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FROM COALESCENCE TO BUREAUCRATIZATION: VEGANUARY'S USE OF
RHETORICAL STRATEGIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Communication
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
Sabrina A. Carr

May 2020

FROM COALESCENCE TO BUREAUCRATIZATION: VEGANUARY'S USE OF
RHETORICAL STRATEGIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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FROM COALESCENCE TO BUREAUCRATIZATION: VEGANUARY'S USE OF
RHETORICAL STRATEGIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Department of Communication

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Social movement plays an integral part in how our society makes progress and changes overtime. With the birth and adoption of digital technologies comes new and unique opportunities for social movements and social movement organizations to make further progress and accomplish its goals. This study uses the foundations of organizational identification and values advocacy to evaluate the rhetoric of a specific organization within the vegan movement, Veganuary, and shows how this organization utilizes various strategies on its social media platforms to grow as an organization over a six-year time period. Specifically, I argue that Veganuary was able to move from coalescence to bureaucratization through the use of values advocacy aimed at community-building and identification strategies, such as celebrity associations/endorsements, political engagement, and normalization.

Keywords: *social movements, social movement organizations, vegan movement, Veganuary*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Social movements are an essential part of societal progression. Essentially, individuals become dissatisfied with their environment in some way, whether politically, economically, socially, or culturally instigate change (Griffin, 1952). In studying social movements from a rhetorical perspective, the goal is to identify and understand the persuasive strategies utilized to bring about change. Many works have been completed on social movements by both foundational and contemporary scholars and stage models of social movements have been produced (See Christiansen, 2009; Griffin, 1952). However, the bulk of study in this area has centered on movements that seek political action. Christiansen (2009) argues, however, that social movements that seek other ends, such as cultural, social, or lifestyle changes, need further study because they often do not align well with current stage models. Therefore, it is imperative that scholars focus on analyses of social movements that seek cultural, social, or lifestyle changes to fill gaps in the existing literature (Christiansen, 2009). As such, this thesis analyzes the rhetorical strategies used by Veganuary aimed at increasing awareness and support for the vegan lifestyle in an effort to extend the scholarship of social movements.

Before explicating why/how the Veganuary campaign provides an exceptional case and set of artifacts to help fill the gaps in the existing literature, it is necessary to discuss the birth and growth of the vegan movement to situate Veganuary in the larger social, cultural, economic and political context. Vegan is defined as “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” (Rodan & Mummery, 2019, p.2). The word vegan was first introduced by Donald Watson, one of

the founders of The Vegan Society. The Vegan Society was formed in 1944 by animal activists who wanted to do more for the ethical treatment of animals by removing animal products from their diets and lifestyles (Vegan Society, n.d.). Since that time, the vegan movement has grown in both awareness and size, especially in recent years (The Vegan Society, n.d.). In fact, *The Economist* dubbed 2019 “the Year of the Vegan,” arguing that vegan will become “mainstream” in 2019 (Parker, 2018, para. 1).

Beyond the “Year of the Vegan” moniker, plenty of evidence supports the growing salience of the Vegan movement. For example, a multitude of online articles and news sources allude to the growing popularity and trendiness of the vegan lifestyle. In fact, Google searches about veganism have grown exponentially since 2012, and have surpassed the amount of searches related to vegetarianism (“Google trends,” 2019). Only an estimated 0.1% of the world actually identifies as vegan, but this number fluctuates depending on how individuals self-identify (Lane, 2019). Myer (2019) made a distinction between dietary vegans, lifestyle vegans, and vegan individuals, explaining that these differing labels can cause the numbers reported to be an inaccurate portrayal of the true number of vegans in the world. Within the U.S., an estimated .5% of the population identified as vegan in 2016, or approximately 1.63 million Americans, but this number grew to about 6% of the population in 2019 (Lane, 2019). While these are self-reported numbers and therefore may be slightly inflated, they do represent an increase in the vegan population.

With growing interest in the vegan diet, grocery stores and restaurants have begun to include vegan and plant-based options. Sales of plant-based products have grown 31% from 2017 to 2019, compared to only 4% growth in general food sales (Good Food

Institute, 2019). This market is predicted to grow; estimates indicate it will reach a market value of \$24.3 billion globally by 2026 (“Vegan food market size,” 2019). Not only have these options grown, but vegan influencers and organizations have also seen growing interest in the vegan lifestyle, and new organizations and products have been created to cater to this lifestyle. One of these organizations founded in the midst of this recent vegan-frenzy is Veganuary.

Veganuary & The Vegan Movement

Though some organizations associated with the vegan movement, such as PETA, clearly seek political ends, Veganuary does not. Launched in 2013, Veganuary is a U.K.-based non-profit organization that provides resources and support for individuals interested in trying out a vegan diet and/or lifestyle. According to its website, the organization aims to grow the movement globally through increased participation in Veganuary, bringing awareness to the reasons for adopting a vegan diet, and working with food and restaurant brands to create plant-based alternatives (Veganuary, n.d.b). Clearly, Veganuary is an organization primarily focused on cultural, social, and/or lifestyle change rather than political change.

Veganuary, the organization, launched a campaign shortly after its inception titled “Veganuary.” This campaign takes place every year and encourages people world-wide to try being vegan for the month of January, in which Veganuary as an organization provides resources for participants to keep up with the diet for all 31 days (Veganuary, n.d.b). Being a fairly new organization, Veganuary has seen significant growth in the eight years it has been active, from only 3,000 participants in 2014 to over 400,000 participants in 2020 (Faunalytics, 2014; Smithers, 2020). To date, Veganuary has not

released any demographic information from its 2020 campaign and instead focused on level of outreach and partnerships. According to data from 2020, the Veganuary campaign reached participants from every country in the world except three and partnered with 24 different organizations from around the world (Veganuary, 2020).

To further situate Veganuary in the larger social, cultural, economic and political context, it is also important to note that it has faced a fair amount of criticism from “abolitionist” and activist vegans as well as non-vegans (Leenaert, 2017). Abolitionist and activist vegans tend to have more radicalized ideals than the typical vegan, arguing that veganism is a “moral baseline” and that humans have an obligation to speak on behalf of voiceless animals facing exploitation (Francione & Charlton, n.d., para. 5). Primarily in the form of blog posts, these passionate vegans claim Veganuary’s campaign demonstrates an apparent lack of interest in gaining long-term vegans through education of animal treatment, clearly attacking the organization Veganuary itself (Frost, 2016). The criticism expressed by abolitionist and radical vegans demonstrates negative biases and categorization towards health-conscious vegans which has been a theme in previous literature (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017). These blog posts have sparked conversation among Veganuary supporters and some of the more activist-oriented groups that focus on the morality of the vegan movement, in which the groups in support of Veganuary are engaging in strategies to help bridge these different kinds of vegans, as well as non-vegans, as opposed to encouraging polarizing discourse (Leenaert, 2017).

In comparison, criticism from non-vegans assumes that those engaging in Veganuary are self-righteous activists pushing an agenda that may be harming and misinforming certain individuals (West, 2019). Clearly, some of this criticism from non-

vegans geared toward Veganuary sheds light on the some of the perceptions of the vegan movement as a whole, in which some non-vegans frame all vegans as “narcissistic” and “morally superior beings” (West, 2019, para. 1 & 9).

The vegan movement in general has been criticized by the media for encouraging and hindering recovery from eating disorders, specifically in the vegan movement’s ties to social media, and the Veganuary campaign has become wrapped up in these claims by some bloggers (Hills, 2019; Simmons, 2019). While this criticism may be geared more towards the entire vegan movement, some have made the connection of Veganuary taking place at the beginning of the year with the “restrictive wave of weight loss” that comes through each January (Bell, 2018).

Nonetheless, the term “Veganuary” is being used in this criticism, demonstrating that the distinction between Veganuary as an organization and Veganuary as a campaign has become blurred.

The criticism Veganuary has faced in recent years, however, has not inhibited Veganuary’s success as a social and lifestyle movement, as participation in Veganuary has dramatically increased each year since its inception (Faunalytics, 2014; Brocklehurst, 2019). In fact, Veganuary appears to be growing at a faster rate than the general vegan movement, making this an especially intriguing organization and campaign to study (Land, 2018). By analyzing the rhetorical strategies Veganuary has used in its campaign and their functions, this thesis demonstrates how Veganuary used the values of community, animals, health, and environment and strategies of normalization, celebrity associations/endorsements, and political engagement to propel its movement from coalescence toward bureaucratization.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Completing the study proposed in the rationale necessitates a grounding in literature concerning social movements and their inherently rhetorical nature. What follows is an overview of key literature on social movements as well as a more targeted discussion of the centrality of identification strategies, values advocacy, and the use of social media in contemporary social movements. Additionally, helpful insight and background information about perceptions and criticism of the vegan movement relevant to the Veganuary organization and campaign will emerge from consideration of the rhetorical context in which Veganuary is located.

Social Movements

Extant literature describes the stages of a social movement. (Christiansen, 2009; Enos et al., 2006; Griffin, 1952). Historically, social movements followed three stages: inception, rhetorical crisis, and consummation (Griffin, 1952). As Griffin (1952) described, a period of inception is “a time when the roots of a pre-existing sentiment, nourished by interested rhetoricians, begin to flower into public notice, or when some striking event occurs which immediately creates a host of aggressor rhetoricians and is itself sufficient to initiate the movement” (p.186). The second stage of social movements, a period of rhetorical crisis, occurs when the balance between the opposing groups is disrupted, which may result from the use of new arguments, utilizing new channels, and flooding existing channels with rhetorical discourse (Griffin, 1952). The last stage of social movements is the period of consummation. In this stage of a social movement, the aggressor group has either achieved the goal(s) of the movement and no longer feels the need to continue their efforts or has given up on attempting to instigate some sort of

change (Griffin, 1952).

