The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Priest Compares IVF to Nazi Experiments

July 21, 2020



Archpriest Dmitry Smirnov earned the dubious title of "Sexist of the Year" this spring. **Dmitry.Rezvan / Wikicommons**

A senior Russian Orthodox Church official known for making controversial sexist remarks has compared in vitro fertilization (IVF) to notorious medical experiments that Nazi doctors conducted during World War II.

Archpriest Dmitry Smirnov was granted the dubious title of "Sexist of the Year" by feminist bloggers this spring for comparing common-law wives to prostitutes, urging girls to prepare for childbirth instead of going to school and saying that women have "weaker minds" than men.

Related article: Orthodox Official Compares Abortion Numbers in Russia to WWII Losses

In his latest interview cited by Interfax, Smirnov called IVF and surrogate motherhood a "quite dangerous and sinful game with the Creator of the universe."

“This method of artificially creating people is naturally fascist,” Smirnov told the *Prikhozhanin* (“Parishioner”) magazine.

“As we remember, people were hanged for such experiments after the Nuremberg trials,” he said.

The Nuremberg trials found 15 German doctors guilty of war crimes for experiments including artificially inseminating 300 inmates at Auschwitz, sterilizing men and women at various concentration camps and injecting twins with chloroform after experiments aimed at accelerating the birthrate of the German race.

IVF is a technology used to treat infertility where an egg is combined with sperm outside the body, cultivated for a few days and then implanted back into the same or a different uterus. Studies have linked IVF to certain types of rare childhood cancers due in part to advanced maternal age.

Russia in recent years has been attempting to reverse its demographic decline by reimbursing private-clinic IVF through its national insurance program.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2020/07/21/russian-priest-compares-ivf-to-nazi-experiments-a70944