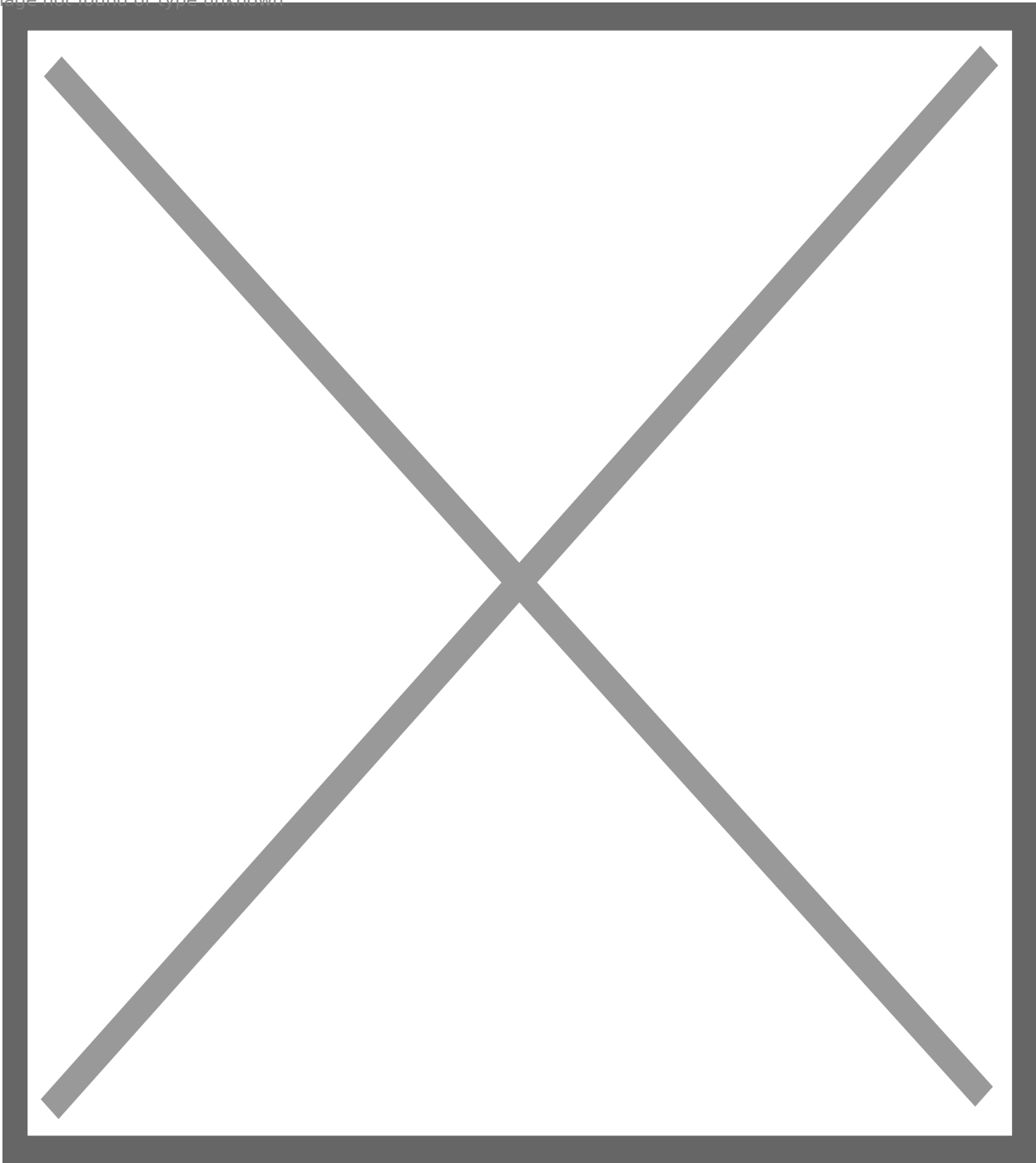


Anti-Natalism: The Opposite of Epicureanism

Post by "Don" of August 20, 2025 at 7:41 AM

I came across this article today:

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[The Case for Not Being Born](#)

The anti-natalist philosopher David Benatar argues that it would be better if no one had children ever again.

www.newyorker.com

I knew the term anti-natalism but never heard of Benatar or his work. But it struck me as diametrically opposed to Epicurean philosophy.

For example:

Quote

Like a boxer who has practiced his counters, Benatar has anticipated a range of objections. Many people suggest that the best experiences in life—love, beauty, discovery, and so on—make up for the bad ones. To this, Benatar replies that pain is worse than pleasure is good. Pain lasts longer: “There’s such a thing as chronic pain, but there’s no such thing as chronic pleasure,” he said. It’s also more powerful: would you trade five minutes of the worst pain imaginable for five minutes of the greatest pleasure? Moreover, there’s an abstract sense in which missing out on good experiences isn’t as bad as having bad ones. “For an existing person, the presence of bad things is bad and the presence of good things is good,” Benatar explained. “But compare that with a scenario in which that person never existed—then, the absence of the bad would be good, but the absence of the good wouldn’t be bad, because there’d be nobody to be deprived of those good things.” This asymmetry “completely stacks the deck against existence,” he continued, because it suggests that “all the unpleasantness and all the misery and all the suffering could be over, without any real cost.”