Contemporary scholars such as De la Porta and Diani (2006) argue that social movements go through four stages: emergence, coalescence, bureaucratization, and decline (as cited in Christiansen, 2009). While these stages are very similar to Griffin's (1952) in many ways, the distinction between the coalescence and bureaucratization stages helps to further explain how movements take shape as they progress and grow. During coalescence, also referred to as the "popular stage," the movement "becomes more than just random upset individuals; at this point they are now organized and strategic in their outlook" (Christiansen, 2009, p. 3). At this stage, the unrest is clearly defined as to what the problem is and who is responsible. During coalescence, "leadership emerges and strategies for success are worked out" (p.3).

Bureaucratization, Christiansen (2009) explained, was first defined by Blumer (1969) and has since been influenced by other scholars, such as De La Porta and Diani (2006). Also referred to as "formalization," bureaucratization "is characterized by high levels of organization and coalition-based strategies" (p.3). He also noted that it is during this stage that "social movements have had some success in that they have raised awareness to a degree that a coordinated strategy is necessary across all social movement organizations" (Christiansen, 2009, p.3). These organizations may also depend on "staff persons with specialized knowledge that can run the day to day operations of the organization and carry out movement goals" (Christiansen, 2009, p. 3). During the bureaucratization stage, it is imperative that organizations utilize resources to gain and utilize political power; otherwise, the movement may dwindle or fade away as engaging in social movements requires sustained energy and passion (Christiansen, 2009).

Of central importance to the current study is Christiansen's (2009) argument that the stages of social movements outlined are primarily concerned with political change and public policy. However, as he notes, other types of social movements exist, including movements more concerned with cultural, social, and lifestyle changes. Yet, current research is vague as to how these types of social movements align with the stages outlined above, as their goals are objectively different. Veganuary, based on its goals, falls within this category of movements. Therefore, this study aims to aid in the understanding of how these stages of social movements may be different in the context of a cultural, social, or lifestyle movement.

Another contemporary study important to situating Veganuary in the realm of social movements is the work of Simoes and Campos (2016) which identified six types of social movements and collective actors, including new anti-austerity social movements, alter-globalization movements, new "classical" social movements, radical movements, movements directly linked to digital activism, and traditional political actors. Veganuary, however, is best classified at the intersection of a new "classical" social movement and a movement directly linked to digital activism. New "classical" social movements are often associated with culture and identity. These types of movements may not be inherently political or have demands or goals related to changing legislation or power differences (Simoes & Campos, 2016). Therefore, in these types of social movements, there may be no direct group or entity that necessarily opposes or dramatically hinders the movement. Movements directly linked to digital activism refers to movements that mainly act online in the form of platforms, groups, and/or organizations. Because the key feature of these movements is the use of technology as the primary resource, a wide range of causes and

movements exist in this context. These are important features to understand in the context of the study, especially since new classical movements are generally less studied than other, more politically-charged movements. The use of social media and technology is an important element of many social movements today, but especially for Veganuary, as it appears it functions primarily through social media and its website as the organization does not possess a physical location.

As mentioned, little work has been done that focuses on uncovering strategies that produce success for new “classical” social movements that function largely online. However, Bronston’s (1976) work on normalization in medical and social contexts adds insight to the current study. In examining perceptions associated with individuals diagnosed with Down Syndrome, Bronston (1976) identified four functions of normalization. First, there is the concept of conscious-raising. Bronston (1976) argued that society generally possesses “massive, deeply held, often unconscious beliefs about differentness” that slow transformative social progress if left untouched (p. 492). Therefore, bringing awareness to issues surrounding the minority groups in our society ultimately begins to challenge existing prejudices and biases. Second, Bronston (1976) described “normalization” as a tool for indoctrinating human service workers, such as doctors and educators, regarding individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Bronston (1976) argued that normalization can be used as an organizing tool by providing a clear blueprint for the movement, an alternative and idealistic vision for society to work towards. Finally, normalization trains advocates for the movement. Largely, what a society deems ‘normal’ is deeply rooted in the existing values and culture

of a society. Therefore, the process of normalization cannot occur without addressing both the existing norms of a culture and the ideal vision implanted by the social movement. The goal of normalization, in Bronston's simplified terms, is to "offer a person life conditions at least as good as the average citizen" (p. 495). Though Bronston's work focuses on disabled populations, his work acknowledges the function of normalization for other minority groups, including females and people of color. Clearly, these populations, unlike vegans, do not choose their minority status. Therefore, the current study will examine if/how normalization plays a role in the wider realm of social movements.

According to Enos et al. (2006), rhetoric is inherently ubiquitous and indigenous, expressing to "never ask if there is rhetoric; where there is culture and language, there is rhetoric" (p.360). The rhetoric present in the vegan movement has been evaluated and critiqued by previous scholars, giving insight into the vegan culture. Some vegan organizations, such as PETA, use graphic images and language within its rhetoric, which Vogelaar (2007) coined the rhetoric of graphic display. According to Vogelaar (2007), rhetoric of graphic display uses the "inherent ambiguity, irrationality, and haunting nature of photography to politicize pain" (p. 2).

This strategy is used in multiple social movements and issues, including anti-abortion rhetoric, anti-child labor rhetoric, and animal rights rhetoric (Vogelaar, 2007). Within the animal rights movement, this type of rhetoric often takes the form of graphic images of animals, often injured and/or lifeless. These photographs are often delivered with little to no explanation, thus encouraging the viewer to piece together a narrative for such images (Vogelaar, 2007). In addition to the rhetoric of graphic display, PETA has

also produced questionable marketing campaigns that objectify the female body and relate animal suffering to historical instances of human oppression such as slavery (Deckha, 2008). While organizations such as PETA have received criticism in recent years for its graphic rhetoric of animals, some research suggests that the use of these graphic images do harm the credibility of the animal food-processing industry and improve the credibility of organizations producing such rhetoric (Scudder & Mills, 2009). However, these researchers also report in their study that many of the participants were unaware of PETA as an organization or were unfamiliar with the organization, which may not be the same case today (Scudder & Mills, 2009). This study gives insight into how graphic images may be perceived by external audiences and give an alternate perspective beyond Vogelaar's (2007) criticism regarding PETA's use of rhetoric of graphic display. Both of these perspectives may prove helpful in this study to understand any potential motivations for the use of rhetoric of graphic display.

Identification

A social movement's survival, clearly, is dependent upon rhetoric. Organizational identification is an important area of study within rhetoric because identification is inherently persuasive (Cheney, 1983). Derived from Burke's work on identification, Cheney (1983) defined four identification strategies utilized by organizations to create relationships with its audience. The first strategy outlined is the common-ground technique. In using this technique, the rhetor attempts to link with the audience through an appeal to values (Cheney, 1983). The second identification strategy is antithesis, or creating a common enemy between both the rhetor and the audience. In doing so, the rhetor ultimately unites with the audience, and may even use this technique to deflect

criticism (Cheney, 1983). In addition to developing common-ground and creating an antithesis, a rhetor can utilize another technique often referred to as “the assumed we” (Cheney, 1983, p. 148). This particular technique can be especially powerful because it may often go unnoticed by the recipient, and also fosters an environment for an “us” versus “them” mentality, creating insiders and outsiders (Cheney, 1983). Unifying symbols are another strategy used by rhetors, and may include slogans, logos, etc. that bring continuity and cohesiveness in a rhetor’s messages (Cheney, 1983).

Within these primary identification strategies outlined by Cheney (1983), specific tactics and implementations of these principles exist. Most central to the current study is the function of employee testimonials in creating common-ground. Employee testimonies often express dedication to an organization as well as some form of affection for the organization. Cheney’s (1983) findings have been echoed by business journals such as *Forbes*, which recognized the potential power in utilizing testimonials from other sources, such as customers, and using brand ambassadors to aid in marketing (Forbes Agency Council, 2018).

Although not grounded in Cheney’s work, current research regarding celebrity endorsements offers new insight into potential ways to build common-ground with various types of stakeholders. For example, customers often trust the opinion of other customers and familiar, well-liked and known individuals. Therefore, celebrity endorsements may also be beneficial in marketing an organization or specific product or brand (Knoll & Matthes, 2016; Um, 2018). In fact, Knoll and Matthes (2016) found that celebrity endorsements positively affect consumers’ attitudes compared to the absence of an endorsement. Additionally, using actors in celebrity endorsements was found to test

more positively among consumers compared to other types of celebrities, such as models, musicians, and TV hosts. However, they warn that when using celebrity endorsements organizations must ensure that there is congruence between the celebrity endorser and the endorsed product or brand. Congruency is also noted by Um (2018) as important for both the consumers' attitude toward the brand as well as the consumers' intent to purchase product and/or engage in organization. As Veganuary uses celebrity endorsements, the current study may add to this line of research.

Cheney's (1983) work directly informed other studies seeking to understand how identification strategies aid in relationship formation between organizations and their stakeholders (e.g., Dailey, Treem, & Ford, 2016; Myers, Davis, Schreuder, & Seibold, 2016; Steimel, 2013). The work of Meyer (2000), for example, is relevant to the current study because it examined how humor functions as an identification strategy. According to Meyer (2000), humor is pleasant and, generally, situationally dependent upon both the audience and context. Humor can build support and group cohesiveness and connect the audience and the rhetor in some way, which refers to humor's identification function (Meyer, 2000). Humor may also serve to clarify a rhetor's view regarding issues, positions, etc. Clarification messages in humor are often delivered in the format of a memorable phrase or short tale and may be unexpected or unplanned (Meyer, 2000). Additionally, humor can function as a way to teach and enforce norms, which Meyer (2000) refers to as enforcement. Enforcement aims to delicately level criticism by pointing out incongruities in messages. This type of humor is especially prevalent in use with children, as children often lack extant knowledge regarding social norms, thus producing incongruent messages (Meyer, 2000). Finally, humor can function as a source

of differentiation. In differentiation, rhetors aim to compare and contrast themselves from their opponents in order to strengthen bonds with certain audiences and create distinctions from others (Meyer, 2000). Leaders may use distinction in humorous messages as a way to distinguish and solidify their specific group from others.

