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July 17, 2008, 10:57 am

PETA TV: The Meat-Is-Murder Files

By VIRGINIA HEFFERNAN



(source: Angel Franco/The New York Times)

Can online video make you thin?

Maybe. If the [thinspiration videos](#) didn't make you lose your appetite, the sickening animal-rights stuff on [PetaTV](#) and [Go Veg](#) might.

A lot of the film is from the 2003 meat-industry exposé, solemnly narrated by Alec Baldwin, called "Meet Your Meat." I was going to post another one of those gross-out, animal-carcasses-on-parade videos, but I'm not sure what the status of those shock-vids is. Are they old, biased, staged, in litigation, too hot to handle?

Or are they right on the money — and should be putting people out of business and off meat for good?

And yet. If you find these videos on [PetaTV](#) or [Go Veg](#), you should see for yourself. I'm all for ideologues cataloging video online that purports to show *the real story*. Everyone gets to make a case, and exposés and even propaganda should never be against the law.

UPDATE, July 18: Parts of this piece have been edited. Initially, I misattributed insights about these videos to a colleague who is at work on a piece about kosher. I regret the mistake.

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5 comments so far...

- 1. July 17th, 2008 11:56 am What in the world does "supposedly Kosher" mean?!
- There are Kosher certifiers who certify the meat as being Kosher -

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About The Medium

With television and the Internet converging at last, who's going to watch all this here-goes-nothing online video? Everything from political propaganda videos to pseudo-candid celebrity rants seems to expect an audience. "The Medium" will find, review and make sense of all those senseless new images: web video, viral video, user-driven video, custom interactive video, embedded video ads, web-based VOD, broadband television, diavlogs, vcasts, vlogs, video podcasts, mobisodes, webisodes, mashups and more.

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July 17 5 comments [PETA TV: The Meat-Is-Murder Files](#) (source: Angel Franco/The New York Times) Can online video make you thin? Maybe. If the thinspiration videos didn't make you lose your appetite, the sickening animal-rights stuff on PetaTV and Go Veg might. A lot of the film is from the 2003 meat-industry exposé, solemnly narrated by Alec Baldwin, called "Meet Your Meat." I was going [...]

July 14 1 comments [New 'Drunk History' Exposes First President George Washington, Recounts Rousing History of Oney Judge](#) (source: YouTube.com") So I was told by the people behind the freakily hilarious "Drunk History" that they were working on a new video in which an extremely drunken woman, and not an extremely drunken man, tells a story from American history. What kind of story do women, as opposed to men, tell themselves when they're [...]

July 11 16 comments [In This Week's Magazine: Coldpage](#) A curiously tepid web page for pop's hottest band.

- what credentials do you or the person you are quoting have to imply otherwise?
 - Posted by Zalman
-
2. July 17th, 2008 12:38 pm
 What's the point of this? Ignore it, go see it, what are you trying to say here?
 - Posted by Don Nolley
-
3. July 17th, 2008 3:00 pm
 I'm all for video and lettign people make up their own minds, but people who don't work in factories and white collar moralists should not be telling the American public what to eat - for one they probably can afford Hebrew National hot dogs over the cheaper "meat franks."
 Talk about elitist!
 And to all you vegetarians: try buying fresh produce in the city on a REAL WORLD budget. It's a quality of life issue. That said, one day animals will grow on trees, and this Darwinian nightmare (thanks God!) will be over.
 The videos are very entertaining, BTW (If you liked the SAW movies I'd be curious to hear your opinion)
 - Posted by meatatarian
-
4. July 18th, 2008 10:12 am
 Thanks for good responses.
 My point in linking to Go Veg and PETATV is to call attention to recent video sites that express a point of view.
 Embedding videos on nytimes.com means that The New York Times is essentially broadcasting those videos. I'm not prepared to program controversial videos on our site when I can't tell how they were produced or edited.
 Links to videos, and particularly links to sites, are another story. They invite readers to investigate for themselves, just as movie and book reviews invite readers to see and read for themselves.
 Viewers who find the meat industry and its foes of interest might seek out these videos for a sense of one side of a controversy. This blog has always tried to demonstrate how polemicists increasingly make their cases with online video and online video archives—as opposed to books, pamphlets, position papers, documentaries, protests, demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, etc.
 If anyone has anything to add about the accuracy of these videos—how truthfully or deceitfully they represent the meat business—I'd appreciate it.
 Many thanks
 Virginia
 - Posted by Virginia Heffernan
-
5. July 18th, 2008 10:15 am
 One more note: By "supposedly kosher," I meant literally that we suppose that meat processed at kosher slaughterhouses to be kosher.
 If these videos are accurate, the meat at this particular processor may not conform strictly to kosher regulations. But the video might not be accurate, or the industry's critics might misunderstand kosher regulations.
 Thus, "supposedly."
 Since I can offer no more reporting on the subject of kosher slaughterhouses and processors, I have cut this section from the post.
 Thanks for the opportunity to clarify.
 - Posted by Virginia Heffernan

Add your comments...

Name Required

July 4
 13 comments

in this week's magazine: Fine-Snaring Fetish

Photograph by Kevin Van Aelst
 In 1996, as Hollywood was lionizing the pornographer Larry Flynt as the author of the real sexual revolution, the Internet was trying to decide what to do about porn.
 It was not an either-or question. After all, data could instantly be conveyed at low cost across vast distances, from traceless studios to [...]

June 30
 2 comments

What If There Were a Web in 1920?

Last night I saw a great moment at a droll mothering site we'll call MotherBoard. I provide no link, in observance of the first rule of message boards, which I keep having to relearn.
 This collaborative, impromptu humor piece outstrips most "Shouts & Murmurs" entries. And it was created by a hive of anon [...]

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About Virginia

Virginia Heffernan is The Medium columnist for The New York Times Magazine. Previously she spent four years as a television critic for The New York Times newspaper. Before coming to the newspaper, she wrote for Slate, and before that she was an editor at Harper's and Talk magazines. In 2005, she published a comic novel, "The Underminer," which she wrote with Mike Albo.



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