "You gotta be dry in January", "You gotta be vegan in..." If people wanna do this, get on with it quietly, do whatever you wanna do. It's the tyranny that comes with it. [...] You like murdering plants and trees. I like eating meat.

The linguistic triggers in excerpt 3 above all use some form of 'vegans' as actor: the predicator 'terrorized' and the complements 'tyranny' and 'murdering'—all of which equate veganism to some form of violent oppression. Similar triggers are found in Morgan's discourse in many *GMB* programs in which veganism is the topic of conversation. Excerpts 4 to 26 below include some of the more prominent linguistic triggers with their source, date of publication on YouTube and how many views each video has gotten, although this does not take into account the number of viewers when the program first aired on national television.

from *Good Morning Britain* (2018a) 'Has Militant Veganism Gone Too Far? | Good Morning Britain' *YouTube*: 806,481 views

4. they get **destroyed**
5. involves the **slaughter** of millions of young critters
6. **radical** vegans **storming** into supermarkets
7. **terrorizing** old people doing their shopping for Christmas
8. **Marching** into steak houses and **screaming** abuse
9. It's the **tactics** you're using to **bully** the rest of us
10. your **fury** about all this
11. the little animals that get **killed**

from *Good Morning Britain* (2018b) 'Is Milk Murder for Cows? | Good Morning Britain' *YouTube*: 965,513 views

12. You don't mind **slaughtering** living plants
13. they hate this kind of vegan **terrorism**
14. this kind of vegan **terrorism**

from *Good Morning Britain* (2019) 'Should Vegan Products With Meat Names Be Banned? | Good Morning Britain' *YouTube*: 292,005 views

15. the more **radical** end of this vegan [??]
16. which has become very **aggressive**

17. they basically terrorize meat eaters
18. billions of bees and insects get murdered

from *Good Morning Britain* (2020) 'Susanna Gets Piers a Greggs' Vegan Steak Bake | Good Morning Britain' *YouTube*: 523,004 views

19. literally billions of bees get exterminated, killed, wiped out
20. they kill billions of those bees every year
21. the bee murder site in California
22. you're killing loads of animals
23. you're wrecking the planet

from *Good Morning Britain* (2021) 'Piers Is Outraged at Claims Vegans Make Better Lovers | Good Morning Britain' *YouTube*: 61,974 views

24. billions of bees get slaughtered
25. billions of bees get killed in California
26. a slaughter of billions of bees

Notable in the excerpts above are 1) the number of views for each video, one video reaching nearly one million at the time of writing, 2) the consistent production of the militant-terrorist frame over a four-year period (2018-2021) and 3) most triggers occurring in material processes as violent predicators with some form of 'vegans' as actor. These violent predicators include *destroy, slaughter, storm into, terrorize, march, bully, kill, murder, exterminate, wipe out* and *wreck*. Other linguistic triggers from the framing include negative appraisal items—*radical, aggressive, fury, terrorism*—and one verbal process with the predicator *scream*. It is also significant that some of the linguistic triggers are once again evocative of Nazi Germany—the verb *storm* reminiscent of the German *Sturmabteilung*, or stormtrooper regiment; the verb *march* evocative of Hitler's military parades; and the verbs *exterminate* and *wipe out* a grim reminder of the horrors of the holocaust. In isolation, any of these words might not trigger conceptualizations of past atrocities, but together—and repeatedly—the potential for ideological work becomes greater.

Assisting in the creation of the negative appraisal pattern is the use of the modifier 'little' to depreciate vegan people and the vegan lifestyle. The following excerpt concerns Morgan's assertion that vegans are hypocrites (*Good Morning Britain*, 2020):

27. Vegans don't want you to know about their dirty **little** secret, which is that they kill billions of those bees every year. And then what happens? How do you think avocados and almonds then get from the bee murder site in California, how do you think they get to you on your **little** plate in Islington? They fly them on planes in big plastic containers and they wrap them all in plastic and they put them in supermarkets in plastic, so not only is it rank hypocrisy because you're killing loads of animals to eat this stuff, but also you're wrecking the planet by then flying it halfway across the world to be on your **little** doorstep.

The three instances of the modifier 'little' in bold font serve to demean veganism through communicating an attitude of condescension. The modifier occurs before the nouns 'secrets', 'plates' and 'doorsteps'—all three potential implications of larger concepts, namely 'vegan knowledge', 'vegan food' and 'the vegan lifestyle'. According to Stubbs (1995) and his corpus analysis of the words *large*, *small*, *big* and *little*, the adjective *little* 'can convey that a speaker's attitude is patronising or pejorative: of over 70 examples of *little man* in the corpus and the OED, none are obviously flattering, and some are definitely insulting' (p. 385). Adding to the 'insult' is the negative appraisal item 'dirty' before 'little secret' and the choice of 'Islington' as a vegan residence: Islington is an inner borough of London with several qualities that Morgan and people with similar values may find offensive, including youth, theater, historical nonconformists, ethnic diversity and immigrant gentrification (*Britannica*, 2021). This kind of 'patronising' attitude is part of the negative appraisal pattern that Morgan establishes for veganism and includes the story VEGANS ARE HYPOCRITES. Since this story dismisses the values of my vegan ecosophy, it is considered a destructive story that has the potential to discourage non-vegans from considering a vegan lifestyle and so must be resisted.

Another linguistic feature that Morgan uses is the discourse marker 'right', which invites agreement with his negative ideas about veganism. In the following two excerpts (Good Morning Britain, 2018a), Morgan uses the discourse marker 'right' eight times.

28. You're aware that how [sic] bread gets made, right? Wheat crops and all that kind of thing? Lady birds, bugs, things, mice, rats, all these other little creatures that are in the cr..., they get destroyed in the production of wheat crops so that you guys can munch your bread. Tell me the difference ideologically between me wanting a Christmas turkey, right, and you guys eating bread, which you know involves the slaughter of millions of young critters.

29. Here's my issue about the vegan thing, right? I've got no problem with anyone being vegan whatsoever, right? I believe absolutely in the right to choice when it comes to food, smoking, drinking, whatever you are. I don't believe in nanny state, right? What I have a real problem with is radical vegans storming into supermarkets like these three did with their mates, right, terrorizing old people doing their shopping for Christmas, right? Young kids trying to go around with their mums and dads at supermarkets. Marching into steak houses and screaming abuse and playing... You know, I could go into their bread stores, right? And I could play little insects being killed or loud music, but I don't because I respect their right to eat bread....

As Naya (2006) points out in her paper on the functions of 'right' in the history of English, the discourse marker 'right' is 'used to check that somebody agrees with you or has understood you'. Biber et al. (1999) explain in more detail:

> *Right* and *see* can also occur [as response elicitors], although as inserts, they are more likely to act as discourse markers... Whereas clausal question tags, such as *isn't it*, have a role of inviting agreement or confirmation from the hearer, these one-word response elicitors often have a more speaker-centered control, seeking a signal that the message has been understood and accepted. (1089)

Using the discourse marker 'right' in this capacity in excerpts 28 and 29 through the uni-directional medium of television, Morgan, in his position of 'speaker-centered control', invites his viewers to accept the following claims: that harvesting wheat 'destroys...little creatures'; that there is no

ethical difference between eating turkey and eating bread; that there exists a legitimate issue with veganism; that while some parts of veganism may be acceptable, other parts are not; that everyone deserves the unrestricted right to dietary choice; that vegans who protest are a problem; that protesting during the holidays is a particular problem; and that vegans do not respect the rights of people with different lifestyles. These invitations to agreement are then strengthened with the negative framing of vegans as noted in the excerpts for the story VEGANS ARE VIOLENT and the introduction of imagined scenarios with elements of innocence and holiday tradition, namely 'Christmas turkey', 'old people', 'Christmas shopping', 'young kids' and 'mums and dads'. Each of these elements creates a stark contrast to the negative framing VEGANS ARE VIOLENT and intensifies the negative appraisal pattern VEGANISM IS BAD. These framings and invitations to acceptance of the negative ideology associated with veganism disregard the values of my vegan ecosophy which lean heavily on cooperation, compassion, and ecological justice. They are therefore considered destructive stories of veganism, particularly the stories VEGANS ARE HYPOCRITES and VEGANS ARE MILITANTS, both of which support Morgan's overall appraisal pattern VEGANISM IS BAD.

Overall, Piers Morgan consistently communicates an attitude about veganism that is antithetical to my vegan ecosophy and potentially influential in discouraging non-vegans from considering a vegan lifestyle. This is particularly problematic because of Morgan's status as a television personality on a nationally syndicated television program in the UK, a status that affords him 'access' (van Dijk, 1998) and thus the power to influence social cognition. Morgan, though, is not the only one with that potentially damaging 'access'.

5.9 THE JOE ROGAN EXPERIENCE

One final medium for analysis in this chapter is the podcast *The Joe Rogan Experience*. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Joe Rogan is an American celebrity with polarizing views on veganism and 'tens of millions of listeners...in the United States [and] in 92 other markets' (Rosman et al., 2022).

Because of this, several excerpts from four of his podcasts were analyzed as potential sources for destructive stories of veganism. The following excerpt is from *The Joe Rogan Experience* episode #1365 with Cameron Hanes, a 'bowhunting athlete' (Rogan, 2019, October). In this part of the episode, Rogan and Hanes are talking about vegan activists 'blocking this burger stand':

1. They're just trying to be activists. You know, they're trying to get a message out, and most of them will **quit**, they're gonna **quit** veganism and they're gonna **start** eating meat **again** because they're health [sic]. That's the truth.

The most prominent story introduced in this excerpt is VEGANS ARE QUITTERS, which is identified through two material processes with vegans ('they') as actor and with predicators as linguistic triggers: 'quit' and 'start...again'. More importantly are the entailments that this story communicates: VEGANS ARE FAKE, VEGANISM IS DIFFICULT and VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. Rogan and his guest spend some time with this story:

2. Google this: What number...I think they said the number of vegans and vegetarians that eat meat when they're drunk is something **outrageous**. It's like close to 90%. But how many vegans **end up quitting** and **eating meat**? I wonder if they've ever done a study on that. (Rogan, 2019, October)

In excerpt 2, the predicators as linguistic triggers are similar to excerpt 1: 'end up quitting' and 'eat meat'. The former uses the verb phrase 'end up'—which contains the nuance of 'finality' regardless of intent—and the latter signifies the act of 'quitting', in this instance quitting veganism through the act of eating meat. Also of note is the attitudinal lexical item 'outrageous', which in this excerpt appears to communicate a 'prosody of feeling that colours a whole phase of discourse' (Martin and Rose, 2007); while technically modifying 'the number of vegans...that eat meat when they're drunk', the attitude of 'outrage' seems to apply to (to 'colour') the more general topic of 'vegans quitting' (the 'whole phase of discourse'). In this way, Rogan both communicates the story VEGANS

ARE QUITTERS and emphasizes how contemptible that act is. This story continues in the discussion between Rogan and Hanes and begins to incorporate more of the entailment VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY:

3. Well you know that guy, **Dr. Sean Baker**, he's the [??] kid with the carnivore diet? Well **he marks** all these people that were in originally in that *Game Changers* documentary that James Cameron put out. A shit ton of them **quit** before the movie came out and they had to pull them out of the movie because they were vegan because of **health reasons** they had to **quit**. It's an indoctrination movie. And it's also...it's extremely biased and it's not focusing on all of the various problems that people have. (Rogan, 2019, October)

In excerpt 3, Rogan introduces into the discussion the vegan documentary film *The Game Changers* and mentions a claim by Dr. Sean Baker that some of the athletes in the documentary were removed from it because they quit being vegan. This heterogloss claim (Martin and Rose, 2007) continues the story VEGANS ARE QUITTERS and explicitly attributes the quitting to 'health reasons'. Rogan then claims that *The Game Changers* does not address 'all of the various problems that people have', again communicating the entailment VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY through the linguistic trigger 'problems'.

Significant in excerpt 3 is the framing VEGANISM IS A RELIGIOUS CULT. This framing, communicated through the trigger word 'indoctrination', is also a common story in the discourse of Joe Rogan. In an excerpt from another podcast, #1105 with Toronto chef and restauranteur Michael Hunter (Rogan, 2018, April), Rogan again introduces this framing:

4. It's an **ideological** battle, and in that sense, veganism very much becomes like a **religion** because you like support all the people that are on your side and the people that are opposed to you are like **apostates**. They're like the negative people that are trying to bring you to the dark side, to **hell**.

In excerpt 4, the framing VEGANISM IS A RELIGIOUS CULT is communicated through the trigger words "ideological", "religion", "apostates" and "hell". Finally, three more excerpts from two more podcasts serve to show the pattern of linguistic triggers that support this framing:

5. When you go off a vegan diet, man, that's like when you become a **Muslim apostate**. They want death to you. (Rogan, 2018, June)

6. I think those *What the Health* guys, I had them on when they did *Cowspiracy*, I think they mean well, but they are fucking **true believers**, and they are not trying to put together a documentary that states all the facts objectively. They are doing a vegan **propaganda** film. (Rogan, 2018, June)

7. I understand where these people are coming from in terms of them not wanting to do harm. I understand it. I see their perspective. But the vicious ways they attack people that leave that that I'm going to call it a **cult** because it's kind of like a **cult**. (Rogan, 2020, October)

Excerpt 5 contains the trigger words 'Muslim apostate', excerpt 6 uses the trigger words 'true believers' and 'propaganda', and excerpt 7 twice uses the trigger word 'cult'. Together with excerpts 3 and 4, all of the linguistic triggers across four separate podcasts spanning three years communicate the framing VEGANISM IS A RELIGIOUS CULT, which ignores all of the values in my vegan ecosophy and creates a destructive story in the minds of Rogan's 'tens of millions of listeners'. Markedly in the linguistic triggers above is the explicit use of the trigger word 'cult'. According to sociologists and religion scholars (Olson, 2006), the term 'cult' is problematic:

> For the better part of two decades, Barker (1986, 1989), Richardson (1993), and several other sociologists of religion, as well as religious studies scholars such as Miller (1996) and Wessinger (2000), have argued that the term "cult" has become laden with negative connotations among the general public and media and have advocated dropping its use in academia. They contend that the term has become a pejorative label given to religious groups the user does not like or understand, and that merely using the word to describe a group elicits negative, stereotypical images about what the group is like before any factual information has been obtained. (p. 97)

When veganism is explicitly referred to as a cult, it also becomes 'laden with negative connotations' which 'elicit negative, stereotypical images' which listeners do 'not like or understand'. Considering this negative ideological effect and the lack of any support for the values of my vegan ecosophy, the framing VEGANISM IS A RELIGIOUS CULT needs to be resisted and replaced with beneficial stories that more accurately portray vegan people and the vegan lifestyle.

Overall, while Joe Rogan does communicate some beneficial stories of veganism, a large majority of his references to veganism deliver destructive stories, and this is a particular problem because of his platform and the 'tens of millions listeners' who receive and share his destructive stories of veganism. As will be shown in the next chapter on beneficial stories of veganism, destructive stories like those of Joe Rogan and Piers Morgan do not go unresisted.

6.0 BENEFICIAL STORIES OF VEGANISM

6.1 DOCUMENTARY FILM: THE GAME CHANGERS

This section will take a critical look at the documentary film *The Game Changers* (2018). As mentioned in the chapter on data collection, *The Game Changers* became the best selling documentary on iTunes in just one week when it was released in 2018 and has since continued to be an inspiring film. The film positively represents veganism regarding health and nutrition, a representation that is potentially inspiring to non-vegans. The film centers on the lives of twenty people, most of whom underwent a transition from meat consumption to veganism, and I explored their personal biographical stories through narrative theory, applying a basic narrative structure (Todorov, 1969; Toolan, 2001; Bal, 2017) and the prototypical narrative structure of the hero (Rank, 2011; Raglan, 2003; Campbell, 2008). The narrative entailments I identified were then evaluated against my vegan ecosophy and the stories they communicated were placed on a beneficial destructive spectrum.

The documentary follows narrator and UFC fighter/trainer James Wilks 'as he travels the world looking for answers about the necessity of animal foods' (Loomis, 2019). Wilks's 'quest', as Netflix describes it, is the overarching narrative of the documentary, within which can be found a narrative structure involving temporal sequences (Todorov, 1969; Toolan, 2001) as well as numerical and logical connections (Bal, 2017). In addition, there are 19 embedded narratives in the documentary, making Wilks's narrative a 'framing narrative' which 'acts as a framework within which many tales are told' (Abbott, 2021, p. 29). For reference, well-known framing narratives include *One Thousand and One Nights* (*The Arabian Nights*) and *The Decameron* by Boccaccio, both of which contain several shorter narratives (stories or tales) within the larger framing narrative of the text (the book or novel) itself. Abbott explains that 'the important point is that framing narratives can, and often do, play a vital role in how the reader interprets the narratives they frame' (2021, p. 30), a point that bears out in the documentary as the narrator, James Wilks, manipulates temporal sequence

and logical connections to communicate narrative entailments. Some of the embedded narratives, along with Wilks's narrative, follow 'the standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero [as] a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation—initiation—return*' (Campbell, 2008, p. 23). These 20 embedded narratives, along with expert opinions organized around a series of 22 misconceptions about veganism, are what drive the documentary and James Wilks's framing narrative forward.

One note on character referencing: James Wilks has two roles in the film. He is the main character in the framing narrative and in this capacity appears in videos and interacts with other characters. His second role is as narrator, a disembodied voice weaving the images of the film together with background information and his personal thoughts on the topics addressed. When it is necessary to distinguish between the two roles, I refer to the person who appears *in* the film simply as 'James Wilks'. When I refer to 'James Wilks the narrator', I am referring to the disembodied voice that guides the viewer through the film. They are distinct because James Wilks the narrator is omniscient whereas James Wilks (the main character) is unaware of how the narrative will unfold. That, at least, is how the two roles are presented.

6.1.1 NARRATIVE SCHEMA & THE HERO NARRATIVE

The formula for the hero narrative can be understood as a distinct variety of the standard three-part, cyclical narrative schema outlined by Todorov (1969): *equilibrium—conflict—new equilibrium*. The relationship between the two narratives can be seen as a logical, cause-effect relationship where the events of the hero narrative are consequences of the events of the standard narrative: *separation as a result of equilibrium—initiation as a result of conflict—return as a result of new equilibrium*. Diagram 6.1.1 below presents James Wilks's narrative structure—a combination of both the standard narrative schema and the hero narrative—with arrows indicating temporal movement and cause-effect relationships.

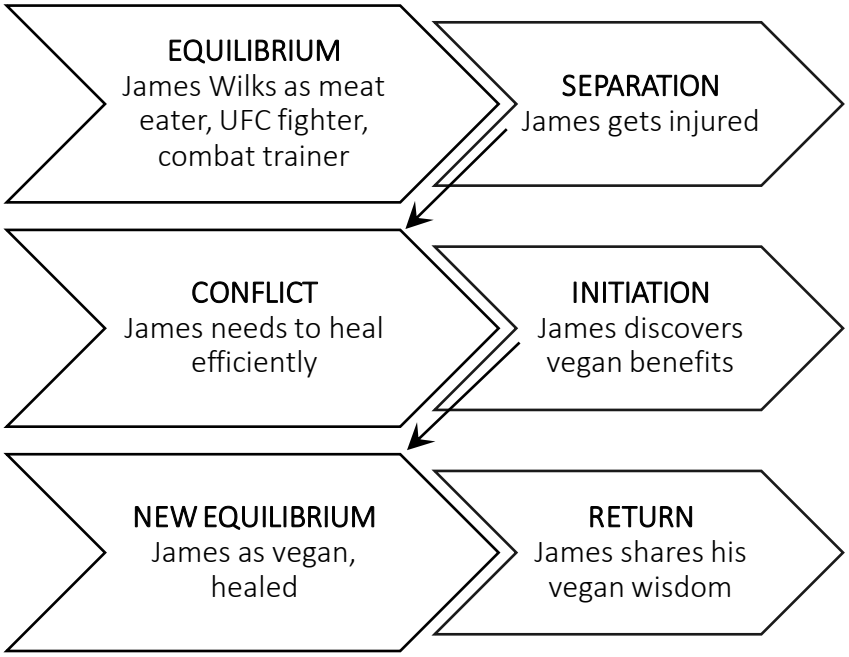

Diagram 6.1 The structure of James Wilks's narrative

As noted earlier in the chapter on the development of the ecolinguistics framework, narrative is a powerful tool that can weave together the whole of our experience. Toolan (2001) explains in more detail:

> Everything we do, from making the bed to making breakfast to taking a shower...can be seen, cast, and recounted as a narrative...with a middle and end, characters, setting, drama (difficulties resolved), suspense, enigma, "human interest", and a moral... From such narratives, major and minor, we learn more about ourselves and the world around us. Making, apprehending, and then not forgetting a narrative is making-sense of things which may also help make sense of other things. (p. viii)

Because of this, narratives are perfect rhetorical devices to communicate the often complicated experiences of becoming vegan in a world of omnivores. On top of that, the hero narrative can add nuance to our experience. As Leeming (2002) explains, 'Our heroes reflect our priorities, our particular cultural values. He or she breaks new ground, can represent all of us. The hero is our second chance. The old ways must be constantly renewed and new understandings developed' (pp.

117-123). The 'cultural values' here can be interpreted as the values of our relationship to the natural world; 'new ground' can be understood as a change in lifestyle and dietary habits; and 'our second chance' can be making the right choices now—the choice to be vegan—in order to nurture and preserve the life-sustaining relationships of ecology and the natural world.

As a final note in this section, Campbell's work on the historical hero monomyth is not uniformly accepted as rigorous scholarship across all academic fields (Crespi, 1990; Ellwood, 1999; Northrup, 2006), particularly in folklore studies where folklorists find the hero monomyth insufficiently defined and inconsistently applied (Toelken, 1996; Dundes, 2016). Campbell's monomyth is based on a psychoanalytical archetype (Freud, 1997; Raglan, 2003), but the hero narrative has been in use for thousands of years, e.g., in Homer's 8th century BCE epic the *Odyssey* and Edmund Spenser's 16th century CE epic poem *The Faerie Queen*. Campbell's interpretation also sustains criticism from feminist scholars who view woman as 'other to the hero' and under-represented in the classical literature (Cavarero, 1995; Nicholson, 2011). Those criticisms notwithstanding, the basic three-part hero formula, aligned with the theory and framework of narratology, is useful to clarify how the hero narrative can be ideologically influential across time and space. My research does not aim to redefine folklore methodology, address the nuances of comparative mythology or seek to marginalize contemporary women with outdated ideas concerning their 'traditional roles'. The female hero, I contend, can inhabit the prototypical narrative of the hero regardless of Campbell's intentions or personal ideologies about women. While I acknowledge Campbell's terminological and organizational contributions, I reject his antiquated vision of the hero narrative and instead seek to redefine it in ways that can be beneficial to the contemporary world and the diversity of living beings that inhabit it.