Various identification strategies also exist within the process of assimilating stakeholders to an organization. How an organization cultivates organizational identification relies on various effective processes, especially within the socialization period when individuals go through the process of self-identifying as part of an organization. During this period of socialization, individuals often begin to learn about the organization as a whole and the traditions and values the organization encompasses (Myers et al., 2016). Thus, messages received during this stage impact one's identification with the organization as well as intent to stay with an organization (Steimel, 2013).

For example, in a study on volunteer identification and retention, certain memorable messages resulted in positive or negative perceptions of the organization, thus impacting the organizational identification of these volunteers. According to Steimel (2013), memorable messages are striking or lasting units of communication that may aid in the sense-making process. In this particular study, messages about significance, specifically significance of the individual's contribution to the organization/cause, were the most effective in creating organizational identification (Steimel, 2013). One may also be more identified with an organization if they personally trust the organization and are satisfied with the actions of the organization (Myers, et al., 2016). Likewise, an organization's external image, as perceived by the stakeholder, may play a role in how

much one identifies with a particular organization, entity, or social movement (Myers, et al., 2016). As Veganuary is a newer organization, creating memorable messages and organizational trust is essential to creating and sustaining a following. This may be especially difficult for Veganuary because it is an online non-profit organization, meaning that stakeholders will likely not interact with the Veganuary team in-person and directly.

Because of this potential disconnect, other studies on creating organizational identification through mediated contexts are helpful in grounding the present inquiry. For example, Dailey, Treem, and Ford (2016) studied social media writers engaging in freelance work for organizations where they were not considered employees; these individuals still found some type of identification with the organization or industry as it was essential to curating effective content for the organization's blogs and social media posts. Some cited creating organizational identification virtually since they never engaged in physical contact with the organization. In these types of contexts, visuals, such as pictures of organizational employees, as well as forming relationships with organizational members helped these workers achieve a level of organizational identification with their clients that aided in their creation of content for the organization (Dailey et al., 2016). Studies such as these are important to understand not only that identification can occur through virtual means, but exactly how an organization can utilize techniques and practices to develop organizational identification in audience members.

Further, Kruckeberg and Starck (1988) stress how a sense of community can affect organizational identification (as cited in Gilpin & Miller, 2013). Because of the

current prevalence of movements to be largely, or solely, conducted via social media and online communities, there is a clear need to study how these groups and communities are formed. The vegan community is of particular interest because, as with other social movements and ideas, people may identify with the cause and support organizations to varying degrees. Vegans may also identify more with the vegan movement than the organization and campaign Veganuary and vice-versa.

Finally, the work of Maier and Anderson (2014) informs the current study because it examined the centrality of multimodal communication in building organizational identification. They (2014) defined “multimodal” as communication that “takes place across several semiotic modes” including writing, images, sounds, etc. (p. 251). Specifically, they explored how a Danish organization strategically communicated its identity through employee magazines using both text and images and found that the multimodal texts are essential in today’s organizational communication.

An example from this research includes the analysis of a “dear colleagues” section of an employee magazine. Within this section, this specific organization used various identification tactics through writing, including the assumed we as well as the espousal of shared values. This “dear colleagues” section also included images that utilized different identification strategies, including unifying symbols (Maier & Anderson, 2014). Images, especially, played a significant role in both creating and sustaining persuasive efforts (Maier & Anderson, 2014). This study highlighted the importance of organizations utilizing different forms of messages in order to exhibit more identification strategies and messages. Maier and Anderson argued that this type of

“multi-layering” messaging may reinforce the persuasive efforts of each tactic, thus increasing effectiveness of persuasive efforts.

Values Advocacy

Interconnected with identification strategies, particularly those that work to build common-ground, is the concept of values advocacy because value appeals, when used correctly, are an effective tool for organizations to connect with audiences and increase organizational identification (Bostdorff & Vibbert, 1994). As value appeals are a primary strategy used by Veganuary, an overview of relevant literature is essential here.

Drawing on various ideas expressed by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), Bostdorff and Vibbert (1994) suggested that values advocacy allows organizations to accomplish three things: enhancement of organizational image, deflection of criticism of the organization itself or criticism related to organizational products and services, and establishment of value premises for future endeavors. Bostdorff and Vibbert (1994) encouraged organizations utilizing values advocacy as a persuasive tool to evaluate their value appeals in regards to integrity, authenticity, and consistency to avoid potential criticism from the audience. O’Connor (2006) argued that epideictic advocacy “leverages an organization’s philanthropic endeavors to gain acceptance or recognition in society,” (p. 265). Inconsistencies between organizational values and the authenticity of an organization can lead to an organization appearing illegitimate to their audience. Expectation gaps can also affect the legitimacy of the organization (Holmström, Falkheimer, & Nielsen, 2010).

While the use of epideictic rhetoric has been documented since ancient times, organizational use of epideictic advocacy has only been adopted in the past 50 years

(Bostdorff & Vibbert, 1994). Mobil's epideictic rhetoric in the 1970s transformed how organizations used value appeals to connect with audiences (Crabbe & Vibbert, 1983). Mobil published Observation pieces in newspapers in the late 1970s with an inherently, but subtle, rhetorical nature (Crabbe & Vibbert, 1983). These Observation pieces included news items, cartoons, readers' letters, and other segments as rhetorical means to educate, engage, and entertain their audience. Mobil then, through appeals to American values such as progress and individualism, was able to position itself to be viewed more positively than other oil companies by the American public (Crabbe & Vibbert, 1983).

More recently, other movement-related organizations, such as Planned Parenthood, have utilized values advocacy in online campaigns. Brandhorst and Jennings (2016) demonstrated how Planned Parenthood used the values of choice, freedom, health, and education to deflect criticism and assert their worth as an organization. Likewise, Guizhentang, a Chinese corporation, utilized values appeals such as nationalism in concert with image restoration strategies to successfully deflect criticism rooted in criticism claiming that the organization's treatment of animals was unethical (Yang & Veil, 2017).

Additionally, O'Connor (2006) evaluated Philip Morris' "Working to Make a Difference: The People of Philip Morris" campaign and found that, while some target audience members felt that the values presented in the campaign conflicted with the organization's reputation, the campaign was still considered successful at enhancing organizational image. While there may be many reasons to use and frame the use of values advocacy, scholarly research appears to be in agreement that advocacy is used by organizations to engage in a dialogue with the public, specifically key stakeholders

(O'Connor, 2006). Therefore, the types of values organizations use in epideictic rhetoric should be “non-controversial” and be socially and/or culturally-accepted (Bostdorff & Vibbert, 1994).

Interestingly, most of the studies on values advocacy assess organizations with poorer reputations, such as those involved in the oil and tobacco industries, or organizations facing direct controversy over an issue reaching media attention. These studies, however, have led to an even better understanding of values advocacy, such as the potential benefits of values advocacy. For example, Yang and Veil (2017) found that the use of values advocacy can influence media coverage, including how a story is framed by the media as well as the key words utilized in coverage stories. Because the vegan movement generally, and Veganuary specifically, has experienced criticism and backlash, analyzing the Veganuary campaign through the rhetorical lens of values advocacy will not only help advance rhetorical theory, but also may provide practical guidance for communication practitioners.

Perceptions and Motivations in Vegan Movement

Public perceptions of veganism are important to understand for the purpose of this study because, while this research is not aimed at understanding vegans' experiences of bias or prejudice, the culture surrounding veganism must be understood to understand the evolution of rhetorical strategies Veganuary has used in its campaign. It has become a joke among certain groups that if someone is vegan, they will tell you within the first few moments of meeting you (Jones, 2018). Technically, vegans are a minority group, and a particularly disliked group at that, according to a recent study about minority group biases (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017). In fact, out of all of the minority groups included in

the research study, including blacks, immigrants, homosexuals, atheists, asexuals, and drug addicts, drug addicts were the only minority unfavored by the sample more than vegans (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017). Of course, such conclusions may not be representative of society's general opinions on vegans, but they do give insight to the challenges vegans face.

Even among vegans, it is evident that different motivations for being vegan affect how that individual is perceived from both in-groups and out-groups. For example, vegans who choose the vegan diet for health reasons are perceived less negatively by non-vegans than vegans who adopt the vegan lifestyle in support of animal and/or environmental activism (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017). Often vegans who have adopted the lifestyle for the sake of health attempt to differentiate themselves from vegan activists, demonstrating potential conflict with in-group members of the vegan movement based on the primary motivations for adopting a vegan lifestyle (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017).

In a content analysis of websites related to vegetarianism and veganism, Jorgenson (2015) found that all twelve sites utilized rhetorical devices and messages related to animal activism. About half of these sites contained persuasive messages related to all of three lenses studied: health, animal rights, and the environment. In the actual rhetorical messages studied, health reasons appear to be more accessible to audiences, as they are more personal than animal activism or environmental concerns (Jorgenson, 2015). From this study, it is clear that organizations identify the individuals' motivations for becoming vegan and use this information in their rhetorical strategies. The current study aims to understand the motivations Veganuary addresses through its own rhetoric present on its social media accounts.

Because of the differences between the vegan diet and traditional diets, vegans have utilized strategies to make their diets fit better into societal perceptions of traditional foods and eating habits. Twine (2018) studied vegan eating practices and discovered four key, overlapping features within the vegan diet, including material substitution, food creativity, new food exploration, and taste transition. Material substitution allows minimal disruptions of prior eating habits for transitioning vegans by replacing the non-vegan foods with direct vegan substitutes (Twine, 2018). Ultimately, material substitution explains the presence of vegan alternatives that largely resemble traditional products, such as plant milks replacing cow milk and meat substitutes. The prevalence of material substitution has infiltrated many markets, including fast foods chains such as KFC promoting its vegan chicken sandwiches and Burger King's Impossible Whopper, which includes a plant-based patty (Starostinetskaya, 2020; Tyoko, 2019).

