



VIP TRANSCRIPT SERIES

INTERVIEW WITH DR. MELANIE JOY



Dr. Melanie Joy, author of *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows*, is an internationally acclaimed speaker and writer on carnism, a term she coined. An authority on the psychology of eating animals, she has been featured on programs, including the BBC, NPR, PBS, ABC Australia, and European radio and TV as well.

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WHY WE LOVE DOGS, EAT PIGS, AND WEAR COWS: UNDERSTANDING CARNISM AND CULTURAL CONDITIONING

STEVE PRUSSACK: Hello, and welcome back to another session of Veganpalooza. I'm your co-host Steve Prussack. It's great to be with you, and we're really excited about our next guest. It's Dr. Melanie Joy. Dr. Melanie Joy is a Harvard-educated psychologist, professor of psychology and sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. She's a celebrated speaker and the author of the award-winning primer on carnism, *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows*. Let's welcome to Veganpalooza 2013 Dr. Melanie Joy.

DR. MELANIE JOY: Hi, thank you so much for having me.

STEVE: Hi, Dr. Joy. How are you today?

DR. JOY: I'm doing really well. Thank you so much.

STEVE: To start, just for those that aren't aware of the term "carnism," can we start with that? How do we define carnism?

DR. JOY: Carnism is the invisible belief system that conditions us to eat certain animals. It's essentially the opposite of veganism. I always like to explain it by explaining how we're really socialized to believe that it's only vegans and vegetarians who bring their beliefs to the dinner table. However, when eating animals is not a necessity for survival, which is the case in much of the world today, then it is a choice, and choices always stem from beliefs.

STEVE: So this conditioning, where does that come from where it's okay to love dogs and, okay, that animal we'll eat?

DR. JOY: Really, we've inherited this system at this point. Carnism is a dominant belief system or ideology. That means that it's entrenched; it's woven through the very structure of society. It's institutionalized, and it also becomes internalized, shaping the very way we think and feel, or rather more appropriately, don't think and don't feel when it comes to eating animals. Carnism, like other isms, it has evolved over a very, very long period of time to the point where today it's essentially become self-perpetuating. It's a system that we've all inherited, we've all been born into. We've also grown out of it. For many people, as I pointed out before, we don't eat animals because we need to; we eat animals because we choose to. In carnism we don't even recognize that when we eat animals, we are in fact making a choice, because the system is invisible and because the system is dominant, meaning that it's created these social norms or paths of least resistance that simply encourage people to be on autopilot when it comes to eating animals. Carnism guides our food choices like an invisible hand.

STEVE: I think you have a really powerful video on carnism.org, and that video where – you want to explain a little about what you have going on there? I'm sure that I'd love to hear the kind of reaction there's been to that, to the family sitting around the table.

DR. JOY: Sure. The way that I like to explain carnism, particularly to people who are not vegan or vegetarian, is to really have people imagine that they're a guest at a dinner party, and the host serves them a delicious beef stew. They ask the host for her recipe, and she replies that the secret is in the meat: you need to start out with three pounds of extra lean golden retriever. Now, most people, at least in the

Western world and in much of the world, are going to have a very strong reaction to that. In fact, in meat-eating cultures around the world, people learn to eat only a select handful of animals, to classify those animals as edible, and find the idea of eating other species disgusting and often even offensive. So even though the type of species consumed changes from culture to culture, members of all cultures tend to see their own choices as rational and the choices of other cultures as irrational and disgusting and often even offensive. So many, many people can relate to this reaction of disgust or offense at the idea of eating a dog, at least in U.S. culture and many cultures in the West. And that's because of carnism. It's because carnism essentially teaches us to block our awareness, to not make the connection, between the flesh or excretions on our plate and the living being they once were, and also it teaches us to block our natural empathy toward other living beings, or at least those other living beings we've learned to classify as edible. Our response to the idea of eating animals who we have not been taught to disconnect from in such a way is much more of a natural, appropriate response.

STEVE: Did you grow up under the same carnism culture? How did it happen for you? How did you have this awakening?

DR. JOY: Yeah, like many people, I grew up eating animals. I also grew up as a person who really cared about animals, and I believe, as Peter Singer and many other people point out, that you don't have to be an animal lover per se to not want to support massive injustice towards them, or any injustice toward them. And carnism is an injustice. But I grew up caring about animals, and I was that person who was "an animal lover." I had a dog who I loved like a family member, of course. I was a kid who rescued hurt birds and squirrels, and I also grew up eating them. I used to be the person who got the Domino's Meat Lover's pizza. Like many people, however, I had what psychiatrist Robert Jay Lipton has referred to as "a knowing without knowing." On one level, we're aware of an unpleasant truth, and on another level, we just don't connect the dots. We just don't make that connection.