6.1.2 EQUILIBRIUM AND SEPARATION

'Equilibrium', the first part of the standard narrative schema, is marked in James Wilks's life by his profession and his meat consumption. 'Separation', the first part of the hero narrative, occurs when he gets injured and can no longer continue (becomes separated from) his profession. The kernel events—the essential parts—of James Wilks's equilibrium and separation are organized in the documentary as a four-part movement:

1. Connotation of equilibrium
2. Introduction of separation
3. Introduction of path forward (initiation)
4. Implication of a cause for separation based on the path forward

These kernel events can be identified in the documentary as follows:

1. James the meat-eater embodies hegemonic masculinity in his success as a martial artist, UFC fighter and combat trainer.
2. James gets injured, losing his ability to fight and train.
3. James discovers the potential benefits of a plant-based diet.
4. James, as a child dressed up as Superman, associates meat consumption with strength.

The temporal sequence of the narrative becomes apparent in the movement from James as a child to James as an adolescent to James as an adult. The lack of chronological integrity—event four of James as a child occurring after events one to three when James is an adult—is what Bal (2017) considers to be a 'deviation in sequential ordering' (p. 68), an aspect of narrative intended 'to emphasize, to bring about aesthetic or psychological effects, to produce suspense, to show various interpretations of an event, to indicate the subtle difference between expectation and realization, and much else besides' (p. 69). All five of these rationale could explain why the deviation in sequential ordering occurs, with three of them particularly applicable to James Wilks's narrative: the 'emphasis' of meat consumption as a nutritional problem, the potential 'psychological effects'

on the audience produced by introducing meat consumption as a nutritional problem, and the 'interpretation' of meat consumption by James from childhood to injury.

The linguistic triggers of this four-part sequence are both linguistic and visual. Linguistic triggers connect the kernel events textually while visual images show James Wilks in the different stages of early life. The basic structure of events one to three above is outlined in Table 6.1 below.

LINGUISTIC TRIGGER	KERNEL EVENT	TEMPORAL SEQUENCE TRIGGERS
'James Wilks is the ultimate fighter'	equilibrium to separation	
'Then, I got injured.'	separation to conflict	adverb 'Then'
'That's when I stumbled across a study about the Roman gladiators.'	(conflict to initiation)	demonstrative pronoun 'That' and adverb 'when'

Table 6.1 Kernel events and temporal sequence in James Wilks's narrative

In Table 6.1 above, the temporal sequence can be identified by the adverb 'Then'—which indicates the chronological sequence of Wilks being an ultimate fighter before getting injured—and the demonstrative pronoun 'That' combined with the adverb 'when', the former indicating a prior event and the latter indicating the time at which the subsequent event began.

Regarding Wilks's 'equilibrium' as an expression of the qualities of hegemonic masculinity, the linguistic trigger identified above—'ultimate fighter'—is only a representative example of the triggers present in the discourse. Table 6.2 below highlights other linguistic triggers of hegemonic masculinity in the discourse and their corresponding visual triggers which appear on screen at the same time the linguistic triggers are spoken. Of note is the great deal of effort that was put into establishing this equilibrium, with linguistic and visual triggers introduced to an extreme.

LINGUISTIC TRIGGERS of HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY	CORRESPONDING VISUAL TRIGGERS of HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY
'fighting techniques'	James Wilks teaching Marine Corp. soldiers how to knife fight
'mixed martial arts'	James Wilks teaching Marine Corp. soldiers how to grapple
'damaging moves'	James Wilks teaching Marine Corp. soldiers how to head butt
'Self-defense'	James Wilks teaching Marine Corp. soldiers how to disarm someone
'Muscles'	James Wilks as a young boy flexing in a tank top
'Power'	James Wilks as a young boy flexing in a tank top
'hard to control'	James Wilks as a young boy in a tank top mooning the camera
'Aggressive'	James Wilks as a young boy in a group photo shirtless in a wild pose
'*kyokushinkai* karate'	James Wilks as a preteen on the street in jeans and t-shirt flexing
'Bruce Lee'	James Wilks in bed under two Bruce Lee posters, one as a ninja
'Kung Fu master'	Bruce Lee surrounded by men in martial arts uniforms, removing his shirt for combat
'fight off bad guys'	Bruce Lee begins fighting off the men in martial arts uniforms
'Attacked'	James Wilks standing in a training gym with Marine Corp. soldiers
'beaten up'	James Wilks standing in a training gym with Marine Corp. soldiers
'Combat'	The front cover of the book "Training for Boxers" with the illustration of a boxer
'Armed'	James Wilks entering a UFC fighting arena before a bout
'five black belts'	James Wilks in the same UFC fighting arena, waiting for the bout to begin

Table 6.2 Linguistic and visual triggers of hegemonic masculinity

Notable is the emphasis on strength, competitiveness and aggression as revealed through linguistic and visual triggers denoting the martial arts, the military and the UFC. Most important is the series of four images of James Wilks as a young boy and their corresponding linguistics triggers: 'muscles' and James Wilks flexing, 'power' and James Wilks flexing, 'hard to control' and James Wilks mooning, and 'aggressive' and James Wilks shirtless and wild. This series is effective in showing James in his pre-vegan equilibrium, embodying the traits of hegemonic masculinity in his youth.

Event four of the four-part movement mentioned at the beginning of this section—James Wilks as a child associating meat consumption with masculinity—can be understood from the following exchange between James Wilks and his father. In the home video in which this exchange takes place, James Wilks as a child is dressed up as Superman, symbolizing and 'anticipating' (Bal, 2017, p. 82) his role as a future hero in his hero narrative. His father is behind the camera.

> James Wilks's father: And now, ladies and gentlemen, the one and only superman. James, does superman eat meat?
> James Wilks as a child: Yes.
> Father: He does?
> James Wilks: Yeah.
> Father: Oh. Could you tell us what sort of foods you eat at teatime when you come home?
> James Wilks: Nearly the same as dinner but um egg and...lamb chop.
> Father: Do you think all the other children should eat those sort of foods?
> James Wilks: Yes!
> Father: In order to get strong?
> James Wilks: Mm-hmm.

To avoid any misunderstandings about the implications of the exchange—that James Wilks at that time incorrectly perceived a correlation between meat consumption and strength—the subsequent scene in the documentary introduces the embedded narrative of UFC fighters Nate Diaz and Conor McGregor: vegan versus meat-eater. The narration begins with a logical connection of emphasized surprise, linking James's beliefs as a child to those of the UFC:

- Even in the UFC, this idea that meat makes you tough had become a focal point... McGregor was a big meat eater.

Then to further emphasize the point, a clip of McGregor in a pre-fight interview is played:

- It's steaks every day for me. Steaks for breakfast, steaks for lunch, steaks for brunch, grass fed, massaged beef, all day long.

Later in the documentary, it is revealed that McGregor loses the fight to Diaz, implying a strength not in meat but in plant-based diets. By this point in James's narrative, clear correlations between him and Connor McGregor have been established: both are UFC fighters, both eat meat and both have endured injury and loss, ostensibly as a result of their meat consumption. As such, this embedded narrative of Nate Diaz and Connor McGregor is one of the primary propellants of James Wilks's narrative and likely the rationale for its introduction early in the documentary: It communicates the major entailments 'meat consumption is for losers' and 'plant-based diets are for winners'. From this point in the narrative, James begins his journey to reconcile a lifetime of meat consumption with the previously unknown benefits of a solely plant-based diet.

6.1.3 CONFLICT AND INITIATION

The 'conflict' of James Wilks's narrative is the need to heal efficiently because his profession demands physical stability. The faster that this happens, the sooner he can return to equilibrium. James Wilks the narrator tells the audience this at the moment of separation:

- Then, I got injured. I was sparring with a future heavyweight champion and tore ligaments in both of my knees. Unable to teach or train for at least six months, I spent more than a thousand hours studying peer reviewed science on recovery and nutrition looking for any advantage I could find *to get back on track as quickly as possible*. (emphasis added)

After his separation, James discovers a link between diet and health and so begins his journey—his 'initiation'—to understand how and why a plant-based diet could aid in an efficient recovery. This journey, the bulk of Wilks's narrative, can be identified primarily through the logical connections established by a series of 1) misconceptions, which are clarified with 2) expert advice and 3) personal experience related in a series of embedded narratives. These three aspects of the narrative together comprise the 'narrative situation' (Bal, 2017) which Toolan (2001) partially defines as the '"cognitive, emotive and ideological"' perspectives, in addition to the simply

spatiotemporal one' (p. 60). The 'narrative situation' for James Wilks's narrative is organized and consistent in its repetitive structure and thus, as I will argue, appealing to the reader and effective as a story promoting veganism. The rest of this section will address each aspect of James's narrative separately—misconceptions, expert advice and embedded narratives—and then offer a couple examples of how they work together to communicate narrative entailments about veganism and meat consumption.

6.1.3.1 MISCONCEPTIONS

For the purpose of this thesis, 'misconception' (hereinafter abbreviated as 'MC' in lists in parenthetical text) is defined as a common, everyday story about an area of life which is being challenged as being misleading or false. The misconceptions can also be understood as the destructive stories-we-live-by. There are 22 misconceptions introduced throughout James Wilks's framing narrative and they are identified by three commonalities: 1) they are orally expressed by James Wilks in the framing narration; 2) they are addressed by the subsequent expert advice and/or embedded narratives; and 3) they linguistically display James's attitude of confusion and incredulity at the changing certainty of his convictions. Within the Ecolinguistics framework, the misconceptions therefore represent some of the more common destructive stories of veganism, and the documentary itself then works to undermine the facticity of those misconceptions before replacing them with beneficial stories. This pattern, while expanding and contracting temporally throughout the framing narrative, is fairly consistent in its application and lends a didactic element to the framing narrative as a whole. Table 6.3 below lists all 22 misconceptions with primary linguistic triggers of confusion and incredulity in bold.

#	MISCONCEPTIONS	PRIMARY LINGUISTIC TRIGGERS
1	Meat makes you tough.	"To think that the original professional fighters ate mainly plants went against everything I'd been taught about nutrition."
2	Meat gives you energy.	"I was confused about how his meat-free diet could possibly give [Scott Jurek] enough energy"
3	Plants do not have enough protein.	"I just couldn't believe that...anyone...could get enough protein eating only plants"
4	Meat protein is better than plant protein.	"I was surprised to learn that all protein originates in plants... But what about the quality of the protein? I'd always heard that plant-based protein was inferior."
5	Plants do not provide enough protein to build muscle.	"If getting lots of protein without animal foods really wasn't an issue, where were all the big guys?"
6	Strength comes from meat.	"How could one of the world's strongest men be so powerful eating only plants?"
7	Everyone makes nutrition-based food choices.	"I'd never really thought about it like that before [i.e., people don't know what they're eating]. What else was in the food I was eating?"
8	Vegan options are scant.	"It was time to give this plant-based thing a try, but there was only one meat-free meal I could think of."
9	Athletic performance is unrelated to diet.	"Bouncing back quickly between workouts is a huge advantage for any athlete. But the idea that food could be the secret weapon... I had to find out more."
10	Diet is not a remedy for serious injury.	"All of these athletes and their stories were impressive, but my goal from the beginning was to recover from actual injuries, like the damage I'd done to my knees."
11	Meat is not damaging to health.	"After seeing how much a single animal-based meal can affect healthy young athletes, I couldn't help but wonder what a lifetime of these foods might have done to my father's heart."
12	Plant-based diets only affect health over long periods of time.	"While all of this sounded promising, my dad didn't just need to get better. He needed to get better fast."
13	Old habits die hard.	"And my dad, like most of us, is a product of where he grew up. I just couldn't imagine someone as set in his ways as my father making such a big switch."
14	Our bodies evolved to eat meat.	"As groundbreaking as all of this nutritional science was, I also found it really confusing. How could meat be so bad for us if that's what our ancestors were supposedly built to eat?"
15	Our teeth are designed to eat meat.	["We have longer digestive tracts than carnivores", "we have trichromatic vision" and we have a brain "desperate" for carbohydrates.] But what about our teeth? Aren't they proof that we're built to eat meat?"

16	Meat is necessary for B12.	"Suddenly it all made sense... The only thing that didn't really fit was B12, an important vitamin that everyone kept warning me you could only get from animal foods."
17	Meat defines masculinity.	"For any guy watching that day, it wasn't just a car Patrik had crushed. It was a myth they'd been fed their entire lives."
18	Meat is linked to levels of testosterone.	"While all this talk about erections was interesting, it also made me wonder about hormones, specifically testosterone."
19	Vegans get too much estrogen from soy products.	"I found this hard to believe since plant-based diets often include soy products, which I'd always been told were loaded with estrogen."
20	Vegan food is filled with carbohydrates which promote weight gain.	"I already knew that processed carbs like white flour and sugar can lead to weight gain, but what I didn't realize is that unprocessed carbohydrates like oats, bananas and sweet potatoes, are associated with decreased body fat."
21	Everyone already understands the nutritional benefits of a plant-based diet.	"Six months into my new diet, my strength, endurance and recovery were better than ever. My dad's health was on the mend... But I was also pissed off. Why didn't everyone know about this?"
22	Veganism is only about food and diet.	"Just when I thought I'd uncovered every dark secret of the animal foods industry, I got invited to train a paramilitary group in Zimbabwe with a special mission."

Table 6.3 Misconceptions and linguistic triggers in *The Game Changers*

The most salient identifying attribute in the linguistic triggers listed in Table 6.3 are verb phrases that signal confusion or incredulity: *to think*, *couldn't believe, couldn't help but wonder, just couldn't imagine, didn't really fit, made me wonder, hard to believe, didn't realize*. In all of these clauses, either James Wilks is the subject of the verb phrase or the misconception is the subject. There are also several adjective phrases that communicate the same explicit confusion and incredulity for James Wilks: *confused*, *surprised*, *really confusing, pissed off*.

The modal operator 'could', often combined with modal adverbs and/or the interrogative mood, also plays a prominent role in creating the linguistic clusters that reveal the misconceptions (MCs 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16). Verschueren (1999) explains modality in this sense as 'an inherently pragmatic phenomenon [involving] the many ways in which *attitudes* can be expressed...signaling

factuality, *degrees of certainty or doubt*, vagueness, *possibility*...' (p. 129) (emphasis added). James Wilks uses the modality to express his own surprise—signaling doubt—about the possibilities presented to him through his research on plant-based diets. In this way he is able to manage what Potter (1996) refers to as 'stake' or 'interest':

> ...*stake* and *interest* [are] emblematic of a whole range of considerations that people may use to discount descriptions. At their strongest, these notions are used to suggest that the description's speaker...has something to gain or lose...[with] personal, financial or power considerations that come into play. (p. 124)

In order for James Wilks to avoid being perceived as an individual or part of a group 'with interests, desires, ambitions and stake in some versions of what the world is like' (Potter, 1996, p. 110), he presents himself as sharing the same misconceptions as his potential audience and then allowing himself to be persuaded to the contrary throughout his journey of discovery documented in his narrative.

The interrogative structure—'where' (MC 5), 'why' (MC 21), 'how' (MCs 2, 6, 14) and 'what' (MCs 4, 7, 11, 15)—is used to cohesively organize the framing narrative: 'since the rest of the [discourse] provides the answer, the interrogative Mood choice in fact plays a cohesive role...and signals roughly "Here comes a summary of the most important information which answers the question above"' (Thompson, 2004, pp. 191-2). The liberal use of interrogatives also plays a role in establishing the temporal structure of the narrative, where, in most cases, the interrogative occurs temporally before the response. Related to this is the use of the contrasting conjunction 'but' (MCs 4, 8, 9, 10, 15, 20, 21) and structures with similar functions (MCs 12, 14, 16, 18) which Martin and Rose (2007) call conjunctions of 'counterexpectancy', where the narrator 'tracks the readers' expectations...acknowledging voices in addition to her own' (pp. 56-7), in this case, the voice of the audience who may accept the misconceptions as high-certainty convictions. Once again, James

Wilks is sharing an identity with his audience while at the same time exposing the flaws in the misconceptions, managing stake and increasing the facticity of his changing convictions.

Finally, there are two additional linguistic structures worth noting. The first is the adverbs 'only' (MCs 3, 6, 8, 16) and 'just' (MCs 3, 12, 13, 17, 22), which are Mood adjuncts of limiting counterexpectancy (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). They function in a similar way as the contrasting conjunction 'but' in tracking reader expectations and contrasting those points of view, where 'just' is commonly used with verb phrases signaling confusion or incredulity, and 'only' is used with noun phrases denoting limitations in dietary choices. The other structure that assists in using the misconceptions as a narrative-driving educational tool is the past perfect verb tense (MCs 1, 4, 7, 17, 19, 22) which is used to indicate distant past events occurring before more recent past events. Similar to the contrasting conjunction 'but' and the counter-expectancy Mood adjuncts, the past perfect sets out to counter expectations within a temporal sequence. Consider Misconception 1:

- To think that the original professional fighters ate mainly plants went against everything I'd been taught about nutrition.

The past perfect in this case indicates being taught in the *distant* past that fighters ate meat (the expectation), and this contrasts with learning in the more *recent* past that fighters may well have been primarily plant-based (the counter-expectation). In Misconception 4, a similar structure is used:

- I was surprised to learn that all protein originates in plants... But what about the quality of the protein? I'd always heard that plant-based protein was inferior.

The past perfect here indicates always hearing in the *distant* past that plant-based proteins were inferior (the expectation), and this contrasts with hearing in the more *recent* past that plant-based proteins are not inferior to animal-based proteins (the counter-expectation). This explanatory

structure can be applied to the remaining four uses of the past-perfect (MCs 7, 17, 19, 22). In this way James Wilks is yet again able to address the misconceptions while also identifying with this audience to manage stake, to educate and to drive his narrative forward.

Overall, the combination of these linguistic features works to undermine the facticity of the misconceptions—the destructive stories-we-live-by—giving the narrative a didactic quality while driving the narrative forward through a logical question-answer progression. The 22 misconceptions are part of the narrative structure that will also deliver narrative entailments for the audience, but not before they are addressed by both expert sources and embedded narratives.

6.1.3.2 EXPERT SOURCES

Expert sources are defined in this thesis as individuals who provide scientifically valid explanations for James Wilks's inquiries about the misconceptions. They also assist in raising the level of certainty for his changing convictions and help to construct a state of 'neutrality' or a 'distanced footing' (Goffman, 1981), which is 'how the *absence* of...stake is displayed' (emphasis in the original) (Potter, 1996, p. 122). Potter goes on to explain that

> ...people may make their own claims, or they may report claims of others; and when they report claims they can display various degrees of distance from what they are reporting... Footing is central when dealing with factual reports, because it is through the paraphernalia of footing that speakers manage their personal or institutional accountability for such reports. (p. 122)

In other words, the expert sources allow James Wilks himself to appear neutral while maintaining his shared identity which he linguistically constructs through the misconceptions. To be clear, these are participant interests (Potter, 1996, p. 110) and are addressed in this thesis because the rhetorical structures have the potential to influence non-vegans in an ecologically beneficial way.

There are 21 expert sources used in the framing narrative, most of which address the 22 misconceptions or related issues. Where the misconceptions are used to represent destructive stories of veganism in the ecolinguistics framework, expert sources are used to undermine the facticity of those misconceptions. Throughout the framing narrative, all expert sources are identified visually, linguistically in the narration, and in written text on the screen. Most are 'nominated' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 40) with 'functional honorifics' (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 82), and all except one are given recognizable affiliations introduced through the use of apposition, all of which have the effect of presupposing 'the importance of the social actor or specialisation' and making 'the speaker appear more important and authoritative' (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 82). All 21 expert sources are listed below in Table 6.4 along with their explanatory roles. Semi-colons in the 'Explanatory Role' column separate appearances at different times in the framing narrative, introducing an explanation for a different aspect of the topic under discussion.

#	EXPERT SOURCE	EXPLANATORY ROLE
1	Dr. Fabian Kanz, Forensic Pathologist, Medical University of Vienna	to explain the idea that the Roman Gladiators were predominantly vegetarian
2	Dr. James Loomis, former team physician, St. Louis Rams/Cardinals	to explain misconceptions about meat, protein, energy and top-tier athletes; to explain origin of protein; to explain amino acids in plants
3	Dr. Robert Vogel, Co-Chair, NFL Subcommittee on Cardiovascular Health	to explain effect of meat on cardiovascular system
4	Dr. Scott Stoll, former Olympian and current team physician, USA Bobsled Federation	to explain differences between meat-sourced vs. plant-sourced proteins and effect on inflammation; to explain how a plant-based diet can accelerate the healing process
5	Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr., Director, heart disease reversal program, Cleveland Clinic	to explain prevalence of coronary-artery heart disease in western civilization due to Western diet
6	Dr. Dean Ornish, Founder, Preventive Medicine Research Institute	to explain connection between biology, athletic performance and health; to explain effect of plant-based diet on reversing heart disease; to explain negative impact of animal protein on health; to explain how dietary guidelines affect all aspects of

		health; to explain how transitioning to whole-foods diet changes the expression of your genes
7	Dr. Kim Williams, President, American College of Cardiology	to explain plaques in arteries; to advocate for eliminating animal products from diet; to introduce heme iron
8	Dr. Columbus Batiste, Chief Cardiologist, Kaiser Permanente Riverside	to explain origins of heart disease; to explain effect of animal protein on health
9	Dr. Helen Moon: Hematologist, Kaiser Permanente Riverside	to explain heme iron and effect on body
10	Rip Esselstyn, former firefighter, professional triathlete, author	to introduce the 7-day rescue challenge
11	Dr. Walter Willett, Chair of Nutrition, Harvard University	to explain causal relationship of animal foods and cancer risk
12	Dr. Richard Wrangham, Chair of Biological Anthropology, Harvard University	to explain how early humans primarily ate plants
13	Dr. Nathaniel Dominy, Professor of Anthropology, Dartmouth College	to explain why we believe our ancestors ate more meat than they probably did; to explain herbivore vs. carnivore teeth
14	Dr. Christina Warinner, Archeological Geneticist, Max Planck Institute	to explain how archeological record misinforms about ancestors' plant and animal consumption; to explain how human anatomy and physiology adapted to plant consumption
15	Dr. Mark Thomas, Geneticist, University College, London	to explain how human brain craves glucose from plant carbs; to explain how important plants are to survival
16	Dr. Aaron Spitz, Lead Delegate, American Urological Association	to explain effect of meat consumption on erections
17	Dr. Terry Mason, COO, Cook County Department of Public Health	to explain how tobacco industry confused the issue of adverse effects of smoking; to compare tobacco industry sales strategies to that of meat industry;
18	Dr. David Katz, Founding Director of Yale University Prevention Research Center	to explain how media confusion works in favor of meat industry, pharmaceutical companies and media; to explain how there is massive global consensus about benefits of plant-based diets;
19	Rob Bailey, Research Director, Energy, Environment and Resources, Chatham House	to explain animal farming effects on habitat destruction and biodiversity; to explain how livestock sector is responsible for 15% of global man-made emissions;
20	Dr. Johan Rockstrom, Director, Stockholm Resilience Centre	to explain how animal farming contributes to water depletion; to explain how [reforming) agriculture is earth's saving grace;

21	Dr. Tim Lang, Professor of Food Policy, City University of London	to explain how much water is used to make beef; to explain how consuming more plants is much better for the planet;

Table 6.4 Expert sources and their explanatory role in *The Game Changers*

For an example of how the expert sources address the misconceptions and fit within the logical sequencing of the framing narrative, consider Misconception 2 and Expert Source 1, Dr. James Loomis. In the excerpt below from the narration, James Wilks first introduces the misconception and then subsequently introduces Dr. Loomis in a coordinate clause:

- I was confused about how [Scott Jurek's] meat-free diet could possibly give him enough energy, so I reached out to Dr. James Loomis, a team physician who was part of two championships: a World Series and a Super Bowl.

