



## A Man Is Suing His Parents For Being Born

Editor's Blog

In a move that won't be doing the so-called "snowflake generation" any favors, a 27-year-old man has taken the drastic step of suing his parents. Their crime – having him in the first place.

Raphael Samuel, a businessman based in Mumbai, India, bases the dispute on the belief that it is immoral for a couple to bring a sentient being into the world without asking their permission to do so. His argument stems from a philosophical movement called "anti-natalism", an outlook that reasons any new human life will inevitably involve pain and suffering, while pleasure (although good) is irrelevant to those who do not or have not existed in the first place.

An anti-natalist ultimately concludes it would have been better not to have been born in the first place. Or as Samuel put it to BBC News: "My life is good, but I'd rather not be here. You know it's like there's a nice room, but I don't want to be in that room."

The decision to take his parents to court is to make a point, Samuel says. He knows it's extremely likely the lawsuit will be thrown out before he has a chance to be heard and he also acknowledges the impossibility of acquiring consent from an as-yet-unconceived being. And yet, he hopes that by pursuing the case, the stunt will raise the profile of anti-natalism.

"There's no point to humanity," he added. "So many people are suffering."

"If humanity is extinct, Earth and animals would be happier. They'll certainly be better off. Also no human will then suffer. Human existence is totally pointless."

At least for now, anti-natalists are in the minority – but elements of anti-natalism are edging into the mainstream. Take, for example, True Detective. Matthew McConaughey's character, Rust Cohle, could be described as a nihilistic anti-natalist.

True Detective screenwriter Nic Pizzolatto says he was inspired by a piece by David Benatar, the controversial head of the University of Cape Town's philosophy department and author of various books and essays on anti-natalism. Benatar's view: "One of the implications of my argument is that a life filled with good and containing only the most minute quantity of bad – a life of utter bliss adulterated only by the pain of a single pin-prick – is worse than no life at all."

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.iflscience.com/editors-blog/a-man-is-suing-his-parents-for-having-him-heres-why/>

In *The Human Predicament*, Benatar lists the pain that goes hand-in-hand with simply being. This includes not just the obvious (sickness and grief, say) but the various discomforts and indignities we all experience on a daily basis, from hunger and thirst to the need to go to the bathroom, waiting in traffic, and feeling too cold or too hot. "The quality of human life is, contrary to what many people think, actually quite appalling," he concludes.

But if death seems like the way out, think again. Grief and dying bring their own pain – or, as Benatar puts it, "Life is bad, but so is death...Together, they constitute an existential vise".

To sum up: Life is worth continuing because death is considered "bad". But that does not mean it is not worth starting in the first place.

As for Samuel and his parents, the good news is that they still appear to be on good terms – despite the looming lawsuit.

"I must admire my son's temerity to want to take his parents to court knowing both of us are lawyers. And if Raphael could come up with a rational explanation as to how we could have sought his consent to be born, I will accept my fault," Kavita Karnad Samuel said in a statement, BBC News reports.

Before adding, "I'm very happy that my son has grown up into a fearless, independent-thinking young man. He is sure to find his path to happiness."