So looking back in my older years, when I was a young adult and no longer a child, I started to feel like I was a vegetarian, at the time, trapped in a meat-eater's body. I became more sensitive to the issue, but I hadn't really been able to take that step to go vegetarian. I'd been exposed to, in my late teens, I'd been exposed to information about animal agriculture. My response had always been, "Don't tell me that. You'll ruin my meal." I dabbled in vegetarianism when I was 17, 18, and it didn't really stick. But one day when I was 23, I ended up eating a hamburger that turned out to be contaminated with campylobacter, which is a food-borne bacterium similar to salmonella. I got extremely sick. I wound up hospitalized on IV antibiotics. I ended up feeling disgusted at the idea of eating flesh, and I just couldn't eat meat after that. So it wasn't even an ethical reaction. It was more of this visceral reaction you have when you get food poisoning. You just don't want to eat the last thing you ate, with the hamburger, but it kind of generalized to all meat.

So I stopped eating meat, and I think that was why I became more open so that when I was again exposed to information about animal agriculture, I was able to take it in. I was less defensive. I wasn't needing to maintain this commitment, this illogical loyalty to eating animals. What I learned shocked and horrified me. It motivated me to want to become a part of the solution. I knew at that point that I needed to be a conscientious objector to this mass atrocity, this system of oppression. That really was what catalyzed – there were many steps on my own personal journey, as there often are. That was kind of the defining moment that really catalyzed my commitment to really focusing on making this raising awareness about eating animals my life's work.

STEVE: With a background in psychology and sociology, were you able to analyze it and come up with these theories on how we were conditioned?

DR. JOY: Yes, I actually didn't have a background at that time. I was an undergraduate, I think, at that point. I'm trying to remember. I had not done my graduate studies, anyway, when I was 23. So really going to graduate school, I was very much motivated by this question that I had in my mind. I was motivated by the idea of wanting to understand more about social injustice and social justice. So I went to, I ended up going to graduate school and becoming an educator because what happened was I started teaching workshops, I was a teacher, I became a teacher, and I started teaching workshops just as a volunteer in the Boston area on vegetarianism. This is before I was vegan; I was still eating dairy products. What I noticed was that people would come to my workshops, and they would be moved by the issue, and everybody would basically be on board ethically, and yet they would leave and not actually change.

I was struck by the fact that information alone is not enough to bring about social change. I really wanted to understand that. Having been active in a number of social justice movements, this was a question that was really important to me, and it really motivated me to study psychology and to really understand how it's possible for good people to participate in harmful practices and how so many of us learn to really just check our critical thinking at the door when it comes to some of the most important choices we make in our lives.

So I studied the psychosociology of violence and nonviolence, and that was what ultimately led me to recognize what I came to call carnism.

STEVE: How did your family and friends, how did people react to your shift in lifestyle?

DR. JOY: Back then, this was in 1989 when I stopped eating meat and eggs, anyway, my mother was constantly trying to feed me protein, protein, protein, worried about my iron, and really concerned about my health. But at the same time, I never felt that my family needed to be vegetarian. I didn't have a problem. I wasn't comfortable with them eating meat around me. There was a little bit of discomfort in the very beginning, but eventually that wore off. Now my whole family is really very much on board with veganism, and most of them are becoming vegan or pretty close to vegan at this point. So that's really changed.

I think a lot of it, a lot of the reason we didn't have friction, was because we have good relationships to begin with. Many times vegans, people become vegan and it causes problems in their families, and it's not because of the veganism per se, although that certainly doesn't help because these carnistic defenses, which I can talk about in a minute, this defensiveness around eating animals is so deeply, it's built into, it's so internalized by meat-eaters that it can be very difficult for vegans. Vegans can be on the receiving end of hostility for no reason other than the fact that they're vegan. But what often happens is that the veganism becomes an excuse to act out other issues, power dynamics, problems that have been preexisting in the family. So really the issue is not veganism; it's more something that's deeper that's just getting expressed through the ideology, or the veganism becomes an excuse for family members to perhaps interact in ways that are not terribly respectful.

STEVE: Interesting. So since there is a lot of defensiveness around it, and education alone doesn't inspire always, what are some of the best tools you've found to help inspire others to awaken to what's happening here?