Dr. Loomis is introduced with the causal conjunction 'so' which, in the system of conjunction laid out by Halliday & Matthiessen (2014), 'enacts roles and relations' and is considered a linguistic device assisting in the creation of lexical cohesion (Bloor & Bloor, 2013). The logical connection between misconception and expert source has therefore been made explicit, and Dr. Loomis can then begin to undermine the facticity of the misconception by explaining 'some pretty *outdated* ideas about nutrition' (emphasis added). Another example of this misconception-expert logical process occurs after James Wilks the narrator introduces Misconception 14:

- As groundbreaking as all of this nutritional science was, I also found it really confusing. How could meat be so bad for us if that's what our ancestors were supposedly built to eat?

The answer to his question comes immediately afterwards from Dr. Richard Wrangham, who appears on the screen with his title, name and affiliation ('Chair of Biological Anthropology, Harvard University') as he begins to speak:

- When we think about the diet of early humans, we're often drawn to thinking about meat, but plant foods were more important than the archaeological record gives credit for.

The logical connection between Misconception 14 and Dr. Wrangham's expert explanation is evident in the lexical cohesion identified through repetition, antonymy, reference and synonymy (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), as shown in Table 6.5 below.

	Repetition	antonymy	reference	synonymy	synonymy
James Wilks	Meat	bad	us/our	ancestors	to eat
Dr. Wrangham	Meat	more important	we	early humans	the diet

Table 6.5 Lexical cohesion for Misconception 14

As Bloor and Bloor (2013) explain, a text 'can be said to be cohesive because the logical progression of the information through the text is helped both by the thematic structure and the use of the devices: *reference, ellipsis, conjunction* and *lexical cohesion*' (p. 90) (emphasis in the original). This type of cohesion occurs frequently throughout the framing narrative, helping to create a cohesive, logical structure which imparts several narrative entailments. The final part of James Wilks's 'initiation' is the incorporation of embedded narratives to support the expert advice in addressing the 22 misconceptions.

6.1.3.3 EMBEDDED NARRATIVES

An embedded narrative (hereinafter abbreviated as "EN" in lists in parenthetical text), according to Abbott (2021), is 'a "story within a story", or a narrative nested in a framing narrative' (p. 248). There are 19 embedded narratives introduced throughout James Wilks's framing narrative. The stories that they tell exemplify the corrective knowledge given by the expert sources; in this way, they work to help James Wilks and the audience better understand the inaccuracies of the misconceptions and, as applied to the ecolinguistics framework, represent the beneficial stories

with the potential to replace the destructive stories (misconceptions). As seen below in Table 6.6, most of the embedded narratives tell personal stories of achievement related to a past transition to a vegan diet (ENs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19) with the remaining four focusing on a current transition or potential transition to a vegan diet. The primary identifying features are the temporal and logical connections that, for the majority of the embedded narratives, revolve around the past event of 'becoming vegan' and the beneficial changes that occur from past to present. In varying degrees, a few of the more prominent narratives, in addition to James Wilks's framing narrative, fit into the prototypical hero narrative, emphasizing the power of transformation to 'break new ground in the overall human journey' and to 'represent all of us...a figure who belongs not to any one family but to all of us' (Leeming, 2002, pp. 119, 121). All 19 embedded narratives and their corresponding transition events, if linguistically evident, are listed below in Table 6.6.

#	EMBEDDED NARRATIVE	TRANSITION EVENT
1	Vegan UFC fighter Nate Diaz defeats meat-eater Connor McGregor. [P]	N/A
2	Scott Jurek, record-holding ultramarathoner, runs the Appalachian Trail and breaks the world record	"I was training for the Western States 100-mile race, which is like the super bowl of ultramarathon racing, and that's **when I was transitioning to a plant-based diet**."
3	Morgan Mitchell, two-time Australian 400m world champion	"A lot of people had doubted me **when I first became vegan**, but my energy levels increased incredibly and my iron, my B12, everything that people said would become deficient, were amazing."
4	Dotsie Bausch, eight-time US national cycling champion	"I grew up in Kentucky, so that's the land of casseroles and barbecue and meat, so **when I transitioned over to an entirely plant-based diet**, I wasn't sure if I was going to survive."
5	Kendrick Farris, American record-holding weightlifter	"**When I made the switch to a plant-based diet**, people, they were like, "I don't know how you're gonna lift that much weight..."
6	Patrik Baboumian, world record-holding strongman	"**I stopped eating meat in 2005**. Up to that time I was 105 kilos, and now I'm 130 kilos. Also, at the same time I set like four world records, so **when I stopped eating meat**, I got stronger and bigger."

7	Bryant Jennings, boxing heavyweight title contender	"I stopped eating meat probably like around the end of 2012. I grew up not even knowing about half of these other vegetables."
8	NFL athletes in experiment [P]	"Yeah, it's pretty gross to see [my blood cloudy from animal fat]... I guess I won't be eating my fried chicken no more."
9	Derrick Morgan, NFL linebacker, Tennessee Titans	"I was reading the research and seeing that a plant-based diet could be beneficial, specifically for recovery, and so I started incorporating it and I started seeing really good results with it."
10	James Wilks's father has a heart attack	"We've gone down the vegan route, and we now have soy milk. Marsha makes sure I have my vegetables, insists on it."
11	Brooklyn firefighters [P]	"My doctor wanted to put me on statin, and I kind of looked at it like that was, uh, like cheating, like an easy way out, and there has to be a healthier, more long-term alternative, and then when this opportunity [to try a plant-based diet] presented itself, I took it."
12	Lucious Smith, former NFL cornerback, jujitsu blackbelt, strength and conditioning coach	"When I went from an animal-based diet to a plant-based diet, my blood pressure went down o like 110 over 70."
13	Arnold Schwarzenegger	"I ate a lot of meat... but as I got older and as I started reading up on it, I recognized the fact that you really don't have to get your protein from meat, or from animals, as far as that goes, so we start going more in the direction of the vegetarian kind of diet [sic]."
14	Collegiate athletes in experiment [P]	Dr. Spitz: "So when you take your date out on Valentines's Day, where are you gonna take them to eat?" Blake: "To the veggie grill, sir"
15	Nimai Delgado, natural pro bodybuilder	"I've never eaten a piece of meat in my entire life, and I've never had an issue with testosterone."
16	Mischa Jani, natural pro bodybuilder	"This is what I always heard, like, 'You can't go lean, you can't go shredded vegan because you have so much carbs.' But I'm standing here in the best shape of my life, easy."
17	Charity Morgan, professional chef	"When I started cooking plant-based, whatever I made for dinner, I made a bunch of it and would send it over to the facility for Derrick to ear for lunch..."

18	Damien Mander, Iraq veteran and founder of International Anti-Poaching Foundation	"...**I started to realize** that every day I was going out on patrol and protecting one animal and coming home at night and putting another animal on the fire. And I knew I was...I knew I was full of shit... the longer I thought about it, the more **I started to accept what I already knew**: The easiest way to protect other animals is just not to put them in your mouth... **I just do the same things as...elephant and rhino. I just, uh, stick to plants**."
19	Lewis Hamilton, five-time formula-one world champion	"**I can't remember feeling this great** in my whole 32 years of my life."

Table 6.6 Embedded narratives and transition events in *The Game Changers*

Eight of the transition events are explicitly marked with the conjunction 'when' which introduces a simultaneous and/or subsequent temporal event (ENs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 11, 17). Morgan Mitchell in Embedded Narrative 3 uses the past perfect verb tense, the conjunction 'when' and the simple past verb tense to do this. Table 6.7 below shows this temporal sequence with verb tenses in bold.

PAST PERFECT EVENT	CONJUNCTION	SIMULTANEOUS EVENT	SUBSEQUENT EVENTS
A lot of people **had doubted** me	**when**	I first **became** vegan	but my energy levels **increased** incredibly and my iron, my B12, everything that people said would become deficient, **were** amazing.

Table 6.7 Embedded narrative 3 temporal sequence

Sometimes the syntax and verb tenses do not explicitly disclose the temporal sequence, as is more common in colloquial speech, but in such cases the conjunction 'when' and other linguistic markers assume that role. Dotsie Bausch in Embedded Narrative 4 uses the verb 'grew up' to signal the distant past and the adverb 'actually' to communicate contrast and surprise, creating both temporal and logical connections.

DISTANT PAST EVENT	CONJUNCTION	SIMULTANEOUS EVENT	PAST EVENT	SUBSEQUENT EVENT
I **grew up** in Kentucky...the land of casseroles and barbecue and meat, so	**when**	I **transitioned** over to an entirely plant-based diet,	I **wasn't sure** if I was going to survive.	And I **actually became** like a machine.

Table 6.8 Embedded narrative 4 temporal sequence

In Embedded Narrative 7, Bryant Jennings avoids the past perfect as well as the conjunction 'when' when signaling his transition moment, but like Dotsie Bausch he uses the verb 'grew up' to reference the distant past and a circumstantial adjunct of time to express the temporal sequence of his narrative.

RECENT PAST EVENT	CIRCUMSTANTIAL ADJUNCT	DISTANT PAST EVENT
I **stopped eating** meat probably	like **around the end of 2012**.	I **grew up** not even knowing about half of these other vegetables.

Table 6.9 Embedded Narrative 7 temporal sequence

Mischa Jani in Embedded Narrative 16 avoids all explicit mention of a transition, but instead indicates temporal sequence primarily by verb tense, first introducing a repetitive past event followed by a verbal process with a modal finite indicating future (im)possibility, and then finishing with the contrasting conjunction 'but' and the present progressive indicating the present moment. The effect of this construction gives the audience a 'before and after' observation without mentioning the event that is fundamental to the creation of the past-future dichotomy.

REPETITIVE PAST	MODAL OF FUTURE (IM)POSSIBILITY	PRESENT PROGRESSIVE
This is what I **always heard**, like,	'You **can't go lean**, you **can't go shredded** vegan because you have so much carbs.'	But **I'm standing here** in the best shape of my life, easy.

Table 6.10 Embedded Narrative 16 temporal sequence

Of the 19 embedded narratives, two have no clear transition-to-veganism event: Embedded Narrative 1, which arguably has multiple roles in the framing narrative; and Embedded Narrative 17, which is about Charity Morgan who transitions from a being a professional *chef* to being a professional *vegan chef*, her own diet unidentified. All of the remaining 17 embedded narratives reference the event of transitioning to veganism and have clear linguistic markers of temporal sequence and logical connections. With most of the actors, the transition event is important to show the reason for their individual success. This success not only supports James Wilks's framing narrative about how eating plant-based foods can lead to healthier, longer lives, but it also shows the audience that it is indeed possible to make a similar movement from meat-consumption to a longer, healthier vegan lifestyle.

Overall, these narratives of 'success' and 'living healthier lives' are central to the movement toward a new equilibrium and the narrative entailments that are communicated to the audience. The next section will address James's new equilibrium and return to society before giving a few examples of how the misconceptions, expert sources and embedded narratives work together to communicate narrative entailments to the audience.

6.1.4 NEW EQUILIBRIUM AND RETURN

The final part of James Wilks's framing narrative—the achievement of a 'new equilibrium' and his 'return' to society—begins when he makes the decision to become vegan and starts to see beneficial health results. After a short recap of what he has learned about plant-based diets, he explicitly states his decision to become vegan about one-third of the way into his narrative:

- Knowing I could get enough energy and protein was one thing, but seeing what a single animal-based meal could do to an athlete's blood sealed the deal. It was time to give this plant-based thing a try...

Five minutes later in the narrative, he reveals his preliminary results:

- Six weeks into my personal plant-based experiment, I went to the gym to see if I could notice a difference... I decided to hit the battling ropes. At my gym, lasting ten minutes on the ropes gets your name on the wall. Only a few people had ever hit 20 minutes. Even at the peak of my conditioning, the most I'd ever got was eight minutes. But on this day, I hit ten minutes easily. Then I hit 20...30... I thought, "Holy shit. I'm gonna do an hour". I went past the hour mark by about one minute and just thought, "All right. That'll do".

Jame Wilks here embodies the knowledge he has gained through his 'initiation' and can now claim a 'new equilibrium': He is now vegan and his plant-based diet allows him enhanced athletic performance. Also of importance here are the explicit linguistic markers of temporal sequencing, of numerical connection and of the opposition established between an animal-based diet and a plant-based diet. He uses the past-perfect finite/predicator in 'the most I had ever got was eight minutes', signaling the distant past and a low level of achievement with an animal-based diet in the number 'eight'; He then follows up with the simple past predicator in 'I went past the hour mark' to signal the more recent past and an increased level of achievement with a vegan diet in the numerical marker 'the hour mark'.

With new equilibrium established, James Wilks 'returns' to society to complete his adventure. In the prototypical hero narrative, this is the time when 'the adventurer...must return with his life-transmuting trophy' (Campbell, 2008, p. 167), which is, in this case, the knowledge of the benefits of a plant-based diet. Campbell explains further:

> The full round, the norm of the monomyth, requires that the hero shall now begin the labor of bringing the runes of *wisdom*, the Golden Fleece, or his sleeping princess back into the kingdom of humanity, where the boon may redound to the *renewing of the community, the nation, the planet*, or the ten thousand worlds. (p. 167) (emphasis added)

Of particular note here are Campbell's references to 'wisdom' and 'renewal'. For James Wilks, wisdom of plant-based nutrition and its effects on health, animals and the environment is the 'boon' that he brings to his audience. This is done in the interest of 'renewing' ecological 'communities', 'national' policy, and the overall health of 'the planet'. This 'return' begins for James Wilks when he discovers that his father has had a heart attack:

- When I was growing up, the toughest guy in the world to me was my dad. He taught me the value of self-defense, and was always there to help me when I got into trouble. But now, he was the one who needed help.

James Wilks's father has an animal-based diet, and because of his father's now failing health, James Wilks brings to him the 'boon' of plant-based nutrition and its effects of improved health:

- I went to see if I could get my dad to make these same changes to his diet as soon as possible.

He finds his father reluctant at first and then recounts his father's formative years in a town renowned for its meat products, echoing a similar journey to James's: tough-guy meat-eater has health complications and discovers renewed health in a plant-based diet. By the end of James Wilks's framing narrative, his father becomes vegan, avoiding a second heart attack. The bigger boon that James Wilks brings, though, is not just for his father but for the entire world: James Wilks's framing narrative in the form of a documentary, imparting the wisdom of eating plant-based foods and leading longer, healthier lives. This wisdom is specifically communicated in the form of narrative entailments, which are 'part of the narrative structure' and 'of particular importance for ecolinguistics' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 184).

6.1.5 NARRATIVE ENTAILMENTS

Narrative entailments are 'the underlying messages or morals within narratives which can be extracted, taken outside the narrative itself, and applied to everyday life' (Stibbe, 2021, p. 184). They are important as stories of veganism because entailments that lead to ecological destruction can be resisted, and those that promote beneficial ecological practices can be promoted. For this thesis, I determine where entailments lie on the beneficial-destructive spectrum by evaluation against the values of my vegan ecosophy.

The most prominent narrative entailment from *The Game Changers* communicates the potential of health benefits from the vegan diet, and this is exemplified in the documentary primarily through improved athletic performance. This entailment is either implied or explicitly stated by all of the athletes in their embedded narratives, each one telling a slightly different version. The embedded narrative of vegan UFC fighter Nate Diaz implies this entailment when Diaz defeats meat-eater Connor McGregor, and the trigger for this entailment relies in part on the explicit opposition established by James Wilks the narrator: 'McGregor was a big meat eater. Diaz was on a plant-based diet'. As Davies (2013) explains, 'As the contrast is made explicit through the trigger, the reader is left to interpret in what ways [X] is *not* like others' (p. 78). In this case, the audience is left to interpret in 'what ways' eating plant-based foods is not like eating meat. Ultimately, the result of their fighting match reveals the most likely interpretation: Eating plant-based foods leads to greater athletic endurance.

Two-time Australian 400m-world-champion Morgan Mitchell also communicates the entailment of plant-based diets linked to improved athletic performance, but instead relies on the trigger of the disjunctive conjunction 'but' (Jeffries, 2014) and the positive appraisal of her physical condition after going vegan:

- A lot of people had doubted me when I first became vegan, but my energy levels increased incredibly and my iron, my B12, everything that people said would become deficient, were amazing. I thought, I'm gonna make sure I'm beating them all on the track. I mean, we're all friends, but it was pretty cool to finish my Australian domestic season undefeated. And to win the nationals was obviously that little cherry on top.

Mitchell begins by revealing the doubt that people had about her when she changed to a vegan diet and then contrasts this ('but') with positive appraisal: references to her 'incredibly increased' energy levels and her 'amazing' levels of iron and B12. She finishes the contrast with a comment on her 'undefeated' domestic season and 'winning' the nationals, and the entailment becomes clear: Changing to a vegan diet improves health and athletic performance.

This entailment is also explicitly stated by the athletes themselves. Scott Jurek, record-holding ultramarathoner, recounts when he transitioned to a plant-based diet and finishes with an explicit statement of attribution:

- I was training for Western States 100-mile race, which is like the Super Bowl of ultramarathon racing. And that's when I was transitioning to a plant-based diet. I remember doubting myself, even up to a week before the race, like, maybe I should have eaten meat. But I led that race from start to finish, and won it for seven years in a row, *and there was no question that the plant-based diet was fueling my victories*. (emphasis added)

Scott Jurek, like Morgan Mitchell, uses the disjunctive conjunction 'but' to contrast pre-vegan doubt and post-vegan success, and is explicit in attributing his 'victories' to a plant-based diet; In fact, he is so emphatic that he negates the potential for any uncertainty when he says 'there was no question'. Similarly, many of the other athletes in the documentary also communicate discoveries of improved health and performance after changing their diets to a vegan, plant-based diet:

- Dotsie Bausch: 'So when I transitioned over to an entirely plant-based diet, I wasn't sure if I was gonna survive. And I actually became like a machine... My diet was the most powerful aspect to me being able to perform and produce for the US team at the Olympic games.'

- Patrik Baboumian: ‘When I stopped eating meat, I got stronger and bigger.’
- Derrick Morgan: ‘ started incorporating a [plant-based diet] and I started seeing really good results with it. I was recovering better. I wasn’t getting as sore. I was a lot less swollen…all of my markers were down, my blood pressure, my cholesterol…the inflammation marker in your blood and mine was…almost obsolete [sic]. It wasn’t there anymore.’
- Lucious Smith: ‘When I went from an animal-based diet to a plant-based diet, my blood pressure went down... My heart rate sometimes has been under 50... I’m more focused, I’m more relaxed and I notice that I have a lot more energy because of the plant-based diet’

The entailment that communicates nutritional benefits from a vegan diet is also communicated through expert sources who use the language of the science community to explicitly make the link between plant-based diets and good health. Dr. Fabian Kanz, Forensic Pathologist at the Medical University of Vienna, is the first to make the connection when he speaks of his forensic work on the remains of Roman Gladiators:

- We found in the cross section of the bone very high bone mineral density, which indicated intense training and high-quality diet to build strong muscles and strong bones. This diet gave the gladiators a nickname, *hordearii*, which means beans and barley muncher... The gladiators were predominantly vegetarian.

The entailment is made clear through the lexical cohesion of repetition, positive evaluation and agency. He begins with ‘high-quality diet’ and then in the subsequent two clauses gives that ‘high-quality diet’ the agency to effect health-positive outcomes: ‘to build strong muscles and strong bones’ and ‘gave the gladiators the nickname…beans and barely muncher’. All of this is done while linking the ‘high-quality diet’ to some of the most renowned athletes in history: the Roman Gladiators. Dr. Kanz finishes with an explicit statement of attribution—‘The gladiators were predominantly vegetarian’—and the entailment becomes clear: Eating a plant-based diet improves athletic performance.

Another expert, Dr. James Loomis, former team physician for the St. Louis Rams/Cardinals, is explicit in explaining the difference in the quality of animal-based protein versus plant-based protein, relying on an established opposition between the two:

- I think one of the biggest misconceptions in sports nutrition is that we have to have animal protein, in a particular meat, to get big and strong and perform at a high level. That's just clearly not true.

He later continues:

- And one of the arguments about animal-based proteins being superior is that plant-based proteins aren't complete, so you're not gonna get all the amino acids, and that's a fallacy as well.

Dr. Loomis introduces two common misconceptions about animal protein and then emphatically refutes them by saying 'That's just clearly not true' and 'that's a fallacy'. In doing so, he communicates to his audience that plant-based proteins are sufficient 'to get big and strong and perform at a high level' and that plant-based proteins are not inferior to animal-based proteins. This in turn reveals the entailment that plant-based foods are indeed beneficial for health and athletic performance.

All of the expert sources in some way communicate this entailment through their own areas of expertise. Here are a few more examples to show how the language that communicates this entailment is widespread throughout the narrative, relying primarily on an established structural opposition between animal-based foods and plant-based foods:

- Dr. Scott Stoll: 'In animal products, you're getting protein packaged with inflammatory molecules... In plant-based protein, you're getting protein that's packaged with antioxidants, phytochemicals, minerals and vitamins that are gonna reduce inflammation, optimize the microbiome, optimize blood supply, and optimize your body's performance.'

- Dr. Kim Williams: 'When you eat animal products...that's when the heart starts to have some real problems keeping up with the demands of the body. We're gonna do a whole lot better by just getting rid of the animal products...'
- Dr. Dean Ornish: 'What we eat has a major impact on our health and our well-being in every way we can measure. People who eat a diet that's high in animal protein have a 75-percent increased risk of premature death from all causes, and a four- to five-hundred-percent increased risk of death from most forms of cancer, prostate, breast, colon cancer, as well as type two diabetes.'

While all of the specific narrative entailments could be stories unto themselves, they can also work together to make a broader story of veganism, so the entailments PLANT-BASED PROTEIN IMPROVES HEALTH, PLANT-BASED DIETS ARE GOOD FOR THE HEART and PLANT-BASED DIETS INCREASE LONGEVITY can all be considered part of the broader story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY. The most important consideration with narrative entailments, though, is whether or not they align with the values of my vegan ecosophy, and the story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY—as communicated through any number of health-positive entailments regarding veganism—aligns with value six of my ecosophy which states that 'a whole foods, well-balanced vegan diet can be nutritionally abundant and effective in the prevention of modern-day health risks like obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancer'. For this reason, the story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY, including all of the contributing entailments, is considered a beneficial story of veganism.

