

UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

School of Marketing and Communication

Multidisciplinary Master's Degree in Communication

Iida-Maria Lauri

“WOW NO COW!”

Marketing the product and the message –
Rhetorical analysis of Oatly product packaging

Master's thesis in organizational communication

Vaasa 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PICTURES	2
TABLES	2
ABSTRACT (Finnish)	3
1 INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Aim	7
1.2 Material	8
1.3 Method	10
1.4 Oatly	11
2 ETHICAL BRANDING AND CONSUMPTION	13
2.1 Ethical branding	14
2.2 Brand ethos	17
2.3 Ethical consumption	18
2.4 The consumer decision process	19
2.5 The ethical message of Oatly	21
3 RHETORIC	23
3.1 Speech types	24
3.2 Ethos, pathos & logos	25
3.3 New rhetoric	25
3.4 Rhetorical context	26
3.5 Rhetorical devices	29
3.6 Visual rhetoric	32
4 RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF OATLY PRODUCT PACKAGING	34
4.1 Visual observations of Oatly's product packaging	35
4.1.1 Colour	35
4.1.2 Typography	38

4.1.3 Illustrations	39
4.2 Locations of the packaging text	42
4.3 Analysis of Chocolate oat drink packaging	42
4.4 Rhetorical devices in Oatly product packaging	45
4.4.1 Repetition	45
4.4.2 Verbless sentences	48
4.4.3 Rhetorical question and hypophora	50
4.4.4 Unexpected and emotion-provoking word choices	52
4.4.5 Humour	58
4.4.6 Addressing the consumer	60
4.4.7 Storytelling	64
4.4.8 Opposition and contradiction	65
4.5 Discussion	66
 5 CONCLUSIONS	 71
 REFERENCES	 74
 APPENDIX. Research material.	 78
 PICTURES	
Picture 1. Oatly oat drinks	9
Picture 2. Oatly oatgurts	9
Picture 3. Some products from the on the go -category	37
Picture 4. Oatly ice creams	38
 TABLES	
Table 1. Oatly products and their acronyms	35

VAASAN YLIOPISTO**Markkinoinnin ja viestinnän akateeminen yksikkö**

Opiskelija:	Iida-Maria Lauri
Pro gradu -tutkielma:	“WOW NO COW!” Marketing the product and the message – Rhetorical analysis of Oatly product packaging
Tutkinto:	Filosofian maisteri
Koulutusohjelma:	Viestinnän monialainen maisteriohjelma
Suuntautumisvaihtoehto:	Organisaatioiden viestintä
Valmistumisvuosi:	2019
Tutkielman ohjaaja:	Heidi Hirsto

TIIVISTELMÄ:

Retoriikka on tuotepakkauksista puhuttaessa relevanttia, sillä tuotepakkaukset suostuttelevat kuluttajaa ostamaan erinäisin keinoin. Retoriikka on monen määritelmän mukaan juurikin suostuttelua kielellisin keinoin, joten on yllättävää, että markkinointia ei ole tutkittu enemmän retoriikan näkökulmasta. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää, mitä retorisia keinoja ruotsalainen kaurayritys Oatly käyttää tuotepakkauksissaan myydäkseen tuotteitaan ja eettistä ideologiaansa. Tutkimusaineistona ovat Oatlyn Suomessa vuonna 2018 myynnissä olleet tuotteet. Tutkimusmenetelmänä on retorinen analyysi. Teoriaosuus muodostuu retoriikan sekä eettisen brändäyksen ja kulutuksen teoriasta. Tutkimuksen hypoteesi on, että Oatly käyttää retoriikkaa tuotteidensa ja eettisen ideologiansa markkinoimiseen.

Tutkimuksessa selvisi, että Oatlyn pakkausteksteissään käyttämiä retorisia keinoja ovat toisto, verbittömät lauseet, retoriset kysymykset ja hypophorat, odottamattomat ja tunteita herättävät sanavalinnat, huumori, kuluttajan suora puhuttelu, tarinankerronta, vastakkainasettelu ja kiistäminen. Näistä kuusi ensimmäistä ovat huomattavasti suuremmassa roolissa kuin kolme viimeistä. Nämä retoristen keinot tekevät Oatlyn tuotepakkauksissa olevista teksteistä hyvin arkikielisiä ja vuorovaikutteisia, ja osaltaan luovat Oatlyn maanläheistä ja helposti lähestyttävää brändiä. Eettinen ideologia on selkeästi läsnä tuotepakkauksissa ja aihetta käsitellään usein huumorin värittämänä. Yllättävän paljon Oatlyn hyödyntämiä retorisia keinoja ovat verbittömät lauseet ja kuluttajan suora puhuttelu, jotka molemmat ovat erittäin vahvasti osallisia tekstien puhekielimäisyyteen.

Oatlyn tuotepakkauksista on aistittavissa aito kiinnostus eettisyyttä kohtaan. Ne kehottavat asiakasta syömään enemmän kasvisruokaa ja liittymään maidon jälkeiseen sukupolveen. On kuitenkin huomioitava, että vaikka kuluttajan eettisyyteen kannustaminen palvelee planeettaamme, edesauttaa se vähintään yhtä paljon Oatlyn tuotteiden myyntiä.

AVAINSANAT: Ethical branding, Ethical marketing, Rhetoric, Rhetorical analysis, Oatly, Product packaging

1 INTRODUCTION

Product packaging is a vital part of marketing a product to a consumer. Majority of purchase decisions in the perishable goods category, before tasting the products, are done based on the packaging in the store. This is the case especially in highly differentiated categories of goods. The most appealing brand package is the one that gets chosen. Once the consumer has tasted the product and the taste is good, they will keep buying the product. If the taste of the product with high quality packaging does not please the consumer, they are likely to buy some other manufacturer's product with a less thrilling packaging. (Méndez, Oubiña & Rubio 2011) So the key is to have good packaging and a good product.

The Sweden-based oat company Oatly has more than doubled their revenue in the past five years. Five years ago, the company carried out a complete rebranding and the economic growth of the company since has been significant. Oatly's new packaging is the result of co-operation between Oatly and a marketing agency called *Forsman & Bodenfors*. (Kukkonen 2018) Despite the fact that Oatly's rebranded packaging has been a great success, the package designs have also crossed some lines and caused problems, although one incident actually turned out to benefit the company. In 2014 Oatly was sued by a milk conglomerate as they argued that the marketing slogan Oatly used at the time was vilifying their product. Oatly lost the case and had to pay the company. It was all well in the end for Oatly as they used the court case in their marketing and it helped Oatly's sales to grow 45% due to the publicity. Another case turned out to be very expensive for Oatly, as they had to take some products off the shelves, as they had the text "tastes like shit" printed on them. (Kukkonen 2018, Lewis 2018)

The importance of package design is increasing, as selfservice is becoming more common and the contact between a consumer and a product is closer than ever. (Ampuero & Vila 2006: 112) Product packaging gives the company the chance to inform the consumer about the product and the company values, and it contributes to the instant recognition of the brand. It is usually the last form of communication between the seller and the buyer

in the marketing process, which further highlights the importance of carefully designed packaging. (Rundh 2005: 681; Rundh 2009: 999)

The main purpose of packaging, besides physically storing the product, is to grab the attention of potential customers and holding it long enough for the consumer to make the decision to buy the product. The product packaging must stand out from the competing products on the shelf in the store. If the product packaging triggers the consumer to buy the product, it also needs to then reinforce the brand in the consumers mind and make a lasting impression for the consumer to repurchase the product in the future. Product packaging, therefore, is not merely a way to physically store the product on a shelf, but an important part of the marketing strategy of a company. (Rundh 2009: 988, 1000-1001)

This study is a case study of Oatly which is a Swedish company manufacturing oat products. Oatly is one of the manufacturers of oat products sold in Finland and they have a strong brand created mainly by their distinctive aesthetic and approach to marketing. Oatly is one of the brands in Finland responding to the demand of dairy product substitutes created by the rising awareness of ethical and environmental questions surrounding the food industry. What makes Oatly's product packaging an interesting topic of research, is that they carried out a rebranding in 2013 after the company's new creative director, John Schoolcraft, joined the company. The look of the product packages changed completely and together the rising awareness of the public and the unordinary new package designs have produced Oatly great success. (Kauppalehti 2018) We will dive further into Oatly in chapter 1.4.

The popularity of vegetarian and vegan food products is ever growing, as people have started to think about the environmental factors of food industry, or simply desire variety in their diets. Many people turn to plant-based foods also because of their health benefits. The Finnish department store chain *S-Group* reports that from 2016 to 2017 the variety of dairy product replacements grew by 30% in the drinks and food preparing category and the variety of vegan ice cream by 60%. This is due to the growing demand. (Patarumpu 2018) These are the categories that Oatly products fall into. As more products

appear on the shelf the competition increases, and the significance of packaging design grows.

The structure of this study is as follows; I will first introduce the aim, research material and the method of my study in the subchapters of this chapter. We will then learn more about the case company Oatly. In chapters 2 and 3 we will then discuss ethicality as a branding strategy as well as rhetorical analysis as a means to study text. Analysis of the product packaging of Oatly will then follow, and we will end with results of the analysis and conclusions.

1.1 Aim

Product packaging is usually studied in the fields of design and marketing. In this study, we will look at product packaging from a different point of view using rhetorical analysis, which is an analysis method used in the field of communication research. With the point of view of communication studies, I am hoping to offer an interesting viewpoint into product packaging. The aim of this study is to discover how Oatly uses rhetorical devices to sell their product and their ethical message. Using rhetorical analysis, we will investigate how Oatly brings forward their ethical values in their product packaging in order to get the consumer to make the purchase and create change in the world. To reach this goal I have formed the following research questions:

RQ1: Which rhetorical devices and themes does Oatly use in their product packaging?

RQ2: What is the function of these rhetorical devices and themes?

RQ3: How are ethical values put forward in the packaging?

These research questions will be answered by studying Oatly products using rhetorical analysis. My hypothesis going into this study is that Oatly uses rhetoric to sell their products and ethical values. This hypothesis stems from the observation that the package

design is distinctive and contains a large amount of text beyond the obligatory product information. The amount of text can be seen on the sides of the product packages in pictures 1 and 2. Where there is text there is also rhetoric if the aim of the text is to convince the audience of something - especially when the aim of the text is to sell a product (Perelman 1996: 11-12). A quick visit to Oatly's website gives enough information about the company's ideology to support this hypothesis: "Our sole purpose as a company is to make it easy for people to turn what they eat and drink into personal moments of healthy joy without recklessly taxing the planet's resources in the process." (Oatly 2019) It is therefore clear that they have an agenda in addition to just selling products.

Oatly's products are relevant right now due to the political climate regarding climate change and the suggestions on how its effects could be reduced, some of which are decreasing the amount of meat and dairy in one's diet (Arguedaz Ortiz 2018). Relevance and exceptional amounts of rhetoric are key factors for why this study is necessary, but another factor is the environment in which these pieces of text make their mark. They come into contact with people when they least expect it: in a super market. People are not reading an environmental blog seeking to find such thoughts, but simply doing their shopping routine. They are also present in people's breakfast tables and in their fridge. Every time they open the fridge, they see the message printed on the packaging. The packaging catches consumers off guard and maybe that is precisely what Oatly is counting on.

1.2 Material

The research material for this study is the complete Oatly product line sold in Finland in 2018, excluding one product. The reason for the geographical restriction of Finland is the fact that I live in Finland and will collect the material by purchasing the products myself. The products are divided into five categories on Oatly's website: oat drinks, on the go - products, oat yogurt, food preparing and ice cream.



Picture 1. Oatly oat drinks (Oatly.fi 2018)

The oat drink category consists of five products presented in picture 1: original oat drink, chocolate oat drink, orange and mango oat drink, organic oat drink and iKaffe. The on the go category hosts three different coffee drinks, a smaller sized option of the oat drinks, excluding the organic oat drink and iKaffe, as well as an additional flavour of strawberry-elderflower. The oat yogurt category consists of three large-sized oatgurts in three different flavours: unflavoured, strawberry and vanilla. The oatgurt packages can be seen in picture 2. The food preparing category has a cream product used in food preparing called iMat in two different sizes, a crème fraiche replacement called iMat Fraiche in two different sizes, a vanilla sauce and three different flavours of cream cheese called pãMackan: natural, garlic cucumber (this is the product missing from my material) and tomato basil. Oatly also sells five different flavours of ice cream: chocolate, strawberry, vanilla, double chocolate fudge and salty caramel and hazelnut. In total this makes 29 products, so the number of products analysed in this study is 28. Complete list of the research material can be found on page 78 in appendix 1 where I share the product names, package types and product sizes.



Picture 2. Oatly oatgurts (Oatly.fi 2018)

Although the material seems quite large in number, not every product has a huge amount of text on them as some packages are smaller in size. The material has been collected from Finnish department stores run by two Finnish major department store chains called *Kesko* and *S-group*. I have purchased the products myself between March 2018 and February 2019. The only product I could not find and therefore cannot use in my analysis is the garlic cucumber påMackan.

While browsing Oatly products in the store, I noticed that the package designs vary, and same designs appear in different products. Because of this there could be the same design on multiple products, so while collecting the material I did my best to select items that had as little overlapping in design as possible. This way I am able to make the most of my material and will have the most material in order to provide a thorough analysis. There is however undeniably going to be some amount of overlapping.

1.3 Method

This study is a qualitative case study of Oatly's product packaging. My choice of method is rhetorical analysis. Rhetorical analysis is the logical method to use as Oatly's product packages have quite a lot of text on them that are not obligatory to food products (like ingredients list and nutritional value information). The obvious role of the additional text is to market the product and therefore to cause an action; a purchase. As rhetoric is the art of effective speech, I feel that using rhetorical analysis is the most justified approach.

The target of a rhetorical analysis is the text itself as well as the means of convincing, the argument itself but also the linguistic appearance. The person carrying out the rhetorical analysis should have empirical information about the topic that the text addresses, the way the text addresses the topic, the goal of the text as well as the possible audiences and their possible reactions. The person should also have information about the language used in the text and appropriate argumentation manners. (Kaakkuri-Knuuttila 2000: 234)

With rhetorical analysis I want to identify the rhetorical devices that Oatly uses in their product packaging as well as emerging themes. I will also discuss what effects these devices and themes have and what kind of reactions they might bring forth in consumers. I am going to carry out the analysis by analysing each product as a rhetorical entity. A demonstration of this will be presented in chapter 4.3 where I analyse one product as an entity. The rhetorical devices and themes that rise from this analysis as repetitive and frequently used, will be discussed in chapter 4.4 with examples. This way I can make the connection between Oatly and those specific rhetorical means which the brand likes to use to grab the consumer's attention and communicate the ethical values that they represent.

Product packaging is not usually studied from the point of view of communication studies but in the fields of marketing and design. One significant researcher who has studied product packaging from a marketing point of view is Bo Rundh who has written multiple articles on the topic, many of which were published in *British food journal* (i.e Rundh 2005, 2009, 2013, 2016) Communication studies however bring something new to the table and are relevant especially while studying Oatly's packaging as their packaging is highly communicative.