DR. JOY: I think it's very, very important for those of us who are already vegan to really become as informed as possible about carnism so that we know what we're dealing with when we're dealing with people who are eating animals, to really understand the defenses so that we can – when you can name something, when you shed the light on something and you name it, you take away a lot of its power. So

that when we're on the receiving end, we can know what's happening. We can say, "This is a carnistic defense. This is a carnistic prejudice getting directed at me."

So for example, when we're sitting down to dinner and somebody makes a mocking comment about our veganism, somebody mocks us, teases us for no reason other than the fact that we don't eat animals, we can recognize that as a carnistic defense, what I call a secondary carnistic defense. It's a defense that's designed to invalidate vegans and veganism. It's a way of maintaining the system. If you shoot the messenger, you don't have to take seriously the implications of his or her message. So we can recognize this mocking behavior for what it is, which is actually harassment. It's carnistic prejudice and harassment. By definition, harassment is treating a member of a social group with hostility for no reason other than the fact that they belong to that particular group.

So it can defuse situations for us. It can help us raise awareness among others. It can help us as vegans to live more sustainable lives because when we appreciate that the facts do not sell the ideology, then number one, we don't feel morally obligated to hit people over the head with "the Truth," to share everything we've ever learned about veganism and all the reasons you shouldn't eat animals. And we can *not* get so frustrated when we do share some information and the person who we've shared it with is at the McDonald's drive-thru the next day. We can *not* think that we're dealing with psychopaths because we can recognize that the facts don't sell the ideology, that it's not our job to change people. Colleen Patrick-Goudreau always says the only thing we can really do is plant seeds, and that's what we need to do, is plant seeds.

I would say we need to simply live our truth and speak our truth with compassion, and that's the best we can do, so it alleviates us from a lot of pressure of trying to change people when we can't really change people. It allows us to alleviate ourselves of the burden of feeling that the success or failure of the vegan movement rests on our shoulders, and that if we don't turn people around as vegan, we've somehow failed the animals and failed the movement. And it can help us just to live more sustainable lives by taking care of ourselves and not allowing others to treat us in a way that's disrespectful, and to stop apologizing for our own choices and to stop, for example, believing the myth that those of us who are emotional about the issue of animal agriculture are somehow overly sensitive. That's another carnistic defense. That's another myth. When it comes to the atrocity that is carnism, our emotions, or the emotions of sadness and anger and frustration, outrage, they're normal, healthful, appropriate emotional responses. The world needs more emotion, not less.

So becoming aware of the system of carnism, I think, is really essential for many, many reasons, only some of which I've listed. And also, I always suggest to vegans, and to everybody, to learn the principles of nonviolent communication. Nonviolent communication is a method of communicating that is learnable. It is based on principles that anybody can adopt and can practice. It transforms relationships, all relationships, and it's really central to communicating effectively. It doesn't guarantee that our communication always works, but it certainly increases the likelihood that our message will be heard as we intend it to be, and it allows us to recognize when violent communication, which is often masked underneath joking or other form of expression that we may not recognize as being unfair or unhealthy, we can recognize when that's directed toward us and not allow ourselves to be on the receiving end of hostility.

STEVE: What would your recommendation be as a starting point for those that want to learn nonviolent communication?

DR. JOY: There's a great book that I always recommend. It's called *Messages*, and we have it on our website under "Resources." Our website is carnism.org. So I'd really recommend going there. On our

website we also have other resources for vegans, tips on effective advocacy and communication. We have another great book that I always recommend called *Trauma Stewardship* for vegans to recognize their own experience of being traumatized or otherwise psychologically and emotionally impacted by witnessing animal suffering. Many vegans are walking around with a lot of pain around this issue, understandably. But unfortunately if we don't recognize the impact of being vegan in a dominant animal-eating culture, the impact of having to go out into a world that daily offends our deepest sensibilities. We walk out the door and we see meat trucks drive by. We're being passed by trucks of body parts. We're sitting at a dinner with the people that we're closest to sometimes, and they're putting dead animals in their mouths and smiling. It's crazy-making. In order to maintain ourselves, in order to maintain a sense of groundedness to ourselves in this world, this crazy-making carnistic world, we really do need to be very careful that we don't become traumatized or we don't internalize the suffering too much. So there's this great book called *Trauma Stewardship*, and it's about taking about yourself as an advocate or an activist in a culture that is organized around such violence, especially when you're on the front lines of a movement that's working to transform that violence.

STEVE: What is your vision for the future of the vegan movement?