Stemming from the concept of material substitution, Twine (2018) found that vegans possess food creativity in order to make vegan alternatives of traditional products as well as creating entirely new vegan creations. Food creativity has led to various online outlets and community groups in which vegans share their experiences with each other in creating their own vegan alternatives, such as vegan cheese and egg replacements (Twine, 2018). Going along with these ideas, vegans engage in new food exploration, in which vegans try and consume foods that they may not have consumed in their previous diets (Twine, 2018). Vegans also discuss taste transitions throughout their vegan journey, specifically regarding vegan alternatives of traditional products and the process of acclimating to different and new tastes (Twine, 2018). The current study will utilize the

insight from this study regarding the specific strategies vegans use to make sense of their own food choices to see if and how these may be used in Veganuary's rhetoric.

Social Media and Website Use in Social Movement and Rhetorical Campaigns

The vegan movement has a large presence online, with various contemporary news sources linking the rise of veganism to social media platforms (Marsh, 2016; Meager, 2016; Petter, 2018). Thus, studying the vegan movement through its web and social media presence is essential to understanding how organizations, such as Veganuary, have utilized online platforms to propel the movement. The capabilities of social media and web 2.0 will be discussed in this section, as there are many different complex parts that make up the current digital landscape. Various scholars have evaluated the use of social media and digital technologies by both organizations and individuals related to social movements, activism, and involvement in campaigns (e.g., Erben & Balaban-Sali, 2016; Guha, 2015; Hughes et al., 2019; Jorgenson, 2015; Simoes & Campos, 2016). Lim (2013) proposed that social media may have a "catalytic effect" that has the "potential power of rhetorical framing to move society" (As cited in Foust & Hoyt, 2018, p. 41). Digital technologies can be used to construct and spread content to aid in social movements and rhetorical campaigns, such as attracting new members or fighting against other institutions or organizations. Social media also enables organizations to observe and monitor stakeholders (Simoes & Campos, 2016). Various studies have shown that social media can be used beyond simply monitoring these individuals, but that organizations may benefit from interacting with their audiences (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Saxton & Waters, 2014; Simoes & Campos, 2016; Treem & Leonardi, 2012; Yang & Veil, 2017). The types of messages organizations use on social

media platforms may also elicit difference responses and levels of engagement from the audience. For example, Saxton and Waters (2014) identified that community-building messages produce more interaction between the organization and the audience compared to informational or promotional messages. Organizations may also use community-building messages within their social media for the purpose of relationship-building and networking (Saxton & Waters, 2014). In using social media, organizations often fail to fully utilize the unique features and capabilities of these channels. Shin et al. (2005) recommended organizations use hyperlinks and hashtags to encourage engagement and interaction.

Additionally, Foust and Hoyt (2018) found that social media may both help and hinder social movements, and that “the ubiquity of digital media allows ‘a movement’ to seem even more like it exists,” (p.41). Organizations and individuals involved in social movements, as well as scholars, must not simply equate the number of likes, views, and shares to the success of a movement or campaign (Foust & Hoyt, 2018). This type of exploration of “numbers” data may be useful to understand in some contexts, but it inherently fails to look at the rhetorical appeals of the messages, as well as how, if at all, the audience connects to the post. Another flaw in some of the previous studies completed in the arena of social media rhetoric within organizations and campaigns is a failure to comprehensively evaluate multiple platforms on which content is shared (Foust & Hoyt, 2018). Therefore, while isolated studies of one platform may be helpful in those specific spheres, it is difficult to generalize the findings of a study using only one platform to the type of activity occurring on other platforms.

Likewise, some previous literature takes a more media determinism perspective,

which assumes that recent movements are “born” on social media as opposed to media being a way to organize ideas that existed prior to their appearances on social media (Foust & Hoyt, 2018, p.46). The determinist “formula” also fails to address the constant evolution of the digital landscape as technologies aim to address the needs and wants of users. Therefore, this study aims to take the implications from previous studies in consideration by performing an analysis of two of Veganuary’s social media platforms, Facebook and Twitter, as well as their website, to identify and understand the embedded rhetorical messages whilst acknowledging the offline roots of the vegan movement.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

According to Foss (2009), the first step in rhetorical criticism is selecting an artifact. For this study, the artifacts include Veganuary's social media pages on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Veganuary/>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/veganuary?lang=en>), as well as Veganuary's website (<https://veganuary.com/>), which includes its blog. These platforms were chosen to encompass Veganuary's presence on multiple social media platforms, as these platforms cater to different, though often overlapping, audiences. Veganuary's website is also an important artifact to study as it is completely curated by the organization itself and has capabilities beyond social media in terms of personalization and customization.

Data was collected using Rowland's (2012) representative approach, which argues that to understand an individual's or entity's rhetoric, one must choose representative artifacts that depict the entirety of said entity's rhetorical output. In other words, the specific rhetoric chosen for analysis should be typical or average forms of output as opposed to exemplars that may be more atypical of the rhetor.

In order to understand how, if at all, Veganuary's message changed since its inception in 2014, I collected rhetoric produced by the campaign from December 1st to December 15th of 2013, 2016, and 2018, as well as January 1st to January 5th of 2014, 2017, and 2019. These specific dates were chosen because Veganuary releases the sign-up page for its yearly campaign in the beginning of December. Data was also collected from January because the annual Veganuary campaign begins on January 1st every year, as participants are encouraged to try being vegan for the month of January. Therefore, the chosen dates December 1st-15th and January 1st- 5th allow for analysis of Veganuary's

rhetoric leading up to the first day of the annual launch, as well as the rhetoric during the beginning of the campaign itself. The years 2013-2014, 2016-2017, and 2018-2019 were strategically chosen in an effort to avoid redundancy during data collection. 2013-2014 is the first year the campaign launched, 2016-2017 was a year of particular growth for the campaign, and 2018-2019 showed a change in participants' motivations.

Because the focus of this research is on Veganuary's rhetorical outputs as an organization, only posts, photos, and texts by Veganuary on social media were analyzed. Twitter data was collected through Twitter's advanced search feature for the following months/years: December 2013- January 2014, December 2016- January 2017, and December 2018- January 2019. Facebook data was also collected using an internal search feature on Facebook's website for the same months/years.

Each piece of data collected from each social media platform was screenshot and stored on the researcher's hard drive for easy access to the data. Over 300 screenshots were saved and organized based on year and social media platform. Because of this large amount of data from online platforms from one single organization, the researcher found the best way to organize data was through a numbering system as opposed to a lettering system. The numbers that coincide with each piece of data have no significant or categorical meaning, but are simply for organizational purposes based on the numbers associated with each saved file to allow easy access to the raw data.

The rhetoric was analyzed using Hoffman and Ford's (2010) evaluative approach for examining organizational rhetoric, similar to Brandhorst and Jennings's (2016) study on values advocacy and rhetoric on social media. In this process, each artifact collected was individually reviewed for any potential identification strategies and/or values appeals

used within the rhetoric. From this initial analysis, specific strategies and value appeals were synthesized to form larger themes within the data. Artifacts were then reviewed a second time to classify each artifact using the themes formed from the first analysis. Throughout the entire analysis, the researcher paid particular attention to the identification strategies and values appeal used within the rhetoric as well as their function in an effort to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the campaign. Effectiveness was judged by campaign participation numbers, Veganuary's feedback surveys, and by best practices outlined by previous scholars, all of which was tracked through a datasheet broken down year by year.

CHAPTER FOUR ANALYSIS

This analysis outlines Veganuary's use of values advocacy and organizational identification strategies and how these strategies worked to help the Veganuary movement achieve coalescence and move toward bureaucratization. As such, this chapter is organized by specific values and identification strategies. This structure is similar to the structure established by Brandhorst and Jennings' (2016) research.

2013-2014 Results

Veganuary launched its website and, subsequently, its campaign on November 28th, 2013. This launch was supplemented with a video posted to YouTube on December 1st, which was shared on Veganuary's Twitter page. The founders of Veganuary referred to the campaign of 2014 as a "soft launch" to serve as a test out for the 2014-2015 campaign, which they predicted to be "much bigger" (Veganuary, 2013 – 150). Though one may argue the vegan movement had achieved coalescence prior to 2013, as a new organization Veganuary had not. To succeed it would need its 2013-2014 campaign to propel it from emergence toward coalescence.

While Veganuary was active on both Twitter and Facebook, most of the rhetoric produced during the 2013-2014 campaign appeared on its Twitter page. Analysis revealed Veganuary primarily used the following values (and associated strategies) in an effort to achieve its goal: support and resources for the vegan community, animal appeals, environmental appeals, and health appeals. Within its use of value appeals, it is evident that Veganuary also used Cheney's (1983) identification strategies of the assumed we and unifying symbols as well as the strategies of normalization (Bronston, 1976), material substitution (Twine, 2018) and celebrity association.

Value of Community

The first value found embedded within Veganuary's rhetoric is support and resources for the vegan community. This value appeared in multiple types of content, such as conversations with followers, the provision of recipes and recommendations, as well as attempts to connect Veganuary as an organization and campaign to other vegan-related organizations and entities. Tweets, especially, aimed at creating an idealistic community full of support, resources, and a feeling of inclusion for all members, which ultimately helps normalize the vegan diet and lifestyle.