1.4 Oatly

Oatly is a Swedish oat company founded in the 90's, that manufactures products from Swedish oats. The idea for Oatly originally came to be from the idea of making a nutritious drink for people who did not want to drink cow's milk for personal or taste related reasons. Oatly's sole focus is on oats and producing dairy replacements. (Oatly.com 2018) As we discovered while discussing the research material, Oatly produces a large variety of different dairy replacements.

Oatly carried out a complete rebranding in 2013 after Oatly's current creative director, John Schoolcraft, joined the company. Together with the company's CEO Toni Petersson they revamped the Oatly brand and marketing with the help of *Forsman & Bodenfors*

creative agency. Oatly doesn't have a marketing department but a business department and a creative department of 20 people. Oatly's product packaging designs changed completely and they started to emphasize the benefits of plant-based foods and ethicality in their brand messaging. (Kauppalehti 2018) Following this their revenue quintupled in five years. The success is due to great branding, excellent products and the growing popularity of plant-based food. (Boxberg 2018) According to the creative director John Schoolcraft, they wanted the packaging to look like it had been made in a basement at home, so that people would pick it up out of curiosity. Every side of the package was to have something interesting to read, and they wanted to distinguish themselves from other dairy alternatives on the shelf that were all quite similarly color-coded. (The challenge project 2016) The packaging was meant to act like an instore billboard, and every element of the packaging was meant to get the shoppers to pick it up. The peculiar manifestos and descriptions would then convince the consumer to buy the product. (Inbusiness 2018)

The strive for a fresh marketing strategy and the investment in aesthetics can also be seen on the company's social media platforms. For instance, their Instagram is well managed with high-quality pictures featuring their products and thought-out captions. A look at the company's website provides an enlightening look at the branding and the overall 'vibe' that the company wants their customers to become a part of. Apart from selling their products they want to create change in the world and challenge the norms of food industry (The challenge project 2016). It could very well be said that Oatly is selling a lifestyle rather than a product. Oatly's ethical values will be discussed further in chapter 2.5.

2 ETHICAL BRANDING AND CONSUMPTION

Now that the climate change is an undeniable fact (IPCC special report 2018), many consumers have started to care about the ethicality of the products they consume. Where does the product come from? How does it affect the environment? Because of this, companies producing goods and services now have a new challenge to tackle or a new tactic to use in marketing and branding, depending on how they see ethicality in relation to their business. Ethicality can be something that a company strives for and uses in their marketing. Alternatively, it can be a new challenge that the company has not previously considered and is now forced to because of the increasingly aware public. (Hall 2007: 365)

Jonathan Hall (2007) talked about an environmental and social tipping point already in 2007. What he calls a tipping point, created and still creates responsibility as well as opportunity for marketers for three reasons according to him. The first of these reasons is that from a consumer perspective ethical concerns are now mainstream. Hall introduced four consumer trends: healthy awakening, empathising, ethical badging which means that being ethical makes a person feel *chic* and *trendy* and the fourth EWOL which stands for the Ethical Way of Life which ultimately refers to the ethical behaviour of consumers. The second reason for the opportunity and responsibility of the tipping point has to do with the challenge of a unified message. Hall advises that apart from the marketing department, the rest of the organisation cannot be trusted with the ethical agenda, as it could end up in a commercial catastrophe, if it does not work out and someone makes a mistake. The third and final reason is that this is a chance for marketers to influence the organisation as marketing directors are the ones that need to understand consumers and maximise return to stakeholders, and therefore have a certain amount of power. (Hall 2007: 365-367) If we imagine that a marketing director of an organization is very passionate about ethicality and he would have proof that it is very important to shareholders also, he could then convince the management that changes to a more ethical direction need to be made in order to please the shareholders.

2.1 Ethical branding

The American Marketing Association (2018) defines brand as a "Name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers." It is, therefore, the essence of a company's ability to compete with other companies. Brand is a device of differentiation and the idea that consumers have of the company. Brand represents the company itself and the philosophy of it. If the brand is strong enough it can turn into an icon. (Fan 2005: 342) Brand is not necessarily something that exist automatically, but something that companies want to pursue, and it requires systematic marketing and a strong company identity.

An ethical brand does not harm public good, but instead it contributes to it or helps contribute to it (Fan 2005: 343). The Branding Journal (2018) defines an ethical brand as a brand that "represents a company, organization or person whose products, services and activities are: 1) morally correct 2) do not harm people, animals and the environment 3) contribute to society and public good in a responsible, positive, and sustainable way". Ethicality should be in the core values of an ethical brand and their strategy should be built around sustainability regarding business, society and the planet. Billström, Mysen, Rindell, Svensson & Wilen (2011) built a foundation of *conscientious corporate brands* (CCB) defining them to consist of brands that have ethical values and concerns embedded in the company's entire business strategy, including values, supply chain, vision and culture. They also developed a model for CCBs and it consists of empirical impact, climate change and internal and external corporate codes of ethics. At the core of CCBs corporate brand strategy is the focus on long-term, consistent and holistic socially responsible behaviour. (Billström et al. 2011: 710-711) Ethical brands are important in helping the progress of fighting climate change and advancing the common good, but if the company knows how to use ethicality in their marketing and branding, it can also turn out to be beneficial for the company too. (Marion 2018)

Creating an ethical brand for one's company is not however easy. A simple marketing campaign is not going to cut it, as it is a company-wide matter. For the ethical image to be delivered successfully, all the brand touchpoints need to reflect the ethical values of

the company, from internal communication to marketing, to customer service and basically every interaction with the company's stakeholders and customers. (Singh 2012; Iglesias, Markovic, Sierra & Singh 2017) Ethicality is also not equally expected from all organisations. Some companies are held to a higher standard of ethicality. For instance, companies, that by nature cause pollution above average measures, are expected to be pro-active and perform preventative measures, therefore investing more into ethicality than some other companies that are not automatically seen as unethical. (Brunk 2010)

If the ethical brand strategy can be carried out authentically, the competitive advantage can be significant. As awareness of consumers is growing, an increasing number of companies are jumping on the ethicality bandwagon and have started to consider ethicality as a strategic factor for defining their product (Iglesias et al. 2017). However, only a handful of brands that promote ethicality are ethical in their core, and therefore can deliver a unified ethical image at every level. An authentic ethical brand image is something that only a few companies can build, as most companies are driven by pursuit of profit. The fact that only a few companies are able to create an authentic ethical brand image for themselves makes it a priceless marketing advantage in today's saturated markets. It is no wonder that ethical companies are proven to perform better financially even during economical crisis. Consumer perceived ethicality (CPE) increases customer's loyalty towards the brand, affects positively on customer's retention, increases the possibility of repurchasing and the possibility of positive word-of-mouth. (Singh 2012)

Organisations face certain challenges and fears when they ponder ethicality and consider making changes or using it as a marketing strategy. Hall (2007) lists five fears and challenges that companies might have or face. First, the fear that consumers won't buy the product even if they are interested. This is an unnecessary fear if the product works, as people are likely to make a purchase if their interest has peaked. Once they notice that the product itself is good, they are very likely to repurchase. The second fear is that the company does not want to be viewed as just jumping on the bandwagon because everyone else is doing it. The advice here is that if you are not first, then be better. There are several almost identical products especially on grocery store shelves, so it is important to make sure that the competing product is better than the others if one wants to beat the

competition. The third fear is the risk of ethically branding one's company if the brand is not 100% clean. Simple solution to this is to not overclaim. If one does not exaggerate and is honest, they cannot be called a liar. Fourth challenge is creating change in a large company, which can feel overwhelming. This is a challenge of course, but it does not need to hold the company back. Big changes start from smaller ones. The fifth challenge or fear is overpowering the consumer and causing distrust. Avoiding overclaiming and being reasonable are keys in this case too. Preaching and being very extreme should be avoided in order to not overwhelm the consumer. (Hall 2007: 366-367)

When we think about customer perceived ethicality (CPE), the most important thing for managers to do is creating awareness of what causes negative CPE, meaning what causes the consumers to see the company as unethical. Unethical perceptions are often found at the root of the faltering brand image and reputation, and can have damaging effects on consumer attitudes and purchase behaviour. Although negative CPE is hard to get rid of, as consumers jump to conclusions very fast and are often hard to win back, it can be fought by reviewing existing ethical codes and changing them if necessary, or if need be, by creating new ones. (Brunk 2010)

For Oatly delivering an ethical image at all levels is not difficult or forced as an ethical way of life is a core value for them (Oatly 2018). Ethicality comes across already in the product itself; growing oat in Sweden is quite as ethical as one can get product-wise. It would be much harder for a company that sells meat or milk products or petrol to appear ethical, as the product being sold already raises questions. Even though Oatly's product is already ethical in itself, they have also decided to promote ethicality in a specific way on their packaging and in their marketing in general, unlike some of their competitors who often have straight-forward packaging, without the amount or the type of ethical messaging Oatly products have on them. Most brands stick to a polished manner of expression but Oatly's delivery is opinionated, political, and casual (Entis 2018).

2.2 Brand ethos

The term *ethos* is thousands of years old and refers to a means of rhetorical convincing and a mode of proof. Aristotle is the philosopher that came up with the term and it refers to the character of a speaker. The goal of the speaker is to convince an audience of their argument. (Aristotle 2012:11; Gill & Whedbee 1997: 2) In the context of marketing products, which is the context in this analysis, the argument is that Oatly's products are good and worth buying. This can of course be further applied to all marketing as marketing is basically convincing consumers to buy a product. The term *ethos* can therefore be used to refer to the character of a company or an organisation.

Chris Arnold uses the word *ethos* in his book *Ethical marketing and the new consumer* (2010) to describe the company's core values and the things that keep a company going; what is their message and what do they strive for? According to him it is the thing that companies should focus on and draw inspiration from, as ethicality should be a given. Ethos is the most important thing that a company has but few companies actually use it to their advantage in marketing, or even recognise it. (Arnold 2010:8) This relates to Oatly strongly as they have chosen to use their ethos heavily in marketing and pretty much everything they do is connected to their ethos of honesty and ethicality regarding business and environment.

Arnold describes the example of a rebranding situation where a company must reinvent itself and they need a completely new identity. In these situations, companies usually only update their look and not the brand because brand is not only defined by looks but also the actions of the company. Brand is defined by the ethos, which determines the actions of a company. The difficulty of ethos is that everything needs to be in line with it, if it is used in marketing. The behaviour of a company must be the same as what they preach. If a brand's ethos is in conflict, no one is going to take it seriously. (Arnold 2010: 8, 10)

Together with a strong personality, a strong ethos is the most powerful way to market a product and to make an impact as people connect to it on every level. Passionate people start ethical companies, and the values of the person become the values of the company.

As people we trust other people and not companies, and this is why many successful ethical companies were started by a passionate individual. Big corporations are hard to trust, but another human is easy to trust if their values are in line with our own. (Arnold 2010: 11) If a brand is able to not be seen as a company trying to gain profit, but as a group of people doing what they believe is right, while being transparent, consumers will want to get behind them as they see the human on the other side. John Schoolcraft, the creative director, emphasizes the humaneness and interaction with the consumer, he does not want their marketing to feel like marketing but a conversation (Entis 2018).

When Oatly carried out the rebranding in 2013, their ethos is what they based it on and what has made them so successful. Even if they did not think of it as their ethos, it suits Arnold's (2010) view of brand ethos. According to Oatly, they thought about their message and the changes that they would like to see in the world. They decided to start promoting plant-based eating and an ethical lifestyle, as well as ethical consuming. Oatly also claims to be big on transparency and communicates with consumers through their product packaging in a casual way. Oatly also makes a conscious effort to not seem like a corporate company, but just a brand. Schoolcraft, their creative director, wants consumers to know that the company is being run by humans, not a "robotic committee" (Entis 2018). This is probably why the brand seems trustworthy and human enough to have made such an impact on the dairy replacement market.

2.3 Ethical consumption

When people buy a cheap product because they think that the quality of it will match another product with a higher price tag, it is called *traditional purchasing*. Other times consumers might boycott a company because of a negative news article they have seen, or they buy a product that has the 'fair trade' -label on them. This kind of buying is called *ethical purchase behaviour*. (Harrison, Newholm & Shaw 2005: 2)

Motivation is key when identifying *an ethical consumer*. For instance, a person can buy organic food products, but the reasoning behind it is to protect themselves and their

personal health from pesticide residue. Another consumer buys organic food products because they are concerned about the effects of pesticide use on wildlife and the environment where the produce is grown. Only the latter consumer would be labelled an ethical consumer as their motive is concerned with the environment and wildlife, rather than their personal health. In this case both motives lead to the same outcome, an ethical purchase, and both consumers made a purchase decision that can be seen catering to the common good. However, only one of these consumers applies ethical motives to their purchase decisions and can therefore be called an ethical consumer. Purchasing decisions are a way for consumers to vote with their money. It is a way to take part in the political conversation, advance societal changes and support the common good, if the consumer wants to do so. (Harrison, Newholm & Shaw 2005: 2)

2.4 The consumer decision process

When consumers are considering buying a product they go through a certain process. This process is similar whether or not the consumer is wanting to consume sustainably, but there are still some differences. The first part of the process is the recognition of a need. This happens at an individual level but can also appear at a mass and a cultural level. (Martin & Schouten 2012: 63) For instance, if we think about climate change and the greenhouse effect, many people have woken up to the reality that people need to change their consumption practices in order to save the planet (IPCC Special report 2018). This has caused a need in people to buy ethical products. It may not be at a mass level yet, but it is definitely a new consumer trend. The recognition of a need also happens at an individual level all the time. Maybe someone decides that they will suddenly start following a plant-based diet or someone is going to have a vegan friend come over and therefore needs to buy groceries that are suitable to the friend's diet.

The second part of the consumer decision process is information search. This refers to the act of seeking information about a potential purchase. People can search information internally from their memory or externally for instance on the internet. Another important source for information about a product, is the product packaging. Although internet is a

great place to find all kinds of information there is also a lot of misinformation online. One type of misinformation is *greenwashing*, which is the act of making something appear more ethical and *greener* than it is in reality. This is fought against for instance with different certifications that a company can only earn and cannot purchase. (Martin & Schouten 2012: 63) Oatly uses their packaging as a channel for informing the consumer and promoting plant-based diet at the same time, but they also have information on their website which is easy to find.