DR. JOY: I am very hopeful. I always like to say I'm in a very privileged position right now to be able to witness the growth of a movement that I see really, really taking off and heading toward a tipping point. I'm in the third year of an international speaking tour, so what I do is I travel around the world giving my carnism presentation to large groups of meat-eaters, actually, meat-eating audiences. When I'm in other countries and also around the United States, I also have an opportunity to meet with many, many activists and people in positions of leadership in the movement in their individual countries. What I see over and over again, the trend that I see is the vegan movement is mushrooming in many places in the world. It's really just blossoming, and I feel very, very hopeful based on what I see. I see that people care. Hundreds of people come to my talks, thousands of people over the years, who eat animals have come to my talks because they're curious about why they eat some animals and not others, and because people really want to live more authentic and freely-chosen lives, and most people are driven to live more in accordance with their own values, core values such as compassion and justice and reciprocity, the Golden Rule, and carnism requires us to act against those values.

So what I see gives me a tremendous amount of hope. It's something that I like to share with other vegans as often as possible because it's very easy when you don't have that perspective to be overwhelmed by the problem and to just feel like the problem is so big, it's never going to get better. And really the carnistic system depends on our internalizing that myth because if we do buy into that myth, the myth that the vegan movement is a lot less powerful than it actually is and therefore we are powerless to make a difference, it causes us to despair. When we despair, we are much less effective at transforming the system. So I would suggest that that is a myth, and it's a form of carnistic denial, and there's a lot of reason to be hopeful and a lot of reason as vegans to feel very proud of our commitment to seeing and speaking and living the truth in a culture that works very hard to silence us and to have us try to do otherwise.

STEVE: It could be difficult when you're in those situations, like you mentioned before, when you're at the dinner table and someone comes at you mocking you, I go through that all the time. It isn't easy to rise above it always and just try to figure out the best solution in those moments when people are obviously trying to trigger you.

DR. JOY: Yeah, it's not easy to, and it's not always our obligation to. Sometimes what we need to do is simply take care of ourselves. Sometimes that means excusing ourselves from a situation. Learning the principles of nonviolent communication is not just about communication, it's essentially nonviolent

relating. So it will help us to understand when we should leave a situation, for instance, rather than stay in one. I am not by any means suggesting that vegans need to be perfect, and vegans need to always be speaking out and using nonviolent communication when other people are not necessarily making that same commitment. We have the right to just be ourselves at times, and sometimes we really don't want to advocate, and that's fine too.

At the same time, because we are an ideological minority in a dominant culture that's organized around a very different ideology than the one that we espouse, it is important for us to become as informed as possible about the ways that the culture impacts us, ways that we can respond. It's really helpful to know, for example, answers to frequently asked questions of frequent comments like, "What about plants? Do plants have feelings?" And again, on our website, we have a list of these. If we are ready with our answers, then we're not caught off guard and we don't end up getting frustrated and flustered and wishing that we had said and done things differently.

So you're right. It's very difficult, and I am by no means suggesting that we should be perfect or that we should even try to live up to this "perfect ideal" that the culture sometimes projects onto us. We're often made to feel that if we don't have all the answers to the problem that's carnism, then we don't have a right to talk about veganism. And that's just not fair. Again, it's a way of silencing us. But what I am saying is that simply by being vegan, by maintaining a commitment to our veganism, to our awareness, to our compassion, to our lifestyles, to our philosophy, we are the greatest threat to all of the carnistic powers that be, and that vegans really do have a lot to be proud of because it takes a lot of courage to live in a culture that works tirelessly, consistently, to lull us back into carnistic numbing, to lull us back into the cocoon of numbing. By choosing not to, by choosing to stay awake, to stay aware, and to live our truth, we are doing a tremendous service to the world and ultimately also to ourselves.

STEVE: Do you have other ideas on how we can get started to help actualize the vision that you talked about before, this idea of spreading the awareness and the vegan message?

DR. JOY: I think one thing that's important is for people, for vegans to be self-aware, to know what works for them. People will spread the message in different ways, and it's really important to tailor our activism to our lives and not tailor our lives to our activism. So find what fits for you, what inspires you, what you are good at, what brings you joy. Those are the things that you should be doing in order to raise awareness, in order to be part of the solution, because we have to move towards the solution with a sense of joy in our purpose. It's not simply about preventing or stemming the tide of suffering; it's also about creating a culture of joy and of liberation. So we need to espouse those. It's also what keeps us sustainable.