Once the story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY has been established as a beneficial story of veganism, it can then be promoted to resist the destructive story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. This story was prominent in both the academic literature (Povey et al., 2001; Sneijder and Molder, 2009; Wright, 2015; Griffin 2017; Silva Souza et al., 2020; Parkinson et al., 2020) and in my analyses of news media articles and user comments. Most notable in the discourse that I analyzed was the focus on the appearance of vegans and their presumed health shortcomings: *pale*, *gaunt*, *sallow*, *unhealthy*, *in need of animal protein*, *no muscle tone*, *insufficient nutrition*, *nutrient deficient diseases*, *tired and worn down*, *severely anemic*, *emaciated*. The beneficial story VEGANISM IS HEALTHY as delivered in the documentary

film *The Game Changers* is undoubtedly a powerful story of vegan health to challenge all of those destructive beliefs.

Another prominent entailment from the narrative is ANIMAL-BASED DIETS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. This entailment is introduced in the embedded narrative of Damian Mander, Iraq veteran and founder of the International Anti-Poaching Foundation (IAPF). In speaking about the IAPF, Mander says:

- The rangers that we support patrol five million acres of wilderness protecting these endangered species, but the actual biggest threat we have is the meat industry and the land they are continually taking away from what we have left of these natural wilderness areas, inch by inch, yard by yard, mile by mile.

Mander is explicit when communicating this entailment, calling the meat industry 'the actual biggest threat' to habitat destruction. The entailment is then echoed and expanded by expert sources and James Wilks the narrator as they move from biodiversity and habitat loss to water depletion and greenhouse gas emissions:

- Rob Baily: 'About three-quarters of all the agricultural land in the world is used for livestock production, and it imposes a huge cost on biodiversity. And what is the single biggest source of habitat destruction? It's the livestock sector.'
- Johan Rockstrom: 'Meat plays a disproportionately large role in causing [the] overuse of freshwater.'
- Narration: 'All told, more than a quarter of humanity's fresh water consumption goes to produce animal foods. And it's not just water depletion that's an issue. It's also water pollution.'
- Rob Baily: 'The livestock sector is responsible for 15 percent of global man-made emissions.'
- Professor Tim Lang: 'The message is overwhelming, both for public health and environmental reasons. The more plants you can eat and the less meat and dairy you can consume, the better.'

This entailment aligns with values two and three of my vegan ecosophy and so can be considered a beneficial story-we-live-by. This story, ANIMAL-BASED DIETS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, is one which directly resists and replaces the destructive story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. This positive entailment is important because destructive stories like VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE are commonly found in the academic literature (Cole and Morgan, 2011; Silva Souza et al., 2020; Keselj, 2020) and in my data analyses and so are in need of resistance.

In addition to these two prominent narrative entailments, there are any number of potential entailments that can be drawn out by the audience. As Stibbe (2021) explains, 'It is important to view the reader as being critical—able to selectively draw out entailments for themselves, and able to accept or reject entailments that the text is explicitly or subtly encouraging them to make' (p. 185). One potential entailment to take from the narrative is communicated by Damian Mander as he addresses the morality of animal consumption:

- ...every day I was...protecting one animal, and coming home at night and putting another animal on the fire... And I knew I was full of shit. I created this flexible morality that was convenient for me...

This entailment, EATING ANIMALS IS MORALLY DESTRUCTIVE, aligns with values one, two and four of my vegan ecosophy, and while the above excerpt is the only reference in the narrative to the morality of animal consumption, it is a valid entailment to draw out and promote. Another potential entailment about masculinity and meat consumption is communicated by Arnold Schwarzenegger as he speaks about advertising by the meat industry:

- They show these commercials, burgers, George Foreman with the grill and the big sandwiches and all that stuff. This is great, great marketing by the meat industry, selling that idea that real men eat meat, but you've got to understand that's marketing. That's not based on reality.

This entailment—MEAT CONSUMPTION IS NOT MASCULINE—is then supported by Dr. Aaron Spitz, who conducts an informal experiment to show that meat consumption can have an adverse effect on penile erections, drawing a correlation between a plant-based diet, penis size and a newly defined non-hegemonic masculinity. This entailment aligns with value eight of my ecosophy about hegemonic masculinity and the need to redefine masculinity in more compassionate, inclusive ways in current and future eco-civilizations, and so contributes to the beneficial story MEAT CONSUMPTION DOES NOT DEFINE MASCULINITY. It is also works to resist the destructive story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE, a story once again found in both the academic literature (Adams, 1990; Nath, 2010; Buerkle, 2012; Gambert and Linne, 2018) and in my analysis of the data for destructive stories in chapter 5.

Overall, there are four beneficial stories in the documentary film *The Game Changers* that can be promoted in the interest of ecology: VEGANISM IS HEALTHY, ANIMAL-BASED DIETS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, EATING ANIMALS IS MORALLY DESTRUCTIVE and MEAT CONSUMPTION DOES NOT DEFINE MASCULINITY. All four of these stories are cognitive structures with the potential to spread and inform the thoughts and behavior of large groups of people, all in the interest of the natural world. Documentary films, though, are not the only sources of beneficial stories of veganism. Cookbooks are valuable as well for the insights they provide with regards to identity and perceptions of authenticity.

6.2 VEGAN COOKBOOKS

Vegan cookbooks are a potential source of beneficial stories about veganism which encourage people to eat more humane and ecologically friendly food. As mentioned in Chapter 4 on data collection, food is central to the vegan lifestyle and can offer insights into ethnic and cultural identities while communicating behavior and group values. Roland Barthes (1961) wrote, 'For what is food? It is not only a collection of products that can be used for statistical or nutritional studies. It is also, and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behavior' (p. 24). In other words, vegan food and the cookbooks that present it can

be a powerful 'system of communication' that introduce 'a protocol of usages...and behavior' regarding the vegan lifestyle and the vegan identity.

Kalcik (1984), writing about foodways—the dietary habits of cultures across time and geographical space—in the United States, further explains the connection between food and identity:

> ...foodways operate in general as symbols or signals of group and individual identity to in- and out-group members and how foodways are an especially potent symbol for making identity statements. Two other aspects of the foodways-ethnicity relationship make it one of the most commonly used semiotic systems for communications about ethnic identity: it is relatively safe, and it is relatively easy to use. (p. 55)

So not only can food communicate behavior and protocols, but it can also communicate those aspects of identity to both 'in- and out-group members', an apparently useful resource for communicating the values of veganism to non-vegans in a safe, easily managed format.

Fellner (2013) echoes the identity aspect of food while also including the broader idea of culture: 'As anthropologists have long established, food helps define group identities, and through cooking and eating, people perform rituals of cultural belonging' (p. 242). To further explore the connections between food, identity and culture, food historian and emeritus professor B. W. Higman (1998) illuminates the role of the cookbook as prescriptive text:

> In any attempt to understand the culture-history of food, the prescriptive texts hold an important place. The simple or complex fact of publication is significant in itself, indicating a codification of culinary rules and a notion that *there exists a market* for such information or *an audience to be influenced*. It can be argued that the emergence of the cookbook marks a *critical point in the development* of any cuisine and that the specialization and ramification of texts has much to tell about *the character* of national, regional, and ethnic *identities*. (p. 77) (emphasis added)

If Higman's understanding of the role of cookbooks is to be accepted, then vegan cookbooks not only offer the reader plant-based alternatives, but also demonstrate the existence of a market for vegan cuisine and an audience 'to be influenced', a phrase best understood in the context of Higman's focus on Caribbean cuisine and ethnic identity:

> For these several reasons, a study of the history of cookbooks published in and having to do with the Caribbean can be expected to throw some light on what it means to be Caribbean or to identify with some smaller territory or grouping, and how this meaning has changed in response to social and political development. (p. 77)

Considering Higman's focus on identity, meaning and development, vegan cookbooks likewise have the potential to offer the reader an identity of authenticity in the ethnicity of the cookbook writer in addition to an alternative identity to the normative ideologies of animal-based cuisine: While the writer uses identity to establish authority and authenticity, they also communicate the values of veganism and the vegan lifestyle. This alternative identity of veganism offers ecologically friendly representations of veganism and how those representative stories may be changing in light of current ecological developments and the destructive representations of veganism in mainstream media.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will analyze seven vegan cookbooks that represent six ethnic/cultural identities that communicate culture, community, family, tradition and authenticity. My goal is to uncover the linguistic structures that communicate stories of veganism and then evaluate them against my vegan ecosophy in the search for beneficial stories.

6.2.1 SWEET POTATO SOUL

The first cookbook—a Southern-American soul-food cookbook by Jenné Claiborne—is *Sweet Potato Soul: 100 Easy Vegan Recipes for the Southern Flavors of Smoke, Sugar, Spice, and Soul* (2018). In her introduction, Claiborne describes Southern food as 'a fusion of many cultures, people, and

circumstances', and explains soul food as 'an African American culinary tradition with roots in the southern United States... [It] is history, triumph, passion, prayer, purpose, and love' (p. 13). With these definitions, she places soul food into a long history of African and Southern American cuisines, in the process establishing both an African American identity and a Southern American identity, which, when combined with her vegan lifestyle, communicate tradition and authenticity with the potential to encourage non-vegan readers to transition to a vegan lifestyle.

Claiborne's identities first emerge at the beginning of the introduction when she uses appraisal items and inclusive pronouns to discuss vegan food in the Southern-American context:

1. I tell [curious non-vegans] how much I adore eating Southern food and how practical it is to make our staples totally vegan. I tell them how each year at Christmas I indulge in vegan sweet potato pie, smoky collard greens, and stuffing with vegan sausage crumbles prepared by my nonvegan family. (p. 8)

Claiborne's identities can be identified through the combination of the appraisal item 'adore' in reference to her attitude toward Southern-American food, and through the use of the pronoun 'our' in 'our staples', a potential reference to Claiborne's African-American identity. The use of this ambiguous first-person pronoun (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Myers, 2010) also assists in establishing inclusivity for both Southern American and African American readers—both of whom are Claiborne's identity in-groups—as well as exclusivity for non-Southern and non-African-American readers, all of whom would look to Claiborne for expertise and authenticity in her descriptions of vegan soul food.

Her African-American identity is also emphasized in the second sentence as she lists the vegan foods in which she 'indulges': 'sweet potato pie', 'smoky collard greens' and 'stuffing with vegan sausage crumbles'. Notable in this list are the food-item triggers 'sweet potato pie' and 'collard greens', two quintessential Southern-American soul foods. Jackson and Meah (2013) point out that

‘ingredients like black-eyed peas, fried chicken, and collard greens, as well as cornbread and yams, okra and squash, catfish and chitterlings are all now part of “the American diet” with distinctive regional origins that can be traced back through the history of the Atlantic slave trade’ (p. 171).

Adrian Miller (2013), in his history of soul food, offers his own ‘anatomy of a meal’ (p. 4), supporting Claiborne’s own indulgent preferences:

> ...let me point out that I’ve chosen these particular foods not to start a food fight, but merely because they are great vehicles to explain the forces that have sharply and subtly shaped soul food. My dinner meal includes the following: entrees (fried chicken, friend catfish, or chitlins); sides (black-eyed peas, greens, candied yams, and macaroni and cheese); cornbread to sop it up; hot sauce to spice it up; Kool-Aid to wash it down; and a sweet finish with a dessert plate of banana pudding, peach cobbler, pound cake, and sweet potato pie. (p. 4)

Claiborne’s repeated use of these iconic soul-food items in the prose of her vegan cookbook outside of the vegan context work to establish her African American identity. Furthermore, it conveys authenticity to her veganized soul-food recipes and communicates the story VEGAN SOUL FOOD IS AUTHENTIC. Food, as has been shown, is a useful indicator of identity. Anderson (2014) writes,

> Food as communication finds most of its applications in the process of defining one’s individuality and one’s place in society. Food communicates class, ethnic group, lifestyle affiliation, and other social positions... Thus, food is available for management as a way of showing the world many things about the eater. (p. 171)

Combined with a solid Southern-American identity, *Sweet Potato Soul* and the story of authenticity that it communicates has the potential to encourage reluctant non-vegans to consider a transition to a vegan diet, especially when the obstacles to that transition are an assumed lack of cultural authenticity. As Claiborne herself claims early in the introduction, ‘The truth is, no matter your

background, you can be vegan and still enjoy the delicious flavors of your culture' (p. 9). She emphasizes this sentiment a few pages later:

2. Over the years I've spread my message of veganism to thousands of people, and in talking to folks, one theme repeats itself no matter where I am: going vegan can be hard because it may seem as though you'll have to give up the foods you love the most, especially foods that are culturally meaningful. (p. 12)

Examples 3 to 24 below contain some of the geographical and food-item triggers for Claiborne's Southern-American and African-American identities in the first six pages of her introduction.

Southern-American Identity Triggers

3. from the South
4. my family in Georgia
5. the supposed Southern addiction
6. I adore eating Southern food
7. we Southerners
8. our regional produce like sweet potatoes, peaches...
9. around Southern plants
10. my great-grandparents from the South
11. a little Southern hospitality
12. a Southern recipe
13. in the Atlanta suburbs

African-American Identity Triggers

14. sweet potato pie, smoky collard greens
15. my favorite comfort foods are macaroni and "cheese," rice pudding, and sweet potato cinnamon roles
16. our regional produce like sweet potatoes, peaches, collard greens, and watermelon
17. my ancestors from West Africa
18. the amazing soul food I was raised on
19. my family also used...collard greens, sweet potatoes, beans, and corn
20. Soul pays tribute to the food I grew up eating
21. soul food made with love
22. enjoy my family's soul food

23. sweet potato pie, biscuits, filling, collard greens, candied yams
24. how vegan friendly soul food has always been

As shown in the highlighted text in the examples, Southern-American identity triggers tend to focus on American geographical terms like 'the South', 'Southern', 'Southerner' and 'Atlanta'. This identity, a superordinate group consisting of any number of subcultures that trace their roots through the history of the southern United States, is inseparable from the identity of being African American, and yet it is defined differently by different people, the distinction being race-based more often than not. Twitty (2017), in his food memoir of the history of African American cuisine in the Old South, explains, 'The Old South is my name for the former slaveholding states and the history and culture they collectively birthed from the days of contact through civil rights' (p. xiii). Notable here is his use of the possessive pronoun 'my' to indicate a potential 'other' with a different understanding of 'the Old South'. He continues to explain:

> Old South culture is...not bound by growing up in the former Confederacy. 'Where are you from in the South?' privileges settlements and cities, not to mention the white-folks version of what 'Southern' means. The former Confederacy is not the totality of the South or Southern culture... (p. xiii)

Twitty has highlighted a distinction between the 'white-folks version of what "Southern" means' and what his African-American version of what Southern means. While he does go on at length to explain both the stark and subtle differences, more importantly for this research is the knowledge that the South is a shared cultural-historical experience, and Claiborne has claimed that identity while at the same time distinguishing which variety of 'Southern' she claims within it. Food items, it seems, assist in doing that.

African-American identity triggers, then, focus primarily on food items like 'collard greens', 'sweet potatoes' and 'watermelon'. As noted previously, certain Southern-American foods and dishes are

commonly recognized exclusively as African-American soul foods (Witt, 2004; Miller, 2013; Twitty, 2017), the term 'soul' being 'the folk equivalent of the black aesthetic... Soul was closely related to Black America's need for individual and group definition' (Van Deburg, 1992, p. 195). Claiborne therefore liberally uses the term 'soul' in reference to both food and the 'black aesthetic'. In combination with her Southern identity, Claiborne's African-American identity helps to establish authority and authenticity for vegan Southern soul food—by communicating the story VEGAN SOUL FOOD IS AUTHENTIC SOUL FOOD—in the attempt to appeal to a potential non-vegan audience. Because this story aligns with value nine of my vegan ecosophy about the historical precedent of plant-based diets, it is considered a beneficial story and should be promoted in the interest of ecology and the natural world.

Claiborne also introduces a history of Southern food in the latter half of her introduction, associating soul food with 'the memory of our African and enslaved ancestors, with the awareness of our rich history' (p. 13). Again she uses the possessive pronoun 'our' and a geographical identity trigger ('African') to explicitly establish her African-American in-group.

Linguistic triggers for her identities, though, are not limited to the introduction. They are used in every part of her cookbook. The following example is from one of the chapter introductions. Of note is her own distinction between Southern food and soul food.

25. The nutritious salads and soups in this chapter prove that **Southern and soul food** is about more than fried foods and butter-laden sweets. (p. 69)

The recipe introductions also include identity triggers:

26. Being a **Southern girl** in the Northeast, **black-eyed peas** are one of the foods that most reminds me of **home**. (p. 85)

There are also two quotations that appear as enlarged graphic elements, one quotation by African-American singer Erykah Badu and another by African-American chef Bob Jeffries. Badu's quotation is about vegan soul food, and Jeffries's quotation makes the distinction—as Claiborne does—between Southern food and soul food: 'While all soul food is Southern food, not all Southern food is "soul"' (p. 15).

One final aspect of her cookbook that communicates Claiborne's identities—specifically her African American identity—are the 12 images of her that appear from the title page to the back cover, including two images of her smiling in front of a dish of mac-n-cheese, one image of her holding up a piece of watermelon, and two more images of her holding uncooked collard greens. As Machin and Mayr (2012) note, 'images may seek to depict specific people and how these people can be used to connote general concepts, types of people, "stereotypes", and abstract ideas' (p. 96). Considering the design qualities and semiotic choices of the photos—close-up, viewer height and eyesight engaged (p. 97)—Claiborne's 'type' can be understood as 'ordinary' (p. 100), 'open and sincere' (p. 97) and obviously African American, all of which lend expertise and authenticity to her vegan soul-food cookbook while at the same time establishing a relationship of trust with her reader. For the curious non-vegan, Claiborne's identity and insider knowledge of soul food and Southern cuisine has the potential to alleviate any concerns about culinary authenticity.

In addition to Claiborne's identities, she uses appraisal patterns to positively appraise veganism while negatively appraising animal farming and animal-based foods. In the following example, Claiborne combines identity triggers with a positive appraisal of vegan food and an explicit negation of meat:

27. I tell [curious non-vegans] about the many chefs who are embracing and building fantastic meals around Southern plants, not meat. And of course, I tell them how my great-grandparents from the South—and my ancestors from West Africa—ate mostly plant-based diets because it was efficient, reliable, and nutritious. (p. 8)

In the first sentence, she uses the appraisal items 'embracing' and 'fantastic' in reference to plant-based meals. The first item is attributed to 'chefs', a call to authority that builds up the facticity of the description 'vegan southern food is good', indicating authenticity. The second item, 'fantastic', displays her own positive judgement of the vegan fare. In the second sentence, she explicitly asserts her Southern-American and her African-American identity through the linguistic triggers 'my great-grandparents from the South' and 'my ancestors from West Africa'. Notable is the use of the possessive pronoun 'my' to once again indicate in-group Southern and African-American affiliation. She then asserts the authenticity that she has created by claiming that her relatives and ancestors 'ate mostly plant-based diets', which she ultimately appraises with the items 'efficient, reliable, and nutritious'.

The appraisal items noted above are not rare occurrences but part of a pattern that emerges throughout Claiborne's entire cookbook. Appraisal is important in the field of ecolinguistics because, as Stibbe (2021) explains:

> patterns of appraisal across a text establish a tone or mood...and the readers of a specific text...are being positioned by the text as appraising an area of life either positively or negatively. [T]hose who are undecided may be more receptive to the appraisal pattern and it may play a role in shaping their evaluations (p. 81).

The pattern that Claiborne establishes is a positive appraisal of vegan soul food: VEGAN SOUL FOOD IS GOOD. For the undecided reader, if the appraisal pattern resonates with them, it has the potential to influence their ideology—an evaluation in their mind—in favor of adopting ecologically beneficial dietary habits. More importantly, this appraisal pattern aligns with values six, seven and nine of my vegan ecosophy about dietary benefits, community and historical precedent and can be considered a beneficial story of veganism that we can promote in resistance to destructive stories.

Assisting in the positive appraisal pattern is an oppositional appraisal pattern that identifies animal farming and animal consumption as destructive. Claiborne begins this pattern on page two of her introduction by introducing a common misconception with low facticity:

28. Though my childhood diet was full of processed sugar and refined grains, my family also used fresh plant-based foods like collard greens, sweet potatoes, beans, and corn to make the most delicious meals. I was also raised a semi-vegetarian, meaning we ate birds and fish but avoided meat from mammals—red meat. We didn't buy into the myth that people need to eat meat for protein or other nutrients. Healthy food was plant-based. (p. 9)

In example 28, Claiborne again begins by asserting her identity, first by negatively appraising 'processed sugar and refined grains'—both of European origin—and then by contrasting that appraisal ('though') with the 'fresh plant-based foods' of 'collard greens, sweet potatoes'—typical foods of African origin. She then positively appraises plant-based meals with the appraisal item 'the most delicious' while negatively appraising meat as a food to be 'avoided'. In the next sentence, she negatively refers to 'need[ing] to eat meat for protein or other nutrients' as a 'myth', lowering the facticity of that statement, and then finishes by reasserting her positive appraisal of plant-based food with the appraisal item 'Healthy'. Several paragraphs later, her negative appraisal of animal consumption begins in earnest:

29. I learned about heinous abuses in the dairy, egg, and fishing industries, and I knew at once that I could no longer participate in such a cruel and exploitative system. [...] I was shocked to learn that millions of land animals are killed every hour for food and that the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions is animals agriculture. It made so much sense when I realized how inefficient it is to get nutrients from animal products... I learned about factory-farm runoff destroying local waterways and about cattle grazing contributing to deforestation in the Amazon rain forest (it's the leading cause!). (p. 11)

In this example, Claiborne refers to animal-farming practices as 'abuses' and appraises that reference as 'heinous'. She appraises the entire animal-farming system as 'cruel' and 'exploitative'.

She shares her attitude toward animal slaughter ('shocked') and identifies that same industry as 'the largest contributor' to the negative process of greenhouse-gas production. She again negatively appraises nutrition in animal-based foods as 'inefficient', and finally identifies 'factory-farming' and 'cattle grazing' as agents of the material processes 'destroying local waterways' and 'contributing to deforestation', respectively. All of this is then summed up in one closing sentence of negative appraisal:

30. Advocates of animal agriculture...don't acknowledge the cruelty, exploitation of animals and workers, inefficiency, and environmental degradation that come along with it. (p. 12)

The appraisal patterns that Claiborne communicates here are ANIMAL FARMING IS BAD and ANIMAL CONSUMPTION IS BAD, and these both align with my ecosophy values one through four about animal-farming ethics and environmental impacts, making these appraisal patterns beneficial stories of veganism. These beneficial stories inversely align with and emphasize the positive story VEGAN FOOD IS GOOD and so have the potential to influence readers' thoughts and behaviors by encouraging them to forego an animal-based diet for the healthier and less destructive vegan diet. To further emphasize this point, she subsequently summarizes her positive appraisal of the vegan lifestyle:

31. Besides being ethical, leaps-and-bounds better for the environment, and a more efficient way to consume nutrients, the vegan lifestyle is also the healthiest way to live. (p. 12)

The positive appraisal items used for the vegan lifestyle are 'ethical', 'leaps-and-bounds better', 'more efficient' and 'the healthiest'. Of note are the comparative triggers that signal gradable opposition (Davies, 2013; Jeffries, 2014) which, when combined with positive appraisal items, are 'an effective way of promoting a particular group of people, a policy, or a broader ideological viewpoint...to provide a commonly stigmatized contrast with which to compare your favoured position' (Davies, 2013, p. 1). Claiborne is providing the 'stigmatized contrast' of cruelty,

exploitation, inefficiency and degradation compared with her 'favoured position' of the positively appraised vegan lifestyle and its beneficial ecological practices.