The third part of the process is evaluation of alternatives. This means that the consumer is mentally weighing their options and thinking about the positives and negatives of a certain product. Sustainability and ethicality of a product is one of the things the consumer might evaluate. Other topics include price, performance, features, style and prestige. The weight of each attribute varies from consumer to consumer. (Martin & Schouten 2012: 65) For example someone who cares deeply about the environment will maybe overlook a higher price, because of the ethicality of the product, and purchase it, whereas someone, who is not particularly interested in living in an ethical way and is very careful with their money, will choose another product. However, even if some people want to buy sustainable products, they won't buy them if they taste bad or cost an unreasonable amount of money. Ethical consumers will not ignore price and quality altogether but are simply applying the sustainability criteria into the decision making. (Harrison, Newholm & Shaw: 2005: 2)

Next is the purchase decision process which means deciding what to buy or not buying at all. It also refers to all the other decisions that need to be made to complete a transaction. These include deciding whether someone wants to order online or go in the store, how they are going to pay and if they are going to use a shopping bag or not. The final part of the process is post-purchase behaviours. These refer to the way the consumer uses the product but also how they dispose of the product, if they do dispose of it. Some people are, for instance, careful to recycle everything correctly while other people do not give it a second thought and throw everything away after immediate satisfaction of the need the product was purchased for. Someone could for example reuse or recycle a glass jar while someone else would throw it away with landfill waste. (Martin & Schouten 2012: 65)

2.5 The ethical message of Oatly

Because of the ever-growing choice and the rising awareness of ethical factors, consumers can apply wider consideration into their purchasing decisions. Consumers can choose, whether they want to purchase from companies that they perceive to be ethical and contribute to solving society's problems. This presents a new area of strategy for companies to pursue as companies can now portray an ethical image with ethical corporate marketing. (Bellow 2010: 23) This is what Oatly is doing.

According to Oatly, when they were planning the rebrand, they looked at the origin and roots of their brand. They discovered that by consuming this product, consumers would not only be doing good for themselves, but also the planet. They came to the realization that animal-based eating is harmful to the planet and people, so they wanted to do more than just sell a product. They needed a bigger visionary ambition and decided to start contributing to the plant-based society or at least encouraging people to take steps in that direction. (The challenge project 2016) The following extract from the Oatly's website illustrates, what the company wants their brand image to be and how they want their company philosophy to be seen:

Swedish and independent

We know how it sounds. Tall, blond, beautiful, hard to get, extremely liberal with no sense of attachment or responsibility whatsoever. Sorry to disappoint you, that's just not us. We are the other Swede – somewhat boring, super practical, painfully honest, notoriously hardworking and independent not because we don't want to be social but merely because we want to have the right to say what we think and do what we think is right. If we wanted to be one of those gigantic food corporations or have some old man behind a wooden desk in a tall building make decisions for us, we would all quit our jobs and go work for an old man behind a wooden desk in a tall building making gigantic food company decisions for us. Don't hold your breath.

(Oatly.com 2018)

The values and goals of the company are also clearly stated on their website. Oatly claims to have true intentions and they would like to be judged on the good they do, instead of

the pretty words they say. Their goal is to bring out products that have a good nutritional value with minimal environmental impact. They are reportedly completely GMO free and want to help people have a better life through their products instead of mindlessly pursuing financial profit. According to Oatly, their aim is to produce the cleanest and most responsible products on the market, and they claim to never stop looking for ways to make their products even better. The final goal they list on their website is making the food industry a more honest place by declaring that they are completely transparent in what they do. (Oatly.com 2018) According to Schoolcraft, Oatly's beliefs surround nutritional health and sustainability, which is why they can be honest as they are not 'bullshitting'. People respond well to honesty and appreciate transparency. (The challenge project 2016)

An ethical way of running a business, living and consuming is a theme that arises from this list of values. Oatly describes how they want to be the most responsible company on the market and have as little effect on the environment as possible. They are not afraid to get political and speak their truth in their packaging. This is where the second theme of my study draws from. How are these ethical values put forward in the product packaging and specifically, how are they communicated through Oatly's rhetorical choices?

3 RHETORIC

The history of *rhetoric* is closely tied to the democratisation of countries. Because decisions were now made at meetings between free citizens, the importance of rhetoric, the ability to speak well, grew as people needed to convince others in order to make decisions. (Leiwo, Luukka & Nikula 1992: 8) Rhetoric has been defined in many different ways by many scholars. It has been defined as the ability to see the available means of persuasion in any given case, as the art of speaking well, as the skill of finding suitable arguments for any point and arranging them skilfully, and as the process of adjusting people to ideas and ideas to people. Some scholars have seen rhetoric as simply the act of persuasion, but other scholars saw rhetoric in a broader way as any kind of instrumental expression. (Gill & Whedbee 1997)

Although the definitions vary, there are also themes that scholars agree on. Something that they all established is that rhetoric is a type of discourse, the aim of which is to influence the audience towards a certain end. In the early times of rhetoric, it was mainly present in public speeches but after printing press was invented, rhetoric expanded to printed format also and the field broadened. (Gill & Whedbee 1997) Rhetoric nowadays often has a negative connotation in people's minds without a validated reasoning. It is often thought of as a shallow means to appeal to one's feelings and the opposite is a calm and cool relevance. However, this is unnecessary and untrue, as rhetoric and the will to affect people are a part of all human communication. (Mustakallio 2014: 7)

The most significant philosopher whose idea of rhetoric is very relevant to this day is Aristotle (2012). He saw rhetoric as a skill; everyone knows how to speak and produce speech, express opinions and debate, but some people are better at it than others. According to Aristotle rhetoric is the ability to recognize what is convincing in each context. No other skill had the same purpose. Rhetoric was not something that was specific to a certain field, but something that gave the ability to see the convincing elements in any given set of things. (Puro 2006: 31, Aristotle 2012: 10-11) Aristotle saw rhetoric as a specific group of means to achieve the goal of a speaker. Rhetoric was seen specifically as a skill and the most important thing was to come up with convincing arguments. (Rokka 2014: 21)

According to Aristotle, rhetoric referred to the argumentation of a topic that could not be resolved by scientific facts and it was carried out by a public speaker in a public place to an audience of ordinary people, who would not be able to follow a speech that required a more complicated act of deduction (Aristotle 2012: 13, Perelman 1996: 11). Rhetorical analysis as a method of study, therefore, is the analysis of text and its means of persuasion (Kaakkuri-Knuuttila 2000: 234).

3.1 Speech types

In *Rhetoric* (2012) Aristotle names three different types of speech: there is political speech, juridical speech and epideictic speech. There are also different types of speech within these three categories. Political speech can be either cautionary or urging. Juridical speech is either defending or accusation. Epideictic speech then again is either rebuking or praising. Political speech focuses on the future as it aims to affect decisions regarding the future. Juridical speech is concerned with the past, something that has already happened. Epideictic speech happens in the now as the praising or rebuking concerns things happening now. (Aristotle 2012: 16-17)

If we think about Oatly's packaging texts and what advertising and marketing are usually like as speech, some interesting observations can be made. Most advertising and marketing materials are trying to create a greater demand for a product or a service at the time by glorifying it and pointing out how excellent it is. While some instances of this can be found also on Oatly's packages, many of the packaging texts can also be seen as political speech, as they are trying to affect the future by encouraging people to consume oat products and plants instead of dairy. Oatly's packaging acts in the now but for the future, which is something that separates their packages from many others.

3.2 Ethos, pathos & logos

According to Aristotle (2012) there are three different reasons for how a speech can convince one of something, three different modes of proof. They can be based on *ethos*, which refers to the character of the speaker. We believe people who seem fair and trustworthy, or pleasing in other ways, more easily. The character of the speaker can convince the listener, if the speech gives a trustworthy impression of the speaker. The second mode of proof and persuasion is *pathos*, the mindset and emotion of the listener. Convincing is based on the listener, if they are influenced by the speech and get into a certain state of mind because of it. This is a significant means of convincing as people make different decisions and judgements depending on how they feel. We make different decisions while being sad to when we feel happy or joyful. The third mode of convincing is *logos*, which refers to the speech and the argument itself. The speaker presents an argument and if the speaker can support the argument by evidence and reasoning, the audience is likely to believe it. (Aristotle 2012: 11; Gill & Whedbee 1997: 2) The most relevant of these three to my study is ethos, as being seen as trustworthy and likeable is vital for a successful brand, but the other two are relevant also. Oatly uses different rhetorical devices to please their audience and to make them feel positive things towards the brand by amusing and humouring the consumer. Logos is present in arguments about the health of the planet and the ethicality of oat.

3.3 New rhetoric

In the 1950s the classical view of rhetoric was broadened by the so-called *new rhetoric*. The most significant philosophers of new rhetoric were Chaïm Perelman, Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca and Stephen Toulmin (Summa 1996: 51). The idea behind new rhetoric is that rhetoric should be viewed in a broader context. It is not merely a way to convince an audience using specific tactics or communicative channels, but a much wider phenomenon, and the importance of the relationship between the speaker and listener is where the focus needs to be. (Puro 2006: 108-109)

This new kind of rhetoric was also called dialectic and it did not matter whether the speech or a piece of text was addressed to a live audience or in writing to a single person. The context was broadened from formal to also informal. New rhetoric refers to all performances where the aim is to convince someone of something regardless of the context or the subject being discussed. (Perelman 1996: 11-12) Ethos, pathos and logos were still recognized as important concepts even though they have different emphasis in different texts and contexts. (Leiwo et al. 1992: 14)

3.4 Rhetorical context

Rhetorical context is an important concept of rhetorical analysis and it includes the speaker, audience and the forum. (Kaakkuri-Knuutila 2000: 235) When a rhetorical critic is examining a rhetorical piece of text, they can focus either on the context of the creation of the text or the context where the text is experienced by an audience. (Gill & Whedbee 1997: 3-4) According to rhetorical critics, texts are pragmatic, and they respond to a cultural or societal issue or problem. In other words, rhetorical texts are in conversation with the culture and the time and they want to create change in the world. Rhetoric acquires its character as a rhetorical text from specific events and situations. (Gill & Whedbee 1997: 3-4)

Certain kinds of situations require a certain type of text or speech and a text can only be understandable if the reader or listener knows the context in which it was created. For instance, a funeral requires a very certain manner of speech or the person could be seen as disrespectful. Another example could be a job application which usually has a quite established form and style. Religious rituals, parliamentary traditions and the justice system are places where the topics and manners of communication are regulated and breaking these rules can be seen as shameful, illegal, inappropriate, insulting or ridiculing (Perelman 1996: 17). An example of the importance of knowing the context of an existing text is the bible. If it was not known that the bible was written as long a time ago as it was, it would seem very out of touch and hard to fathom. But as we know the context it

was written in, we understand that it is not comparable to the modern times without loosened interpretation.

Several concepts arise from the context of a text that a rhetorical critic can use to analyse it. Firstly, *exigence*, which refers to the issue or problem that the text is addressed to. Second, *audience*, the people that the text is aimed at. Third is *genre*, which refers to the nature of the text. The final and fourth construct is *rhetor credibility*, this refers to the societal position of the creator of the text in relation to their audience. (Gill & Whedbee 1997: 3-4) Climate change is one of the exigences in Oatly's case. Other issues that could motivate them to spread the message they have chosen to spread, could be animal rights and the treatment of animals. It could be any factor that according to Oatly could be influenced by consuming plant based dairy alternatives.

The contexts in which Oatly's products are used and the packaging texts are experienced, can be quite varied, which means that the audience of Oatly's products is much wider than one might first think. Individuals who did not choose to be exposed to the packages, experience them and possibly get influenced by them. Audiences can be divided into real audiences and implied audiences. Implied audience is a fictive audience which only exists in the text (Gill & Whedbee 1997: 7). Implied audience is the audience that the writer thinks about while composing the text, the writer predicts this audience's reaction and their understanding of the text (Norquist 2017). While considering the implied audience of Oatly, it is the people who understand the importance of environmental issues and are open to, or already use dairy product replacements. They understand the casual style of Oatly packaging texts and appreciate them. The real audience, however, is much wider.

Their actual audience consists of all consumers who are interested in milk replacement products and consume them, but also the consumers of milk products, who could be turned to plant-based alternatives. Basically, the people who are likely to pick up the product in the store. The real audience is also extended to people, who did not purchase the product or did not look at it in the store, but who come into contact with them at home in the fridge or at a café, at a workplace coffee table or a hotel breakfast table. The possibilities of locations and different people they reach seem almost endless. The challenge

is to try to resonate with all these different people in very different situations in their everyday lives.

The third concept that critics can use while analysing rhetorical texts is genre. Texts that use similar stylistic and argumentative strategies and have distinguished discursive features can form a genre. (Gill & Whedbee 1997: 5) The genre of the texts analysed in this study is product packaging, as product packaging is a channel of communication that has certain rules and common practices regulating it and a specific function. While considering the genre of product packaging, it is important to think about the aim that the text has. What is the speaker trying to persuade the audience of? In this case a product is being sold. One of the functions of product packaging, besides providing a means to preserve the product, enabling a safe passage through the supply chain as well as providing significant amounts of information, is to sell the product. Packaging can be thought of as the “silent sales-man”. (Emblem 2012: 26, 41, 48)

The obvious aim of a rhetorical packaging text is to sell the product; to peak the consumer’s interest enough by persuading them of the excellence of the product, in order to make them want to buy. This is naturally also one of the aims of Oatly’s packaging texts. The packaging texts also provide the customer important information on the product and its claimed benefits. Another aim for Oatly is to raise awareness of environmental issues and creating positive change in the world (Oatly 2018). Other goals that Oatly’s packaging texts undoubtedly have are creating a positive brand image, creating brand awareness and imprinting the brand image into consumer’s minds. Oatly’s packaging texts exist in the store where people look at them briefly, but also at home and other places where people maybe sit around with the packaging out on a table, for instance. The aim of selling the product is very present in the store, but once the product has been taken out of the context of the store and has successfully “sold itself”, the other aims are more present. In chapter 4 we will further discuss what kind of functions and goals different pieces of Oatly packaging texts have.

The fourth concept is societal position. The societal position of Oatly has grown as their business has grown but when they first launched the new packaging, they were a much

smaller company and therefore had a lot less influence. As their revenue has grown and they have gotten more popular, the influence has grown naturally too. Their growth of influence is, however, due to the fact that the products have spread wider, and not necessarily because the company seems more trustworthy. It is always going to be problematic for a profit-seeking company to appear trustworthy and therefore have authentic influence on the minds of consumers, as consumers can be highly sceptical as they recognize the motive to make money on the company's part. However, the fact that Oatly is seeking influence in order to create change in the world and a better and more environmentally friendly tomorrow, beside making some money, works in their favour.

Oatly's product packaging is heavily tied to the time it was created in. It is quite political, as it arguments against consuming animal products and enforces an ethical way of living and eating. If the packaging was created 20 or even 15 years ago, it would probably be disregarded as strange fanaticism towards the environment. But as it was created about five years ago it is understandable, as it discusses a modern societal issue – climate change and taking action to slow it down. With their packaging, Oatly is trying to create conversation and change, so understanding the context the packaging was created in, is vital in order to analyse it.