I do believe that it's very important to start including, which is starting to happen more and more – obviously this is my bias, it's my life's work, but there's a reason it's my bias – I think it's really important for us as vegans to raise awareness not only of veganism but also of carnism because really people typically do not get on board with the solution if they don't recognize what the problem is in the first place. Dominant systems maintain themselves by remaining unexamined. It's like there are vegans and vegetarians and then there's everybody else. So I feel that it's very important for us to really start shining the spotlight on carnism so that we make carnism, the dominant carnistic culture, the problem to solve, to face, rather than veganism the problem to solve.

We can see how feminists did this quite effectively when they started talking more about sexism. Today many people support feminist initiatives, but they still don't call themselves feminism – which is a problem. That's another conversation. Feminist became a four-letter word, and feminists are working to take back that name. But regardless, many people don't call themselves feminists, and yet no one wants to

be considered a sexist. So this is a frame I think that we can learn from. I'm not saying that we abandon the notion of raising awareness about veganism. We absolutely need to keep veganism on the table, no pun, and talking about veganism and being proud and really carrying proudly that term and that ideology. But I think that along with that, it's important for us to keep highlighting, keep putting the spotlight on carnism because that's really the problem. The goal of the vegan movement is not simply the abolition of animal agriculture. Animal agriculture is a symptom of a deeper problem. The goal of the vegan movement is the abolition of carnism, which is the belief system that enables animal agriculture in the first place. So for people who want to learn more about what I'm talking about, they can come to carnism.org, which is our organization, Carnism Awareness and Action Network.

STEVE: And your presentation is up on there, and also I would imagine your book, which I have. *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows* is a great place to really get into this and learn it to spread it, or to communicate it better.

DR. JOY: Yes, it's a great place to learn, and the hour-long carnism presentation that's available on the website as well for viewing or free download. So there are a lot of resources, and we're adding more and more resources for vegans to help vegans live more sustainable lives in the dominant, animal-eating culture.

STEVE: What's helpful for us to remember as we continue to advocate for a better world for all beings?

DR. JOY: I think really it's a very good question. I think we can get caught up in the complexity of how to do this as best we can, the complexity of how do I advocate effectively, how do I change the world, and a lot of important questions for us to be asking ourselves and continue visiting and revisiting. But I also think to simplify that, really in my opinion what this comes down to is every day, the best that we can do, the best that anybody can do, is to live their truth. You wake up every day and say, "I'm going to do the best to live my truth today." To live our truth means to seek our truth, to look inside, "What is true for me?" To not be in denial, to be honest with ourselves. "What is true for me? How am I feeling? What do I need? How can I be the me that I want to be today?" And to speak our truth with compassion and with curiosity. Curiosity is an open mind, and compassion is an open heart. I think if all of us maintained a commitment – and obviously we can be committed to something and not do it perfectly and that's called being human. We're messy people. We've inherited a messy world. So this compassion is something we obviously need to extend toward ourselves.

One of the things that I always really encourage people to do, vegans to do, people in general but in particular people who are working toward social change, like vegans, is to practice nonviolence toward self. We really need to do that and to remember that we are animals too. I think one of the most effective things that we can do is to be committed to practicing our Cs of compassion and curiosity toward ourselves and towards the world, the third C being courage, having the courage to do this. And to hold ourselves accountable but to also relate to ourselves with compassion, as I've said, and to just allow ourselves to be who we are and to be, to accept ourselves as who we are as we strive to be part of the solution.

STEVE: Do you weave this message into your course at the University of Massachusetts? Do your students get to hear some of this?

DR. JOY: I do teach an animal rights course now, so this is woven in pretty directly. It depends on the course that I'm teaching. But in all my courses, there's a focus on psychology. I teach psychology and sociology, so whether I'm talking about domestic violence, which is one course that I teach, domestic violence is we're talking about healthy vs. unhealthy relationships. It's the same principles because in order to have a healthy relationship, you need to be committed to integrity and the truth and compassion,

and all of these things that we've already been talking about. The dynamics of abuse, whether they're abuse in the home or abuse in the world, are consistently the same. So this conversation is always happening; it's just happening perhaps with a different frame. But the conversation is always organized around truth and integrity and awareness. The same thing if I teach alcoholism. We think of addiction and recovery. There's an addictive way of thinking that's organized around denial, justification, projection, many of the same defense mechanisms that carnism relies on, and recovery is about shifting consciousness from a consciousness of denial and dishonesty to a consciousness of authenticity and integrity.

STEVE: What are some of the roadblocks that typically prevent your students from getting started? And I think you would be a good case study in that you're going out there and giving your talk to meat-eating audiences all over the world. What are some stumbling blocks you come up against?

