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Radical antinatalism manifesto

On the Helsinki sperm bank attack

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2024

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We antinatalists (radical or not) are not calling for violent bans. Our goal is to raise important questions about the nature of life and reproduction. The attack on the sperm bank symbolizes our desire to stop mindless reproduction and reflect on what it means to be human in our imperfect world, and to draw attention to the perhaps most violent and invisible ideology existing. We must rethink the value of life and its implications for all of humanity, and realize that every new birth is a creation of new sentient being, and as a result, an enormous responsibility. Such reflection will help us create a more sustainable and ethical society, where suffering and inequality will not be the norm.

Thank you for reading our manifesto – now you are now free to decide what you want to do next.

Material on the risk of suffering in general: centerforreducing-suffering.org
Preventing Extreme Suffering Has Moral Priority (WARNING! EXTREMELY DISTURBING FOOTAGE): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyA_eF7W02s

Attack on the sperm bank.

Obviously, the “radical anti-natalism” is not seriously. And a few graffiti are called “attack” only for the menacing sound. Although one of the most obvious symbols of reproduction is the sperm bank, of course **we do not want to ban people from giving birth** — we call for voluntary refusal to have children, or at least awareness and responsibility in reproduction. The point of the attack was not to close the institution (we discarded any destructive acting options that could disrupt the work of the hospital overall) — rather, it was a desperate attempt to draw attention to an idea that parasitizes in our heads worse than heteronormativity or patriotism — the idea of pronatalism (the normality of reproduction). The critique of pronatalism dates back to the 19th century, but almost all of humanity refuses to think about it, even though it is, in fact, the most important idea ever invented: the idea of minimizing the suffering of sentient beings (all other actions of humanity most often work toward this very goal).

This nonviolent attack, which has done no harm to any sentient being, these few graffiti will cause a financial damage that is negligible compared to all the new suffering that we create every day, justifying it with the ideas of love. Perhaps other anti-natalists may condemn us saying we that is a bad advertisement for anti-natalism. However, we believe that any dialogue on this topic should be good with today’s indifference and ignorance.

Our world is full of suffering, inequality and environmental disasters. Is life really an unconditional good that should be passed on to one and all? If you create a new sentient (capable of suffering) being — they will definitely experience suffering: at least because of increasing global warming, disease and complexity; at most because of violence, poverty or powerlessness, torture, discrimination of any kind — e.g., if they are unlucky enough to be born of a non-normative sexual orientation or gender, to be born with a physical or mental disability, if their skin color does not fit into the racist worldview of our communities, if they are forced to give birth or participate in war (as a combatant) by the laws of our societies...

What if you don’t create them? If person has never existed, there has never been any suffering. Antinatalism is the belief that we should at least recognize how catastrophically serious a decision it is to create a sentient being who would never suffer if you didn’t give birth to them, and at best refuse to reproduce (or otherwise create more sentient beings) at all. This is not a criticism of reproductive rights, but a rethinking of those rights from a moral and ethical perspective.

The Ethics of Life and Suffering

Every new human being that comes into existence inevitably faces a range of risks and suffering — and ultimately, death. As we support the hegemonic ideology of reproduction, encouraging the creation of new sentient beings, we fail to consider that outside of their existence they would never experience pain, loss, economic hardship, social isolation, stress, violence, disease, inequality or injustice, loneliness, frustration, pressure, suffering. Any reason for noncoercive reproduction begins with the words “i would like to”. Radical antinatalists question the ethics of mindless reproduction.

Care for Quality of Life

Creating a new life does not guarantee its quality. Think about what kind of childhood will you give your child? What kind of inheritance? How many rights will that child have in the country in which you live? Will the child experience suffering if they turn out to be different from the majority – for example, transgender? What if the child is unable to work? Will you be able to provide for them for the rest of their life? What if the child has almost just the unquenchable hunger for comfort and peace for the rest of their life? We must recognize that life may not bring happiness and fulfillment (but even if it does bring happiness, that happiness does not “balance” the suffering experienced). The quality of existence may be more important than the fact of existence itself. Radical antinatalists believe that we should question whether we should create new people if they are likely to encounter many difficulties.

Cultural Normativity of Reproduction

Culture insists that parenthood is a natural and desirable part of life. But isn't the imposition of the idea that increasing suffering is natural and desirable wild? Many of us do not support racism or sexism as practices that increase suffering. Many of us oppose torture, even if severe suffering is inflicted on “very bad” people. Many of us oppose rape or pedophilia. Many of us oppose unjustifiable killing and wars (though is there any justifiable violence?). Many of us hate animal abusers who enjoy torturing animals. But when it comes to our children – we make an exception. Radical antinatalists believe that we must critically re-examine whether parenthood (or any other creation of sentient beings) is truly a conscious choice, or a consequence of societal norms imposed on us from an early age –

and ban the promotion of breeding just as much as any other infliction of suffering (discrimination, animal abuse, war).

Environmental Crisis and the Planet's Resources

The Earth is already under tremendous strain from overpopulation. Each new person requires resources – food, water, energy. Our ecosystem is being depleted. With global warming and environmental degradation, creating new lives seems like an irresponsible move – both in terms of the comfort of our children in a dying world, and in terms of the comfort of the world and humanity being buried under more and more children. Sperm banking, as an institution that encourages reproduction, promotes population growth, which only exacerbates existing environmental problems. Radical antinatalists believe that we need to give the planet a chance to recover voluntarily before it takes away our reproduction rights by force.

The Threat of Extreme Suffering

There is such *extreme suffering* that cannot be justified by anything: neither by god, nor by chance, nor by the pleasure of many others, nor by any morality or ethics. Such suffering should not be tolerated under any circumstances, regardless of its utility. Examples of extreme suffering: torture, boiling in oil, skinning, heavy disease, agony, loss of limb and most war wounds, Irukandji syndrome. If there is a non-zero chance that your child could be subjected to extreme suffering (and unfortunately there is such a chance, not only because of accidental painful death – these cases are actively reproduced by powerful gangster groups and our governments), creating a new sentient being is extremely immoral.