Examples 32-59 below highlight some of the more prominent appraisal items from Claiborne's nine-page introduction, both positive appraisal items for vegan food and negative appraisal items for animal-based foods and factory farming.

Vegan Food Appraisal Items

32. I **adore** eating Southern food
33. I **indulge** in vegan [food]
34. building **fantastic** meals around Southern plants
35. ate mostly plant-based diets because it was **efficient**, **reliable**, and **nutritious**
36. **ethical**, **leaps-and-bounds better** for the environment, and a **more efficient** way to consume nutrients
37. the vegan lifestyle is the **healthiest** way to live
38. the **superior health benefits** of a vegan diet
39. the **countless health benefits** of living a vegan lifestyle
40. the **healing power** of a vegan diet
41. a **healthier** alternative to meat-based Southern and soul food
42. the **power** of a completely vegan lifestyle
43. a **healthy** vegan diet
44. **incredibly delicious** food without dairy, eggs, and meat
45. a whole-wide world of **easy-to-find** and **affordable** ingredients that help make your favorite foods **special**

Animal Food And Farming Appraisal Items

46. **avoided** meat from mammals—red meat
47. the **myth** that people need to eat meat from protein and other nutrients
48. **heinous abuses** in the dairy, egg, and fishing industries
49. such a **cruel** and **exploitative** [animal farming] system
50. millions of land animals are **killed** every hour for food
51. the **largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions** is animal agriculture
52. how **inefficient** it is to get nutrients from animal products
53. factory-farming run-off **destroying local waterways**
54. cattle grazing **contributing to deforestation**

55. the cruelty, exploitation of animals and workers, inefficiency, and environmental degradation [of animal agriculture]
56. grass-fed and free-range livestock... even less efficient than factory farming
57. WHO categorizes processed meat as a group 1 carcinogen
58. Eating animal products raises your risk for cancer, heart disease, and diabetes
59. incredibly delicious food without dairy, eggs, and meat

These positive and negative appraisal patterns are also not restricted to Claiborne's book introduction and continue as a prominent feature of her chapter introductions:

60. These vegan soul sides are just as delicious and alluring as the originals yet so much healthier. (p. 97)

And in the introductions to individual recipes:

61. Some cooks use seafood [for jambalaya], some use smoked sausage, and vegan cooks take it to the next level and use chickpeas, smoked tempeh, or meaty jackfruit. (p. 137)

In both of the above examples, Claiborne positively appraises plant-based foods—'delicious', 'alluring', 'so much healthier', 'the next level'—while contrasting and negatively appraising animal-based foods as less healthy and on a lower level.

One final rhetorical strategy that Claiborne employs is procatalepsis, a strategy through which she counters potential objections to the vegan diet from a generalized interlocutor. Using an example introduced earlier:

- I tell [curious non-vegans] how much I adore eating Southern food and how practical it is to make our staples totally vegan. I tell them how each year at Christmas I indulge in vegan sweet potato pie, smoky collard greens, and stuffing with vegan sausage crumbles prepared by my nonvegan family. (p. 8)

In setting up this structure, she places herself ('I') in the sayer position of verbal processes ('tell'), a position of power and authority. The receiver ('them') is an anaphoric term previously identified as a 'curious questioner' inquiring about the difficulty of being 'a vegan from the South' (p. 8), i.e., a presumably non-vegan person. In this way, Claiborne depicts herself as more knowledgeable than her non-vegan receivers, exhibiting her authority and expertise in an effort to counter potential objections and influence a potentially non-vegan audience. The objections noted here are similar to the misconceptions in *The Game Changers*, both of which denote destructive stories in need of resistance. The procatalepsis occurs eleven times in the first two paragraphs of the introduction, all of which are listed below in Table 6.11.

PROCATALEPSIS	IMPLIED OBJECTION
I tell them how much I adore eating Southern food	vegan food is unappealing
and how practical it is to make our staples totally vegan.	vegan food is impractical
I tell them how each year at Christmas I indulge in vegan sweet potato pie, smoky collard greens...	vegan food is not indulgent
prepared by my nonvegan family.	vegan food is only for vegans
And how some of my favorite comfort foods are macaroni and "cheese",...	vegan food is not comforting
Then I remind them that we Southerners are all about making things from scratch and that we have more pride than anyone else in the country for your regional produce...	vegan food is not geographically representative
I tell them about the many chefs who are embracing and building fantastic meals around Southern plants, not meat.	vegan food is not serious food
I tell them how my great-grandparents from the South—and my ancestors from West Africa—ate mostly plant-based diets	vegan food is has no historical precedent
because [plant-based diets were] efficient, reliable, and nutritious.	vegan food is impractical and unhealthy
Then I usually offer them a little Southern hospitality and invite them to try a Southern recipe made vegan.	vegans are arrogant
The truth is, no matter your background, you can be vegan and still enjoy the delicious flavors of your culture.	vegan food is not authentic

Table 6.11 Procatalepsis and countered objections

This kind of didactic discourse could only succeed when delivered by a person with experience and expertise, and Claiborne uses her cookbook platform to establish both. Aside from the breadth of objections, misconceptions and destructive stories that she lays out in one paragraph—the first paragraph of her introduction—the most notable aspect is the final objection that she identifies: the objection of authenticity; and it is from that objection, for that objection, that her cookbook begins in earnest and she begins to establish her identity as a Southern African American.

Overall, in almost every part of Claiborne's cookbook, she emphasizes her Southern and African-American identity—communicating the story VEGAN SOUL FOOD IS AUTHENTIC—while positively appraising vegan food with the appraisal pattern VEGAN FOOD IS GOOD and negatively appraising animal farming and animal-based foods with the appraisal pattern ANIMAL FARMING IS BAD and ANIMAL CONSUMPTION IS BAD. These stories communicated by her identity and appraisal patterns closely align with the values of my vegan ecosophy, specifically values one through seven about ethics, environmental impacts, consumption, exploitation, dietary benefits and social justice. For this reason, the stories that Claiborne tells are considered beneficial stories of veganism to be promoted in resistance to destructive stories like the ones encountered in my analysis of news media discourse and user comments, stories like VEGANS ARE FAKE—which marks veganism as inauthentic—and the story VEGAN FOOD IS UNAPPEALING, which marks vegan food as tasteless and in need of animal products. The beneficial stories that Claiborne creates for her readers instead encourage non-vegan readers to switch to a vegan lifestyle in the interests of health, morality and, most importantly for ecolinguistics, ecology and the natural world.

6.2.2 CHLOE'S VEGAN ITALIAN KITCHEN

Another cookbook that highlights an ethnic identity to build authenticity in vegan cuisine is Chloe Coscarelli's *Chloe's Vegan Italian Kitchen* (2014). Coscarelli, like Claiborne, references food, family

and geographical locations to establish her Italian-American identity, but she also uses the Italian language itself as an identity marker. In addition to her Italian-American identity, Coscarelli also builds a second identity—a friendly, neighborly identity—to seemingly appear more appealing to her readers. Combined with appraisal patterns of both vegan food and animal-based foods, *Chloe's Vegan Italian Kitchen* has the potential to be a source of beneficial stories of veganism.

Coscarelli begins the introduction to her cookbook with the enlarged graphic quotation 'If you can't go to Italy, let Italy come to you' before beginning the body of prose with the greeting 'Ciao friends!' (p. XI). The quotation is an indication that Coscarelli will quite literally bring her Italian identity to her reader, and this begins with the Italian greeting 'Ciao', the first of many Italian words to help Coscarelli construct her Italian identity.

Other Italian words and phrases that appear in the introduction are *amore*, *bravissimo*, *vino*, *trattoria da* and *con amore* (p. xi-xii). On the two pages following the introduction, she includes a 'Pastagram' with the images and Italian names of pasta shapes—including lesser known names like *cavatappi*, *capunti*, *gemelli* and *bucatini* (p. xiii)—and then later offers the reader two separate Italian lessons: one survival-phrases lesson for use in the context of food, family and veganism, including *sono vegano* (I am vegan), *senza carne* (without meat), and *ti voglio bene* (I love you [to friends and family]) (p. xv); and another lesson on the uses and pronunciation of the different pasta types, including '*Orecchiette* (oh-reck-ee-ET-tay)', '*Radiatore* (rah-dee-ah-TOR-eh)' and '*Fettuccine* (feh-too-CHEE-nay)' (p. 112). The importance of language in forming identities is best explained by Joseph (2020):

> Identity, even in the here and now, is grounded in beliefs about the past: about heritage and ancestry, and about belonging to a people, a place, a set of beliefs and a way of life. Of the many ways in which such belonging is signified, what language a person speaks, and how he or she speaks it, rank among the most powerful, because it is through language that people

> and places are named, heritage and ancestry recorded and passed on, and beliefs developed and ritualized. (p. 19)

For Coscarelli, her identity as an Italian-American is 'grounded' in her family and Italian ancestry, and this identity becomes manifest in her use of the Italian language and her references to her 'heritage and ancestry' and her 'set of beliefs and...way of life'. The potential effect this has on the reader is to communicate authenticity to alleviate any concerns one may have about eating vegan Italian food and sacrificing, in the words of Claiborne, 'the foods you love the most, especially foods that are culturally meaningful' (Claiborne, 2018, p. 12).

Other Italian-language linguistic markers that index her Italian identity appear in the titles and short introductions to each recipe. Most dishes are given an English name and an Italian equivalent:

1. Fried Zucchini: *Zucchine Fritte*
2. Easy Eggplant Caponata: *Caponata di Melanzane*

These translations occur for non-Italian dishes as well:

3. Italian Quesadillas: *Quesadillas all'Italiana*
4. Baked Italian Onion Rings: *Anelli di Cipolla al Forno*

She also includes Italian sayings at the bottom of several pages in both Italian and English:

5. *La buona cucina rende allegri*: Laughter is brightest where food is best.
6. *Chi dice male dei maccheroni e un fesso*: Who speaks badly of macaroni is a fool.

In addition to the Italian language, Coscarelli also uses identity markers that reference Italy and Italian traditions:

7. Traditionally, caponata is overcomplicated with added ingredients...
8. My version of this Italian staple is easy, easy, easy!
9. This Sicilian staple is hearty and easy to whip up...

And finally, Coscarelli references her extended family:

10. This (no longer) top-secret recipe came straight from Lecce, Italy, from my Italian nonna.
11. ...this recipe has been with the Coscarellis for years!
12. My Italian grandfather Don asked for seconds, so it must be legit!

All of these references to Italy, Italian tradition, Italian family and the Italian language help to index Coscarelli's Italian-American identity, which assists in promoting her vegan Italian cuisine as authentic and therefore de-marginalized as an everyday food. This is supported—in fact prefaced—in a narrative family history which appears in her introduction. It begins thematically with her family:

13. My family is originally from the Calabria region of southern Italy. However, our roots are Sicilian, as the most distant ancestor we can trace is Caterina Palermo, who was born in 1683 in Sicily. (p. XI)

The four clauses in these two sentences begin thematically—in the Hallidayan sense—with 'My family', 'our roots', 'the most distant ancestor' and 'who', which again references 'the most distant ancestor'. According to Bloor and Bloor (2013), the concept of Theme is 'the idea represented by the constituent at the starting point of the clause' (p. 73), or as Halliday clarifies:

> The theme is the element that serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that which locates and orients the clause within its context. The speaker chooses the theme as his or her point of departure to guide the addressee in developing an interpretation of the message; by making part of the message prominent as Theme, the speaker enables the addressee to process the message. (p. 89)

In this way, Coscarelli 'guides' her reader to the 'interpretation' that family and ancestral roots are central to her vegan Italian cooking, as one would expect any cuisine to be central to its cultural foundation. This once again has the potential to demarginalize vegan food in the Italian context with the story VEGAN ITALIAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC, 'to demarginalize' meaning to remove vegan Italian food from its overlooked, underrated status as authentic Italian food. Considering that the story also aligns with value nine of my vegan ecosophy about historical precedent, it is considered a beneficial story of veganism to be promoted in resistance to other destructive stories.

In addition to her Italian-American identity, Coscarelli also creates a 'neighborly' identity that makes her appear open, honest, sociable and friendly, the kind of non-confrontational character that has the potential to appeal to people with different value systems. She communicates this identity in three ways. The first way is through the use of the exclamation mark which Coscarelli uses 106 times in her 280-page cookbook. The exclamation mark is traditionally associated with 'high emotion' (Casagrande, 2014, p. 86) and 'excitability' in women's discourse (Hiatt, 1977, p. 39), making it a primary feature in distinguishing female written communication (Scates, 1981; Rubin and Greene, 1992; Winn and Rubin, 2001), but a more recent study by Waseleski (2006) shows that use of the exclamation mark has much broader significance, including signifying friendliness and helpfulness and communicating factual information or 'opinion stated as fact' (p. 1017).

To closer examine Coscarelli's use of exclamation marks, I have borrowed and applied Waseleski's (2006) content codes from her research on exclamation marks in online discussion groups. While Waseleski's codes were designed for a different genre of written communication, and while more than half of the codes did not apply to cookbook discourse, the seven codes that did apply were applicable with little to no change in their definitions. Only one additional code had to be created for five instances of exclamation-mark use, and that was ironically the original use of the punctuation: the exclamation. For Coscarelli, the most frequent use of the exclamation mark (40%)

was for 'opinion stated as fact', and the second most frequent use (28%) was for 'helpfulness'. Table 6.12 below shows the codes used for this research, an explanation of each code, the number of exclamations per code, the percentage of the total and two examples each from Coscarelli's cookbook.

CODE	EXPLANATION	#	%	EXAMPLES
Fact	Statement of fact, or opinion stated as fact	42	40%	• A lot of flavor is packed on a little skewer! (14) • It's sweet, creamy, with a touch of tang! (129)
Helpfulness	Offering helpful advice to the reader	30	28%	• If you're looking for a salad to impress, this is your ticket! (69) • Omit the croutons to make it gluten-free! (72)
Opinion	Statement of opinion with first-person subject	10	9%	• I love sweet potatoes so much that I almost turned into one! (53) • Delish! (119)
Self-disclosure	Talk of oneself or one's friends and family	9	8%	• Then my mom created this recipe, and I'm obsessed! (49) • My Italian grandfather Don asked for seconds, so it must be legit! (160)
Action	Action or call for action	6	6%	• Chicken quesadillas, get out of town! (18) • I'm drooling just writing about it! (118)
Exclamations	Short emotive expressions with no clausal constituents	5	5%	• Holy Italian guacamole! (22) • Sweet mother of sausage! (54)
Greetings	Greetings or closings	2	2%	• Ciao friends! (xi) • We may have met before in my other cookbooks...and so we meet again! (xi)
Thanks	Expressing appreciation	2	2%	• Grazie! (42) • No thanks! (84)
TOTAL		106	100%	

Table 6.12 Coding for use of exclamation marks (adapted from Waseleski 2006)

All of the 106 exclamation marks in Coscarelli's 280-page cookbook, each in their own nuanced way, help her to create a friendly, neighborly identity through the 'traditional meaning potential of

emphasis' (Jaworski, 2015, p. 228). In Jaworski's (2015) analysis of the semiotic landscape and the creative use of punctuation, he explains that the exclamation mark, 'is a convenient resource for creating pragmatic and visual impact' (p. 228). In the same way that the exclamation mark functions in the urban landscape, so does it appear to function in Coscarelli's cookbook, emphasizing her 'facts' and opinions, her helpfulness and her intimate self-disclosures while also serving the pragmatic function of identity formation and the creation of an intimate relationship with her readers.

Aside from helping to establish Coscarelli's neighborly identity, excessive use of the exclamation mark also creates an identity of vegans in general that the reader can recognize across any number of contexts, an identity in contrast to the stereotype of the disdainful, self-important vegan. As Stibbe writes (2021):

> Texts do not just describe pre-existing identities, but play a role in establishing, constructing and maintaining those identities over time. In other words, texts build and perpetuate a model in people's minds about what kinds of people there are in society. (p. 101)

In other words, Coscarelli's cookbook has the potential to create a 'model' of the vegan identity that transcends time and place, and her prolific use of the exclamation mark emphasizes a friendly, neighborly, helpful vegan identity—communicating the stories VEGANS ARE FRIENDLY and VEGANS ARE HELPFUL—beneficial stories which align with the values of my vegan ecosophy and which the reader can extract from the text, share with others and refer to in their behaviors and relationships with the natural world.

The second way that Coscarelli communicates her neighborly identity is through the use of her own image. Similar to Claiborne, Coscarelli uses her image to communicate an ethnic identity—shirts with traditional Italian ornament, espresso glasses, canned tomatoes, glasses of wine—but unlike

Claiborne, she also uses it to reinforce her neighborly identity, and she accomplishes this through images of shared laughter with friends at backyard social gatherings, walking her dogs, sipping espresso at outdoor cafes and shopping at an outdoor market. These kinds of neighborhood, community snapshots occur in 15 out of 22 images of Coscarelli and portray her in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where she smiles and gazes intimately at the people around her both in-frame and off-frame. Machin and Mayr (2012) explain how images function in this regard:

> Images...are managed to present a particular interpretation of the attitude, character and identity of the person and consequently is another semiotic resource by which events and comments can be evaluated implicitly. (p. 70)

For Coscarelli, including images of herself around the neighborhood seems to be inviting the reader to 'interpret' her actions—and her veganism—as average, everyday occurrences, once again de-marginalizing veganism as a lifestyle and potentially attracting a non-vegan audience with the possibility to change their lifestyle habits to those that are more ecologically friendly.

The third and final way that Coscarelli communicates her identity of friendliness is through the use of 'whimsy'. In her introductions to the chapters and to the recipes, she often creates whimsical words and phrases, some of which are built on intertextual cultural references, and some of which are word-play constructions of rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, lexical semantics and highly colloquial forms of English. All of the instances seem innocent and playful and so have the potential to lend a harmless, endearing quality to Coscarelli's neighborly identity. The eleven examples below are a representative selection.

14. "I hum, you hum, we all hum for hummus!" (p. 17)
15. "Chicken quesadillas, get out of town!" (p. 18)
16. "Holy Italian guacamole!" (p. 22)
17. "Praise the Italian lord for white beans!" (p. 26)
18. "...a super-duper, crispy, potatoey, salty, okeydokey-artichokey quick fix!" (p. 34)

19. “All hail kale!” (p. 41)
20. “My version of this Italian staple is easy, easy, easy!” (p. 57)
21. “Hug, hug, cous, cous!” (p. 61)
22. “This ain’t your average tomato soup!” (p. 72)
23. “Sweet mother of sausage!” (p. 92)
24. “...handheld heaven!” (p. 104)

In example 14 above, Coscarelli references the rhythm and cadence of the 1920s novelty song ‘Ice cream’ or ‘I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream’; in example 16, she references the Batman television series of the 1960s in which Batman’s sidekick, Robin, frequently uses the modifier ‘Holy’ in exclamations of wonder and astonishment; and in example 22, Coscarelli uses a highly colloquial form of the contraction ‘isn’t’ within a commonly used structure to indicate above-average quality. Overall, she appears to be making popular cultural connections with her readers while communicating an identity of innocent whimsy.

One more notable aspect of her whimsy is the infusion of religious symbolism which has the potential to trigger her Italian identity at the same time through the associations of Catholicism. Trigger words used to this end include *holy*, *praise*, *lord*, *hail*, *sweet mother* and *heaven*. This kind of whimsical wordplay layered over allusions to the Catholic religion, in addition to her prolific use of exclamation marks and her images of neighborly interaction, assists her in building a friendly, neighborly identity while reminding the reader of her authenticity as a vegan Italian chef. The stories that she creates through these identities—the stories VEGAN ITALIAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC and VEGANS ARE FRIENDLY—align with the values of my vegan ecosophy and so 'may encourage people to behave in ways which help protect the systems that life depends on’ (Stibbe, 2021, p. 101). For Coscarelli, this ‘way of behaving’ is her vegan lifestyle, and she highlights it through a series of appraisal patterns.

Coscarelli, similar to Claiborne, establishes two appraisal patterns, one positively appraising vegan food and the other negatively appraising animal-based foods. These two appraisal patterns are most prominent in the third paragraph of her introduction:

25. Eating vegan means avoiding meat, fish, dairy, and eggs. This means no artery-clogging animal fats or greasy, cheesy dishes that put you into a food coma. My vegan recipes use unprocessed, healthy, plant-based ingredients that are good for your body and kinder to our sweet animal friends. In other words, you can feel great while you stuff your face! (p. xi)

After a brief definition of 'eating vegan', Coscarelli negatively appraises animal-based foods with the appraisal items 'artery-clogging', 'greasy' and 'coma'. She then positively appraises vegan food by claiming that her recipes are 'unprocessed', 'healthy', 'good for your body', 'feel great' and 'kinder to our sweet animal friends'. These appraisal patterns—VEGAN FOOD IS GOOD and ANIMAL-BASED FOOD IS BAD—continue throughout the introductions to Coscarelli's recipes. Examples 26 to 39 below document some of the more prominent items.

In addition to the appraisal items for vegan food, Coscarelli also positively appraises animals in the paragraph above with a term of endearment—'sweet'—before referring to them with the noun-head 'friends'. This equitable and inclusive reference to animals implies a human-animal relationship of equality and interdependence, a linguistic item of counter-discourse that, according to Stibbe (2012),

> could provide 'an image of profound reality' (in Baudrillard's terms) rather than a 'simulacrum,' and encourage readers to interact more directly with the natural world simply by encouraging them to lift their eyes from the page and view the world in a new way. (p. 4)

Stibbe (2012) further explains that 'If we are to create a more humane and sustainable society, it will be necessary to look once again at animals and celebrate some of the characteristics that we share' (p. 3). In this case, the shared characteristic is 'friendship' and all of its nuances of trust,

intimacy, harmony, companionship and understanding. If the reader can indeed 'view the world in a new way' by 'celebrating some of the characteristics that we share' with animals, the potential of transitioning to a vegan lifestyle increases, as do the ecological benefits that accompany it.