DR. JOY: My students, my courses are not advocacy courses. When I have my hat on as a professor, my goal is not to create advocates, and my goal is not to advocate. It's to have conversations in the classroom that are relevant to the content that we're discussing, and it just so happens that these conversations have similar content because the message is similar. So I don't know that that would be a good case study because we're not really talking about advocacy in the classroom; we're doing critical analyses. So I think when you say what are the roadblocks, are you talking about if I personally am advocating to, say, meat-eating audiences and what are some of the reasons that people give for why they can't or they don't become vegan, or they don't become advocates?

STEVE: Yeah, what kind of response are you getting when you're getting the message out there to that kind of audience and what kind of feedback?

DR. JOY: There's just a tremendously, overwhelmingly positive response to the talks, overwhelmingly positive. We get feedback at the end of each presentation, anonymous evaluation forms, and I often get many, many emails and messages following presentations from people who have attended thanking me. Consistently people will say, "Thank you for helping me see what's happening. Thank you for helping me see the truth." And they're deeply appreciative. Now, they're self-selected people. People who come to my talks are people who are essentially saying, "I'm open to this information." Granted, we don't advertise the talks as being about veganism. We advertise the talks as being about the psychology of loving some animals and not others. But this is why I feel as hopeful as I do because I find over and over again, everywhere I go, that the one thing that we have in common is that people care. Even people who are not animal lovers, people care about animals, they care about the truth, and they care about justice. And carnism depends on our not caring, and the system is built on deception.

So really the greatest threat to carnism is its own proponents, essentially. Once people become aware of the system and the way that the system has influenced them, they're in a much better position to step outside of the carnistic box and make their choices freely because without awareness, there is no free choice. So it's so important that we continue this conversation, continue to raise awareness of carnism and its defenses, in a compassion way with the recognition that the real problem is the system; it's not just the individuals in the system. Not to divest anyone of personal responsibility, but one of the messages that I'm constantly trying to get out is that eating animals is not simply a matter of personal ethics. It is the inevitable end result of a deeply entrenched oppressive system. So eating animals is really a social justice issue. And that said, most people really care about justice and support social justice, and it's a matter of helping people make that connection.

STEVE: So what does the future look like? Are there projects you wanted to share with our listeners or anything coming up?

DR. JOY: I'm about to leave in a day for a tour of Australia and New Zealand and Hawaii on the way. I'm very excited about the speaking tour. It's very, very exciting, and there are a lot of great things happening that we're mentioning on carnism.org as they arise. Some of the things we can't talk about just yet. We're putting together a short four to five minute video that's going to be something, we think it's going to be one of the most important and effective tools for raising awareness of carnism that we've developed yet which will be a very quick overview of carnism and a call to action that we're hoping to get out there and spread as widely as possible. So that's very exciting.

We've developed task forces, which we're getting ready to launch. Carnism awareness task forces are groups of professionals who come together under the umbrella of CAN, our organization, who will work together to raise awareness of and to challenge carnism in their profession. So for example, we've got mental health professionals, legal professionals, yoga practitioners, and the idea of the task forces is to really work to transform oppression, carnism, from the inside out rather than the outside in. It's really challenging institutionalized oppression or institutionalized carnism, and it's an interesting social experiment because it's never been done in quite this way before. So we're very excited and hopeful about the potential for social transformation when we're working specifically with the pillars of the system, with the very institutions that maintain the system. People can get more information on that also at our website at carnism.org.

STEVE: Dr. Melanie Joy, this has been so comprehensive. Is there anything we haven't touched on that you wanted to share with our listeners? This has been so informative.

DR. JOY: Thank you. I just want to say, really, thank you and Will for everything that you're doing to just constantly raise awareness and support vegans who are on the front lines, often unsung heroes of some of the most important social transformation that's happening in the world today, and so I'm just deeply appreciative of everybody that's doing this really, really hard but incredibly fulfilling and vitally important work.

STEVE: Thank you so much, Dr. Melanie Joy. Such a great way to deliver the message in a sane format that we can all implement in our own life. I'm really excited about this. Dr. Melanie Joy, her book is *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows*. The website again is www.carnism.org. Dr. Melanie Joy, thank you so much for being part of Veganpalooza.

DR. JOY: Thank you. It's been an honor and a pleasure.

STEVE: Thank you. We'll see you next time. And thank you for listening to this session of Veganpalooza. I'm your co-host Steve Prussack. We'll see you in the next one.