

Veganism & its relation to food autonomy, by Marloes Boere – Friday 31/05/2019, 14:15 - 15:15

Food Autonomy Festival #3 Amsterdam

Personal story with universal aspects about how veganism can increase autonomy.

Marloes started with the example of the Bull Elvis at the Woodstock farm sanctuary (USA) and her house cat, Julia, who was rescued as well. They both like human company, but how to choose which meat we can sell and which not. What is the reason for this difference?

This is a cultural belief that differs around the world; which animal do we eat and which is your friend?

The belief is strong, but we hardly talk about this different belief systems. We talk about veganism and vegetarianism but not about the belief system behind eating animal products and meat. Which is carnism: the invisible belief system, or ideology, that conditions people to eat certain animals (and not others), it is the opposite of veganism. This is the dominant and invisible belief system and it is violent.

There are 4 types of victims of carnism: animals, environment, workers in slaughterhouses and health. But there is also another way carnism is violent to people; it does a disservice to our own autonomy.

Marloes argues that it is in-natural to us to eat animal and that we should have inherent respect to animals. We see videos of farmers talking about his livestock and his language is only about dominance, money, efficiency, etc. It's only about dehumanizing the animal itself. The question Marloes asked is if this farmer is a free man. The answer is no: he can only see animals as profitable, efficient means. He can't develop an autonomous relationship towards the animals.

If we eat meat, we get a defense mechanism that defends eating meat. The defense mechanism being the one that we see animals as less worthy with lesser moral value.

Carnism limits us! By making us the oppressor and oppressed at the same time. It takes away the possibility to relate to animals in a natural way and it enforces the defense mechanism that upholds our position oppressor.

Marloes grew up on a dairy farm. She had cut off her compassion for animals when she was ten, after crying after losing one of her calf friends. She reconnected with this past and herself with meeting Elvis at the sanctuary.

Becoming vegan was the best choice she ever made giving her back her autonomy to have a respectful relationship with animals and nature!