Facebook posts by Veganuary clearly used visuals to normalize vegan food by sharing homemade, visually-appealing vegan alternatives that often resemble traditional food. In particular, one cartoon digital flyer asking users for feedback on the website not only included the aforementioned happy animals and a happy environment, but also delicious "classic" meals such as pizza, burgers and fries, and tacos. (Veganuary, 2013-070). The inclusion of these vegan alternatives of a standard meat-eater's meal is a particularly interesting approach to normalize vegan food by making it appear similar or the same as the option containing animal products, which has been outlined by previous work as material substitution (e. Twine, 2018). This sense of normalizing vegan foods and finding alternatives is also addressed through Veganuary's Twitter. For example, Veganuary tweeted "Does anyone have great [#vegan](#) gluten-free savoury recommendations for one of the [@DeanFarmTrust](#) staff members? [#veganuary](#)" (Veganuary, 2013- 112). This tweet sparked conversations and replies from multiple Twitter users regarding vegan options and conveys a support system for vegans of all kinds of needs and backgrounds. Veganuary tweeted similar things, such as "Thinking

about trying [#Veganuary](#), but can't give up "X" - tell us what you think you'll crave, and we'll find an alternative," leading up to the start of the campaign in January (Veganuary 2013 – 124). In starting these conversations, Veganuary attempted to establish itself as a resource for those leary of trying the vegan diet. This content also introduced distinct elements of Veganuary's strategy of normalizing the vegan diet by replacing meat and dairy with similar vegan options. These vegan options make the vegan diet not only easier, but aid in making the movement more popular, thus aiding them in their work toward coalescence.

Veganuary also engaged in public conversations with other vegan-related organizations on Twitter, such as The Illustrated Vegan, Love Food Café, U.K.-based vegan bakery Ms. Cupcake, and others. Some of these conversations consisted of simple exchanges, such as Veganuary mentioning to Ms. Cupcake that the bakery was included in Veganuary's list of vegan resources (Veganuary, 2013 – 168). Other conversations, however, overtly demonstrated that Veganuary and other organizations shared a common goal of making "going vegan" easier for individuals. For example, U.K.-based restaurant Love Food Café reached out to Veganuary on Twitter saying "[@WeAreVeganuary](#) We'd like to offer 10% off all our food for anyone who signs up to the Veganuary pledge - is there an easy way to do this?" (Love Food Café, 2013). Veganuary replied saying "that would be brilliant!" and shared their email to further discuss details (Veganuary, 2013 – 128). Through these conversations, Veganuary built support for its campaign and awareness by building its network. These types of conversations also help to further the community of vegans and vegan organizations.

Not only did Veganuary attempt to build a community and give support to

interested participants, the organization also asked for support from fellow vegans in various ways, such as through feedback and spreading awareness about the campaign. As mentioned, Veganuary considered Veganuary 2013-2014 a “soft launch” and consistently asked for feedback from followers regarding content they would like to see and any technical issues they might be facing, as well as what the organization could improve on for next year’s campaign. One specific tweet asked users “One week since the Veganuary website launched - what do you think? Post your comments here,” with a link to its Facebook page (Veganuary, 2013 - 154). These types of tweets imply genuine interest in participants and users, likely with the hope that these individuals will give the organization and campaign constructive criticism that may aid in the growth of the campaign, a necessary component of building coalescence. Veganuary even asked some participants and supporters to use “nudge theory” to encourage others to take part in the campaign (Veganuary, 2013 – 157). While the actual feedback Veganuary received from individuals was not studied, asking for feedback from individuals and customers is not a new concept and may be used to strengthen a sense of community within stakeholders by implying their feedback is worthy and encouraged (Cheney, 1983).

Overall, Veganuary’s appeal to a sense of community and belonging is also displayed in its subtle language, which clearly aligns with Cheney’s assumed “we” tactic, in which people are often unaware of such tactic being used. On one of Veganuary’s Facebook posts, the organization used the phrase “Everyone’s going vegan for January,” implying that an ambiguous “everyone” is trying out veganism (Veganuary, 2013– 070). However, this type of language also coincides with the persuasive bandwagon fallacy and follows the mentality that “everyone is doing it, and you should do it too...” This type of

language, while it may be effective in building coalescence, appeals to the idea of veganism as a dietary trend rather than a long-term lifestyle change which could work against the overall vegan movement

Value of Animals

In addition to attempts at creating a sense of community and inclusion through their tweets, Veganuary also posted content displaying compassion for animals. This value was predominantly expressed through posted links leading to external blog posts, articles, and videos related to animal rights and compassion for animals. One tweet, which included a link to an exposé by *Rolling Stone* and The Humane Society, voiced the “animal cruelty and disgusting conditions on factory farms,” (Veganuary, 2013– 143). The wording in this tweet displays clear disapproval for the treatment of animals without blatantly shaming meat-eaters, a tactic used by other vegans and vegan organizations (Palmer, 2019). During the campaign, Veganuary also shared a post promoting Joaquin Phoenix’s film ‘Earthlings,’ warning that “you’ll never look at animals the same,” (Veganuary, 2014– 074). Though this strategy is not a celebrity endorsement affording Veganuary the same benefits as those noted by Knoll and Matthes (2016) and Um (2018), associating Veganuary with a project by a well-known individual and animal rights activist such as Joaquin Phoenix had the potential to draw more attention to the campaign.

Interestingly, most of Veganuary’s rhetoric around animals appears to be more subtle. In one tweet, Veganuary shared a link to a *Forbes*’ article that deems veganism a “mega-trend.” Along with sharing this link, Veganuary tweeted “Get compassionate, get healthy, join #Veganuary,” (Veganuary, 2013 – 176). While it links veganism with

compassion, Veganuary does not explicitly mention animal treatment or animal rights within the tweet. Other examples of subtle appeals to compassion and care for animals include the use of animals in various pictures and graphics shared on Veganuary's social media. Facebook has multiple photos with a primary objective of promoting the Veganuary campaign that are supplemented with pictures of cows, chickens, and pigs that appear to look healthy and happy (Veganuary, 2013 – 071, 077).

However, what is absent from these messages is also important to consider, as Veganuary did not produce content with rhetoric of graphic displays, which has been used by other animal activist organizations such as PETA (Vogelaar, 2007). This is not necessarily a surprising finding, as during this point in time, Veganuary's goal was likely coalescence. Therefore, Veganuary may have been avoiding off-putting messages that may offend certain groups. This strategy of avoiding potentially off-putting values coincides with Bostdorff and Vibbert's (1994) research, in which they claim that noncontroversial messages work best for organizations concerned with public relations and image.

Value of Environment

Another value briefly displayed on Veganuary's social media during 2013-2014 involves care for the environment. Most of the content related to environmentalism and sustainability was shared through external links to reports by organizations within the field, such as the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization and Viva!, another U.K.-based vegan charity. One tweet by Veganuary urged users to look at the UNFAO's "Livestock Long Shadow report," with a link to their Facebook page (Veganuary, 2013 – 147). One post on Facebook explicitly mentions going "vegan for the planet," which is

supplemented by a photo of planet Earth photoshopped onto the consistent background of green grass, snowcapped mountains, and blue skies used in multiple Veganuary promotional campaign photos (Veganuary, 2013 – 070).

Similar to how Veganuary presented rhetoric related to animal rights and compassion, the organization appeared to use subtle messaging about caring for the environment. Not only do some of their photos and graphics contain happy animals, but they also contain a “happy” environment complete with green grass and blue skies (Veganuary, 2013 –071, 077). While these messages do not necessarily overtly mention the environment, these types of imagery make the organization appear environmentally conscious. This type of communication also relates back to Cheney’s (1983) work. These happy animals and happy environments illustrate the values Veganuary stands for, but these illustrations, which all have the same style, help unify all these messages (Cheney, 1983). These illustrations, especially in conjunction with the textual rhetoric, add potential points of identification for the audience. In doing so, Veganuary not only provides ways for participants to identify with the organization, but it also aids in furthering coalescence within the movement by defining areas of discontent.

Value of Health

Health also proved to be a value that Veganuary utilized within its rhetoric in 2013-2014. Similar to how content related to animals and the environment was shared, Veganuary typically included an external link to credible and/or well-known contemporary sites to display vegan-related health appeals. In doing so, Veganuary simply shared vegan content from other sources without creating any original content regarding these values. For example, Veganuary shared a link to an article about the connection

between diet and cancer from another non-profit's website, the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, but did not provide any additional commentary on this link, or even connect it to the vegan diet itself. The tweet simply reads "@BeardforBowels there's a big link between diet and cancer, check out the @PCRM website: pcrm.org/health/cancer-..." (Veganuary, 2013 –142).

While Veganuary did not add any original rhetoric to these messages, it did share hyperlinks which Shin et al. (2015) noted encourages conversations through the spread of helpful and/or interesting information. These links also subtly demonstrate some of the values and ideas Veganuary endorses, and Veganuary encourages user to look into this information on their own, which Saxton & Waters (2014) claim promotes dialogic communication by starting the conversation.

Summary of 2013-2014

Based on the rhetoric present on these sites in the 2013-2014 year, it appears that Veganuary as a new organization was primarily concerned about building coalescence at this stage. As such, it is not surprising that appeals related to animals, the environment, and health were used significantly less than appeals focusing on building the community. According to a report completed by external company Faunalytics (2014), approximately 3,325 people participated in Veganuary during January 2014. Interestingly, with a 78% of those participants indicated they were motivated for animal-related reasons. Most of the content within this year consisted of community-building messages, which makes sense considering the organization is new and has yet to build strong relationships with participants and other stakeholders. To build coalescence, social movements clearly must start by building relationships and organized support.

It is also important to note that a majority of the posts made by Veganuary during this time were on Twitter, with approximately 60+ tweets compared to only less than 10 posts on Facebook in December 2013. This heavy proportion of tweets may partly explain the stress on support and resources for the vegan community, and minimal presence of values related to animals, the environment, and health, as Twitter's platform may allow for more casual community engagement.