3.5 Rhetorical devices

A speech can be called excellent, if it leaves people feeling a certain way (the way that the speaker or writer intended), or the message of the speech can still be recalled when some time has passed. We attempt to create change with our words and do not want to simply waste our time. The aim is to make people take the action we want them to take, even long after they heard what we had to say. This is a very difficult goal to achieve and very few people are capable of this, but the average person can have an impact to some degree too, if they are skilful in their delivery at the right moment. (Mustakallio 2014: 57-58)

A message that influences the listener's life is the core of a piece of text. The message could be significant in its topic or goal, or it could seem rather insignificant. What matters is the way that the message is presented to the audience. If the message that a speaker wants people to hear is not significant, the delivery, which refers to different rhetorical means, as well as the timing and the form of the speech, could be used in order to make an impact. If a rhetorical text is built or presented in a way that it makes an impact, it can stay in people's minds for a long time. (Mustakallio 2014: 57-58) Rhetorical devices are often mentioned in the context of speaking, but they can easily be applied to written text also.

The functions of rhetorical devices are appealing to the audience and argumentation in favour of a specific point of view (Rokka 2014: 29). There are several rhetorical devices that can be used to deliver an effective speech. One of the most typically used devices is *a trope* which is a figure of speech. Tropes include all the rhetorical devices that are used to express things in a way that they are not usually expressed. Tropes include rhetorical devices like *metaphor* and *comparison*. (Mustakallio 2014: 58-68) Metaphor colours the speech and makes the matter known by using a word, that the audience is already familiar with. Metaphor has a long history as Aristotle gave advice on how to correctly use them already in *Rhetoric*. (Kaakkuri-Knuutila 2000: 259, Aristotle 2012)

Figures refer to rhetorical devices that have to do with the order of words in a sentence. For instance, *repetition* is a rhetorical figure. *Anaphora* is a type of repetition, which means that multiple sentences start in a similar way with the same word or phrase. The opposite of this is *epistrophe*, as it is the kind of repetition where the ends of clauses or sentences are the same. *Anadiplosis* refers to the repetition of the word at the beginning of a sentence, which was at the end of the previous sentence. *Exaggerating* and creating *a climax* (things are presented as steps and finally culminate) are also rhetorical devices that have to do with word order and word choices (Harris 2013: 17, Leiwo et al 1992: 14).

Paralipsis means pretending to omit something that is too obvious to mention, for example the sentence "I don't need to remind you that plagiarism is a crime, right?" uses

paralipsis as a rhetorical device. *Summarizing the core message of a speech* is also a rhetorical device, but for it to have the maximum effect one should first let the listener know that the following sentence is important so that the listener knows to pay attention. (Mustakallio 2014: 58-68)

Hypophora and *rhetorical question* are two rhetorical devices that are used in the form of a question. Hypophora is used when the speaker or writer presents a question, but then also proceeds to answer it. It is a great way to persuade or inform, but can also be used to anticipate questions that the reader or listener might have or raise. Rhetorical question, however, is a question that the speaker or writer is not expecting an answer to. The answer is implied in the question itself and the question form is a way for the speaker or writer to emphasise something that the audience already knows. The goal is to make the listener or reader think and to engage them. (McGuigan 2007: 26, 30)

Some expressions that strengthen, weaken or colour the argumentation are for example *bailing*, *protection* and *strengthening*, *conjunctions* and *argumentative performative*. Bailing increases the acceptability of an argument by leaning on an authority, common sense or the possibility to further justify an argument. Protection means protecting one's argument by weakening the content of the argument to make it seem less absolute and therefore easier for the audience to accept. Strengthening is the opposite of this. Conjunctions like the word *but* can be used to elaborate, which one of the opposing arguments is heavier. Argumentative performatives show the speakers argumentative moves ("I deny all presented accusations."). (Kaakkuri-Knuuttila 2000: 256-257)

Some common-sense rhetorical devices are *humour* and *storytelling*. Humour can be used subtly masked into the text or it can be very obvious. At best humour can make the audience or listener like the speaker, and therefore they will be more open to what the speaker has to say. Connected to humour are *sarcasm* and *irony*, which are sometimes a little risky as they can do some harm, if the listener is not able to interpret them in the intended way (Kurki & Tomperi: 2011). Storytelling is a great way to engage the listener and to hold their attention. A good story teaches a lesson and makes the listener feel different emotions; it appeals in an emotional and a rational way. (Mustakallio 2014: 69-72)

These are not in any way all the rhetorical devices that one may use, but these are the ones that are commonly used. If one was to name and define the meaning of all rhetorical devices, it would take a hundred pages and then some. Going into the analysis I have a working hypothesis that the most commonly used rhetorical device in Oatly's product packaging texts would be humour. This is based on my personal experience of the packaging as an occasional consumer of Oatly products.

3.6 Visual rhetoric

Visual rhetoric generally has two meanings. First, it can be described as rhetorical expression that exists in visual form. Images or visual forms that have some kind of a persuasive goal or convey meaning represent visual rhetoric. For instance, if someone does photography that tries to create awareness of a societal issue, it is visual rhetoric. Or if someone draws up a protest sign. Advertisements are also a very typical example of visual rhetoric. These examples might contain some text too, maybe to elaborate on the context of the image or its topic or purpose, but the image is the central component of the message. The image can also stand alone and create a reaction in the audience by itself. It can prompt an emotional reaction or a specific association. (Edwards 2009: 220)

Visual rhetoric is easy to understand through verbal rhetoric as the difference is merely in the way that the persuasive message is delivered to the audience. Visual rhetoric is traditionally thought of as monologic, a one-way type of rhetoric, as it usually consists of fixed images, but it could also be described as weakly dialogic. Visual rhetoric can make the audience adhere to the message of the image, and also engages them into an analysis of the image and therefore creation of meaning. (Lancioni 2008: 106, Roque 2008: 185)

The second meaning of visual rhetoric refers to the study of rhetoric; it refers to the effort to theorize and understand rhetoric that exists in visual form or involves visual elements. Visual rhetoric operates as a mode of inquiry that looks at images and visual elements from a different point of view to, for example, art history. As an analytical pursuit, visual

rhetoric helps us understand how visual constructs create meaning. In summary, visual rhetoric is concerned with how persuasion is evoked in visual form, how images are seen and how they are looked at. Visual rhetoric broadens the understanding of rhetoric beyond the spoken and written word and recognizes the potential in images. (Edwards 2009: 220)

Visual rhetoric is relevant in the context of this study as some of Oatly's packaging designs involve illustration and images. Most of the time they do have a smaller role than the text, or their roles or significance are balanced, but visual rhetoric offers another interesting tool to analyse Oatly's packaging designs. Especially when the context of the products advertising themselves is so fitting to visual rhetoric.

4 RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF OATLY PRODUCT PACKAGING

Oatly's mission with their packaging on the shelf is to get the shopper to pick up the product out of curiosity, which arises from the original look of the packages. The text and the message behind the text do the rest by communicating the reasons why the consumer should buy the product. Together, these functions must be communicating the Oatly brand very effectively and successfully, as the company has experienced massive growth since the rebranding in 2013.

In the forthcoming analysis I am going to investigate the way Oatly uses text and rhetorical devices in their packaging, as well as how they bring forward the ethical values of the company. The usage of text in Oatly's packaging is different to other brands as they use so much of it. Oatly sees package design as an opportunity to communicate their message to their customers. They do not simply state the things that are obligatory for a company to disclose on the packaging (i.e. ingredients and nutritional information) but take the opportunity to address and even try to educate the consumer.

The context of creation for the products I am about to analyse is at Oatly's headquarters, where they design the packaging and the text and illustrations that they carry. Oatly is the speaker and they create the message that they want their audience, the consumers, to see and read. The context in which the texts are experienced is the grocery store, but it also goes much beyond that. The products, and therefore also the texts, are present and experienced also at home or where ever the consumer who bought the product takes it. It is probably usually the home of the person, but it could also be a workplace or some other location, where a larger number of people, that are not the consumer's immediate family or friends, also get exposed to the text.

In this chapter I will analyse Oatly's product packaging and determine the rhetorical devices Oatly uses in them. I am first going to discuss the visual observations I have made of the packaging. After that I will present a comprehensive analysis of one of the products in order to illustrate how I arrived at the rhetorical devices and themes discussed in

chapter 4.4. The rest of the chapter entails the discussion of the rhetorical devices through examples and a discussion of the results of the analysis.

For the sake of convenience, I have named the products in a very simple manner to avoid making the analysis heavier than it needs to be. The names of the products and the way I will be referring to them can be seen in the table below, *OP* refers to *Oatly product*.

Original oat drink	OP 1	Strawberry elderflower 230ml	OP 11	Vanilla sauce	OP 21
Organic oat drink	OP 2	Oat drink junior	OP 12	påMackan unflavored	OP 22
Chocolate oat drink	OP 3	Chocolate oat drink junior	OP 13	påMackan garlic cucumber	OP 23
Orange mango oat drink	OP 4	Oatgurt unflavored	OP 14	påMackan tomato basil	OP 24
iKaffe	OP 5	Oatgurt strawberry	OP 15	Chocolate ice cream	OP 25
Matcha latte	OP 6	Oatgurt vanilla	OP 16	Strawberry ice cream	OP 26
Cold brew latte	OP 7	iMat 1l	OP 17	Vanilla ice cream	OP 27
Mocha latte	OP 8	iMat	OP 18	Double chocolate fudge	OP 28
Chocolate 235ml	OP 9	iMat fraiche 0,5l	OP 19	Salty caramel and hazelnut	OP 29
Orange Mango 230ml	OP 10	iMat fraiche	OP 20		

Table 1. Oatly products and their acronyms

4.1 Visual observations of Oatly's product packaging

In this subchapter I will discuss the visual observations I have made analysing the packages. We will discuss colour, typography and illustrations.

4.1.1 Colour

The overall look of Oatly's packaging is quite minimalist when colours are considered, but at the same time visibility and aesthetics of the packaging are clearly very important to the brand. Each package uses approximately three colours and typography and imagery have an important role. A moderate usage of colour in most of the products and large sized lettering in the front of the packaging is something that separates Oatly from corresponding products on the shelf. Apparently, this was very purposeful as with the

rebranding Oatly wanted a completely different look compared to their competition (Challenge project 2016). Packaging colour is not something hugely studied, but it is something that should be thought about when creating brand packaging. Colour has three functions in product packaging: attention, aesthetics and communication. (Kauppinen-Räsänen 2014: 670)

Oatly's packaging design is really trying to use colour and its functions to their full potential as the simple colour scheme and the little use of white as a primary colour, except in their yogurt and some ice cream packages, is hard to miss as many competitors use excessive amounts of white in their package designs or the bottles are see-through. The fact that the packages use mainly only three colours, makes them seem minimalist even though the amount of illustrations and text is significant. This could also be something that had to be done in order to counteract the busyness of the text and illustrations. If the designs had the same amount of text and illustrations topped off with a rainbow of colours, it could be too much for the consumer and invite negative reactions. Keeping the colour scheme mostly muted on the busier packages is a practical way of trying to keep the look tasteful and inviting.

The colours on these packages that have the texts and illustrations on them, are notably not pure colours. The colours are either lighter than pure colours or are a mix of a couple or more pure colours. Natural products tend to use less pure-looking colours and together with a rustic looking packaging they can communicate the naturalness of the product. Especially earthy colours such as brown, blue and green are popular in natural products and Oatly uses all of them. White is used as a primary colour in six packages. White signals purity and optimism but also suits the rustic homemade look of the Oatly brand. (Ledin & Machin 2018: 102-103)

In the product packages that are smaller in size and cannot therefore hold large amounts of texts and illustrations, Oatly has decided to go a little more elaborate with the visuality of the packaging. For example, the on the go -coffee drinks have a silver metallic base colour as seen below in picture 3.



Picture 3. Some products from the on the go -category (Oatly.fi 2019)

As there is not enough room for elaborate illustrations and persuading or humorous texts, the consumer's attention must be grabbed in other ways, in this case using colour and interesting fonts. OPs 6-11 had very little rhetorical text on them and the main responsibility of marketing the product was given to the colour and the interesting round shape of the packaging.

Colour has also been used as a way to separate products from others and to illustrate a greater quality. OPs 17-21 are completely black and white which is quite different to the other range and works as a way to separate the products meant to be used while cooking. The black also stands out on the shelf in the shop, as not many other companies dare using it as a primary colour. Black is a colour that is used to communicate seriousness, higher quality and luxury in products, for example champagne bottles often have a black label (Ledin & Machin 2018: 102). This could be why black is quite an unusual colour to see in a grocery store as companies want to make their products seem easily approachable. The characteristics of black packaging colour are quite accurate to these Oatly products, as they are more expensive than the corresponding dairy products and used while cooking, which can be seen as a more serious activity than eating ice cream for example.

An impression of a greater quality is also created in the ice cream category. Oatly has five different ice creams, three of which are more ordinary flavour-wise and therefore more affordable than the other two. The packaging colour of the more affordable ones (OP 25-

27) is quite simple, despite the bright product name, and not at all “in your face”. However, the two more expensive ones and more elaborate in flavour (OP 28 &29) have rich shades of chocolate and caramel as their primary colour. The difference in colour design can be seen in the picture 4. Colour is used as a way to create an image of a richer flavour and to justify the higher price.



Picture 4. Oatly ice creams (Oatly.fi 2019)

Colour is also used to signal the flavour of the product. This is typical for food product packaging and Oatly is no different. Products that have a strawberry flavour have something pink on the packaging. OP 4 and OP 10 have a bright orange packaging as the flavour of the products is orange and mango; fruits that are orange in colour. Also, OPs 3, 9, 13 and 28 have brown as their primary colour on the packaging because the flavour of the product is chocolate. Vanilla flavoured things have something yellow-toned on them.

4.1.2 Typography

Writing on product packaging is partly regulated by law but also by common practices. The brand name and product names are presented at the front of the packaging, on the primary display panel. The brand name is the one in biggest font on all the packages. Another category of typography on packaging is a callout. They are inserted in graphics in a box or another kind of icon. Sell copy is something usually printed on the secondary panel/s of the package, and according to its name it is something that tries to sell the product. Mandatory copy refers to the text that is required by law and can usually be found in small print. (Ledin & Machin 2018: 104-105)

Oatly has the brand name in biggest font in every packaging at the front of the package, except on OPs 25-29 on which the brand name can be found in larger font on the lid of the ice creams, but at the front Oatly is printed in a smaller font below the product name. A callout they have on several packages is “It’s Swedish!” in a speech bubble quite low at the front of the packaging. Sell copies are the rhetorical texts that we will discuss below, the texts that Oatly has on the sides of the packages and even on the inside of them. The purpose of these does vary, however, as the main purpose of the sell copies on the outside of the packaging is to sell that product, but when the text is on the inside, it is selling the brand and making it more memorable.

Some sell copies can also be found at the front of the packaging. They do not count as a callout as they are not inside any kind of icon; “Powered by Swedish oats” can be found on OPs 9-11 and “No milk. No soy. No ...eh... whatever.” on OPs 1-4 and 14-16. Some products that do not have this specific sell copy at the front have “100% vegetable product” in Finnish instead. The ice creams have a “100% vegan” sell copy at the front. Mandatory copy is at the backside of the products and it includes, for instance, the list of ingredients and the nutritional value information. These elements can be seen in pictures 1, 2 and 3 even though they are not actual pictures of my material, but pictures taken from Oatly’s website. The fronts of the packages hardly change between batches or export countries.