Negative Appraisal Items

26. Chicken quesadillas, **get out of town**! (p. 18)
27. Gremolata...is commonly served on meat and fish, **but wouldn't you rather** have it on crispy roasted potatoes? Yes, please! (p. 36)
28. Anyone who misses the cheese on this has **lost their marbles**. (p. 89)
29. **Who needs** anchovies when you've got capers? (p. 138)
30. There's **nothing worse** than greasy eggplant Parmesan swimming in so much cheese and oil that you **can't even taste** the eggplant. (p. 160)
31. If you've been **scarred** from memories of frozen TV dinner meatloaf, this gourmet vegan version is surely the cure! (p. 165)
32. Luckily there's **no need to conceal** such a lovely flavor profile with a **pile** of cheese. (p. 166)

Positive Appraisal Items

33. I think my version tastes just **as good as**, **if not better** than, the original salami-and-cheese salad. (p. 66)
34. This pizza is the **ultimate** vegan **paradise**. (p. 92)
35. So **fresh**, **authentic**, and "accidentally" vegan! (p. 128)
36. The **creamy**, **indulgent** sauce is made from **healthy**, **high-protein** tofu... (p. 133)
37. This veganized version is **light and tasty** but every bit as **indulgent**. (p. 160)
38. One bite and you'll **forever keep** your risotto vegan! (p. 166)
39. Tofu is a **wonderful** vegan ingredient that lends a ricotta-like consistency. (p. 242)

In addition to Coscarelli's own attitude (monogloss) expressed in the examples 26 to 39 above, she also introduces attitudes from other sources (heterogloss) (Martin & Rose, 2007), and some of the more potent sources she chooses to introduce are seemingly non-vegan men. In this way she counters potential reader expectations by offering positive appraisal patterns about vegan food from the demographic least likely to become vegan, increasing the authenticity of her vegan Italian food by removing herself, a vegan, as an evaluative variable. In the example below, the dietary

preference of the sources of appraisal is unidentified, but the 'masculine' traits that Coscarelli identifies are indicative of a typical meat-eater:

40. I hosted a taste-testing party in New York City for some old college friends to test this pizza. I made the mistake of having it during an "important" football game, and one of the guys actually took out his laptop and turned on the game during dinner. Nobody paid attention to the food until one of them took a bit of this pizza. "Phenomenal" and "life-changing" were a couple of the adjectives used. This pizza is the ultimate touchdown! (p. 94)

Guy college friends who watch football to the neglect of their host's food have the potential to serve as a powerful endorsement of the quality and authenticity of Coscarelli's vegan Italian food, especially when they employ 'attitudinal lexis' where the amplification of the attitude is an inherent part of the descriptive word (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 44), in this case 'phenomenal' and 'life-changing'. Coscarelli uses this strategy again with a similar source for an appraisal of her meatball sliders:

41. I made these once for a pack of far-from-vegan guy friends and they scarfed them down. They were shocked to learn that they were vegetarian, let alone vegan! (p. 98)

This time, Coscarelli's sources 'scarf down' her food—arguably another instance of attitudinal lexis with 'eat' at the unamplified end of the spectrum—and react as 'shocked' in discovering the absence of animal products, referencing and challenging a common destructive story of veganism, VEGAN FOOD IS UNAPPEALING. Sometimes Coscarelli references her brother as a source, again not identifying his dietary preference:

42. Have you ever seen a bear eat after hibernation? Me neither, but I imagine it looks something like when my brother dug into this Grilled Pesto Pie! He demanded seconds, thirds, fourths, and all he could murmur was "keep 'em coming!" as he nearly swallowed them whole. (p. 97)

In this case, Coscarelli uses metaphor to refer to her brother as a 'bear after hibernation' to communicate the speed and intensity of his eating without the actual hunger and need for nutrition, which would therefore indicate her brother's enjoyment of quality food. Coscarelli also introduces the appraisals of her roommate who 'took one taste [and] canceled her take-out food order' (p. 70), her recipe tester's son who 'licked his bowl clean' (p. 134), and her Italian grandfather who 'asked for seconds, so [the eggplant parmesan] must be legit!' (p. 160). In all of the instances of heterogloss, Coscarelli references the positive appraisal of her food by other people who are ostensibly non-vegan and many times male.

These appraisal patterns are similar to the patterns in Claiborne's cookbook and reveal the underlying evaluations in Coscarelli's mind: VEGAN FOOD IS GOOD and ANIMAL-BASED FOOD IS BAD. Together with her neighborly identity, her Italian identity and the story VEGAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC, they align with the values of my vegan ecosophy and are considered beneficial stories of veganism. Also like the stories communicated by Claiborne, the stories in Coscarelli's cookbook serve to resist the destructive stories uncovered in Chapter 5, specifically the stories VEGAN FOOD IS UNAPPEALING and VEGANS ARE FAKE. According to Stibbe (2021), 'the message may penetrate deep into people's minds and become a story that they live by. This story, once in their minds, can influence their behavior and how they treat the systems which support life' (p. 79). In this way, Coscarelli has created stories with the potential to effect real-world change in the interest of ecology, the natural world and the relationships that sustain it.

6.2.3 VEGAN INDIAN COOKING

There are several other cookbooks that use linguistic features and rhetorical strategies similar to Claiborne and Coscarelli in order to communicate beneficial stories of veganism. Because of these similarities, this and the following sections will be considerably shorter than the previous two,

aiming to introduce slight differences without being too repetitive of the linguistic features they have in common.

Anupy Singla's *Vegan Indian Cooking* (2012) communicates a strong ethnic Indian identity signifying authenticity through a long history of plant-based cuisine. She begins signaling her Indian identity in the second paragraph of her introduction: 'In our home, we followed an Indian diet—which is predominantly vegetarian—most days' (p. 9). Here she uses the inclusive pronouns 'our' and 'we' to identify her in-group—her family—and then marks that group by identifying the kind of cuisine they ate: Indian. In the following paragraph, she makes a deeper connection to her ethnic identity:

1. The way we ate then is the way a vast number of people still eat in India, where about 30 percent of the country' sizable population is vegetarian—primarily Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains. (p. 9)

In this way, Singla constructs her identity through her family, the country of India and three religious groups known for their formative influence on Indian culture. She also twice introduces the plant-based quality of traditional Indian food, establishing a strong connection between her vegan diet and her ethnic Indian identity. Claiborne communicated the same message when she claimed that West African cuisine was primarily plant-based.

Singla continues to emphasize her identity throughout her book introduction and into the introductions to the individual recipes—again similar to Claiborne and Coscarelli—talking about 'everyday Indian recipes' (p. 10), 'South Asian homes' (p. 10), her 'grandfather...in India' (pp. 10-11), 'centuries-old Indian philosophy' (p. 12), how 'the word *chaat* holds a ton of meaning' for her (p. 57), how 'if any soup reminds [her] of [her] days visiting India, it's this one' (p. 87), and 'quintessential Indian snack foods' (p. 106).

Similar to Coscarelli, Singla also offers Indian names of ingredients next to their English counterparts—'black salt (*kala nam*ak)' (p. 26) and 'ginger root (*adarak*)' (p. 39)—and occasionally uses the Indian names for her recipes next to the English translations—'North Indian Tomato Soup (*Tamatar ka Shorba*)' (p. 87) and 'Punjabi-Style Cabbage (*Band Gobi*)' (p. 164). This language-based practice has the effect of communicating the story VEGAN INDIAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC which in turn has the potential to influence non-vegan people to consider a vegan diet, especially those worried about having to give up foods that are imbued with cultural significance.

Also similar to Claiborne and Coscarelli, Singla uses her own image to communicate her Indian identity. On the cover of her cookbook there is a picture of her holding the iconic stainless-steel tray of Indian spices; in a second picture, she is standing in what appears to be a kitchen in an Indian restaurant, again with the tray of spices (p. 7); in a third picture she is at an open-air market talking to a vegetable vendor of apparently Indian ethnicity (p. 8); and in yet another picture she is feeding an elephant a bunch of bananas (p. 12). She also appears at a traditional Indian festival (p. 20), using a finger bowl at a presumably Indian restaurant (p. 125), and riding an elephant (p. 51)—the last image not the best choice to communicate a vegan lifestyle, but arguably an indicator of Indian identity. Just as their images assisted Claiborne and Coscarelli in establishing authentic ethnic identities, so do Singla's images assist in creating her own authentic Indian identity, communicating the story VEGAN INDIAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC.

One aspect of Singla's discourse that diverges from that of Claiborne's and Coscarelli's is the lack of explicit appraisal patterns. Singla takes a more egalitarian approach to the topic, claiming the validity of subjective preferences and inviting people to focus on whole foods, health and convenience. She makes claims like 'It's not a book that forces a lifestyle upon you' (p. 9), 'Eat what you want, but make sure what you eat is real, whole food' (p. 9), and this:

2. To me, labels are not tools for judging what others can and cannot do on a daily basis. Instead, they're merely a way to understand a person's food philosophy and thus fine-tune my suggestions on food when I dine out with them or invite them to my house for a meal. (p. 15)

In this way, Singla may appeal to a broader reader base while challenging the destructive story VEGANS ARE SANCTIMONIOUS from chapter 5. Combined with her 'authentic' Indian identity, Singla creates the beneficial story VEGAN INDIAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC which, as with the stories communicated by Claiborne and Coscarelli, aligns with my vegan ecosophy and has the potential to attract readers to the vegan lifestyle in the hopes of creating more ecologically friendly practices.

6.2.4 THE ENGLIGHTENED KITCHEN

Mari Fujii's vegan cookbook *The Enlightened Kitchen* (2005) also communicates beneficial stories of veganism, but because of the circumstances of the cuisine that it focuses on, Fujii does not need to develop an ethnic identity to project authenticity. The cuisine that Fujii presents is the cuisine of Japanese Buddhist temples—*shojin* cuisine—a centuries-old vegan food in Japan based on the traditional doctrines of Buddhism. According to Fujii, 'traditional temple cuisine uses no animal products. All ingredients come from plant sources, such as vegetables, seaweed, wild plants, grains and pulses, in the belief that this way of eating has numerous physical and spiritual benefits' (p. 6). She later explains in more detail: 'In line with the Buddhist precept that forbids the killing of living things "that flee when chased," the eating of meat and fish is not allowed' (p. 8). S*hojin* cuisine—vegan from its Japanese origins—is already authentic; there is no historical meat-based equivalent with which to contend.

The Japanese Buddhist temple aspect of the cuisine, though, does communicate the entailment of nonviolence, and Fujii reminds her reader of this throughout her cookbook, starting with the title where she communicates the reception of a higher knowledge and understanding with the modifier 'enlightened', and with the subtitle where she introduces the origins of the cuisine with the phrase

'from the Temples of Japan'. Most notable are the references in the introduction to her cookbook where she discusses the ecological, creative, health and spiritual aspects of the cuisine. Consider the following:

1. Temple cuisine uses seasonal ingredients in the belief that following the flow of nature is best for the body. (p. 6)
2. [Learning] the various ways of cooking [seasonal vegetables] is an important part of temple cuisine... This way of eating, in which the whole foodstuff is used, without wasting any of it, is also kind to the environment. (p. 7)
3. Nutritious, low-calorie temple cuisine is the perfect antidote to the unhealthy eating habits of today's society... (p. 8)
4. Perhaps the key to fully appreciating temple cuisine is to select and prepare ingredients with care, and to eat with relaxed enjoyment. (p. 9)

Throughout the discourse of her introduction, Fujii constantly reminds her reader that the cuisine in her cookbook is 'temple cuisine', replete with the connotations of the Buddhist precept of nonviolence—'ahimsa'—while making direct links to bodily, spiritual and environmental health. In this way, Fujii communicates the stories VEGANISM IS PHYSICALLY HEALTHY, VEGANISM IS SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY and VEGANISM IS BENEFICIAL FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. These stories align with values three, four and six of my vegan ecosophy and so are considered beneficial stories. Shared cognitively across broad groups of individuals and informing their behavior with regards to ecology and the natural world, these stories have the potential to transform the way people think and behave with regards to veganism and its effects on the environment. They are also direct challenges to the destructive stories in Chapter 5—VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY, VEGANS ARE MENTALLY UNSTABLE and VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE—stories which also frequently appear in the academic literature addressed in Chapter 2 (e.g., Povey et al., 2001; Silva Souza et al., 2020; Cole and Morgan, 2011; Taylor, 2012; Paxman, 2021).

Similar to Singla, Fujii also differs from Claiborne and Coscarelli in her choice to avoid negative appraisal of animal-based foods. Aside from her two references to animal-based foods in the quotations above, there are no other significant mentions of meat or other animal products in her cookbook. She instead focuses solely on plant-based foods and their spiritual and physical effects on the body, positively appraising vegan food by reference to *shojin* cuisine and the ingredients commonly used for it. She accomplishes this by expressing both monogloss and heterogloss attitudes as shown in examples 5 to 22 below.

Monogloss Attitudes

5. Temple cuisine uses seasonal ingredients in the belief that following the flow of nature is best for the body. (p. 6)
6. These sun-dried ingredients, with their high nutritional value and concentrated flavor, are traditional staples in the Japanese diet. (p. 7)
7. Seasoning is generally kept light...the better to enjoy the delicious natural flavor of fresh vegetables. (p. 8)
8. Nutritious, low-calorie temple cuisine is the perfect antidote to the unhealthy eating habits of today's society... (p. 8)
9. It is my sincere hope that both your heart and your body will reap the benefits of this soothing, healthful way of cooking and eating. (p. 9)
10. Delicious on its own as a healthy drink, soymilk adds a mild and mellow flavor to soups. (p. 17)
11. Eggplants are so delicious in the fall that it is easy to overindulge. (p. 30)
12. A taste well worth acquiring, nattou is both versatile and healthy... (p. 44)
13. The simple, light flavor of Japanese pumpkin lends itself well to a variety of cooking methods. (p. 53)

Heterogloss Attitudes

14. Whether from America, Europe or Asia, all agree that temple food is light on the stomach yet satisfying enough to see them through to the next mealtime. (p. 6)
15. Eating dried foodstuffs is said to ensure a long, healthy life. (p. 7)
16. People who sample my cooking are often astonished to find just how sweet the natural flavor of vegetables can be. (p. 8)
17. My [temple cook] husband always says that seeing the happy faces of the monk as they ate his food made him feel that his job was worthwhile. (p. 9)

18. People often say that they feel that **a weight has lifted** from their shoulders after eating temple food. (p. 9)
19. One writer who came to visit us called temple cuisine "**soul food**". (p. 9)
20. A monk on Mount Koya once left some tofu outside overnight in winter...and was surprised to find [the frozen tofu] **delicious**. (p. 48)
21. When the president of a French champagne vineyard visited us, we served him ginger rice and Kenchin style vegetable soup... He said it would go **perfectly** with a glass of bubbly! (p. 85)
22. This udon noodle dish is a **favorite** of novice Zen monks. (p. 88)

As seen in the examples above, Fujii's attitude and the attitude of others toward *shojin* cuisine is communicated in the appraisal items in bold font. Of note is the heterogloss attitude of 'One writer who came to visit' and 'called temple cuisine "soul food"' (p. 9), a semantic reference shared with Claiborne to the effect of food on both the mind and the body. While Claiborne's use of the phrase 'soul food' has deep historical, ethnic and cultural significance, Fujii's inclusion of that attitude is most likely a reference to a more spiritual aspect of health, life and longevity, the primary focus of *shojin* cuisine and her cookbook, *The Enlightened Kitchen*.

Overall, Fujii's approach to her vegan cookbook aligns more closely with Singla for the way that she avoids emphasizing the dichotomy of plant-based and animal-based foods, instead choosing to focus on the positive aspects of vegan cuisine. The positive appraisal of vegan food—VEGAN FOOD IS GOOD—similar to the previous authors, aligns with the value in my vegan ecosophy regarding the dietary benefits of veganism, and so is considered a beneficial story of veganism. Combined with the stories of physical, mental and environmental health, Fujii's stories of vegan cuisine have the potential to resonate with a broad spectrum of individuals, in how they think and behave, with potential benefits for ecology and the natural world.

6.2.5 THREE MORE COOKBOOKS

There are any number of vegan cookbooks with similar stories to tell in linguistically similar ways. Many of them rely on creating an authentic ethnic identity, on creating a neighborly identity, on appraising both vegan food and animal-based foods, and on telling short personal narratives that focus on the transition from an animal-based diet to a vegan diet. While not previously discussed—but evident in many of the examples given—Claiborne, Coscarelli and Singla all tell a personal narrative of their experience with food that centers on that moment when they transition to veganism, a rhetorical strategy used in the documentary film *The Game Changers*.

Many of the cookbooks also tell a narrative history as part of establishing an authentic ethnic identity. Again, Claiborne, Coscarelli and Singla all do this, making strong connections to some distant land where the food is endemic and thus considered authentic by default. Even Fujii uses narrative to a certain extent—not about her personal transition or in the interest of establishing an identity, but about her husband and his experience becoming a monk in the temple kitchens of Zen Buddhism. It is through her husband's story that she communicates to her readers about the spiritual effects of vegan temple cuisine. In the following short sections, three more vegan cookbooks are addressed, each one similar in some way to the previous four cookbooks, sometimes even introducing a new communicative dimension to the stories of veganism.

6.2.5.1 ¡SALUD! VEGAN MEXICAN COOKBOOK

Eddie Garza's cookbook *¡Salud! Vegan Mexican Cookbook* (2016) follows a similar pattern to the pervious authors in the stories he tells. He writes of his childhood in a South Texas border town and frequently references his grandmother and the Mexican staples he ate growing up. Like Coscarelli, in the introductions to his recipes he makes constant reference to family, friends, and distant relatives in exotic-sounding places across Mexico, creating a Mexican-American identity and lending authenticity to his experiences and the vegan foods that he creates, in the process telling the story

VEGAN MEXICAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC. He also gives a brief history of Mexican cuisine, starting in pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica and moving through the Maya, the Aztec and the Spanish colonizers to modern Mexican cuisine. In this process, he places plant-based foods—as do Claiborne, Coscarelli, Singla and Fujii—into a long history of cuisine, communicating authenticity while establishing a precedent for his vegan varieties and communicating the story VEGAN FOOD HAS AN HISTORICAL PRECEDENT. He also frequently uses Spanish words throughout his cookbook—*La Cocina Vegana*; *sin carne, sin leche, sin huevos*—again establishing both his Mexican identity and the authenticity of his vegan Mexican cuisine. And finally, similar to Singla and Fujii, he avoids appraising animal-based foods and instead appraises Mexican cuisine in general, both the animal-based foods he grew-up on and the vegan iterations he has created for himself and his readers, a potential attempt to broaden his appeal to a potentially diverse readership.

6.2.5.2 HOT DAMN AND HELL YEAH

Ryan Splint, in his cookbook *Hot Damn and Hell Yeah: Recipes for Hungry Banditos* (2015), transcribes a highly colloquial style of Southern American English that indexes an identity and indicates authenticity for his 'Vegan Tex-Mex and Southern Eats', a style of food that developed in the southern United States in the border towns of Texas along Mexico. Among other ways that he accomplishes this, he uses nonstandard spellings, elision, nonstandard verb forms like *ain't*, and common Southern expressions.

> [Nutritional yeast] is a yellow-brown, nearly powdered substance that usually shows up in recipes where yer after a cheesy flavor of some sort. Ya kin usually track this down at health food or whole food stores, but ah'll admit sometimes ya have a helluva time findin' it. Some folks might try sellin' you brewer's yeast instead, but don't fall fer that—it ain't even close to the same thing. (p. 8)

In the same way that Coscarelli, Singla and Garza use different languages to communicate authentic identities, Splint uses a style of written colloquial language. According to Jaworski and Coupland

(2006), 'style [is] to be treated as a resource for strategic positioning of self and others in discourse. Style allows us to enact particular social personas, a form of self-identification with and self-differentiation from particular groups or group orientations' (p. 392). Splint, in choosing to transcribe a Southern American variety of English, is able to use it 'to enact a particular social persona' identifiable with the American subculture to which Tex-Mex cuisine belongs. In doing so, he is able to communicate the story VEGAN TEX-MEX CUISINE IS AUTHENTIC, addressing any potential concerns that non-vegans may have regarding culturally meaningful cuisine.

6.2.5.3 THUG KITCHEN: EAT LIKE YOU GIVE A FUCK

The final cookbook to address follows a similar pattern to Splint in the use of a particular style of English to communicate an identity and in-group affiliation. The cookbook *Thug Kitchen: Eat Like You Give a Fuck* (2014) has no identifiable author, but there are three clues to their identity: the title of the cookbook, a note on the back cover that says 'Thug Kitchen is based in Los Angeles', and the language that is used throughout the cookbook. The word 'thug' in the title is derisively evocative of an African-American young man, and the language used throughout the cookbook, heavily laden with expletives, has been called a 'caricatured use of African American Vernacular English (AAVE)' (Priestly et al., 2016, p. 350). Combined with the geographical location of Los Angeles, the assumption that the writer is an African American male is common and appears to be warranted.

If that assumption were true, which it isn't, it would also be novel; veganism has long been mistakenly considered a privileged lifestyle of middle- and upper-class white people (Harper, 2010; Polish, 2016; Greenebaum, 2018), and the vernacular of an African American man espousing the health benefits of vegan cuisine is idiosyncratic and unexpected. As Priestly, Lingo and Royal (2016) explain it, 'Part of the humor lies in the dissonance between the health terminology and the humor

framed by the “thug” persona... One doesn’t often get called a “punk ass” while receiving advice about Vitamin A intake’ (p. 354).

As it turns out, the writers of *Thug Kitchen* are a young white couple—Michelle Davis and Matt Holloway—who initially created their ‘thug persona’ for a food blog which turned out to be so popular—Gwenyth Paltrow has publicly written and spoken of her fondness for the blog—that to date they have published three cookbooks under the same *Thug Kitchen* franchise. It wasn’t until the publication of the first book—*Thug Kitchen: Eat Like you Give a Fuck*—that their true identities were made public. The obvious deception aside—but important and to be discussed later—the most significant aspect of *Thug Kitchen* for ecolinguistics research is how the authors linguistically construct the ‘thug’ identity and the potential effect this may have on the reader regarding veganism and ecological responsibility.

The most obvious linguistic tool used by the authors of *Thug Kitchen* to construct their ‘thug’ identity is expletives. In the first nine pages of the introduction alone, there are 90 expletives, most of which are some form of the words ‘fuck’, ‘shit’, ‘ass’ and ‘damn’. The use of such profanity is best described as ‘propositional swearing’ which is ‘consciously planned and intentional—in this case, the speaker controls the content of the utterance. Propositional swearing can be polite or impolite, or potentially neither. It is polite when it promotes social harmony, as in face building (e. g., *This pie is pretty fucking good!*)’ (Jay and Janschewitz, 2008, pp. 269-70).