2016-2017 Results

By December 2016, Veganuary launched its annual campaign for the fourth time. Similar to the 2013-2014 year, the following values (and associated strategies) were present in Veganuary's rhetoric on social media: value of community, value of animals, value of environment, and value of health. However, as the campaign grew, these values were present in different degrees than in 2013-2014, and a new strategy, the use of celebrity endorsements, appeared.

Value of Community

Compared to the data from the 2013-2014 campaign, less content produced by Veganuary focused on support and resources for the vegan community. However, it is evident that the support and resources provided appeared to be more professional, formal, and organized. At this point in time, Veganuary had crafted an e-cookbook full of recipes from English celebrities such as Jack Monroe, Joanna Lumley, and Jasmine Harman (Veganuary, 2016- 097). This type of support demonstrates a type of growth within the organization around improving its own resources, which demonstrates that Veganuary reached coalescence through organized support and strategies.

Veganuary continued to strengthen its appeals to community and support during

the 2016-2017 campaign. Supportive content was found on both platforms, but especially was prevalent on Twitter. In a tweet, Veganuary claimed “support is what we do best,” with a link to their website for meal inspirations (Veganuary, 2016– 229). Again, this type of content serves as a reminder that Veganuary assists individuals on their vegan journeys in hopes that these individuals will make long-term diet and lifestyle adjustments. Veganuary also shared casual, phone-quality pictures of vegan dishes and meals, both homemade and from restaurants, including vegan sushi and Mexican rice bowls (Veganuary, 2016- 240, 254). This variety of vegan food options displays Veganuary’s focus on normalizing vegan food for average individuals by showing the vegan diet can be enjoyed inside and outside the home. This also relates back to Twine’s (2018) idea of material substitution as an effective method for altering traditional diets sustainably and effectively. Also, by infiltrating its social media with normalizing messages, Veganuary could continue building a sense of community.

New to this specific year, Veganuary used humor in some of its rhetoric around community and outreach. For example, Veganuary posted a tweet that said, “when your best friend says they’re taking part in #Veganuary ;)” with a link to register as well as a funny GIF from the television show *New Girl* in which characters are fist bumping and showing excitement. Using popular television shows and movies that the audience might be familiar could help the audience relate to Veganuary and further build community. While humor was only used minimally, and its presence existed only on Twitter, it demonstrates that Veganuary was exploring other ways to build community and utilize unique social media features, which coincides with previous work on both humor and social media (Meyer, 2000; Shin et al., 2015).

Similar to 2013-2014, Veganuary did most of its community engagement and casual support on Twitter. While there were fewer conversations around recommendations and helping each other, this type of content was not entirely absent. Also, similar to previous years, Veganuary continued to thank participants that signed up and encouraged them to recruit other friends and family members for the campaign, which shows a continued interaction with the audience, ultimately sustaining the relationships Veganuary built with its followers in previous years. These actions align with the goal of moving towards the bureaucratization stage of social movements, as building and maintaining membership is key to sustaining a social movement (Christiansen, 2009).

Value of Animals

Content appealing to compassion and support for animals was central to the rhetoric of Veganuary's 2016-2017 campaign. This is not surprising given that 78% of the 2014 participants noted that they did so for animal reasons (Faunalytics, 2014). On both platforms, pictures of animals, particularly young animals, were supplemented with verbal messages, such as "Too Sweet to Eat" (Veganuary, 2016 -083). The most common verbal message within these photographs was "Because you love animals..." One photo showed a smiling dog with the catchphrase while another showed two children gently holding a hen while another had a young female affectionately looking at a dog (Veganuary, 2016 – 219, 220). Animal sanctuaries appear to be the source of most of these photos, which boast conventionally cute and heartwarming scenes of happy animals.

Veganuary also attempted to give the animals on its page a sense of personality

and tried to demonstrate animals' capabilities of feeling emotions during this period. One picture of a young piglet is supplemented with text on the image that states: "Pigs are more intelligent than cats and dogs, and love to socialise!" The caption of the photo continues the message by asking "So why do we hurt them and eat them?" (Veganuary, 2016– 093). Another example of Veganuary's attempt to put the lives of animals in perspective comes from short testimony of English actor John Bishop, who claims "...Once you get to know these animals as individuals it's impossible to imagine sitting down to eat them." (Veganuary, 2016 – 094). Both of these examples attempt to give these animals human-like characteristics. Veganuary also reminded its viewers that all animals, not just pets, can have the capacity to experience emotions.

However, the playful and sweet rhetoric of happy and emotion-filled animals were largely contrasted by graphic images of factory farm animals, a type of imagery also used within Veganuary's messaging. This type of messaging used by Veganuary seemed aimed at bringing awareness and exposure to the harsh conditions and treatment of animals. These darker images seem intended to instigate some form of shock from the audience, encouraging them to consider the conditions and treatment and animals in less appetizing terms. One picture displayed a sad cow in a crowded factory farm facility with a quote from Charles Bukowski, a German-American writer, that read, "I guess the only time people think about injustices is when it happens to them." (Veganuary, 2016 -090). Other examples included photos a sad-looking cow asking, "will you help me?" and a pig stuck in a small cage (Veganuary 2016 – 257, 258).

Due to the graphic nature of these images, this rhetoric may be considered more disturbing by the audience. This type of rhetoric, the rhetoric of graphic display, "may

lead to a sense of helplessness and revulsion on behalf of the viewer” and may actually discourage process within the vegan movement (Vogelaar, 2007, p. 23). However, while the rhetoric of graphic display contrasts with other content produced by Veganuary, this type of rhetoric is present in other vegan and animal activist organizations, such as PETA (Vogelaar, 2007). Therefore, this type of rhetoric may have been an attempt to align with the rhetoric and strategies of other vegan organizations, especially considering that bureaucratization requires a level of coordination among social movement organizations.

Value of Environment

Compared to previous years, Veganuary made posts with clear messages that showed the positive environmental impacts of the vegan diet. One post on Facebook claimed that going vegan contributes a “more positive impact than giving up your car,” for the health of the planet (Veganuary 2016 - 82). Some of the rhetoric also includes Cheney’s (1983) assumed “we” tactic and insinuates a group mentality by arguing that “collectively, we can change the world,” (Veganuary, 2016 - 82). Veganuary’s appeal to environmental issues may have been expanded to attract invested environmentalists, which ultimately creates steppingstones for a bridging the vegan movement with other movements, such as climate and environmental movements. It is important to note these graphics, while making powerful claims, failed to show the original sources of this information, which harms the credibility and accuracy of the infographic (Dengo, 2017). This lack of sources largely contrasted the environmental rhetoric from 2013-2014 that showed links and sources to ideas but lacked any original commentary on such ideas.

Value of Health

As with years prior, health continued to be a value within Veganuary’s rhetoric.

Interestingly, this type of rhetoric was completely absent on Facebook, but was used on Twitter. The overall messaging around health in this year hinted at the superiority of the vegan diet in regards to health, but provided few direct sources for information regarding vegan health. One tweet said, “cut out the bad stuff!” with a supplemental picture of an egg and the words “one egg contains more cholesterol than a Big Mac...” (Veganuary, 2016- 217). More subtle messaging about health was also utilized, including hashtags on Twitter such as #wellbeing, #healthy, and #detox (Veganuary, 2016 – 217, 253).

Veganuary also appealed to health through generic content about how being vegan feels. One tweet used a GIF of a person in athletic clothes dancing with the caption “how #vegan feels” (Veganuary, 2016- 237). The idea of being healthier by becoming vegan may also be an attempt by Veganuary to appeal to individuals’ more idealistic self that may come with New Year’s Resolutions, which is also displayed through hashtags such as #NewYearNewYou and #NewYearsResolutions (Veganuary, 2016- 217, 253).

A new strategy – celebrity endorsements

Veganuary also utilized famous and well-known public figures decisions to be vegan and/or try out veganism, whether through quotes or direct endorsements, during its 2017 campaign. The use of famous and well-known public figures is clearly a strategic attempt at increasing both awareness and identification for the Veganuary campaign. While testimony is not one of Cheney’s (1983) four identification strategies that represent the organizational perspective, Cheney (1983) recognizes testimonials as an outsider perspective that may be used as a tactic. As mentioned previously, Veganuary utilized the personal testimony of actor John Bishop to give animals emotions and personality (Veganuary, 2016– 94). Other public figures with some type of presence of Veganuary’s

social media include actress Amanda Abbington, Joaquin Phoenix, Leonardo da Vinci (Veganuary, 2016 – 084, 098, 257). Animal-rights quotes from both actor Joaquin Phoenix and artist Leonardo Da Vinci are supplemented by pictures of animals. Both of these figures are well-known within the vegan community as well as to other groups and individuals, so the use of these specific individuals demonstrates attempts to cater and appeal to multiple types of people whilst maintaining congruency between these individuals' values and Veganuary's values (Um, 2018). Both Amanda Abbington and John Bishop are English. Because Veganuary is a U.K.-based organization, it is understandable that many of their celebrity endorsements would be from other people within the country. However, this may also demonstrate a lack of significant permeation into other nations that Veganuary was attempting to reach in its campaign. Knoll and Matthes (2016) identified that celebrity endorsements and commitment to an organization can aid in creating positive perceptions of the organization, so Veganuary's use of these testimonies may have aided in the organization's connection to its audience and their perceptions.

Summary of 2016-2017

60,000 people participated in Veganuary during 2017 (Veganuary, n.d.a). Clearly, the movement was gaining traction. Compared to the year Veganuary launched in 2013-2014, the organization's social media pages were filled with animal-rights and compassion-related propaganda in 2016-2017. While the frequency of rhetoric differed on each social media platform, animal-related posts were found to be the most common on Facebook, while Twitter remained to appear dominated by community-related posts that had little representation on Facebook. The increase in animal-related content is not

surprising given that approximately 78% of individuals in 2013-2014 reported animals as their reason for participating in Veganuary (Faunalytics, 2014). Likely, Veganuary attempted to cater its messages to a majority of its audience.

