RMS -vs- Doctor, on the evils of Natalism

The Context:

The kabuki-west mailing list is for planning dinners and get-togethers the San Francisco Bay Area. Somebody made the horrible mistake of posting a baby announcement, and RMS replied, at his finest. Predictably, much back-and-forth flamage followed, so I waited for it to die down, then ran RMS's original message through the DOCTOR program in Gnu Emacs, and sent the resulting analysis back to the mailing list.

RMS's Natalism Flame:

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Date: Sun, 21 Feb 93 15:14:50 -0500
From: rms@gnu.ai.mit.edu (Richard Stallman)
To: mcuddy@ctbu.rational.com
Cc: kabuki-west@mica.berkeley.edu
Subject: Another mcuddy..
```

Could people please not use this list to announce information of no particular interest to the people on the list? Hundreds of thousands of babies are born every day. While the whole phenomenon is menacing, one of them by itself is not newsworthy. Nor is it a difficult achievement--even some fish can do it. (Now, if you were a seahorse, it would be more interesting, since it would be the male that gave birth.)

Following your example, I might send the list an announcement whenever a new GNU program is written. That happens less often than babies are born, it does the world a lot more good, it reflects more conscious creativity and hard work, and some of the readers might actually find the information useful. Even so, I think most of the readers would consider this outside the scope and purpose of the list. Clearly that goes double for babies.

Of course, we have another place for announcements of new GNU programs. If some people like to read birth announcements, perhaps you should set up a suitable list or newsgroup. Perhaps rec.births? (While you're at it, start rec.deaths for obituaries--they're usually more interesting to read.)

These birth announcements also spread the myth that having a baby is something to be proud of, which fuels natalist pressure, which leads to pollution, extinction of wildlife, poverty, and ultimately mass starvation.

Perhaps the people who have decided to have no children should start making proud announcements, so as to set a better example. I could start. I'm sure everyone on this list will be glad to know I don't plan to reproduce myself.

Kabuki-West Replies:

In summary:

- Richard: Fuck off. -Eliot Lear
- Fuck you. -Paul Traina
    - No, thanks. I don't want to have children. -RMS
        - good -Peter Shipley
- Fuck you, Richard. -Brent Chapman
    - Boy, I really am getting popular. I haven't had so many offers before in just one day. -RMS
        - You mean that you are in no danger of getting laid. -Elaine Richards
- Richard, You appear to be unclear on the concept. -Joe Buck

- Richard, what Paul and Brent so succinctly expressed is quite approprate. ... To sum up: Fuck you. - David Muir Sharnoff
- Please send your "fucks" via personal mail and refrain from using Kabuki-west for such messages. -Lile Elam
- It appears that the problem of natalism is even worse than I thought. -RMS
- Perhaps some people took my message as an expression of personal hostility. It was not based on hostility, just annoyance at a general practice on the occasion of one instance. If anyone felt bad because of misunderstanding this, I regret the unintended result, and I hope this message corrects the matter. -RMS
- Wow, I think yall who sent "fucks" to the mailing list need to go back and re read RMS's msg. Has breeding become such a religion that the mere mention of a an oposing view ignites a fury of vile replies? If those people who sent "fucks" really want to feel strongly about something, maybe they should move to Iran and start worshiping Kholmeni or something. -Edjik
- You people just have no sense of humor. I thought the original message was pretty funny and made a few good points (if it didn't, nobody would have been offended). I guess it's a shock for smug self-righteous breeders to learn that not everybody in the world thinks babies are cute and special. -Wayne A. Christopher
    - Finally, someone read the message as it was intended to be read. -RMS
- No, I think you are correct about the purpose of the list, but parents seem to be so flushed with hormones after they have managed to accomplish the same act that single celled life does, that they revert to the brain level of that afore-mentioned life. I appreciate your choice, the same one that I and my partner have made. -Doug Faunt
- I'm somewhat surprised by the idea that a mere message from me could torpedo the happiness of parents. I'd think it wouldn't even come close to doing that. Not that I wanted to do that. The most I thought it could do was to discourage the posting birth announcements. -RMS

The Doctor Replies:

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Date: Wed, 10 Mar 93 22:46 EST
From: Don Hopkins <hopkins@bongo.garnet.cs.cmu.edu>
To: rms%gnu.ai.mit.edu@ecp.garnet.cs.cmu.edu
Cc: mcuddy%ctbu.rational.com@ecp.garnet.cs.cmu.edu,
       kabuki-west%mica.berkeley.edu@ecp.garnet.cs.cmu.edu
Subject: The doctor replies ...
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I am the psychotherapist. Please, describe your problems. Each time you are finished talking, type RET twice.