Notable for *Thug Kitchen* are both the ‘consciously planned and intentional’ aspect of the profanity the authors use—considering the medium—and the attempts made with the use of profanity to establish an identity through ‘social harmony, as in face building’, i.e., the authors’ attempts to build rapport with their readers. Compare the example given in the quote above by Jay and Janschewitz—'*This pie is pretty fucking good!*’—with the following lines from *Thug Kitchen*:

1. When beets are bad, they are really fucking gross. But roasted, these motherfuckers get sweet and delicious. (p. 49)
2. Barley is a goddamn delicious grain that looks a lot like rice... (p. 59)
3. These noodles always hit the fucking spot. (p. 75)

In some ways, *Thug Kitchen*'s use of profanity aligns with Coscarelli's use of the exclamation mark in *Chloe's Vegan Italian Kitchen*, particularly with regards to expressing opinion as fact, as seen above, and in being helpful to the reader, as seen in the following examples:

4. If you make this refreshing motherfucker when peaches are at their peak, you won't need to sweeten it at all. (p. 131)
5. Make it when you've got people to impress or when you're really fucking lonely. (p. 150)
6. Chickpeas and garbanzo beans are the same fucking thing. You're welcome. (p. 165)

Both Coscarelli and *Thug Kitchen* have chosen to emphasize similar aspects of their writing to index their identity, but have chosen to do that in different ways. Regardless, the results are potentially the same: the creation of an identity that closes social distance, establishes rapport and, according to Stibbe (2021), 'may encourage people to behave in ways which help protect the systems that life depends on' (p. 101).

Culpeper (2011), informed by Leech (1983), might label this kind of profanity use as 'mock impoliteness' or 'banter', both of which involve impolite or offensive language conflicting with the contextual conditions. The authors of *Thug Kitchen* and its readership both understand that standard politeness formulas are to be suspended with the discourse of *Thug Kitchen* despite the apparent formality of the producer-consumer context. Culpeper (2011) interprets Leech's (1983) understanding of 'banter' as follows:

> Leech (1983) argues that banter reflects and fosters social intimacy (i.e. relative equality in terms of authority and closeness in terms of social distance): the more intimate a relationship, the less necessary and important politeness is, and thus lack of politeness can be associated with intimacy. (p. 209)

Through the use of profanity, *Thug Kitchen* is able to create an intimacy with its readers by closing the social distance, the goals of which could potentially attract non-vegan readers to the vegan lifestyle through in-group inclusion and the assumption of shared values. Culpeper (2011), in a discussion of distance and scale in offensive language, offers a curious example from a road sign by Australian beef farmers: 'You are in cattle country. Eat beef, you bastards' (p. 210). Aside from the obvious contextual (dis)similarities, the linguistic features of note in this example are the imperative structure, the profanity, and the profanity as a reference to the reader. Consider the following examples from *Thug Kitchen* that contain similar linguistic features:

7. Welcome to Thug Kitchen, bitches. (p. ix)
8. Eat like you give a fuck. (p. ix)
9. Eat well, eat small meals, and eat often and you won't have to apologize for your shitty attitude... (p. 2)
10. Stop fucking with that frozen aisle shit. (p. 14)
11. Dip, dip, pass, motherfucker. (p. 111)

Overall, the goals of swearing in *Thug Kitchen*—like the goals of excessive exclamation mark use in *Chloe's Vegan Kitchen*—are most likely to create an identity and to build rapport with the readers. As Jay and Janschewitz (2006) note, '...our identities are marked by our use of swear words' (p. 275), and the identity marked in *Thug Kitchen* is one of informal, edgy, peer-group friendliness.

Most importantly for ecolinguistics research are the values that this identity communicates through positive appraisal of plant-based foods—'We started our website to inspire motherfuckers to eat some goddamn vegetables and adopt a healthier lifestyle' (p. ix)—and negative appraisal of animal products: 'Eating all that meat and other animal products like cheese and eggs...does come with

consequences' (p. xxvii). Because these appraisal patterns create the stories VEGAN FOOD IS HEALTHY and ANIMAL-BASED FOOD IS UNHEALTHY, both of which align with value six of my vegan ecosophy, they can be considered beneficial stories with the potential to encourage more ecologically friendly practices in its readers.

There are also several other positive aspects of *Thug Kitchen* that promote the vegan lifestyle and align with the values of my vegan ecosophy—e.g., the cookbook challenges some common stereotypes of vegans and vegan food through 'counter discursive strategies' and 'radical reframing' (Macgilchrist, 2007) and it uses binary opposition to influence opinion (Davies, 2013)—but not all the stories in *Thug Kitchen* are beneficial.

As mentioned earlier in this section, the white authors of *Thug Kitchen* deceived their readership by creating an identity associated with African American men in order to create greater appeal for their recipes and cookbook. Priestly et al. (2016) explain it best:

> ...even though [*Thug Kitchen*] has attracted new audiences to vegan practices, the language it uses to promote veganism needs to be examined because the tropes imbricated in that language point to broader cultural issues concerning power, oppression, and patterns of consumption. (p. 350)

The misrepresentation has been called 'nouveau blackface' (Dickson, 2014) and a 'post-internet form of blackface' (Terry, 2014), among other things. Dr. Breeze Harper (2014) explains further:

> I can understand how 'thug' can be triggering for thousands of Black people in the USA, in light of Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, and Michael Brown's murders. Please understand, this is all within a USA context in which the term 'thug' as been [sic] racialized to mean 'a threatening Black male who deserves preemptive strike against just for walking around while Black'. This change in the social/racial meaning of 'thug' has happened within the past decade, with great significance. Many have argued, 'thug' is the PC way to call a Black male the n-word. I can understand why the term, 'thug', can illicit such pain and suffering

> amongst a significant number of Black Americans who fear that their husbands, brothers, fathers, and sons will be perceived as 'thugs' by the White American imagination ensconced in centuries of negrophobia.

Bryant Terry (2014) offers even more critical analysis of the problem when he writes, 'Whether or not the hipsters and health nuts charmed by *Thug Kitchen* realize this, vegetarian, vegan and plant-strong culture in the black experience predates pernicious thug stereotypes. Said another way, the *Thug Kitchen*'s central comic conceit doesn't jibe with reality.' As learned from Claiborne, soul food has its roots in West African cuisine, which is primarily plant-based. Slavery and oppression by white Europeans forced enslaved African Americans into adopting meat-based diets, so, as Terry writes, the 'central comic conceit' isn't accurate and only further marginalizes the African American community, vegans in particular. Since this aspect of *Thug Kitchen* does not align with value seven of my vegan ecosophy about social justice and marginalized communities, the cookbook unfortunately also contains a destructive story of veganism which needs to be resisted.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

7.1 THESIS SUMMARY

This thesis was an ecolinguistics analysis of the linguistic structures that create and communicate destructive and beneficial stories of veganism. Chapter 1 of this thesis introduced my personal background and the fact that I am an ethical vegan, which, contrary to expectations of researcher bias, offered greater insight into my topic through my own identity and experiences. It also introduced my research questions, defined several key terms, and identified some of the analytical theories that I would employ in my analyses, including Critical Discourse Analysis, Positive Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics.

Chapters 2 and 3 together comprised my literature review. In Chapter 2, I addressed the social and linguistic constructions of veganism in the academic literature and in popular culture. The chapter was organized around five common negative representations of veganism, and then examined five large-scale studies in an effort to show the breadth and depth of the research that has been done over the last two decades. In Chapter 3, I looked at the development of the ecolinguistics framework, starting with Michael Halliday's lecture at AILA in 1990 (Halliday, 2001) and finishing with the 2018 *Routledge Handbook of Ecolinguistics* (Fill and Penz, 2018). In between, I show how Arran Stibbe and other writers were doing analytical work on language and the environment, eventually culminating in the publication of Stibbe's (2015) *Ecolinguistics: Language, Ecology and the Stories We Live By*, which would establish for the first time a coherent framework for research in the ecological analysis of language.

In Chapter 4, I discussed my data, data collection and methodology. I explained my choice of purposeful sampling for data collection and how that assisted me in finding the most stimulating, information-rich data. I also addressed the sources for my data, how they differed depending on the kind of story I was looking for, and why this was important. The methodology section allowed

me to detail the iterative process for data analysis and to explain how my knowledge of the representations of veganism and of the linguistic theories laid out in the ecolinguistics framework assisted in this process. I also explained how I evaluated stories against my ecosophy and placed them accordingly on a beneficial-destructive spectrum. The final part of the chapter introduced my vegan ecosophy and offered support for the assertions I make in it.

Chapters 5 and 6 presented the results of my data analysis. In Chapter 5 I addressed my analysis of the destructive stories of veganism. The chapter is organized around the kind of sources used and the stories of veganism uncovered in them, starting with full-length articles and then progressing through online user comments, a television program and a podcast. I identified 38 distinct destructive stories using five different linguistic theories and a CDA toolkit determined by the discourse. In Chapter 6, I discussed my analysis of beneficial stories of veganism. I also organized the chapter around the data sources, which was one documentary film and seven vegan cookbooks. I identified 29 distinct beneficial stories of veganism through the linguistic theories of narratology, identity and appraisal patterns in addition to a PDA toolkit determined by the data.

In Chapter 7, this chapter, I will address some of the more salient discoveries to emerge from my analysis, most of which are related to the linguistic theories, how they apply to the stories they construct, how the stories relate to each other, and how some of those stories have moved beyond this analysis into a practical, real-world ecolinguistics application. The majority of this chapter is about the beneficial stories, which are the intended culmination of the ecolinguistics framework and its intended use for resistance of destructive stories in everyday life.

7.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I began this thesis with five research questions that guided this study and helped to illuminate how representations of veganism are constructed in online and offline media. In this section, I will explicitly address those five questions as laid out in Chapter 1, the introduction.

1. How is veganism represented discursively online and in other forms of media?

Veganism is represented discursively both negatively and positively. Negative representations of veganism primarily center on veganism as a health problem. It is represented as lacking nutritional elements like protein, iron and vitamin B12. Because of this negative representation, vegan people are often represented as looking pale, emaciated, malnourished and generally unattractive. In addition to those physical representations, vegan people are also represented as being mentally unhealthy, often characterized as 'crazy', 'nuts', 'whacko' or 'insane' on the extreme side of mental instability, and as 'uneducated', 'ignorant', 'careless' and 'disingenuous' on the less extreme side. Related to this are the representations of vegans as hypocrites, which is related to the representation of veganism as environmentally destructive. Partially related to the issue of health is the representation of vegan men as effeminate, due to the belief that soy products contain the female hormone estrogen. That same representation is also related to the belief that masculinity is inextricably linked to the consumption of meat, a social construction most likely related to an imagined idyllic past. Related to vegan food are the representations of veganism as expensive, inaccessible and difficult to maintain, and thus the additional representation of vegans as privileged and sanctimonious. Finally, vegans are sometimes represented as violent and militant in the context of animal rights and protesting.

Regarding the positive representations, the focus is again on health. Veganism is discursively represented as being good for the heart, good for protein consumption and good for longevity. Vegan food is therefore frequently represented as being healthy and authentic. Related to

authenticity is the representation of vegan people as friendly, helpful and knowledgeable about nutrition and the historical basis for the cuisines of their ethnic and cultural origins, which contributes to representations of vegan food as authentic. Veganism is sometimes represented as environmentally beneficial aligned with an inverse representation of animal-consumption as being environmentally and ethically destructive. Notable in the representations of veganism is their variety. Many of the representations have clear logical relationships, but each representation has its own individual nuance that distinguishes it from the next representation.

2. How are negative representations of veganism linguistically constructed?

Negative representations of veganism in the data for this thesis were linguistically constructed using five of the linguistic theories adopted by the ecolinguistics framework, plus an assortment of other linguistic features used in the broad, transdisciplinary methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis. The most used linguistic construction was appraisal patterns, which contributed to most of the destructive stories in this thesis. They were used to communicate negative attitudes about appearance, health, mental capabilities, activism and intelligence through the use of modifiers and attributive processes, violent material processes, copulas and negative complements, adjuncts, semantic prosody, and comparative and superlative structures, among others.

The second most common linguistic construction was facticity patterns. These were most commonly used with the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY and worked to undermine the health of the vegan diet, particularly with regards to the notional possibility of risk. The patterns were developed using modal finites, hedging, presupposition, calls to authority, negative semantic prosody, disclaimers, and concessions, among other linguistic structures.

There was one conceptual metaphor—VEGANISM AND MEAT CONSUMPTION ARE PLACES—used to suggest that meat consumption was authentic and original while veganism was represented as temporary

and insufficient. The metaphor was developed using predicators that indicate spatial movement, e.g., 'dive into', 'abandon' and 'return'. Related to metaphor were two developed framings—VEGAN DIETS ARE A SOURCE OF ILLNESS and VEGANS ARE ADVERSARIES. The former framing used a variety of linguistic features that indicate a source frame of viral infection, indicating illness manifestation, viralness, chronic qualities, recovery and medical assistance. The latter used linguistic features that indicate a source frame of the adversarial process and, in the clearest mappings, elements of plaintiff, defendant, council, evidence, claims, rights, pleas and arguments.

The final linguistic theory used in the creation of destructive stories is identity theory, and there are two instances of this: VEGANS ARE IRRATIONAL and VEGANS ARE HIPPIES. The first identity is constructed through idiosyncratic material processes like 'drinking one's own urine', and the second one is constructed through identity triggers that evoke an alternative therapy frame, triggers like 'yoga' and 'alternative therapies'.

Aside from the linguistic theories in the ecolinguistics framework, there were other random linguistic constructions that assisted in uncovering destructive stories. One of those constructions was 'whataboutism' or the 'tu quoque' argument in which an attempt is made to mislead or distract through the introduction of a parallel but ultimately unrelated topic. Four other constructions include analogies, scare quotes, discourse markers and heterogloss. Overall, it was notable how many linguistic constructions were used to mislead and deceive 'in subtle and artful ways' (Potter, 1996, p. 1), like with whataboutism, scare quotes, heterogloss appraisal, and the tools of fact construction (Potter, 1996). Over 98% of the world's population regularly consume animal products, and yet the representations which animal-consumers communicate about veganism and their own dietary practices seem to be much less honestly constructed than the claims made by vegans to support veganism.

3. How are positive representations of veganism linguistically constructed?

Positive representations of veganism in this thesis were constructed using narrative structures, identity patterns and appraisal patterns. For the documentary film *The Game Changers*, narrative structures were employed for the analysis. The film contained a basic prototypical narrative structure and a prototypical hero narrative structure, both of which worked together to form a framing narrative. Within that framing narrative, I uncovered 19 embedded narratives. All of the narrative structures were identified through their temporal sequences and logical connections indicated by the linguistic features of adverbs, circumstantial adjuncts, verb tenses, demonstrative pronouns, comparatives and conjunction. Two other parts of the narrative structure were 'misconceptions' and 'expert sources'. Misconceptions were identified through the linguistic features of predicators and modifiers that indicated confusion, the interrogative mood, modality, contrasting conjunctions and mood adjuncts. Expert sources were used to undermine the facticity of the misconceptions and were identified through nomination and functional honorifics. More importantly, the relationship between the expert sources and the misconceptions which they attempted to undermine was identified through elements of lexical cohesion, including causal conjunctions, repetition, antonymy, reference and synonymy. The final element of the narratives was the narrative entailments or stories. Depending on the story being told, I uncovered the linguistic features of structural opposition, disjunctive adjuncts, appraisal patterns, repetition and agency.

For the vegan cookbooks, I used narratology, appraisal theory and identity theory to reveal the representations of veganism, the former two theories used primarily to support the latter, identity theory. Identities were linguistically constructed using appraisal patterns with regard to food, family and tradition, including the use of possessive pronouns, familial terminology, geographical locations, comparatives, didactic structures, procatalepsis, second languages, colloquial

vernaculars, expletives, clausal theme, punctuation, whimsical language and image. Appraisal theory is also used with plant-based and animal-based foods, mostly using the linguistic features of monogloss attitudes, heterogloss attitudes, and attitudinal lexis. Notable in the linguistic construction of positive representations was the overlap of 'misconceptions' in *The Game Changers* and procatalepsis in Claiborne's cookbook. Also of interest is the role that antonymy plays in the linguistic development of the representations. Considering the vegan lifestyle, it makes sense: Everything about veganism has an opposite in the normative agricultural and dietary practices of most people on the planet.

4. How are positive and negative linguistic constructions of veganism related to each other?

Positive and negative representations of veganism in this thesis tend to be inversely aligned with each other. The most powerful beneficial story in my data was VEGANISM IS HEALTHY, and the most prolific destructive story was VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY. As a reminder, in the search for ecolinguistic stories, beneficial stories need to be powerful and not necessarily prolific; and destructive stories tend to be powerful *because* they are prolific and already part of our collective conscience. The beneficial story ANIMAL-BASED DIETS ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE inversely aligns with the destructive story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. The beneficial story MEAT CONSUMPTION DOES NOT DEFINE MASCULINITY inversely aligns with the destructive story VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE. The beneficial stories VEGANS ARE FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL inversely aligns with the destructive stories VEGANS ARE VIOLENT AND MILITANTS AND ADVERSARIES. In this way, the data notably suggests that beneficial stories are created and communicated in response to the most prolific destructive stories.

5. How can our knowledge of the linguistic constructions of veganism be of practical use in the real world?

This final question was answered in part by James Wilks, who convinced his father to change his diet to avoid a second heart-attack, who made a documentary film about his transition to a plant-based diet, and who created the opportunities to talk to people in mainstream media, each time reaching a wider audience with beneficial stories of veganism. James Wilks's unique position will be discussed further in the next section, but for most people without a platform like a documentary film or an invite to appear on a morning talk show, there are other options to share the beneficial stories of veganism with those around us. For me, I wrote this thesis and hope that I can in some way publish it to reach a wider audience. From this research, we know that narratives are powerful, and that they are even more powerful when they are personal narratives that center on the transition to veganism and the beneficial effects that that has on our lives, whether those are beneficial physical effects for sporting activities, or beneficial cognitive effects related to ethics and the natural world. As we know, narratives exist in every aspect of our lives, which means that we potentially have countless opportunities every day to share the beneficial stories of veganism. As a professor, I have, in addition to my research, the classroom and my students and I never miss an opportunity to tell some beneficial stories. I always try, though, to keep in mind something that this research has also suggested: telling too many stories risks being stereotyped as the vegan in that hackneyed joke about over-disclosure.

Identity performance is another powerful way to communicate the beneficial stories of veganism, and we know from this research that commonly shared beneficial stories focus on authenticity, family, culture and food, lots of good food. My family here in Japan frequently has friends over for lunch or dinner and drinks, and I hope that the food that we make impresses our guests and relates the beneficial stories that vegan food is healthy and delicious. During those meals, I might talk about growing up in an Italian-American family, eating pasta every Sunday, homemade pizza every Friday, and other Italian dishes throughout the week. And I might make a point to be friendly, easy-going and generous. I perform my identities so that my guests enjoy my company and see my food

as authentic and hopefully delicious, breaking down some of those anti-vegan beliefs in the process. These are all practical, useful things that we can all do in the real world.

7.3 INSIGHTS

Having answered my research questions about the representations of veganism and their linguistic construction, there are other related aspects of the research that provide insight and warrant further consideration. Most of the discussion in this section will center on the beneficial stories because finding beneficial stories is one of the primary objectives of both this research and the ecolinguistics framework, the objective of finding and implementing practical, real-world solutions in the interest of effecting social change. Understanding the stories in more detail works toward that goal. Before that, though, there are a few points to address regarding the destructive stories.

7.3.1 DESTRUCTIVE STORIES

One notable aspect of the negative representations of veganism is that many of them are to some extent logically connected to each other through causal relationships. For example, VEGANS ARE CARELESS AND UNEDUCATED, therefore VEGANS ARE UNHEALTHY; or VEGANISM IS EXPENSIVE AND INACCESSIBLE, therefore VEGANS ARE QUITTERS; or VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE, so when VEGANS ARE AGGRESSIVE AND MILITANT, they are also HYPOCRITES AND DISINGENUOUS. The possible consequences of this are that any one negative representation has the potential to trigger a plurality of entailments, i.e., other negative representations. Representing vegans as quitters has the potential to also communicate the representation of vegans as lazy, weak, disingenuous, hypocritical, irrational, emotionally unstable, careless, unhealthy and/or fake. It also has the potential to communicate the representation of vegan food as unhealthy, unappealing, expensive and/or inaccessible. This compounding of negative representations is a powerfully destructive phenomenon: easy to initiate, difficult to resist. And, considering how 'meat' has been socially constructed (Adams, 1990; Grillo,

2016) in a world where over 98% of the world's population consume it, I am not confident that the same works for positive representations of veganism.

Sometimes my evaluation of stories was not a straightforward process, as was the case with the destructive story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE. Veganism can be and sometimes is detrimental to the environment, and I evaluated the story VEGANISM IS ENVIRONMENTALLY DESTRUCTIVE as destructive not because of the negative impact that veganism has on the environment, but because it undermines value three of my ecosophy about *the greater violence of animal agriculture*. Animal agriculture is the single largest contributor to environmental degradation, and that fact needs to be addressed in any discussion of diet and the environment. When it is not discussed, it creates an equivalence between veganism and animal agriculture regarding environmental impacts, and that is misleading because they are not equal in the destruction that they perpetrate on the natural world. In this case, the absence of information played a role in my evaluation.

As previously noted, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY was the most common destructive story in my data. From my research and my personal experience as a vegan, I would say that this holds true in everyday life as well: A large obstacle for many non-vegans is the belief that the vegan diet is unhealthy (Povey et al., 2001; Souza et al., 2020). Since there is such a strong relationship between health and diet, and since diet is probably the most salient aspect of vegan practice, stories of health seem to have the most impact on people's lives. One reason for this could be that diet is more than food, as noted in the section on vegan cookbooks. In addition to daily consumption, nutrition and health, diet is also strongly related to culture and tradition, which is consistently linked to any number of identities. While I understand the arguments about veganism being more complex than a mere diet (Wright, 2015), I would contend that diet is more complex than at first assumed. This bears out in the literature as well as in my analysis: Diet is linked to health, strength, performance, body image, environment, ethics, national identity, ethnic identity, gender identity

and religious identity. And this idea is supportive of the sources that I chose for the beneficial stories of veganism: cookbooks and a documentary on sport, health and nutrition.

Regarding user comments, compared to full-length articles and the other media, they were the richest source for destructive stories of veganism. They were also rather limited in the variety of linguistic theories that were used to reveal stories. In fact, aside from one instance of fact construction—for the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY—only one major theory was used in analyzing user comments: appraisal theory. This suggests that, due to user comments being the briefest tracts of discourse to analyze—sometimes not even constructed in a complete clause—linguistic triggers of appraisal are more easily embedded in short tracts of discourse compared to other linguistic theories that need lengthier discourse in which to develop, e.g., narrative or a framing. As my analyses show, 'patterns' of appraisal did indeed develop across multiple comments, sometimes from multiple sources.

7.3.2 BENEFICIAL STORIES

Beneficial stories were the planned culmination of this thesis. Destructive stories were included primarily as an ancillary feature to beneficial stories. Destructive stories are important to understand—their linguistic constructions and the types of media in which they are most prolific—but beneficial stories are the ones with the potential to alter social cognition toward promoting practices that are favorable for ecology, the environment and the relationships that sustain it. If this thesis has produced any insight into how we might begin to make any practical difference in the way that we treat the natural world regarding diet and agricultural practices, that insight is to be found in the next two sections.