Forms of support for the vegan lifestyle was seen in higher magnitudes during this year and the campaign added the use of celebrity endorsements and quotes in the campaign. This combination of strategies is not also surprising given that Veganuary appeared to be in the coalescence stage during this time. These strategies significantly aid in cultivating and maintaining a sense of community and relationship with stakeholders to further organized support within the vegan community. Sustaining a community is often difficult for social movements, and in some cases, can cause a social movement to collapse. Therefore, Veganuary's focus on building a community makes sense, not only for coalescence, but to ultimately reach bureaucratization.

Interestingly, based on Veganuary's survey results for the 2017 campaign, only 47% of participants in 2017 were motivated by animal rights, as compared to the 78% noted in 2014. (Faunalytics, 2014; Land, 2017). Approximately 32% of participants in 2017 cited health as a reason for participating in Veganuary (Land, 2017.). These survey results suggest that for Veganuary to continue grow, it may need to expand its rhetoric.

2018-2019 Year

The 2018-2019 Veganuary campaign launched officially on December 4th, 2018. Similar to previous years, Veganuary appealed to values related to community, animal rights, health, and environmentalism during 2018-2019. Veganuary again relied on all the previously outlined values during the 2018-2019 campaign, asking people to try to be vegan for the month of January "for the animals, our health, and the planet" (Veganuary,

2018 – 350, 352). The campaign continued to use the strategies of normalization and celebrity endorsements. In what follows, particular attention is given to the new ways Veganuary used social media to build identification and propel the movement. Specific attention is given to a new value/strategy that emerged, political engagement.

Value of Community

New to this specific year, Veganuary shared multiple recipe videos on its Twitter page with links to watch the full videos on Veganuary's YouTube page. Recipes included items such as raw sushi rolls, one pot curry, and flatbread pesto pizzas with roasted veggies (Veganuary, 2018 – 288, 315, 329). Veganuary stressed the excellent taste of these recipes, with the links providing the step-by-step process on how to make each dish. Veganuary also featured articles by multiple, established organizations compared to years prior, such as Plant-Based News, MyGoodPlanet, and Elle Magazine (Veganuary, 2018 – 102, 273, 303, 313, 316).

Veganuary also continued to support its community by reaching new heights in attempting to normalize the vegan diet for both its community and its outsiders. On Twitter, Veganuary begins to share even more food photos, mostly giving credit to other vegan blogs and chefs (Veganuary, 2018 – 280, 301). There also was more content related to veganism and holidays, such as Christmas and Hanukah. Veganuary even started a new mini-campaign titled "12 Days of Vegan Eats," playing off of the 12 Days of Christmas (Veganuary, 2018 – 275). Each day, Veganuary shared a recipe one could use during the holidays to replace traditional dishes (Veganuary, 2018 – 276, 280). While the inclusion of holiday-related content is likely a form of support, the inclusion of holidays such as Christmas within Veganuary's rhetoric also demonstrated a shift in

discussing veganism as a lifestyle not a diet. In doing so, Veganuary provided ways in which new traditions around food and holidays could be formed, further normalizing veganism as a whole.

Most notably, Veganuary's 2018-2019 posts highlighted numerous partnerships it had established over time. It noted that it was partnering with 12 new countries to be involved with the campaign, such as Malaysia, Japan, Brazil and Sweden (Veganuary, 2018- 336, 338). Veganuary also reported participants from approximately 190 different countries in its end survey results (Brocklehurst, 2019). Further, it posted advertisements for Pulsin (Veganuary, 2018- 285). As concluded from these advertisements, Pulsin is a U.K.-based brand that sells vegan, nutritious "dessert" bars, perfect for both adults and children (Veganuary, 2018 – 275, 285).

Similar to 2016-2017, Veganuary used humor in attempt to build community. In addition to the use of popular GIFS, Veganuary included two memes in its 2018-2019 rhetoric. For example, Veganuary posted a picture of vegan bodybuilders with muscular bodies and added the following text to the photo: "Just four malnourished vegans...desperately seeking protein," with a laughing/crying emoticon that is typically associated with humor (Veganuary, 2018 - 362). Another meme, originally posted by Studio Vegan, used the show Family Feud to "name an excuse" that people normally give for why one cannot go vegan (Studio Vegan, 2018 – 296). Veganuary shared this meme, adding the following comment "'where do you get your protein though?' *sigh*" (Veganuary, 2018- 296). These specific pieces of rhetoric are especially important because they took aim at voicing frustration and attempts to respond to criticism and misconceptions about veganism in a humorous, light-hearted way. This rhetoric also

builds a sense of belonging and community in doing so, which aligns with Meyer's (2000) work on humor.

Additionally, Veganuary continued to utilize celebrity endorsements and in 2018-2019 and even expanded to create a Veganuary ambassador program. These ambassadors included athlete Hector Bellerin, actress Evanna Lynch, and television presenter Jasmine Harman (Veganuary, 2018 – 105, 328, 335). Veganuary posted video testimonies from each of these ambassadors on both Facebook and Twitter, in which they discussed concerns about the dairy industry, the importance of caring for animals and humans, and how being vegan improved their bodily health and athletic ability (Veganuary, 2018–105, 328, 335).

In addition to these testimonies from Veganuary ambassadors, Veganuary also posted quotes and articles related to celebrity vegans that were clearly separate from the Veganuary campaign, similar to previous years. This content mentioned well-known names such as rock group Def Leppard and singer/actress Miley Cyrus (Veganuary, 2018 – 267, 269). Drawing attention to celebrity habits related to veganism is an important strategy to note because, while some of these celebrities are specifically supporting Veganuary, others are simply promoting a vegan diet. Veganuary effectively utilizes the life-choices of celebrities and audiences' interests in celebrities' lifestyles to further its campaign through stakeholder identification with these celebrities and influencers, which coincides with previous research on the benefits of celebrity endorsements (e.g., Knoll & Matthes, 2016).

Value of Animals

During this year of the campaign, there was minimal content focused directly on

animals and animal-rights related content, which contrasts previous years. This may be a response to the shifting motives of participants noted at the end of the 2017 campaign. The animal-related rhetoric present in 2018-2019 was found primarily on Twitter, although there was some form of animal-related content on both social media platforms, whether that be through subtle imagery or explicit messaging.

On Twitter, Veganuary mentioned other industries that impact animals' rights, such as the fashion industry, bringing attention to other industries that impact animals and sharing positive news for the community. For example, Veganuary shared a link to an article on Twitter that claimed fashion brand Chanel will discontinue its use of exotic skins for products (Veganuary, 2018- 344). Veganuary also utilized celebrity testimonies to share messages of animal cruelty in the fashion industry, again following the principles outlined in Knoll and Matthes' (2016) research on using celebrities to aid in stakeholder engagement and acceptance (Veganuary, 2018- 264). One particular video testimony by athlete Jason Gillespie discusses the damage caused by the leather industry (Veganuary, 2018- 264). Though there is no indication Veganuary was formally coordinating with other, related social movement organizations in its messaging, a characteristic of bureaucratization noted by Christiansen (2009), this messaging clearly demonstrated Veganuary's willingness to broaden its focus in ways that align with other social movement organizations.

Value of Political Engagement

The most significant change in the content and rhetoric produced by Veganuary in this year is that it included political engagement surrounding the movement. As mentioned, Veganuary is a U.K.-based organization, and in this year, it used the platform

it had built over the years to pressure Parliament and the Prime Minister to adopt a vegan diet for the month of January (Veganuary, 2018- 346, 348). This included protests, billboards etc., all of which were posted on both Facebook and Twitter. In fact, approximately a third of the rhetoric produced by Veganuary on Facebook related back to political engagement. One specific billboard read “Vegan for January, Prime Minister?” and included a picture of then Prime Minister Theresa May holding bunches of carrots in her hands (Veganuary, 2018 - 352). Other signs used during protests promoted a “Plant-based Parliament.” (Veganuary, 2018 – 347). These changes towards more political involvement in the overall movement reflect elements of the bureaucratization stage of social movements. According to Christiansen (2009), the bureaucratization stage includes organizational involvement in furthering the movement, especially through some type of political agenda. In a way, the organization Veganuary’s political involvement demonstrates their belief that the government should be held accountable for regulations and policies affecting animals and lead by example in hopes that the treatment of animals would improve, health would improve, and the changes would benefit the environment.

In previous years, Veganuary focused on awareness and education, often within its own community, which aligns with the characteristics of coalescence in building and strengthening a community. With this addition of political action from the organization itself suggests that bureaucratization has occurred, as the organization itself is carrying the day-to-day logistics of keeping the momentum of the movement by challenging high-power authority figures to consider veganism.

Summary

By the end of January, the organization reported 250,000+ sign-ups from the year,

80,000 more than the previous year (Brocklehurst, 2019; Veganuary, 2018). Based on these numbers alone, one can see that Veganuary is not only sustaining its campaign, but is also growing it, reaching from coalescence to bureaucratization. The 2018-2019 campaign for Veganuary was especially interesting, as this year demonstrated a potential shift in the audience as surveys indicated health the largest motivator for joining Veganuary (Brocklehurst, 2019). In the years prior, animal-related reasons accounted for the majority of participants (Faunalytics, 2014; Land, 2017). This is an interesting finding as there is not an overwhelming amount of explicit rhetoric nor any new rhetorical strategies regarding the health-related reasons for becoming vegan within Veganuary's messaging.

Interestingly, Facebook was completely absent of overt forms of rhetoric centered around environmental care, healthy living, and the rights of animals beyond what was mentioned in Veganuary's ambassador videos. Instead, Facebook primarily focused on its recent political involvements and the personal testimonies of celebrity vegan ambassadors, which leaned towards animal-related rhetoric. Twitter possessed messaging from all the values discussed above. Overall, this shift in content suggests that Veganuary transitioned from coalescence to bureaucratization over time as content became more organized, partnerships were made, and its rhetoric possessed more political elements.