Large part of the product names are printed in the same font and the Oatly brand name is always printed using the same font. Some product names at the front and text titles on the secondary panels have different fonts or are sometimes illustrated. The longer rhetorical texts, however, all have the same typewriter-like font.

4.1.3 Illustrations

Illustrations on the packaging function as an add-on to the text, and the two are always linked. Text can stand alone, but all the illustrations on the packages are somehow linked to the text. The illustrations add to the text and create a more interesting and eye-catching

appearance. An important detail is that the illustrations on the packaging look like someone has drawn them by hand. They are not polished photoshopped pictures but look like something someone could draw in the corner of a notebook. This is, of course, a stylistic choice that is meant to communicate the down-to-earth brand image.

For instance, OP 3 which I will soon discuss in detail, has a spiral illustration on it paired with a humorous text which pokes fun at hypnosis. The spiral illustration can be seen in picture 2, but in this picture from their website it is printed on the side OP 16. Another similar example is the tiny illustrated power cable on OPs 9-11 that appears together with the sentence “Powered by Swedish oats” creating humour from the word *powered*. On OP 2 and OP 15, which have the same texts and illustrations, there is an illustration of a cloud and raindrops and the topic of the text is the bad Swedish weather. The illustration is there to make the packaging livelier and to create intrigue. The texts and the illustrations are clearly linked in these instances, and the illustrations would seem quite out of place without the texts but at the same time the illustrations also bring added value. A seemingly random illustration could easily catch a consumer’s eye as an unordinary thing to see on a supermarket shelf.

On OP 1 there is an illustration of two yogurt cups, as the text that accompanies it is marketing another Oatly product. This illustration is not humorous and quite frankly there just to bring life and look to the design of the carton side. On the other side on the same carton there is an illustrated membership card for the consumer to write their name on, so they can join the “post milk generation”. This is an interactive and humorous illustration as it playfully gives the consumer a physical way to join Oatly’s post milk mindset. Similarly to the membership card, on OP 2 and OP 15, there is an illustration of scissors on a dashed line as well as a white decorated name tag where one can write a name of an herb, as the theme of the text above it is that one can turn their oat drink carton into an herb garden.

On OPs 4, 16 and 17, which have the same texts and illustrations, the other side of the carton has a very large sized illustrated stencil that says “EAT MORE PLANTS” on it. The stencil is accompanied by an illustrated knife on the edge of as well as a short text in

a tiny print that says “CAUTION! Cutting this stencil may cause a minor revolution.” The stencil is very to the point with the simple order to eat more plants and it is hard to miss. It is a clever way to put forward the ethical agenda of Oatly, as the customer can decide if they want to cut it out and spread the word or not. Oatly is playing with the packaging material and using the physical package to their advantage with an illustration of a knife and a stencil, and in the example above with scissors. Even if the customer does not cut the stencil out and therefore endorse the message, they have still read it and that way been influenced by the message. This stencil illustration works together with the text, but also alone as a simple call to action. It also draws the consumer in to read the text next to it and also on the other side of the carton.

OP 24 has large sized illustrated numbers on the inside of the packaging where the text piece of that package is also located. The numbers are each illustrated differently in order to make them as eye-catching as possible. Once the reader sees the numbers, they will most likely spot the text too. The text let’s the reader know that these are their lucky numbers, even though they change their mind right after and admit they should not write about destiny and things like that, so the text and illustrations are once again very linked and cannot stand alone.

Another observation I made is that the products that do not have room for additional text use more visual fonts in the name of the product at the front of the packaging. The only products that each use a different font to one another on the product names are, OPs 6-11 and 25-29, the ones that do not actually have any additional text on them. The other products all have a very similar font for the product name. This is another way, in addition to colour which was discussed earlier, for Oatly to try and stand out as there is no room to do that in text form. Different typography is however used on the titles or text pieces on the products that do have additional text on them.

4.2 Locations of the packaging text

While most of the rhetorical texts on Oatly's packaging can be found on the outside of the packaging, some products have texts hidden inside them which are therefore meant for only the customer who has made the purchase. This is a way to market the product even further still, when the consumer is already using the product or has completely used it.

It is important to think about the context of the text, when it is on the inside of a package. Having text on the inside means that a consumer, who buys the products, does not even know what they are going to get exposed to and cannot, therefore, prepare for it and consider it before making the purchase decision. If the text inside the packaging is heavily promoting plant-based eating or some other ideology that the consumer does not necessarily support, they could feel blindsided. On the other hand, if the person agrees with the text or finds it amusing, they could feel great joy due to the unexpected pleasant surprise. Putting illustration or text on the inside of the packaging means, that it is experienced right before the packaging is thrown away. This means that it is the last attempt at making an impression as the consumer has probably already become very familiar with the outside of the packaging. It could leave the consumer with a positive impression about the product and therefore the brand too, but it could also leave a negative impression if the message does not sit with the consumer's personal ideology. The placement of the texts and illustrations will be discussed in the analysis when it is relevant.

4.3 Analysis of Chocolate oat drink packaging

In this chapter I am providing a demonstration of how I have analysed the packaging texts by writing out my analysis of the chocolate oat drink. Oat drink chocolate is one of the five one litre cartons of oat drinks in the material of this analysis. The packaging material is carton and the colour of the packaging is brown. The product has text and illustration on both sides of the carton. On one side there is an illustration of a spiral mimicking the

look of a spiral figure used stereotypically while putting someone under hypnosis. (See picture 2 vanilla oatgurt packaging) The text under the illustration reads as follows:

(1) A MESSAGE FROM THE OATLY DEPARTMENT OF MIND CONTROL

To further develop your personal well-being, stare into this diagram for 30 seconds before consuming its contents while having a friend with a deep, distinguished voice whisper into your ear:

“The oats are the future. What you are doing is right.”

Repeat this activity whenever you feel the need. Namaste.

This whole side of the carton including the text and the image form a very humorous effect with its sarcasm. Oatly does not have a department of mind control, obviously, so the absurdity creates the humour. The whole text is in imperative form and addresses the consumer while making fun of the idea of hypnosis. Emotion- and thought-provoking words such as *deep*, *distinguished* and *well-being* are used. At the very end is a reference to mindfulness culture originating from India with the *namaste* greeting. The core message of this humorous design is included in the word *right*. *Future* is also an emotion-provoking word. The two sentences that host these words are the message of this whole side, emphasized by the fact that they are written in bigger font than the rest of the text; “Oats are the future. What you are doing is right.” The message is strong, and it is delivered by two short sentences with similar sound, as they both end with the most important word of the sentence. The last and most important word is the one that is emphasized and therefore they are memorable for the reader.

The whole idea and design of this side is built around this message. Making fun of hypnotizing is a way to soften the message and further build brand image of a fun and original company that does not take things too seriously. This carton side is a great symbol for the whole brand; At the core is a strong message but the message is presented in a fun way to avoid being too aggressive and to attract consumers, as humorous packaging and an easy-going approach to marketing a product, as well as an ethical lifestyle, is not something that people are used to seeing and therefore find interesting and original.

The left side of the carton has a bit more text than the right side and the eye-catcher is an illustrated “BUY NOW!” at the top under which is the following text:

- (2) That’s what you would expect us to say. But seriously, why should we try to sell this product to you? Shouldn’t it sell itself? Shouldn’t we just let people try it and form their own opinion and if they like it they will call up their best friend or text them or WhatsApp or Snapchat them or emoji them or whatever and let them know that this product is smokin’ hot. Totally. If only life was that easy perhaps this package would just write itself and we wouldn’t ever have to think about sales.

This side is interesting as it has two different ways of making an impact. Even if the consumer in the shop does not read the smaller longer text, they will see the large “BUY NOW” text, which is quite hard to miss, and be influenced by it. If they do read the text too, they might appreciate the idea behind it and will buy the product. The first sentence of the text is a comment on the bold order to buy and minimizes the effect of it, giving the impression that it was written ironically. It addresses the consumer while telling them what they expect, almost putting words in the consumer’s mouth. This is a justifiable assumption, however, as usually the underlying message of advertising and marketing is telling the consumer to buy. This is followed by several hypophoras and repetition within the hypophoras.

The first two questions are quite neutral and make an interesting point, but the longest indirect hypophora is where the tactics appear. The question continues discussing the point of the two previous questions, but at the same time introduces many ways that the consumer could word of mouth -market the product to a friend. This is a subtle way to put those ideas in the reader’s head, without directly telling them to do this. There is two types of repetition in these sentences. First, “Shouldn’t” starts both the hypophoras so the name of the rhetorical device is anaphora. Another repeated word is the conjunction *or*, the repetition of which gives the sentence its rhythm. The hypophoras are answered with “Totally.”, which is a verbless sentence, so the only purpose it has is for rhetorical effect. The last sentence is seeking sympathy but also apologetic depending on one’s interpretation. They can also work together. Oatly is apologetic for having to market and sell the

product which tells us that Oatly believes that their customers appreciate honesty and authenticity and are not fond of forced marketing and often almost fake advertising.

The whole tone of this carton side resembles stream of consciousness or thinking out loud, which is caused by the conversational and informal structure of it. The chocolate oat drink packaging has different goals on each side. The left side discussed right above is trying to sell the product by addressing the consumer in a candid way, having a go at humorous empathy or an apologetic tone (depending on interpretation), while the other side was focused on selling the product by promoting the ethicality of the product and how consuming oats is the right way to live. The other side is merely selling the product, while the other one is selling the product and the lifestyle. I analysed all the packages in my research material this way, and the number of rhetorical devices I discovered is nine. We are now going to discuss these nine devices.

4.4 Rhetorical devices in Oatly product packaging

Now that I have demonstrated how the analysis itself was carried out, we can move on to the discussion of the rhetorical devices I came across. The rhetorical devices and themes discussed in this chapter are the ones that I have identified from the packaging texts and ones that started to repeat themselves throughout the analysis.

4.4.1 Repetition

I am starting with repetition as it is quite easy to spot as it is simply mentioning the same word or phrase multiple times in the same text. OP 1 is the first example as repetition is used on it by repeating the full name of the product in a short text; “What could possibly be better than our new single portion oatgurt packs in lemon elderflower and vanilla blueberry? A twin pack of single portion oatgurts in lemon elderflower and vanilla blueberry, that’s what.” The name of the product is repeated in order to make the reader remember it. There is no other reason for Oatly making the text harder to read, which it this way is. If the full product name was only mentioned once and was replaced by a pronoun the

second time, the text would be much easier to read. This kind of repetition, where the word or phrase at the end of a sentence is then said again right at the start of the next sentence is called an anadiplosis and it is used to put emphasis on the word or phrase to make the reader or listener remember it. It can also be used just for the sake of logic or cohesion. (Harris 2013: 19) In this example it is clearly used for the first reason.

On OP 2 and OP 15 the word *god* is repeated: “THANK GOD FOR THE TERRIBLE SWEDISH WEATHER // Just to be clear on this, god can be whatever god you choose to believe in.” The repetition of the word increases its shock value, as *god* is not a word that you would expect to see on a carton of oat drink. Also, the word *terrible* gets repeated in the same text and is also a word that most companies probably would not have on their packaging. Later on, in the same text, the phrase *a little* is repeated in the following way: “You see oats need a little sun and a little rain all summer long and not too much heat which is why some of the best oats in the world grow in Sweden because Sweden has some of the worst weather in the world.” Repeating *a little* gives the text almost a lyrical sound and the *not too much* gives it extra cohesion as it is also a word that describes quantity. In the same sentence *Sweden* is also repeated twice to make it sink into the reader’s mind that the product is Swedish.

OP 5 has repetition too. “So you are a barista? Cool. We are the company that made the first oat drink. Also pretty cool.” The word *cool* is used in a very similar way as both times it either forms a verbless sentence alone or is a part of one.

OP 14 has a cult theme in one of the texts and the word gets repeated in the text multiple times. The word appears first in the title of the text and is then repeated three times in the actual text. The reason that the word is repeated so many times is that the point Oatly is making in the text is that if “the power of acting collectively to promote the concept of eating plants instead of giving plants to animals and then eating them is cult like – “, they will happily be called a cult.

Also on OP 14 but on a different piece of text and on OP 3, which has the same design as OP 14 on one side, the conjunction *or* is repeated as a part of a rhetorical list; “ – if they

will call up their best friend or text them or Whatsapp them or emoji them or whatever – – “: This is a way for Oatly to just list different means which people can use to tell other people about their product and word of mouth -market them in the meantime. This kind of repetition of a conjunction has a specific name: polysyndeton. This means that in a list of words, or in this case phrases, there is a conjunction between each member of the list. Polysyndeton is used to create the effect of emphasis, persistence or intensity. In the case as the repeated conjunction is *or*, the emphasis is on the alternatives. (Harris 2013: 7)

OP 19 is the one product which uses repetition as the main rhetorical device in its packaging text. This is also one of the products that has the text on the inside of the product. The text on OP 19 is quite long and reads as follows:

- (3) I want to personally thank each and every one of you for writing to me at John@oatly.com. I have received so many wonderful emails that I cannot possible answer them all, which is why I have decided to remove my email John@oatly.com from the packages. So from now on you won't be able to send an email to John@oatly.com and tell me how much you love our products. Actually you will be able to send an email to John@oatly.com but you will receive an answer from someone who is not actually John@oatly.com but is pretending to be John@oatly.com. They won't be me but they will be wonderful to email to. Thanks for your understanding. Sincerely, the guy who used to answer his own email at John@oatly.com. *John*

The *John* at the end is printed in assumably John's handwriting and each time the email address is mentioned it has a black background and white font, while the other text is black on white background. So not only is the email address repeated seven times, it is also highlighted with a different colour background. This kind of repetition, where the word or phrase, or in this case an email address, repeats itself at the end of sentences and clauses, is called an epistrophe. (Harris 2013: 18)

The obvious reason for the repetition of the email is that even though John himself can no longer answer all the messages he has been getting, they still really want to receive those messages. It's a quirky way to announce the fact that customer service is going to receive those messages from now on. This text is very suitable to appear on the inside of the package as it is addressing those customers that have seen this email address being

promoted or maybe even wrote to John themselves. It would be interesting to know for how long they kept, or will keep, printing this text on the packaging. If they are simply doing it for a short while for informative purposes, or if they will stick with it to promote the email and to get people to write to them.

4.4.2 Verbless sentences

Verbless sentences are quite self-explanatory. They are “sentences” that start with a capital letter and end in a full stop but there is no verb, which makes them improper sentences. Any grammatically correct sentence should include a verb. Because of this, verbless sentences are not acceptable in academic writing. Even though these improper sentences are not grammatically acceptable, they are still used in written texts and speech. Speech is often a lot less formal than writing, and in writing these can be used to mimic real life conversation. They can be phrases or just one word. (Zidane 2014: 59, 74) Verbless sentences are also used to emphasise the word or phrase between the capital letter and the full stop. Even though verbless sentence is not included in listings of rhetorical devices, they are something that Oatly uses very regularly in their packaging texts. They are a way to make the text more casual and conversation-like. Oatly uses them to comment or add to the sentence that came before the verbless one.