```
  Date: Sun, 21 Feb 93 15:14:50 -0500
  From: rms@gnu.ai.mit.edu (Richard Stallman)
  To: mcuddy@ctbu.rational.com
  Cc: kabuki-west@mica.berkeley.edu
  Subject: Another mcuddy..
```

Are you annoyed that Stallman is emotionally stimulating?

Could people please not use this list to announce information of no particular interest to the people on the list?

Maybe your plans have something to do with this.

Hundreds of thousands of babies are born every day.

Is it because of your life that you are going through all this?

While the whole phenomenon is menacing, one of them by itself is not newsworthy.

What happened when the whole phenomenon is menacing one of them by itself is not newsworthy?

Nor is it a difficult achievement--even some fish can do it.

How do you reconcile the people you hang around with?

(Now, if you were a seahorse, it would be more interesting, since it would be the male that gave birth.)

Can you elaborate on that?

Following your example, I might send the list an announcement whenever a new GNU program is written.

What would happen if a new gnu program is written?

That happens less often than babies are born, it does the world a lot more good, it reflects more conscious creativity and hard work, and some of the readers might actually find the information useful.

Is it because happens less often than babies are born it does the world a lot more good it reflects more conscious creativity and hard work and some of the readers might actually find the information useful that you came to me?

Even so, I think most of the readers would consider this outside the scope and purpose of the list.

Perhaps this has something to do with problems at school?

Clearly that goes double for babies.

When did you first know that goes double for babies?

Of course, we have another place for announcements of new GNU programs.

Have you been scared of that?

If some people like to read birth announcements, perhaps you should set up a suitable list or newsgroup.

Do you really think people might want to read birth?

Perhaps rec.births?

Possibly any hobbies you have are related to this.

(While you're at it, start rec.deaths for obituaries--they're usually more interesting to read.)

This is not a healthy way of thinking.

These birth announcements also spread the myth that having a baby is something to be proud of, which fuels natalist pressure, which leads to pollution, extinction of wildlife, poverty, and ultimately mass starvation.

Is the fact that having a baby is something to be proud of which fuels natalist pressure which leads to pollution extinction of wildlife poverty and ultimately mass starvation the real reason?

Perhaps the people who have decided to have no children should start making proud announcements, so as to set a better example.

Is it because of your sex life that you are going through all this?

I could start.

Is it because of hangups you have that you say you could start?

I'm sure everyone on this list will be glad to know I don't plan to reproduce myself.

How do you reconcile your inhibitions?

RMS Replies:

(Just 15 minutes after I sent him the doctor's reply!)

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Date: Wed, 10 Mar 93 23:01:18 -0500
From: rms@gnu.ai.mit.edu (Richard Stallman)
To: hopkins@bongo.garnet.cs.cmu.edu
Subject: Re: The doctor replies ...
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Funny.

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Date: Wed, 10 Mar 93 23:48:54 -0500
From: rms@gnu.ai.mit.edu (Richard Stallman)
To: hopkins@bongo.garnet.cs.cmu.edu
Subject: Re: The doctor replies ...
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Did the responses really come from doctor, or did you enhance them by hand?

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Date: Thu, 11 Mar 93 00:56 EST
From: hopkins (Don Hopkins)
To: rms%gnu.ai.mit.edu@ecp.garnet.cs.cmu.edu
Subject: The doctor replies ...
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Pure doctor.el replies -- the indentation was changed to protect the margins. However I did delete a few of the uninteresting or repetitive doctor replies and try again, but most of the replies were funny enough the first time to keep. The first reply to your name in the headers was rigged into the doctor program itself (as to who wrote that code I cannot speculate), but I think the last few replies are a clear indication that emacs is a truly artificial intelligence.

-Don