7.3.2.1 THE GAME CHANGERS

The documentary film *The Game Changers* tells a strong beneficial story through the linguistic features of narrative structure in order to resist some of the negative rhetoric surrounding the allegedly poor appearance and poor health of vegans. According to Stibbe (2021), 'narrative is the most powerful form of story' (p. 182) in his book *Ecolinguistics*, and the success of the *The Game Changers* seems to support that. Commercial success, though, is difficult to assess. Subscription services like Netflix count views, but the streaming platform is not very generous with their data. Besides, counting views is not a very accurate indication of a film's commercial success. In addition to that, *The Game Changers* has been and still is available on multiple platforms. It was initially released in theaters, and then went directly to iTunes, and now can be seen, according to the film's website, on iTunes, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, Vimeo, Google Play and Vudu, not all of which are subscription services like Netflix. Fortunately, there is a much clearer measure of success, and it aligns with the goals of this thesis.

As mentioned in my answer to research question 5 about practical applications in the real world, James Wilks—the narrator, main character and co-producer of the documentary film—appeared on both *Good Morning Britain* (*GMB*) and *The Joe Rogan Experience* (*JRE*) to defend the nutritional claims made in *The Game Changers*. He appeared with strongman Patrik Baboumian on *GMB* in October of 2019, and, as expected, Piers Morgan immediately began communicating several destructive stories of veganism, even before Wilks and Baboumian were even introduced. Piers Morgan said that New Zealand rugby players were 'massive' because 'they don't follow a vegan diet', that race-car drivers don't have to be strong (re vegan Lewis Hamilton), that the vegan diet rots your brain by 20%, and that tennis players are quite weak (re vegan Novak Djokovic). Once introduced, he challenged Wilks and Baboumian with some common misconceptions about veganism, and Wilks and Baboumian responded. Here is a two-minute exchange from that program:

Baboumian: I was actually doing better after I went vegan than before.
Morgan: But your basic strength came from eating meat...
Baboumian: Um, you can't really say that...
Morgan: But basically your residual strength came from meat eating.
Baboumian: No, no...
Morgan: But for basically two-thirds of your life you've been eating meat.
Wilks: There's plenty of people that've been vegan, body builders, their whole life they've been vegan. All protein originates in plants. Animals are just the middle...
Morgan: There is a body builder who's been a vegan their entire life? Nobody was vegan twenty years ago. No one even heard of it.
Wilks: That's not true.
Morgan: Other than weird tribes in the rain forest, no one even heard of being a vegan 20 years ago. It's a new cult.
Wilks: The term vegan was coined in 1944 in the UK, so that's not true.
Morgan: Name me one body builder who've been a vegan, professional body builder, who's been a vegan from the day they were born.
Wilks: Jehina Malik.
Morgan: Who?
Wilks: Jehina Malik. She's a female body builder...
Morgan: Where's she from?
Wilks: The States.
Morgan: Really?
Wilks: Yep.
Morgan: She's been a vegan since the day she was born.
Wilks: Absolutely.
Morgan: So her parents starved her of meat when she was young.
Wilks: They didn't *starve* her of meat. They gave her better fuel.
Morgan: Better fuel. And you don't eat meat.
Wilks: No.
Morgan: When did you last eat meat?
Wilks: Seven years ago.
Morgan: So how old are you?
Wilks: Forty-one.
Morgan: Wow. So for 34 years you were a meat eater.
Wilks: Correct. I made a mistake.
Morgan: You made a mistake for 34 years?
Wilks: Well, you know, we're led to believe we need meat to be strong and healthy and it's just completely not true.

Morgan: (silence)

When the entire segment is considered, Wilks and Baboumian successfully resisted Morgan's destructive insinuations that meat consumption in youth establishes strength in the later stages of life, that only meat provides sufficient protein for muscle building, that nobody could be vegan from birth and be healthy, that veganism is a recent phenomenon, that veganism is a cult, and that meat provides most nutrition which, when removed from the diet, amounts to 'starving'. A little over halfway through the segment, Morgan says: 'You know what? I will watch this documentary. I will watch it. I'm interested in watching it.' And then at the end of the segment, he repeats, 'You know, I'm gonna go and watch your documentary later. I'm interested.' I consider this to be real-world resistance to the destructive stories of veganism, and it all began with *The Game Changers* and the beneficial stories that it linguistically communicates.

In a later part of the segment, program co-host Susanna Reid asks Wilks, 'And what have you achieved since becoming vegan?', to which Wilks responds, 'I've made a film about it'. I find that question and answer to be illustrative of James Wilks's role as hero in the prototypical hero narrative. The hero's role is in some sense to 'achieve', and James Wilks, as hero, achieves the goal of resistance through the boon he has secured during the initiation phase of the hero journey: nutritional knowledge of plant-based diets. He shares that boon with his ailing father; he shares it with a wider audience through the documentary film; and he shares it a third time with yet another wide audience on *Good Morning Britain*.

To date, I can think of no other event that so closely exemplifies what ecolinguistics sets out to achieve. In fact, James Wilks even uses critical linguistic analysis in the *GMB* segment when he challenges Morgan on Morgan's use of the trigger word 'starve'. Here is the exchange again:

Morgan: So her parents starved her of meat when she was young.

Wilks: They didn't *starve* her of meat. They gave her better fuel.

Morgan appears to have chosen the expression 'starve her of meat' in order to trigger the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY, but Wilks immediately resists that story by negating the trigger expression ('*didn't* starve her of meat') and replacing it with a more favorable description ('gave her better fuel'), in the process communicating the beneficial story PLANT-BASED DIETS ARE HEALTHIER THAN MEAT-BASED DIETS. I don't think James Wilks is aware of the ecolinguistics framework, but he appears to have developed useful rhetorical strategies to resist the destructive stories being told in mainstream media like *Good Morning Britain*.

James Wilks also appeared on Joe Rogan's highly popular podcast *The Joe Rogan Experience* in December of 2019 to debate Chris Kresser, M.S., L.Ac, who is described on Spotify as 'a globally recognized leader in the fields of ancestral health, Paleo nutrition, and functional and integrative medicine'. I won't discuss this podcast episode in any detail here—it is over three and a half hours long—but it serves as another example of James Wilks actively resisting destructive stories of veganism in the real world. After the debate, on his Twitter feed, Joe Rogan wrote, 'James knocked it out of the park, and defended himself and the film quite spectacularly.' Again, I consider this to be real-world resistance to the destructive stories of veganism. It seems that James Wilks and the other producers of *The Game Changers* found an effective strategy of resistance in narrative.

The usefulness of narrative, particularly by celebrities and athletes, is supported by Parkinson and Twine (2020) whom I addressed in my chapter on the social and linguistic construction of veganism. They advocate for the use of narratives, which they consider to be 'an effective way of communicating context and increasing trust and awareness' (p. 38), particularly with regards to vegan celebrities and athletes, who 'can be important in breaking down perceptions of veganism as unhealthy and challenging stereotypes of vegans as weak, tired, or lacking energy' (p. 27). In

addition to the athletes in the *The Game Changers*, several celebrities also played a role in its production, including Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jackie Chan, and director James Cameron.

Putting aside for the moment the beneficial aspects of *The Game Changers* and its linguistic construction, I must address the fact that the film appears to reinforce the traits of hegemonic hetero-masculinity. The film does promote male strength and body image, and contains a segment about plant-based diets and penile erections. Of the 19 embedded narratives, only three are about women, and one of them is not even an athlete. She is a cook. Of the remaining 16 narratives, four involve American football players; two involve athletes in combat sports (three if you count James Wilks); two involve body builders; two involve weightlifting strongmen; one involves Brooklyn firefighters; one involves a military veteran; and one involves Arnold Schwarzenegger, a notorious body-builder, Hollywood action-film hero, conservative politician, and divorcee who fathered a child with his housekeeper while he was married to another woman. That is a list of hyper-masculine professions with a history of toxic masculinity. As Krane (2004) writes, 'Sport also reinforces and supports hegemonic masculinity and femininity... Characteristics associated with hegemonic masculinity include strength, competitiveness, assertiveness, confidence, and independence' (p. 3).

On the same topic, it is also notable that James Wilks successfully defended the film on *GMB* with Piers Morgan, who also exhibits the traits of hegemonic hetero-masculinity, particularly those of competitiveness, confidence and assertiveness. Joe Rogan fits the profile as well, being a UFC commentator and champion of shameless transphobia. Eighty-nine percent of Joe Rogan's guests are males and his most-viewed episodes include those with Kanye West, Mike Tyson, Jordan Peterson and Alex Jones (JRELibrary, 2022), all of which have exhibited traits of toxic masculinity in their public past. This all suggests that anyone else besides MMA fighter James Wilks might not have had the same success in resisting the destructive rhetoric of Piers Morgan and Joe Rogan.

Other vegan/vegetarian guests on *GMB* have not been as successful as Wilks and Baboumian. I might also reference some recent research that has found that vegan members of a large online vegan community use the traits of hegemonic masculinity to counter anti-vegan rhetoric, unconsciously upholding the detrimental hegemony of the normative gender hierarchy (Brookes and Chalupnik, 2022). It is possible that James Wilks and the other producers, writers and director of *The Game Changers* recognized the potential in using the traits of hegemonic hetero-masculinity as tools of resistance against stories like VEGAN MEN ARE EFFEMINATE and VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY.

Ultimately, I am compelled to acknowledge the entailment VEGAN MEN UTILIZE THE TRAITS OF HEGEMONIC HETERO-MASCULINITY, which undermines value eight of my vegan ecosophy. Notable in that value is the phrase 'subordination...through the performance of hegemonic hetero-masculinity', which is what I think is occurring in *The Game Changers*. Using the traits of hegemonic hetero-masculinity, even in resistance to the destructive stories of veganism, reinforces hegemonic hetero-masculinity in other areas of life, which is subordinating, marginalizing and destructive. I do think that the film attempts to address this lapse in judgement—through Scott Jurek, Morgan Mitchell, Dotsie Bausch, Charity Morgan and the segment about meat and masculinity in meat-industry advertising—but the entailment still exists and is likely to ring loud with the LGBTQ community, feminist women and non-toxic, non-athletic men. It is definitely a consideration moving toward future research: the consideration of the extent that beneficial stories of veganism have an impact on male non-vegans without exhibiting those hyper-masculine traits.

One more point needs to be recognized regarding *The Game Changers*. As mentioned earlier, the story VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY is by far the most prolific story in the data for this research. This is recognized in the academic literature (Povey et al., 2001; Sneijder and Molder, 2009; Souza et al., 2020) as well as by James Wilks himself when he is asked on *GMB* about what he thinks the biggest myth about veganism is, and he responds, 'Well, that there's not enough protein'. He repeats this

on *JRE* as well when he says, 'I think we should definitely hit protein, because I think of everyone watching, that's the biggest myth, the biggest sort of gripe, and I think we should definitely hit B12...' This seems to suggest that real-world resistance to destructive stories is designed specifically for those stories that are most prolific and thus potentially the most influential. This thesis appears to support that, as noted earlier: The most prolific destructive story, VEGANISM IS UNHEALTHY, inversely aligns with the most powerful beneficial story, VEGANISM IS HEALTHY. This is certainly not a novel discovery, but it bears remembering when delivering beneficial stories of veganism in everyday life. Considering the hackneyed joke 'How can you tell if someone is vegan? Don't worry. They will tell you', it might be best to communicate the stories of veganism sparingly but powerfully and effectively.

7.3.2.2 VEGAN COOKBOOKS

Most of the cookbooks attempt to communicate authenticity through the establishment of an ethnic-based identity that supports the kinds of food that each book centers on, and this is accomplished in a number of ways, both linguistic and visual. Chloe Coscarelli (2014) uses references to family and ancestors, images and the Italian language to establish her Italian identity and thus the authenticity of her Italian food. Anupy Singla's (2012) uses the same linguistic and visual techniques to project her own ethnic Indian identity and therefore the authenticity of her Indian food. Eddie Garza (2016) does this as well with his Mexican recipes, and so does Claiborne (2018)—minus the language element—to project the authenticity of her Southern African-American soul food.

Ryan Splint (2015) and the authors of *Thug Kitchen* (2014) also rely on identity performance, but they accomplish this in different ways. Splint employs a southern-American Texan vernacular to communicate authenticity while Davis and Holloway use the word 'thug' with an aggressive, expletive-laden prose, stereotypically evocative of African-American men. Both cookbooks also use

image to assist in communicating their identities, but to a lesser extent that the other cookbooks. Splint uses hand-drawn illustrations of skeleton cowboys on the range, a quirky complement to his exaggerated vernacular. *Thug Kitchen* uses the photo of an African-American young man running down an urban street with a bag full of groceries, the only full-body image of a human being in the cookbook.

Only Mari Fujii (2005) eschews an emphasis on identity performance, most likely due to *shojin* cuisine having always been vegan, which means that there has never been a meat-based equivalent that has appropriated the quality of authenticity. Japanese temple cuisine is inherently authentically vegan. Fujii instead focuses more on the physical and spiritual benefits of vegan food. All of the writers use positive monogloss appraisal patterns to potentially encourage positive evaluations in the minds of their readers. Only Fujii and Coscarelli additionally use heterogloss appraisal patterns to objectively emphasize the quality of their vegan food, Coscarelli in particular focusing on the demographic least likely to transition to a vegan lifestyle: men.

Another notable aspect of the vegan cookbooks is that not all of the writers chose to negatively portray animal-based foods. Claiborne does, as do Coscarelli and Davis and Holloway, but Singla, Fujii, Garza and Splint all decline to engage in negative appraisal, a choice that is possibly linked to broadening their appeal to their readers and closing the social distance.

Jenné Claiborne's cookbook *Sweet Potato Soul* (2018) deserves a few words. First, it is notable that she uses the rhetorical strategy of procatalepsis, which aligns with the misconceptions used in *The Game Changers*, both sources finding value in using destructive stories to introduce beneficial stories. Her situation is singular in that her identities are complicated and her appraisal patterns profuse. The situation is even more complicated when you consider that the one African-American writer in the group has foregone the transcribed vernacular of her race and ethnicity while the

young white couple (*Thug Kitchen*) have chosen to employ that vernacular despite not being African American and not including recipes for traditionally African-American foods, meaning that there was no need to establish authenticity and credibility. The answer might be found in the consideration that Claiborne needs to make her case for vegan soul food in the face of long-held stereotypes for an historically plant-based West-African food; She needs to separate herself from white southern Americans despite the overlap in their cuisines; She needs to sound authoritative in all aspects of the food she introduces while also making her food sound appealing; She needs to appeal to a broad range of people, both white and African American, both Southern American and not Southern American, both vegan and meat-consuming; and she needs to do all of this while being black, female and vegan.

Claiborne is, of all the authors in this research, the most marginalized, which means she needs to be the most convincing since she has the biggest burden of proof in a world that sees her as anything *but* an authority. Perhaps for these reasons her introduction is the longest and most complex of all the cookbooks addressed in this research; Her personal stories are the most abundant and her historical references the most detailed; Her positive appraisal of vegan food is the most consistent throughout her cookbook and her negative appraisal of animal-based foods is the most critical. The point here is that while I might be able to say that performance of an ethnic identity is necessary to create effective beneficial stories of veganism, at least in the medium of the vegan cookbook, it is not the same performance for everyone. Some must overcome more obstacles to achieve similar results, and perhaps this is the rationale for value seven in my vegan ecosophy that recognizes the need for social justice in marginalized communities of race, class and gender minorities.

Finally in this section, I want to once again address *Thug Kitchen* with regards to its racist deception. Due to years of criticism, Michelle Davis and Matt Holloway have changed the name of their franchise. In mid-2020, they decided to discontinue the use of the name *Thug Kitchen* and have

replaced it on all of their cookbooks with a new name: *Bad Manners*. They have also reviewed all of the content on their website in an effort to remove any instances of cultural appropriation. The couple explained: 'We realize...that whatever our original intention, our use of [the term "thug"] reflected our privilege and ignored the reality that the word is assigned to black people in an attempt to dehumanize them. That's (messed) up and not at all what we want to stand for. We apologize. We recognize we need to do better' (Vegan Food & Living, 2020). This change strengthens the beneficial stories in their new cookbooks and makes them more valuable as tools of resistance. I personally like the cookbooks and the 'gritty' identity that Davis and Holloway have created but was always uncomfortable with their performance of 'digital blackface'. Perhaps the cookbook series now deserves a closer linguistic analysis now that it doesn't promote the marginalization of African-American men.

Overall, vegan cookbooks produce several beneficial stories of veganism, many of which did not appear in *The Game Changers*, including VEGAN FOOD IS AUTHENTIC, VEGANISM IS SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY, VEGANS ARE FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL, and VEGAN FOOD HAS AN HISTORICAL PRECEDENT. All of these stories directly challenge and resist some of the destructive stories of veganism uncovered in my data and in the academic literature, namely VEGANS ARE FAKE, VEGANS ARE MENTALLY UNSTABLE, VEGANS ARE AGGRESSIVE AND VIOLENT, and VEGANISM HAS NO HISTORICAL PRECEDENT. Unfortunately, there are no real-world instances of the cookbook stories actively resisting destructive stories of veganism, like with James Wilks, but there are some indications of their popularity. *Gentleman's Quarterly* online magazine UK published an article in March 2022 titled 'The thirty-one best cookbooks to buy in 2022' (Bugler, 2022) in which 12 of the 32 cookbooks are explicitly labeled as vegan, vegetarian or plant-based. I consider that number, more than a third of the cookbooks, to be unexpectedly high, especially considering the medium: *Gentleman's Quarterly*.

Also notable is how some of those cookbooks are described. Peggy Brusseau's (2021) cookbook *The Contented Vegan* is described as 'a caring companion that will help you along the way' (Bugler, 2022), reminiscent of Coscarelli's friendly and helpful identity. The cookbook *Vegan Japaneasy* by Tim Anderson (2020) is described as 'drawing on the naturally vegan principles of Japanese cuisine' (Bugler, 2022), suggestive of Mari Fujii's description of Japanese temple cuisine; and *One Pot, Pan, Planet* by Anna Jones (2021) is described as 'packed with flavour and focused on planet-friendly ingredients' (Bugler, 2022) which is suggestive of Claiborne's appraisal patterns that represent animal consumption as environmentally destructive and plant-based foods as beneficial for the environment. There seems to be a pattern that is getting repeated as vegan cookbooks are gaining more popularity and communicating beneficial stories of veganism to a continually widening audience.

7.4 LIMITATIONS

This research has several limitations, the first of which regards the ecolinguistics framework. It is comparatively new and still undergoing adjustment and refinement, and because of this it sometimes lacks clarity. One such area concerns the movement from linguistic constructions—like a framing, a facticity pattern or a narrative entailment—to the stories-we-live-by. The framework fails to explain how the two might differ or how they might be related. As can be seen in my analysis in the results section, I sometimes switch between them, sometimes using the term 'story' and sometimes using a term like 'evaluation' or 'entailment'. In the end, I made the decision that they are both accurate representations of the ideology communicated through the discourse, referencing the linguistic construction when addressing the linguistic analysis, and later using the term 'story' when addressing the process of evaluation against my vegan ecosophy.

Another perceived limitation to the ecolinguistics framework is that it is 'theory heavy'. The framework introduces eight linguistic theories, six of which I employed in my linguistic analysis:

Framing theory (Lakoff and Wehling, 2012), metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Muller, 2006), identity theory (Benwell and Stokoe, 2006), fact construction (Potter, 1996), appraisal theory (Martin and White, 2004; Martin and Rose, 2007) and narrative theory (Toolan, 2001; Bal, 2017). In addition to those, I also used Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2003; van Leeuwen, 2008; van Dijk, 2011), Positive Discourse Analysis (Martin, 2004; Macgilchrist, 2007) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). I am undoubtedly more aware of the analytical possibilities open to me as a researcher and have gained some limited experience with each one of those theories, but I wonder if working with only one or two theories would have allowed me to develop a more nuanced understanding of the theories used and thus given me better insight into the phenomenon being studied.

One final limitation is about the amount of data I collected and analyzed. In short, there was too much of it. While analysis itself was rarely a problem—I am a linguist first—extracting valuable insights from those analyses was a challenge. There are 67 stories of veganism that I uncovered and probably as many distinct linguistic features that helped me to do that, and organization was at times problematic. In future research, I think it would be better to narrow my research by focusing on fewer sources for less data for fewer stories using fewer linguistic theories. I suspect that the insights gained from a more streamlined study might be more clearly identified, organized, explained and applied in real-world practice.

7.5 FUTURE RESEARCH

As already mentioned, the results from this ecolinguistic study have the potential to change the way we communicate about veganism. On a personal, daily basis, beneficial stories can be communicated repeatedly in countless situations as we move from home to work to school to shops to friends' houses and sporting events and whatever else people do together. In broader contexts, some of the linguistic strategies revealed in my data can be used in news media, television

programs, movies, documentaries, pamphlets, restaurant menus, radio broadcasts, websites, and in any medium commonly used to communicate with each other. For our understanding of destructive stories, it is also good to know how they are constructed so that we can spot them and resist them when possible. And the world will change. We will develop new destructive stories of veganism and we will need to understand them linguistically, rhetorically, so that we can develop and tell even more beneficial stories in an act of resistance. Right now the world is on a path toward destruction, and beneficial stories of veganism can serve as one small way to correct that movement toward something better, something that fosters the relationships of all participants in the natural world, something that values life and how so much of it is interconnected and necessary for survival.

Toward that end, I see promise in future research investigating the possibility of causality between news articles and their associated user comments. While we now know a little about how destructive stories are linguistically constructed, it might be good to expand our knowledge on how those stories are communicated and what entities are implicated in that communication. Multimodal analysis of data in the search for stories of veganism is also a promising option for future research. This thesis did contain a little image analysis, and in my opinion that analysis was fruitful. A more detailed multi-modal analysis could shed light on how stories of veganism are communicated through image, sound and design elements. The ecolinguistics framework has not accounted for this possibility, making it a potentially insightful area to explore. Also regarding multimodal analysis, I see potential in future research on other vegan documentaries and the narrative patterns that they potentially share. And finally, also regarding multimodal analysis, one final suggestion for future research on the linguistic representations of veganism concerns social media. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok have large numbers of successful vegan influencers, and it would likely be advantageous to better understand how those influencers visually and linguistically construct their stories of veganism. Again, as a participant in a non-academic context, I

see indications of identity construction and narrative, except that social media doesn't end like a documentary or a cookbook. Learning how vegan social-media influencers adapt to the changing times and grow as a 'vegan messenger' would be insightful, because the times will change and someone will have to do this all over again.

Finally, I would like to end this thesis with a quote by the writer and media producer Aph Ko (2021) discussing writing about cultural phenomena:

> Trying to help others understand the deeper messages enveloped in a particular cultural norm can take every ounce of energy you have...especially when you try to present these issues in new and exciting ways. (pp. 1-2)

What I have tried to do with this thesis is to uncover some of those 'deeper messages' about veganism and meat consumption, and while it has indeed taken a considerable amount of energy, I hope that I have presented at least some of those messages 'in new and exciting ways'. I would like to think that this work can help others, especially the trillions of animals that suffer and have their lives taken from them every year. After forty years of meat consumption, it is the least that I can do to bring a bit of balance back to the natural world.

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