OP 5 has two verbless sentences, “Cool.” and “Also pretty cool.”, which are already familiar from the previous repetition chapter. The purpose of these is to comment on the previous sentences and create validation to the text. OP 3 and OP 14 have a verbless sentence “Totally.”, which has a very similar function to the previous example. It is commenting on a previous sentence and answering hypophoras that were presented. On another piece of text on OP 3 there is another one-word sentence: “Namaste.” This is the last sentence of the text and a kind of sign-off. The function of it is a little different to the previous examples, as it does not comment on something that has been said before, but acts as a humorous ending to a text that makes fun of hypnosis and sarcastically jokes about Oatly having a mind control department.

“Now to the terrible weather.” is a sentence which can be found on OP 2 and OP 15. This sentence is not commentary either, but functions as a transition between different topics. It could be seen to belong into the same category as “Namaste.” as they both guide the text. One signals an ending and the other a change of topic. Also, on OP 2 and OP 15 later in the same piece of text there is a verbless sentence “Like Sweden.”. This sentence comes after one in which Oatly says that not all countries have summers during which people go to the beach. *Sweden* could have been mentioned already in the previous sentence so making a verbless sentence is merely there to put emphasis on the country.

Another verbless sentence can be found on OP 18, OP 12 and OP 21, which host the same exact text. The packages are all the same shape and size, which leads me to believe that this text is very popular and specific to their products in this size. The verbless sentence found in these is “For realz.” and it is now again commenting on and adding to a previous sentence. Although it is informal already because of the missing verb and its shortness, it is even more informal due to the way it has been written with an added z at the end. The z is quite important, as it sets the tone for the whole piece of text that goes as follows: “By consuming the contents of this carton, you will be summoned when the fourth moon rises under the emerald sky and the rabbit runs thru the 14th sector, to gather in a field of oats and watch the paranoia burn.” This text is quite out there and even ridiculous so by having the z after ‘for real’ the ridiculousness of the text is acknowledged. The effect would be totally different and flatter if it was simply “For real.”.

This piece of text is first making it sound like by drinking an oat drink, these very weird things would happen to you, but then Oatly takes it back with the “For realz.” The text is so over the top that it could be seen as a parody. But what is it a parody of? It could be said that there is a stigma surrounding vegetarians and vegans, that they are these weird hippies who do all kinds of peculiar things, for example being fanatic about animal rights, and do not understand life’s realities. This kind of text could be seen as Oatly making fun of this kind of thinking by taking this text so far. With the last short sentence, they acknowledge the humour and make the point that the people who use dairy replacements are just as normal as milk drinkers, and that Oatly does not represent this kind of

fanaticism and is, in fact, very realistic and down-to-earth. In short, Oatly is separating themselves from the hippie stigma and also proving it wrong by parodying it.

This same piece of text, apart from a tiny bit different start of the sentence, can be found on OP 14, where it is a part of a longer text. The longer text also has another verbless sentence: “What a scary word.” which refers to the word *cult* that ended the previous sentence. This verbless sentence, again, is commenting on and adding to something that was stated before.

Some of Oatly’s most famous catch phrases are also verbless clauses. First, the phrase “WOW NO COW!” which can be found on a large number of Oatly’s products, is a verbless exclamation that lets the consumer know that there is no milk in the product. This exclamation is very effective in its simplicity and would not work in longer proper form. Apart from it being a verbless clause, it also uses words that rhyme which gives the phrase its catchiness. Something that needs to be noted also with this phrase is its positioning on the packaging. The phrase is positioned at the top of the packages right next to the opening so each time a customer goes to open the carton they see the text and are influenced by it.

Another catch phrase that is at the front of many Oatly products is the combination of multiple verbless sentences: “No milk. No soy. No ...eh... whatever.” This is a simple way to casually inform the consumer on how the product does not contain the things that many people in Oatly’s target audience want to avoid. It is a repetitive piece of text with the recurring “No *blank*” structure which gives it great rhythm. The hesitant “...eh...” in the last sentence makes the phrase highly casual and conversational as filler words such as *eh* are very frequently used in conversations to fill silence.

4.4.3 Rhetorical question and hypophora

Rhetorical questions and hypophoras are some other rhetorical devices that Oatly uses frequently. They are a way for them to make the texts more conversation-like and provoke thoughts in the reader of the text, the consumer. Many times, the questions are hypophoras which Oatly answers right after presenting the question. Sometimes the answer highlights

the point of the question and sometimes it can even contradict the point that the question makes.

OP 1 has the hypophora that is already familiar from the repetition chapter: “What could possibly be better than our new single portion oatgurt packs in lemon elderflower and vanilla blueberry?” The text then goes on to answer this question right after. OP 2 and OP 15 ask “How is that for turning a negative into a positive?”, unlike the previous example this one does not get answered but is there to provoke thoughts in the reader and make them want to agree with the text. OP 3 and OP 14, which share a text together, present a series of hypophoras:

- (4) But seriously, why should we try to sell this product to you? Shouldn't it sell itself? Shouldn't we just let people try it and form their own opinion and if they like it they will call up their best friend or text them or WhatsApp or Snapchat them or emoji them or whatever and let them know that this product is smokin' hot.

The first two questions make an interesting point while being very confident in the product as it is so good that it sells itself, but the longest hypophora is quite tactical as it tries to plant ideas into the reader's head. This instance is the most aggressive example of hypophoras or rhetorical questions being used in Oatly's packaging in this research material. The same text can be found on OP 13 with some differences in the third question. The third one goes: “Shouldn't we just let you try it and if you like it you will do with it whatever you want, like drink it or make something nice with it.” This is a much more casual and relaxed way to end the hypophora marathon as it is not as manipulative. These hypophoras on OP 13 do not get answered, but in OP 3 and OP 14 they are answered with a short “Totally.”, which is further encouraging the consumer to do as they are suggested. It is common to answer a number of hypophoras presented in a series with one broader answer, as Oatly has done in this case, because answering each question separately at a time could get tiring for the audience. (McGuigan 2007: 26)

The other one of the texts on OP 5 starts off with “So you are a barista? “. This is a very simple hypophora and a way to directly address the consumer and create the illusion of conversation. This question is answered on behalf of the consumer with “Cool.” which

might draw people in depending if they are actually a barista or not. A different piece of text on the same carton has a rhetorical question; “But let’s keep that to this side of the carton, okay?”. This is almost just a statement or a command but turns into a rhetorical question with the “okay?” at the end. This sentence or question is quite peculiar to me as it follows a list of things one can do with this oat drink apart from just using it in coffee. It seems that with this last question or recommendation the tone of the text turns to a negative direction and Oatly seems to want to separate baristas from regular oat drink users as if they were somehow more sophisticated and would not use the oat drink in other ways than as a milk replacement in special coffee drinks. This is merely my interpretation but that is the impression I got. Another possible interpretation is that the last sentence is just a ‘tongue-in-cheek’ type of a humorous suggestion, which probably is what Oatly was going for. This is a good example of how seemingly simple sentences or texts can be interpreted in multiple different ways depending on people’s different personal experiences.

4.4.4 Unexpected and emotion-provoking word choices

Unexpected and emotion-provoking word choices is definitely one of the categories that has the most points under it as they are a quite common rhetorical device and an easy way to make a text have a greater impact. Unexpected and emotion-provoking words were one of the first things I noticed about Oatly’s packaging design. On all the larger sized products, OPs 1-5 and 14-17, there is the same title on the side of the carton that has the obligatory nutritional information as well as ingredients list; “This is the boring (but very important) side”. The word *boring* is a funny choice and even though it is true that the information can be boring to some people, it still feels like it is bold to state that. That is why Oatly does add that the side is still very important. This describes the Oatly style well; bold and humorous but acknowledges the facts.

On OP 1 the text starts off with the large sized exclamation “Look, twins!” which is accompanied by a picture of two yogurt cups. The word *twins* is usually used when referred to people, so the word is an interesting choice. The fact that it is an exclamation ushers the consumer to pay attention. A little later in the same piece of text there are words that

have a positive connotation and therefore try to give the consumer a positive impression of the product. The words and phrases used are *modern convenience*, *added bonus*, *handy backup pack* and *so delicious*. These words and phrases are meant to arouse positive emotions in the consumer that they would then associate with the product.

On the other side of the carton on OP 1 the text starts with the title “This package supports the POST MILK GENERATION”. Under the text is a simple cut-out membership card on which one can write their name and title. The aim of the text and illustration is to indicate that the consumer can be a part of the post milk generation and gives the consumer a group to identify with and to belong to. *Generation* is a word that makes people feel different things, as many people identify themselves to belong to a certain generation and are usually very proud of the generation they belong to. Some other emotion-provoking phrases and words that are used in the text are *health*, *sustainability*, *advantages*, *real*, *influential* and *crazy*. Promoting a plant-based diet is very in line with the Oatly brand values and using the words *health* and *sustainability* as well as *real* and *influential* make plant-based diet sound appealing. Who would not want to be influential and healthy?

OP 2 and OP 15 have a text strongly titled “THANK GOD FOR THE TERRIBLE SWEDISH WEATHER”. It starts out strong with the phrase *Thank God* which is a quite commonly used phrase to express relief. *God* is also a very thought and emotion-provoking word that most people feel quite strongly about in one way or another. Using the word *god* is a way to catch the consumer’s attention and make them look twice, as a religious word is not something consumers are used to seeing in a grocery store. Thanking god for terrible weather is something quite strange also, as people usually complain about bad weather instead of being thankful for it. *Terrible* is a strong negative word but in this case, it is somehow a positive thing as the terrible Swedish weather is a good thing for the oats. The text and title would not have the same effect, if it had the word *bad* instead of *terrible*. Also, on OP 2 and OP 15 the word *sad* is used in the context of an oat drink ending, which tells the consumer that the oat drink is so delicious that one will become sad when they finish it. *Sad* is also an emotion-provoking word as it is used to describe a very specific negative emotion.

One of the texts on OP 3 is scattered with carefully chosen words. The text has descriptive words such as *deep* and *distinguished* as well as the emotion-provoking words *well-being*, *right* (in the sense of doing something right) and *future*. At the very end is a reference to mindfulness culture originating from India with a *namaste* greeting. The two sentences that host the words *future* and *right* are the core message of that carton side, emphasized by the fact that they are written in bigger font than the rest of the text; “Oats are the future. What you are doing is right.” The message is strong, and it is delivered by two short sentences with similar sound, as they both end with the most important word of the sentence. The words are also almost identical in length and both have the letter *r* in them, which add to the similar sound they have.

OP 3 and OP 14 have the phrase *smokin’ hot* in a text, where they claim that their product is just that. The phrase is highly conversational and informal. On OP 14 but in the other text on the other side of the carton there are a number of unexpected words surrounding the cult theme of the text. The word *cult* itself, that is a part of the bold title reading “A MESSAGE FROM THE CULT”, is already a quite charged word as cults normally have a very negative connotation to them. The other unexpected word choices in the text are *enlightened*, *tomorrow land*, *weird*, *uncontrollable*, *dangerous*, *trend*, *movement*, *scary*, *fourth moon*, *summoned*, *emerald sky*, *14th sector* and *paranoia*. Some of these words are borderline ridiculous which is naturally the point.

A large part of these words can be also found on OPs 12, 18 and 21 in the sentence “By consuming the contents of this carton you will be summoned when the fourth moon rises under the emerald sky and the rabbit runs thru the 14th sector to gather in a field of oats and watch the paranoia burn.” which I already mentioned in the chapter 4.4.2. The text on OPs 12, 18 and 21 is leaning very heavily on the word choices for their rhetorical impact as that is the only rhetorical device used on them, despite the use of the pronoun *you* to address the consumer. The words create effect of the text that we already discussed on page 49. Although the sentence is almost identical to the one on OP 14, OP 14 uses a larger number of different rhetorical devices as the carton size is bigger and therefore the text is also longer. The text on OP 14 has the same purpose of parodying the hippie stigma as the other products with the same but shorter text, but it also uses the cult theme. The

theme is used to take power away from the word and to illustrate that even if people who do not use dairy products can seem like a hippie cult to some people, they are just a group of people that are passionate about something.

On OPs 4, 16 and 17, which have the stencil illustration on them that we discussed in the chapter 4.1, there is a text in tiny print that starts with “CAUTION!”. The choice of this word is clever, as it is something that people react to and are naturally drawn to read. In this case, however, the exclamation is connected to a positive scenario (the revolution of plant-based diet) instead of the usual potential danger or horrible event, which it is usually referring to. On the other side of the carton the consumer is called an “oat punk” in the title of the text “HEY OAT PUNK!”. *Punk* is a strong word, which does not always have a positive connotation, so it is a bold choice of word by Oatly but one that definitely draws attention. On the same cartons, there is another unexpected word *political*, which one might not expect to see on food packaging. Some other unexpected and emotion-provoking words are *fun*, *revolutionary*, *change*, *angry* and *happy*

OP 5 has some interesting word choices on it. On the barista side there are words such as *overly*, *excessively*, *fully* and *total* to emphasise that the barista has full control of the product and that its qualities are good; “– it isn’t overly sweet or excessively heavy. What it is, is fully foamable putting you in total control over the density –“. On the non-barista side there is an interesting phrase. In the first sentence “If you want a really nice latte that doesn’t contain milk from a cow you have a couple of options.” there is the “milk from a cow” phrase. It is as if Oatly added the ‘from a cow’ to remind people where milk comes from; not the shops but cows. The word *milk* alone would be sufficient, so it is interesting that they wanted to add the extra words. Later on, the text has some positive words to create positive product connotations such as: *nicely*, *amazing* and *happy*.

OP 19 had the text on the inside of the package which promoted the email address John@oatly.com (see example 3). The text had some words that Oatly uses to bring forth their gratitude and to encourage customers to write to the address, even though John will not be answering them himself; *personally*, *thank you*, *each and everyone of you*, *wonderful* (twice), *love* and *sincerely*.

OP 20 and OP 22 are also products that have text on the inside of package. The products share the same horoscope themed text which is titled “Today’s horoscope The Oat January 1-December 31”:

- (5) Your cosmic co-pilot is in retrograde with your high-minded fifth house encouraging a temporarily transgressive path into peacekeeping wonderland until productive conversation with your financial unicorn release sudden urges to pursue that project of passion. This is your time, foot off the brake, let the good times roll! When you see flashing yellow lights just ignore them, nobody believes in horoscopes anyway.

