

Veganism & Procreation

Is Procreation Aligned With Veganism?



What Is Antinatalism?

Antinatalism is a stance that it is wrong for humans as a whole to procreate. For SHK antinatalism is a philosophical and ethical stance against human reproduction, rooted in harm reduction and rational consideration for future life. Antinatalism regards the implications that procreation has, both for humans, other animals, and the natural world. Many antinatalists consider intentional human reproduction (besides exceptions related to force) an irreversible, unnecessary, indefensible, and enduring form of harm, regardless of circumstances, situations, or consciousness in living.

Reduce Suffering

The spread of intentionally abstaining from procreation can radically reduce suffering, exploitation, and environmental destruction in the world. Refraining from creating new life is the most efficient and effective means of minimizing suffering and injustice for all current and future sentient beings. Living according to antinatalist philosophy prioritizes keeping Earth's natural life forms, resources, diversity, beauty, and health intact. When antinatalists abstain from childbirth to prevent harm to a new life and existing lives it is done mindfully, not selfishly. No people or the Earth are being directly harmed by someone not coming into existence, but bringing someone into existence will bring about continuous avoidable harm for the person being born and incalculable others. It should be noted that antinatalism is purely a personal stance, and it doesn't inherently equate to taking reproductive rights and freedoms away from people, which is not something we advocate for at SHK.

Having children is antithetical to harm mitigation— each new human is a gamble with guaranteed harms and, at best, questionable benefits to the living and natural world.

What Is Veganism?

The definition of veganism is "a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude as far as is possible and practicable all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promote the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of [other] animals, humans and the environment."

Vegantinatalism:




Veganism and antinatalism are so similar that they should be merged together to form one portmanteau word: vegantinatalism. These two ideologies have a lot of overlap, as they are both rooted in serious prevention, practicable harm mitigation, and compassionate regard for present and future life of both human and nonhuman animals. Specifically, they both involve looking out for others, wanting individuals to experience at least a minimally decent life, mitigating ecological destruction, respecting consent, and not bringing life into existence to suffer and die for the self-interest of oneself and others.



Vegans don't want other animals to be forcibly bred into existence to be unjustifiably used against their will, dominated, objectified, and destroyed. Humans are an exceptionally cruel species and when we birth new humans not only are we unable to guarantee what kind of person someone will become, we also can't guarantee their safety, health, or overall life satisfaction. Many people already support the concept of "adopt don't shop" for companion animals: We believe in extending that principle to humans as well, taking care of those who we already have, rather than breeding new humans into existence.

"The world is a dangerous place for nonhuman animals. Those who aren't hunted, tortured, or enslaved by humans struggle to survive within ecosystems encroached on and polluted by people. Often, their very bodies are perverted by the poisons we have introduced into their habitats and bloodstreams."

-Patrice Jones, *Aftershock: Confronting Trauma In A Violent World*

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Human Procreation Harms Nonhuman Animals

All human procreation is inherently bad for animals and the environment (the home to all animals). When humans have children, they are going against the anti-exploitation and anti-cruelty principles of veganism, whether they are vegan or not. The only kind choice in a cruel world is to stop having kids. All new humans are subject to potential exploitation and cruelty themselves, and they'll perpetuate exploitation, displacement, ecological destruction, and cruelty onto others through capitalism, commonplace harmful human behavior, and potentially more. All human procreation causes and perpetuates significant harm, no matter how consciously one lives their life and minimizes their environmental and suffering footprint.

Vegans may teach their kids to view other animals with respect, dignity, and kindness. They may teach their children that other animals aren't trash, resources, or commodities or otherwise unfeeling, unknowing, or here to serve us—but this doesn't produce any guarantees of a truly compassionate human, nor does it safeguard against all potential harm.

Vegans should seek to exclude—as far as is practically possible—having human children. New humans add to pollution and environmental destruction, which has far-reaching and harmful consequences that impact living beings, present and future. If vegans were to foster and adopt other humans they could potentially help change the trajectory of those peoples lives from a speciesist animal consumer who condones animal use and killing to an anti-speciesist plant-exclusive eater who opposes animal exploitation and killing.

Just like we have more ethical alternatives to food, clothing, entertainment, and much more, we also have alternatives to bringing new humans into existence. If we want to take care of other life, we can foster, adopt, rescue, volunteer, mentor, donate, etc. to support humans and other animals who are already alive. Families come in all kinds of shapes and sizes, and we clearly don't have to birth someone into existence to love someone else. Why perpetuate so many problems and injustices by bringing another human into existence when we can easily help countless individuals with real feelings, desires, needs, and interests who are alive and in need of help right now? Furthermore, if a new human with empathy for all animals comes into existence they will be in for a world of hurt, as they will be faced with having to co-exist with the rest of their species, who by and large don't care in any meaningful way about the plight of nonhuman animals and the destruction our species-wide killing machine has wreaked on the planet.

Vegan Babies Are A Myth

Infants and toddlers cannot be vegan, or anti-vegan for that matter. Babies are not capable of understanding the whats, whys, and hows of what humans do to nonhuman animals, and therefore cannot form an opinion about how they feel and if they are entirely against humans encroaching on and destroying the lives, bodies, and cultures of other animals Education and decision making are prerequisites to someone becoming vegan and a human baby is far from being informed or developed enough to understand the concepts of exploitation and justice. The babies vegans have may be plant-based eaters, but there's no guarantee that they'll make the conscious choice to eat strictly plant-based foods and abstain from other forms of animal exploitation and killing for the rest of their life.



"In truth, veganism isn't a destination; it's a direction. You keep going as far as is practicable and possible for you in order to be in solidarity with other beings on this planet every time you get the chance. This is why people who eat plant-based aren't always vegans. It's an ideology first. It's how you see the world."