Further, it seems the motives of participants have fluctuated over time. Clearly, a multitude of motivations have propelled the vegan movement, including animal welfare, health, ethical food systems, and environmental impact, many of which are represented in Veganuary's yearly campaign (Brocklehurst, 2019; Jorgenson, 2015). In the beginning, Veganuary's participants were primarily motivated by animal welfare, with that being

cited as the most popular motive for participating from 2014-2018. In the first year of Veganuary, 78% of participants cited animal welfare as their reason for participating. However, by 2019 that number dropped to 34% (Faunalytics, 2014, 2016; Land, 2017; Miceli, 2018). In 2019, health was the most commonly cited motive for involvement with Veganuary's campaign, with about 46% of participants (Brocklehurst, 2019). In 2020, health was still predominantly the most popular cited reason, with 38%, but animal rights was not far behind at 37% (Veganuary, 2020).

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

Veganuary has clearly gained significant momentum to date. Assessing the intricacies of this growth extends the scholarship on new “classical” movements. In fact, I argue the rhetorical strategies used by Veganuary provide a preliminary road map for the continued study of these types of movements and for movements seeking to move from coalescence to a form of bureaucratization. To better understand the strategies Veganuary used to transition from coalescence to bureaucratization, it is important to reflect on the rhetorical strategies used in relation to previous scholarly work. The following explains how the present study extends previous research, offers practical advice for communication practitioners, and provides a guide for future studies in similar contexts.

Theoretical Implications

Overall, the findings from this study demonstrate potentially effective ways for new “classical” movements to reach a form of the bureaucratization stage. As Christiansen argues, cultural/social/lifestyle movements seek different ends than traditional movements and, thus, may not fit the contemporary social movement stage model. However, the current study indicates that while these types of movements may not seek the political power central to the bureaucratization stage, they can reach this stage in terms of awareness, organization, and mobilization. More importantly, Veganuary’s campaign and its subsequent growth demonstrate how the rhetorical strategies of identification and values advocacy, generally, and normalization, celebrity associations/endorsements, and political engagement, specifically, may be central to propelling new “classical” movements through the stages of a social movement.

The manner in which Veganuary built its campaign demonstrates that values advocacy and Cheney's (1983) identification tactics may help propel a new "classical" movement through the stages of a social movement. The use of the common-ground technique was clearly evident through multiple appeals to values, including community, health, animals, and environment which suggests that Veganuary aimed to provide an inclusive environment for people with a number of different motivations for participation.

The values demonstrated by Veganuary largely relate to the motivations for adopting a vegan lifestyle outlined by previous research and vegan organizations (Jorgenson, 2015; MacInnis & Hodson, 2017). At the beginning of the campaign, all of the values depicted by Veganuary were noncontroversial. This is not surprising given that Bostdorff and Vibbert (1994) contend controversial values may be ineffective in values advocacy, which aims to create a census around specific values, an important piece of building coalescence. Arguably, the most articulated value comes from support and community, which logically makes sense as Veganuary defines itself as an organization that "encourages and supports people and businesses alike to move to a plant-based diet," on its own website (Veganuary, n.d.b). The value of community and the importance of building such has been confirmed in previous research as well (e.g. Kruckeberg & Starck, 1988; Saxton & Waters, 2014). Saxton and Waters (2014) found that community-building messages produced more interaction, which in turn, aided in building relationships with stakeholders, so it likely that Veganuary benefitted from this focus on community in such ways. Likewise, community messages have been found to increase organization identification, which further builds and strengthens stakeholder relationships (Kruckeberg & Starck, 1988). As time progressed, Veganuary's rhetoric surrounding

certain values displayed more controversial messaging which is also not surprising as movements that reach bureaucratization have more political power.

Other strategies used extend both our understanding of social movement rhetoric and Cheney's conceptualization of common-ground including normalization and celebrity endorsements. For Veganuary, part of the normalization strategy was material substitution (Twine, 2018). Findings herein support the work of Twine (2018) who notes that vegan alternatives to classic non-vegan dishes and meals is considered to be "one of the quickest ways in which a society might achieve a sustainable food transition" as it incorporates elements of one's previous diet and lifestyle and defines veganism in terms of do-able increments of change (p. 178). Veganuary also used celebrity associations and endorsements as a way to normalize veganism, and even potentially glamorize the vegan lifestyle. The presence of celebrities' endorsements and celebrity ambassadors in Veganuary's rhetoric suggests that this may be a key way for stakeholders to connect with Veganuary, which is consistent with previous research (Cheney, 1983; Knoll & Matthes, 2016).

Veganuary also utilized some humor within its rhetoric, which has been confirmed in previous research to aid in organizational identification by building group cohesiveness and enhancing the credibility of the speaker (Meyer, 2000). However, humor was also used to address stereotypes and misconceptions of the vegan lifestyle, which ultimately aimed at raising consciousness about the vegan diet and/or lifestyle, which is consistent with strategies of normalization (Bronston, 1976; Meyer, 2000). Thus, this finding implies that humor can function beyond building support and group cohesiveness, and, in turn, be used as a tool for normalizing various beliefs and ideas as

well. As Meyer (2000) claims in his research, humor can also be used for clarification and enforcement purposes, which further coincides with the potential goals of normalization within social movements. Based on this knowledge, Veganuary may have even benefitted from using more humorous messages.

Veganuary also used the assumed “we” in multiple rhetorical messages in what appeared to be aimed at creating a stronger, more identified community by appearing inclusive. Further, Veganuary used unifying symbols by including its logo in many of the photos it produced from 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 on both Twitter and Facebook. However, Veganuary did not use antithesis in its campaign. Veganuary produced little rhetoric that directly placed blame on any entities or industries as enemies. The only thing close to such type of rhetoric includes Veganuary’s brief use of what Vogelaar (2007) describes as the “rhetoric of graphic display” in which Veganuary shared images of ill and injured animals at the hands of the food industry. The lack of developed antithesis, however, makes sense in this type of social movement as new “classical” social movements may not have political demands or any direct group or entity that opposes the movement.

Veganuary also utilized the features of social media, especially Twitter, in its rhetoric, such as hashtags, external links, and furthermore utilizing the ability to easily communicate with other individuals and organizations (Shin et al., 2015). Utilizing some of these specific tactics and features of social media may have contributed to the effectiveness of Veganuary’s rhetorical appeals. Maier and Anderson (2014) also noted that the use of multimodal messages, such as messages that incorporate both text and image, can be more effective than each medium alone when used with organization

identification strategies. Veganuary utilized various multimodal messages frequently throughout the campaign, as these types of messages are easy to craft on social media due to its capabilities and may have also aided in creating organizational identification.

Practical Implications

As this study happened at the intersection of new “classical” movements and movements directly linked to digital activism, it also allows for a discussion of practical implications of running a movement on social media. Organizations should remember that social media allows for interaction between the audience and the organization and should avoid viewing social media as a one-way communication platform. Many features of social media exist that make it especially helpful for building and sustaining social movements digitally, such as arranging events, providing awareness and education, and connecting individuals (Simeos & Campos, 2016). This study also confirms the findings of previous studies that suggest dialogic and interactive communication enhance relationships with stakeholders (Saxton & Waters, 2014; Simoes & Campos, 2016).

By properly using social media, rhetorical appeals and strategies may be used more effectively. This case study may act as a guide for organization and social movements interested in reaching larger audiences and progressing from coalescence to bureaucratization by using tools such as normalization, celebrity endorsements, and political engagement in its rhetoric online. Social movements and social movements organizations will likely benefit from building relationships and increasing outreach before considering political involvement, although this likely depends on the type of social movement. For Veganuary specifically, it may have benefitted from developing an anti-thesis as well through its social media platforms, such as poor health, which would

appeal to a significant amount of their audience.

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge the limitations within this study. Because this study was a rhetorical analysis, only so many inferences can be made regarding the public perceptions and success of the Veganuary campaign based on numbers alone. The messages produced by other individuals related to Veganuary and other vegan organizations were excluded from this study, so one cannot assess how those messages may have influenced participants. This study also only investigated a snapshot of Veganuary's rhetoric by focusing on two separate social media platforms for a limited amount of time. While Veganuary posts a considerable volume of content on Instagram, that platform does not have an internal search feature that allows for easy access to historic posts. Thus, Veganuary's Instagram content was excluded from this study. While steps were made in attempt to find representative rhetoric to investigate, it is likely that some elements were not included in this particular study. This study is a case study and only focuses on one organization within a larger movement. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be applicable to other organizations and movements.

Future Research

Future work is needed within the context of social movements, especially new "classical" movements, as these types of movements often contrast political and economic movements in its goals (Simoes & Campos, 2016). Scholars wishing to advance the study of these types of movements should test the assertions made within this study regarding shifts from coalescence to bureaucratization on other social movements and social movement organizations, which has also been called for by previous scholars

(e.g. Christiansen, 2009).

This study contributed more research into the understanding of how an organization involved in a larger social movement used online social media platforms to produce and share persuasive messages with stakeholders. Future studies should evaluate the identification strategies found within the rhetoric of this study, such as normalization, celebrity endorsements and testimonies, and political engagement, to determine if these strategies may be effective and applicable to other organizations and contexts.

This study also confirmed previous studies that suggest social media is an interactive tool that should be used for more than just one-way communication (e.g. Saxton & Waters, 2014; Shin et al., 2015; Treem & Leonardi, 2020). Future studies should continue to evaluate organizations' use of social media in terms of interactive strategies that aid in organizations engaging in two-way communication with stakeholders. Future studies should also make distinctions between different social media platforms, as different sites allow for different features and cater to different audiences, but acknowledge the conglomeration of rhetorical outputs an organization or movement may create through social media.

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