This text is quite something. It is absolutely filled with unexpected words and requires at least a double take and even after that one struggles to digest it. The beginning of the text is filled with descriptive words and each noun is a part of phrase. This is what makes it such a heavy read. Later on in the text there is a metaphoric phrase *foot off the brake* and right after that the quite established phrase *let the good times roll*. The last sentence is the simplest one of the text and calms the reader down with its simple enough grammar and structure. Flashing yellow lights could refer to a warning light of something, need of caution is informed with yellow lights at least in traffic, but the text does not specify what the reader would be warned about. The wording makes this piece of text the hardest to digest from the material. The phrases create a fast pace and rhythm for the text which then slows down towards the end. The last part “nobody believes in horoscopes anyway” is also a little confusing as it is a little hard to interpret what Oatly is getting at. Oatly is naturally parodying horoscopes but the question is why. They are also belittling horoscopes by saying that nobody believes in them, which is not true. The probable reason is that they want to separate themselves from the kind of culture where happiness or one’s life events are in someone else’s hands than their own. I see the text as Oatly wanting to let the reader know that they make their own choices and they should live their life like they want. Naturally accompanied by Oatly products as the oat horoscope is relevant through the year.

A similar theme is continued on OP 24, which is the last of the products with text on the inside of the package, where Oatly tells the customer their five lucky numbers, each

illustrated differently. Right after that, they however say that maybe those numbers are just random and do not mean anything and they should just stick to writing about oats and “leave numbers and destiny out of it.” The text has some specific words related to this theme: *lucky numbers* and *destiny*. This text has a similar function to the previous example, as it does not market the product, but Oatly as a brand due to the location of the text. Broader interpretation could also be very similar to the previous example. Oatly is once again following a “destiny theme” and then removes themselves from that picture, this time however in a more straight-forward way. The text is not as aggressive as the previous one, but the theme is similar and the way they then backtrack from it. In this instance Oatly states that they are just going to stick to what they know, which is oats, and they will leave destiny out of it. This way Oatly brings themselves forward as sensible and down-to-earth as they do not believe in “destiny stuff”. It is a way to highlight their honesty and realism as well as, once again, that they do not believe that random numbers should control someone’s life.

OPs 25-29 use a number of different adverbs and descriptive words between them in the actual name of the product to describe it in a humorous way. The purpose of the words is purely rhetorical as one can see from the sarcastic nature of them. OP 25 declares itself to be “totally basic chocolate ice cream”, OP 26 is “quite ordinary strawberry ice cream” and OP 27 is “pretty average vanilla ice cream”. The products are belittling themselves, which is quite unheard of in the advertising world, where everyone is usually just emphasizing their excellence, but that is where the humour and rhetorical effect comes from.

OP 28 and OP 29 have a different approach as they describe themselves as “very fancy double chocolate fudge ice cream” and as “really posh salty caramel hazelnut ice cream”. These too use quality related adverbs, but the adjectives are positive this time around. We discussed earlier in chapter 4.1 how these two ice creams are more expensive than the first three, as the flavours are more elaborate. So the words *posh* and *fancy* are used not only to justify the price and to excite the consumer, but also to make fun of the higher price.

These two ice creams also came with a thin added lid under the actual lid, that had a group of words that had clearly been selected with a certain goal in mind. The lid has words and phrases such as *congratulations*, *lucky*, *limited edition*, *collector's item* and *just for you*. These are words that are used to make someone feel as if they are lucky and special somehow. The purpose in this case though is to be sarcastic which we will return to when we discuss humour and sarcasm.

4.4.5 Humour

When Oatly uses humour as a rhetorical device they do not blurt out one-liner jokes, but the humour usually arises from the absurdity of a text. The topic is so out there that the consumer is forced to interpret it as a joke instead of taking it seriously. Humour is also used to mask or soften deeper messages and meanings. Despite plain humour Oatly uses also sarcasm in a couple instances.

On OP 2 and OP 15 there is a sentence that starts with a sarcastic intro that gives the whole sentence a sarcastic tone; “You probably didn’t know this but – “. This subordinate clause is followed by a description of how in the summer people go to the beach. “You probably didn’t know this but summer time is when we all go to the beach but there are parts of the world where beach days aren’t in abundance.” On OP 4, 16 and 17 (see example 7) the consumer is asked to spray paint around town using a paint that washes off with rain, because Oatly wants them to spread their message, but does not want to make the authorities unhappy or get the consumer in trouble. The whole text can be seen to have been written with a humorous intention as it is hard to imagine that Oatly would expect their audience to actually go and spray paint away around town.

As we discovered in chapter 4.3 OP 3 has a very humorous text (see example 1) on one side. The text makes fun of hypnosis and the absurdity of it makes it funny. The absurdity comes from the on-theme word choices that the text is full of. The function of the humour in this case is to mask a deeper meaning behind the text, which is to let the consumer know that by consuming the product they are doing the right thing and advancing positive

change. Also on OP 3 but in another piece of text and on OP 14 the last sentence of a text is “If only life was that easy perhaps this package would just write itself and we wouldn’t ever have to think about sales.” which is sarcastic and in my opinion kind of odd. The full text piece can be seen in example 2. The purpose of this sentence is likely to be humorous as it is sarcastic, but it sounds a little like Oatly is seeking pity with it as it implies that Oatly worries about sales.

On OP 5 on the side which addresses the baristas who read the text there is the sentence: “What it is, is fully foamable putting you in total control over the density and performance of your foam so you can showcase your latte art skillz, sorry we mean skills.” The sentence first explains what the product is and at the end turns humorous as Oatly first jokingly says *skillz*, but then corrects themselves straight after. This is very harmless and easy humour, which gives the text a very casual sound even though it includes valuable information about the product.

On OPs 12, 14, 18 and 21 there was the sentence about being summoned and watching the paranoia burn. (The sentence can be found in the previous chapter) The sentence had all kinds of weird words such as *tomorrow land*, *14th sector*, *paranoia* and *rabbit*. The sentence was so absurd that one has to take a double take when faced with it. That is followed by confusion and amusement. This is an example of Oatly being so absurd that it can only be interpreted as a form of humour.

OP 19 first uses sarcasm on the outside of the packaging where it says in a tiny print: “Just so you know, there is nothing of interest on the backside of this label whatsoever.” This is probably the most obvious example of sarcasm in this material. The text is printed on a section of the label where it can be ripped and unfolded for easier reading. On the inside of the label the humour continues as Oatly repeats the specific email address over and over again. It starts out neutral, but the humorous effect comes alive when one reads further and realizes Oatly’s tactic to imbed the email address to the reader’s mind. The text also first describes how one can not send an email to that address anymore but then goes on and says that one actually can, John just will not be the one answering it. The text ends in “Sincerely, the guy who used to answer his own email at John@oatly.com.” This

is a hilarious sign off as people usually do answer their own email. By doing this Oatly is also acknowledging the fact that it is a little weird that John can no longer answer his own email. TÄHÄN

OPs 28 and 29 had a thin surprise lid inside the actual cap. The text on the paper lid reads as follows: “CONGRATULATIONS! You are one of the lucky individuals to receive this limited edition* Toni Petersson signature ice cream lid collector’s item made just for you.” There is then a large signature of Oatly CEO Petersson and below that upside down in small print “*Approx. 55,000 in first batch”. The text is very sarcastic as it first uses all the possible words in such a small amount of text to make the customer feel special and as if they won something. But then one reads the small print and understands how ridiculous the actual text was and how foolish they were if they believed they actually won something. This is either funny or could make the customer feel stupid, and that could be dangerous. Maybe Oatly is counting on the customer to understand the humour immediately because Petersson’s signature might not be the most sought-after signature out there.

OPs 20 and 22 have the humorous horoscope text on them. As we discussed in the previous subchapter the purpose of this text is to bring forth the Oatly brand, and in this case it is, as in some others, done by creating a ridiculous piece of text. While the text was very humorous, it had a deeper meaning too, as Oatly wanted to tell the reader that things like horoscopes do not matter, and one should live their life in reality, making choices for themselves.

4.4.6 Addressing the consumer

Oatly uses the singular second person, *you*, quite a lot to address the consumer and to create a conversational feeling. While most companies settle for merely telling things about their product and might use plural second person to show respect and appreciation for the consumer, Oatly takes the opportunity to talk to the consumer as their equal, in a very casual way.

On OP 1 the consumer is addressed while talking about the excellence of another Oatly product to indicate that the product was made for specifically the consumer and precisely they could benefit from it. Oatly addresses the consumer directly also in the other piece of text on OP 1 by directly telling them what to do. “Cut it out and carry it with you wherever you go.” is very directly trying to persuade the consumer.

On OP 5 there is a side addressing baristas and another side addressing the average user of oat drinks. On the barista side, Oatly first makes sure that the reader is a barista. The text then goes on to tell the barista, by addressing them directly, how to use the product. The text ends with “We are here for you from now on, whenever you are ready.” to make the barista feel appreciated and comfortable using the product. On the other side of OP 5 is a text that is addressed to non-baristas “(too)”. First Oatly tells the consumer that they have two options: To take a photo of the packaging and show it to their barista or buy the product and make a latte themselves. The text then goes on to tell the consumer how to actually use the product. The text ends with Oatly explaining that the oat drink can be used also as a regular oat drink. The final sentence is: “But let’s keep that to this side of the carton, okay?”, which we already discussed in 4.4.3 and which surprised me. Although the average consumer is addressed in a similar manner to the barista, this last sentence leaves a little sour taste. Why could baristas not use the oat drink in other things than coffee too? Oatly wants to get baristas excited about the product and wants them to discover it, but at the same time cannot forget the non-baristas.

On OP 2 and OP 15 the reader is addressed in a sentence that starts with “You see – “. Also, on the same cartons, but on the other side of the packaging, the consumer is addressed and told that they can turn the carton into an herb garden. The theme of the whole text is to make a point that Oatly manufactures their cartons from recycled materials:

- (6) One day we were sitting around the office thinking about how sad it is to finish a carton of oat drink. We can always go buy another carton but the carton’s future was to be folded and sent to the recycling plant to be turned into a new carton. That didn’t sound like much fun so we came up with a better idea. Each carton of Oatly is now designed to be turned into your own mini-indoor herbgarden. All you have to do is cut the package off on the line below, get some dirt and seeds and you’re set.

Below the text there is a dashed line and an illustration of scissors. Recycling is a very basic aspect of sustainability and Oatly can be seen bringing forward its ethical superiority by making sure that the consumer knows that the cartons are made from recycled materials, even though it is information that could have been left out as the design of this carton is about turning it into an herb garden. Saying that the cartons can be turned into the consumer's mini herb garden makes it feel more intimate, as the word *your* could have easily been left out. It's also a way to guide the consumer into recycling both by using the herb garden tactic, but also by describing at the start how they at Oatly would recycle the carton.

OP 3 addresses the consumer while advising them on how to hypnotise themselves into doing the right thing. (Example 1) The text is completely in imperative and that could feel uncomfortable if the text was not as ridiculous as it is. On the other side of OP 3 and on OP 14 the consumer is told to "BUY NOW!", on OP 13 there is an almost identical title "BUY this NOW!". These are quite aggressively ordering the consumer to make a purchase, but the command is, of course, immediately taken back in the text that is under the title where Oatly then counteracts themselves with "That's what you would expect us to say. But seriously, why should we try to sell this product to you?". This is creating the impression that the consumer should know that the product is excellent and comes off as Oatly being very confident in their product. The bold title is very eye-catching and definitely intrigues people, even if the consumer does not read further and discover that it was a lure to read further, they will still possibly be influenced by the short pithy exclamation.

The text on OP 13 has the same beginning as the texts on OP 3 and OP 14 but it ends differently: "Shouldn't we just let you try it and if you like it you will do with it whatever you want like drink it or make something nice with it." We discussed in 4.4.3 how the hypophoras on OP 3 and 14 were putting thoughts in the consumers head. The OP 13 version is similar, but it is a rhetorical question, as the question is not answered by Oatly like in the other text. This version is a lot less aggressive and Oatly is simply telling the consumer to enjoy the product rather than telling them to tell their friends about it. The

OP 13 sentence also directly addresses the reader, unlike the hypophora on the other two products.

On OP 4, 16 and 17 the consumer is greeted with “HEY OAT PUNK!”. It is an exclamation that addresses the consumer calling them an oat punk. It does not ask if the consumer would like to be one, but simply states that they are. It is a greeting that is quite hard to miss. The whole text is spoken directly at the consumer as Oatly tells them how to spread their message:

- (7) A company probably shouldn't encourage revolutionary thinking in society, so here is your very own spray stencil to help you on your way. Just drink your oats then cut out the stencil on the side of this carton and create your own political piece of art. Remember though that while covering public spaces with your beliefs might someday bring about change it will also make city authorities angry so make sure to use a non-permanent paint, something that washes off with the next rain and have fun!

This is written in a way that directly tries to persuade the consumer into action but at the same time Oatly knows that this is not going to happen. Using the second pronoun however makes the text highly conversational and intimate while the absurdity of the request makes it humorous.

OPs 12, 18 and 21 address the consumer while they let them know that if they consume the product, they will be summoned to watch the “paranoia burn” in a field of oats. This is a text that makes absolutely no sense, so the direct addressing of the reader exists for the purpose of increasing the effect of the cult theme by making the consumer feel like they are joining a ridiculous imaginary cult.

On OP 19 the reader is addressed by Oatly (John), but not everyone is going to identify themselves as a part of the group they are addressing, as not everyone who reads the text will not have written to that email address. This depends on how the reader interprets the text; as a message to those who have written to John, or as a way to invite people to write to that address. The consumer is addressed also on the outside of the packaging in a text in tiny print starting “Just so you know –“. The text goes on to let the consumer know that

there is text on the inside of the package. On OP 20 and OP 22 the consumer is addressed while Oatly tells them their ridiculous horoscope (example 5). In addition to the Oatly way of addressing the consumer directly, also horoscopes tend to do that, so this approach does especially suit this piece of text. On OP 24 which has the very similar destiny theme to OPs 20 and 22, the reader is addressed as Oatly says that the numbers illustrated on the back of the label are their lucky numbers.

4.4.7 Storytelling

Storytelling was not a hugely popular rhetorical device on Oatly's packaging, but a few examples could be found. On OP 1 storytelling is used in the following text: "That's right, it is a state of mind that is both real and influential and not just a crazy t-shirt slogan that people are wearing around the festival scene during the summer." Describing the scene of a person wearing a t-shirt with a crazy slogan at a festival creates a very vivid image in the readers mind. On OP 2 and OP 15 there are a couple of small story pieces or very descriptive phrases that want to create an image in the reader's mind: "-- summer time is when we all go to the beach --" and "Some summers you don't even get to put on shorts before it is time to break out the winter jacket." These are situations that many of us can relate to and have some kind of memories of, so they create images into most nordic people's minds.

In the other piece of text on the same cartons there is storytelling right at the start as a day in the office is described. "One day we were sitting around the office thinking about how sad it is to finish a carton of oat drink." *One day* is quite a typical beginning for a story. OP 14 has the first lengthier story piece that discusses how groups of people that were different to masses were once categorized:

- (8) Since the beginning of time people that were different, enlightened or living in tomorrow land were considered to be weird, uncontrollable even dangerous. And when these people began to assemble they would be first classified as a trend then a movement and finally a cult.

