

## Introduction

This essay is about activism in art and will discuss advertising methods used by the non-profit organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA, 2015). PETA is the largest animal rights organization and PETA2 is their youth program (PETA, 2015). In order for PETA2 to spread their message of animal rights, they attend major music festivals and interview bands such as *Silverstein* and *Fall Out Boy*. The interviews discuss different ways that the bands help animals and how youth can help. These interviews are then made into videos and shared online with YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, in order to attract youth. PETA2 posts tweets on Twitter, to give advice, videos, contests, and links to join their “Street Team” which is a group of youths that gets free PETA2 merchandise in return for sharing their media campaigns. By giving away free merchandise, it gives youth a reason to want to share PETA’s message. Celebrities such as Noah Cyrus, Lady Gaga, Boo Boo Stewart, Fifth Harmony, and Justin Bieber have all been featured in one or more of PETA2’s advertisements. When youth are able to see somebody that they look up to on a poster, it automatically attracts their attention. The three advertising campaigns that will be discussed in this essay are *Dissection Kills*, *Seaworld of Hurt*, and *Be an Angel for Animals*.

Before PETA existed, there were two things people could do to help animals; volunteer for a local animal shelter or donate money to the Humane Society. While many of these organizations did valuable work to bring comfort to animals, they did not question why we kill animals or why we use them to test new products (PETA, 2010).

PETA was founded in March of 1980 by Ingrid Newkirk and Alex Pacheco in United States (PETA, 2001). In 1980, PETA organized the first *World Day for Laboratory Animals Protest* in United States and their first demonstration was against chicken slaughter at Arrow Live Poultry (PETA, 2008). From 1981 to 1983, PETA launched undercover investigations in laboratories and slaughter farms, and exposed footage of animal testing and animal abuse in North America. These videos were “released to the public in 2000” (PETA, 2008, page 2) and went viral very quickly. Since then, PETA has been working towards banning animal testing worldwide, and persuading people to become vegan.

PETA2 has created campaigns such as Dissection Kills, Seaworld of Hurt, and Be an Angel for Animals. Noah Cyrus is the younger sister of the famous pop singer, Miley Cyrus. Noah is also a supporter of the PETA2 campaign called *Dissection Kills*, a campaign that is persuading high school students to opt out of dissecting animals in the classroom. PETA2 believes that students should have the right to choose if they want to participate in dissection. Noah went through a full day of photo shoots, and a video was produced at the same time. In the video, “she explains why she decided to join PETA2 and why it's so important that animals are not dissected.” (J-14 Magazine, 2015, page 1). In the poster, Noah is lying down on a dissection table, with her chest cut open revealing her organs. Her skin is pale to suggest that she is dead, and her face appears stiff. Her eyes are open to signify that even if an animal is dead, their spirit is still alive. The animals that are dissected are killed in order to be dissected in a classroom. This

image was an inside look at the disturbing reality of animal dissection. PETA 2's poster is graphic and used a catchy slogan, "I am not a classroom experiment" (PETA, 2015, page 2).

Seaworld has been under pressure since PETA 2 released the campaign entitled *Seaworld of Hurt*. The campaign began in 2011 and its purpose was to persuade people not to purchase tickets for Seaworld (Seaworld of Hurt, 2012). The poster used a graphic cartoon image of an Orca whale, tied up in rope and bleeding. This symbolizes the pain that animals go through when they are held in captivity. Being in concrete tanks is equivalent to a human being forced to live in a bathtub for the rest of his/her life. All the images that were produced by PETA2 showed the disturbing reality of captivity, exploitation, and abuse that sea animals experience. The colour scheme is dark, to symbolize the depression animals experience when outside of their natural habitat. In total, at least 58 beluga whales have died at SeaWorld locations proving that belugas cannot successfully be bred in tiny concrete tanks where they are denied everything that is natural and important to them. (PETA, 2015). If the act of capturing animals for entertainment is to continue for much longer, these marine animals could become quickly endangered.

Fifth Harmony has been raising awareness with their new campaign, *Be an Angel for Animals* by working with PETA2 to send the message to their fans to adopt animals and not to wear furs. The group posed for a poster standing together in support of animals using darker yet vibrant colours in the outfits the girls wore, with a contrasting background. There is a faded illustration of wings and halos on all of the girls. They are to represent the actual title of the

campaign. But if you dive deeper into the meaning of the poster, it also means that they are doing their part to help animals.

The way I can help animals is by being vegetarian, adopting animals, not wearing animal furs, and raising awareness in my school. I urge family, friends, and schools to try vegan-friendly food choices such as tofu or vegetables. I believe that schools should have posters on animal adoption. I suggest that students do not purchase any clothing made using animal furs.

Finally, schools should stop attending zoos as field trips, as it only encourages the captivity of animals. Rather than visiting zoos, schools could visit a science centre, an adoption centre, or a museum. These are the things I believe schools and teenagers can do to help save and care for animals.

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