This is a way to guide the reader into what is to come by defining where the word *cult* originates from, which is the humorous underlying theme of the text.

4.4.8 Opposition and contradiction

There are a couple instances, in which Oatly contradicts themselves or where opposites are used in the text, in order to make the text more interesting. On OP 2 and OP 15 there is an opposition between best and worst as well as positive and negative: “– some of the best oats in the world grow in Sweden because Sweden has some of the worst weather in the world. How is that for turning a negative into a positive?”.

Oatly contradicts themselves on OP 4, 16 and 17 when they first say that a company should not endorse revolutionary thinking, but then continue right on to tell, how they have provided the reader with a spray paint stencil. Another example of a similar type of contradiction can be found on OPs 3, 13 and 14 where the reader is first told to buy the product now, but then in smaller print Oatly retracts that statement saying that the product should sell itself. These are both used to create shock value, which in turn makes people interested to read more.

Oatly contradicts themselves on OP 19, where they first tell the reader that one can no longer write to John’s email. Then right after Oatly admits that yes, they can, but a different person will answer. The first part of the text (see example 3) is borderline reverse psychology as Oatly claims how one cannot send messages to this email address while repeating the email address at the same time. The reverse psychology effect however disappears when the text goes on to explain that people can after all write to them, but a customer service person will answer, not John.

Oatly contradicts themselves or changes their mind in a conversational manner on OP 24, as they first let the reader know their lucky numbers but then right after deciding that they do not know anything about these things and they should probably just write about oats, which they know. The large sized illustrated numbers separate two parts of the text; the first part where it says “Your lucky numbers are” on the far left before the numbers and

then the second part, in which Oatly changes their mind, on the right side right after the letters. This is a way to emphasise the change of heart and let the reader believe in the numbers for a little longer before Oatly admits that they are just random numbers. The separation could also be seen to emphasise the meaning we interpreted for this text in chapter 4.4.4. The text about lucky numbers is on the far left and the text of Oatly being sensible is on the far right, which could be seen as Oatly separating themselves even further from the destiny ideology.

The destiny theme and contradiction is also present on OPs 20 and 22, where Oatly first tells the consumer their a bit ridiculous horoscope, but then proceeds to say that no one believes in horoscopes (see example 5). The function of this contradiction is to elaborate to the consumer that Oatly does not believe in horoscopes but thinks that everyone should make their own decisions. A subtler contradiction can be found on OPs 12, 14, 18 and 21. The texts first make it sound like by drinking an oat drink, these very weird things would happen to you, but then Oatly contradicts that with “For realz.”, which takes all the seriousness away from the text (if there was any), and reveals that the text was written with tongue-in-cheek attitude. The broader interpretation I made of this contradiction was that by parodying this cult and fanatic hippie stereotype, they are separating themselves from those, who are not realistic and making themselves out to be just that.

4.5 Discussion

In this chapter I have analysed Oatly’s packaging from a rhetorical standpoint, and looked for specific rhetorical devices that Oatly uses in order to sell their products, but also to bring forward their ethical message and values. I am now going to summarize and discuss these results.

I first started by looking at the visual aspects of the packages. Oatly uses colour quite moderately on most of the packages. The colours are often quite light, and some products even have white as the main colour of the package. Majority of the products also use only three different colours on the packaging, sometimes only two. Some smaller products;

most products in the on the go -category use brighter colours. This is because these product sizes are smaller and therefore cannot fit large amounts of text and illustrations on the packages, or the print or pictures would have to be tiny and because of that, they would be pointless. When Oatly does use colours, the colours are not pure, but mostly lighter shades or mixes of colours, for instance orange and brown. Some colours like green, brown and blue are used to emphasise the naturalness of the products.

Oatly uses colours to signal the flavour of the product; brown coloured packaging signals a chocolate taste and orange packaging is used for orange and mango flavoured products. The oatgurt packages have white as primary colour, but the little colour that the packages have correlates with the tastes: blue for unflavoured, light yellow for vanilla and light pink for strawberry.

Colour is also used to signal quality and to justify a higher price. The iMat-products have a completely black packaging and white text. The black packaging separates these products that are meant to be used while preparing food from the other products. Black also signals quality which tries to justify the higher price compared to dairy products in the same product category. The ice creams also have two products which differ from the other three with their more complicated flavours. The two more expensive products have a rich brown packaging colour, while on the other three the main colour on the packaging is white. The more saturated packaging colour signals greater quality, richness of flavour and justifies the higher price.

Typography and illustration have a big role on Oatly's packages. The Oatly brand is always printed in the same font, as well as the longer text pieces, but product names and text titles use different fonts and often look handwritten. Illustrations are used to make the packaging more eye-catching and to support and emphasise the texts. The illustrations look hand-drawn and are not polished or perfect, which plays into the down-to-earth, less corporate, Oatly brand.

Text and illustrations could be found on both the outside of the packages, but in six cases also on the inside of the package. The aim of the texts and illustrations on the outside is

to sell the product and the brand, as well as ethicality, but when the material is on the inside of the package, its function is mainly increasing brand memorability and the likelihood of repurchase, as the text cannot be read before the consumer has bought the product and started using it.

The texts and illustrations that the products have on them, function as their own billboards and Oatly uses the chance to communicate with the consumer quite seriously, even though their packaging texts are not that serious. The rhetorical devices that I identified from these texts are: repetition, verbless sentences, rhetorical question, hypophora, unexpected and emotion-provoking word choices, humour, addressing the consumer, storytelling, opposition and contradiction. The most significant from these were, unsurprisingly, the unexpected and emotion-provoking words. This is to be expected as unexpected and emotion-provoking words are an easy way to increase the impact of a text. Oatly used words surrounding different themes and emotions to create humour or to emphasise a message. Another significant rhetorical device was repetition in its many different specific forms. Repetition was used to emphasise words and to create rhythm in the text. The best example to mention here, is the repetition in the text on the inside of the iMat Fraiche 0,5l packaging. The text had Oatly's creative director's old email address (now run by customer service, presumably) in it seven times, which emphasises the address to a point where it turns humorous and is definitely remembered by the reader.

Rhetorical question and hypophora were also significant rhetorical devices as they were a way to make the text more conversational. They also added interesting structural changes into the texts as all the sentences were not ordinary statements. Often the questions were hypophoras, which means that they got answered after they were presented. Oatly answered the questions by agreeing with them and therefore emphasising the topic of the question. The function of the rhetorical questions was to make the reader think and to emphasise the topic of the question. The questions were presented in a way that they were not even actual questions, but statements that were written into the form of a question in order to create an agreeing reaction from the reader.

The last significant category was verbless sentences, which Oatly really seems to like. This is no wonder as verbless sentences bring a very casual element to the text and increase the conversational feel of them. They also emphasise the word or phrase of the improper sentence and bring rhythm into texts. Even the famous Oatly phrase “wow no cow!” is a verbless sentence. The usage of verbless sentences ties in with the usage of the question form, as the questions were often answered with these verbless sentences. Addressing the consumer in singular second person was also used to make the texts more conversational and personal. The reader was directly addressed in most of the texts. Sometimes in a conversational manner, sometimes being directly ordered to do something.

Humour did not have as big a role as I expected, even though it was still present. This was one rhetorical device that was hard to identify as humour is partly dependent on an individual’s interpretation on what they find humorous or funny. The humour I found in the texts was mostly due to the texts being so ridiculous or out there that they could only be interpreted as humour. Sarcasm was also used in some instances, but all in all humour had a somewhat smaller role than I expected in the beginning of this analysis. The two rhetorical devices that I recognized and that were not as popular were storytelling, opposition and contradiction of oneself. The latter is the most interesting of these three and could be recognized in a couple situations. Mostly these situations were due to the fact that Oatly first said something, but then changed their mind or explained the matter in a way that first they said “no” when actually in the end they meant “yes”. This connects to some of the humorous texts. In the text about lucky numbers, humour was used to parody destiny culture, which Oatly would then separate themselves from. The aim of this was to give the reader the impression that they dictate their own life and they can live it how they want. It also gave Oatly a chance to separate themselves from this cultures to make them seem more sensible and down-to-earth.

The packaging texts had many different functions. While the main purpose of the texts is naturally to sell the product that the text is on, as well as promote Oatly’s brand image and increase brand recognition and memorability, they did have other functions too. The original oat drink package had a text on it that was advertising another Oatly product, the

purpose with the text was to have the customer read it at home while using the product. If the oat drink turned out to be delicious the customer would read the text and hopefully give the advertised product a go. This was the only example of a text having the function of selling another product of the range.

Some texts, while selling the product too, promoted the ethical values of Oatly and plant-based diet. Some were more straight-forward and told the consumer that they should eat more plants in big letters in a cut-out stencil or told them that they were doing the right thing and eating oat is the future. The consumer was invited to join the “post milk generation” and “oat cult” and called an “oat punk”, the consumer was offered a community which they could be a part of by buying the product. The reward is the feeling of belonging while doing good for the planet. The fact that the products are made in Sweden was emphasised as Oatly probably thinks that it increases their brand value as Nordic countries usually have a “pure” and nature-centred reputation.

The texts were written in a very casual manner and humorous themes were used to make the texts more approachable. Some texts were almost ridiculous and therefore humorous with their elaborate themes or weird vocabulary. All the humour and quirky texts play into the Oatly brand being seen as approachable and likeable. This way also their message would be approachable and not seen as preaching, which could turn off some consumers. Being seen as humorous, casual and down-to-earth does not, of course, hurt their sales either, but there probably is an honest desire to make a change in the meantime.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In this study, I have analysed the packaging of Oatly products on the market in Finland in 2018 using rhetorical analysis. The aim of the study was to discover, which rhetorical devices Oatly uses on their product packaging in order to sell their products, as well as their ethical message. This study is relevant as Oatly has had great success due to their rebranding in 2013, during which they completely changed their packages and renewed their strategy. The other factor in their success has been the ongoing growth of the plant-based food product market. It is interesting to study rhetoric in advertising, as by learning about this, companies can discover new rhetorical tools and ideas to use in their marketing.

The rhetorical devices I discovered from the packages are repetition, verbless sentences, rhetorical question, hypophora, unexpected and emotion-provoking word choices, humour, addressing the consumer, storytelling, opposition and contradiction. The most significant of these were the first six, storytelling as well as opposition and contradiction were used significantly less. From the first six, unexpected and emotion-provoking word choices, repetition, humour and addressing the consumer rise a little above the others. The functions of the rhetorical devices were emphasising things that were said, colouring the text, making the text casual and conversational as well as creating a down-to-earth, approachable and humorous brand image. Rhetorical devices were intertwined often, and one example of this is when Oatly parodied fanatic cult-like hippie culture and destiny culture, which Oatly would then separate themselves from. The rhetorical devices connected to these instances were humour, unexpected word choices and contradiction of oneself. The aim of these texts was to make Oatly seem approachable and down-to-earth, and to give the reader the reassurance that they are in charge of their own life and they can live it how they want. It also gave Oatly a chance to separate themselves from the fanatic hippie stereotype, that some people might have, to make them seem sensible and realist and as normal as everyone else.

As greater purposes above these more specific themes, are selling the products and creating a positive change in the meantime. Illustrations on the packages were there to make

the products more eye-catching and to bring liveliness in to the texts which they were very connected to.

The visual observation I made about the packages is that Oatly uses colour to communicate aspects of the product, and the colours they use are not pure, but mixes of colours or a lighter version of a colour. There is also never a lot of different colours used on one package. Earthy colours such as blue, brown and green are used to emphasize naturalness. Colours also signal the flavour of the products, as well as quality. They are also used to separate products into groups. Another observation was that products that had a lot of text on them had often a more muted colour palette, while products that did not have room for long texts used more colour or were otherwise more visually eye-catching. Typography of brand name and longer text pieces were consistent, but product names and text titles used a number of different fonts that sometimes looked more illustrated than written.

My hypothesis going into this study was that Oatly uses rhetoric to sell their products and ethical values. This turned out to be correct as I identified multiple rhetorical devices from the packages. Ethicality also turned out to have a big role in Oatly's packaging. The topic was usually discussed in somewhat humorous context, which makes the message more easily digestible instead of feeling like preaching. Another assumption I made was that humour would be one of the most significant rhetorical devices for Oatly, and while it was used in many occasions, it did not have quite as big of a role as I thought, as it did not rise above other devices. When humour was used, it usually rose from unexpected word choices and funny text themes, but also sarcasm was used a few times. The rhetorical device that were used a surprisingly large amount were verbless sentences and direct addressing of the consumer with single second person, which were some of the biggest reasons for the texts seeming so casual and conversational.

Although this study gives great insight into the marketing tactics used on Oatly's product packaging and an interesting point of view of communication studies into marketing on product packages, there are obviously some limitations. Firstly, this analysis is based on my personal interpretations of the material and the rhetorical devices are ones that I recognized from the material. Another researcher might do different interpretations. Another

limitation is the fact that Oatly has so many different packaging designs, part of which appear on several different products, that overlapping of designs was bound to happen and it did to some degree. Oatly also comes out with new products regularly and with those come new designs.

In the future it would be interesting to see more studies done in the field of communication studies into packaging design. Product packages are after all one of the most important communication channels between a company and a consumer. It would also be interesting to study another brand's packaging to see, which rhetorical devices other brands use on their packages, and if there are big differences to the ones Oatly uses.

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Appendix 1. Research material

On these pages one can see the complete list of Oatly products I am analysing separated into categories. The information in the tables will be product name, package type and product size.

Oat drinks

Product name	Package type	Product size
Oat drink	Carton	1l
Oat drink organic	Carton	1l
Oat drink chocolate	Carton	1l
Oat drink orange mango	Carton	1l
iKaffe	Carton	1l

On the go -products

Product name	Package type	Product size
Matcha latte	Carton can	235ml
Cold brew latte	Carton can	235ml
Mocha latte	Carton can	235ml
Chocolate oat drink	Carton can	235ml
Orange mango oat drink	Carton can	230ml
Strawberry+elderflower oat drink	Carton can	230ml
Oat drink	Carton	250ml
Oat drink chocolate	Carton	250ml

Oatgurts

Product name	Package type	Product size
Oatgurt unflavoured	Carton	1l
Oatgurt strawberry	Carton	1l
Oatgurt vanilla	Carton	1l

Food preparing products

Product name	Package type	Product size
iMat	Carton	250ml
iMat	Carton	1l
iMat fraiche	Plastic box	0,5l
iMat fraiche	Plastic box	200ml
Vanilla sauce	Carton	250ml
PåMackan unflavoured	Plastic box	150g
PåMackan tomato basil	Plastic box	150g

Ice creams

Product name	Package type	Product size
Chocolate ice cream	Carton	500ml
Strawberry ice cream	Carton	500ml
Vanilla ice cream	Carton	500ml
Double chocolate fudge ice cream	Carton	500ml
Salty caramel and hazelnut ice cream	Carton	500ml