

Hello earth, here the men's movement

Women have the right for each other. Better than the men. Not surprising, because the strings are today in the hands of feminists, says a new lobby group. Women are disadvantaged, marginalized men. That puts everything upside down and is not only bad for men but also for women and children. Welcome to the world of combative men's rights activists (m / f).

Marco Visscher

"The challenge is," begins Paul Elam, weighing his words carefully, "in order not to fall for the temptation to present ourselves as victims. Our movement, "he continues - and he may say, because Elam is considered the father of it -" must be what feminism claimed to be, but never was a fight against privileges for one sex but before equal legal treatment. '

Elam's say, for the record, believe that feminism has nothing to do with gender equality and that it has become so successful that women are privileged today. He is part of the worldwide men's rights movement.

Yes, there is such a thing as a men's rights movement - and last weekend the avant-garde met in London at the International Conference for Women Affairs. If you do not have heard of, is that the feminists blame. For feminists have taken over the media, politicians keep their grip and indoctrinate our children. It's hard not to laugh about the subject. Feel the men - already far beyond mensheugenis dominant in almost all key positions in society - are disadvantaged? They found that men are the victims of "institutional sexism? Is this a joke ?!

Some in the movement see humor indeed as a good way to deal with the matter. They point out that airy white young men earn a scholarship, because they as a group today are underrepresented at universities. Or they notice sarcastically that the men in the waste, sewer and mining are so common that they women do not admit to their industry - and that there should be a statutory limit for their presence, as in politics and the boards of large companies . And men also play another long matches at Wimbledon without higher prize money ...

For the vast majority, however, it is a serious matter. They point out that the fathers who have less rights after a divorce in dealing with their children. That indeed all kinds of charities to prevent circumcision of girls and prevent, but not in boys. That men are more often punished in the law and harsher penalties than women for the same offense. That men commit much more likely than women commit suicide. And that there is hardly room to schedule such abuses. Mike Buchanan, founder of the world's only political party for men: "In the eyes of the state are men's second-class citizens."

Suppose the men argue that all this had been the other way around. Then there was broke a storm of indignation. Then the injured party should be protected and compensated. Why it remains silent when men are the injured party? Whoever brings up is ignored, ridiculed or excluded. It is this double standard that challenges the men's rights movement.

That's not a typical Western problem. For years, Anil Kumar calls in the traditional, conservative India - discredited alleging a culture of rape - attention to the lack of legal protection of women against rape, domestic violence or sexual harassment in the workplace which women do have. And men are guilty until proven otherwise in an indictment. Kumar: "This is completely contrary to human rights."

Who are the men's rights activists? What drives them and where they disagree? How much influence can they have?

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The almost two hundred conference attendees, completely expected, predominantly man, married, divorced or single fathers and grandfathers or neither. Some wear a sad family history with them: then separated and cut off from any contact with their children, or abused by a domineering mother. One man wearing a T-shirt that says 'Where's my foreskin' (Where is my foreskin?).

They come to agree among peers and, not least, to meet their blogging, vlog following and tweeting idols once in person. This increases the blow willingness of each presentation. In some cases, there is already a standing ovation even before the speaker has begun.

Who are these idols? Paul Elam, to start. Elam, a tall, slender American, set seven years ago A Voice for Men on a website where men matters can be discussed. Feminists have put aside his work as a lobby for abusers' and for men who do not wish to pay alimony. Several times he has had death threats were serious enough by the police to investigate. "I am prepared to die for this cause," he explains. "Oh yes, no doubt."

Or Karen Straughan, a divorced mother in Canada, "pissing off feminists since 2010", according to its own description. In her reflections on her own blog, *Owning Your Shit*, still come expletives over. In London, she puts an end to the thunderous applause after its announcement in a characteristic way: "Oh, shut the f * ck up."

Or Janice Fiamengo, a somewhat shy, reticent literary scholar, also from Canada, who calls himself a year ago outside the academic circles catapulted by placing weekly video messages on YouTube. She aimed her arrows in particular the oppressive atmosphere at universities, where students wishing to escape increasing emphasis on teaching materials or discussions in which they, or others, might feel uneasy. In Fiamengo's own field is the intrinsic value of literature - as a product of its time and culture - become irrelevant. Books are still simply read "to educate politically correct attitudes," she explains. Yes, the alert reader has already noticed it: there are women in the men's rights movement. Most of them had an affinity with feminism, but became estranged. They find that feminism is not sufficiently challenging them to take responsibility, but placed in a victim. They find that feminists teach women to present themselves as weak and vulnerable, waiting for salvation of the state. The three-day conference, the women present are individually cherished and adored.

Karen McFly (a fictitious name with which they meepraat on the internet about these topics), working as a translator at an IT company and flown in from Germany for the conference, says always get cringe when other women to speak in the name of her sex. "I'm mad as feminists launch a campaign in which they claim that" all women "are afraid to travel by bus or subway because of sexual harassment. I'm ashamed of that. It drives people apart. It leads to an erosion of compassion. "She thinks that just putting the right men movement women in their strength.

Zoe Kuijper, from the Netherlands, puts it more succinctly: "It do not matter if you have boobs or not?" Well, it actually does so indeed and men's rights activists regret that very much. They find each other in the idea that feminism uncritically has percolated through the whole society. Swayne O'Pie that 25 years ago the only guy at school was when he attended women, says, "Feminism is the only ideology which can not be openly criticized. That should arouse suspicion. "

Although women are not in the top positions, he acknowledges, but the men with influence have adopted their agenda. Ridiculous, O'Pie calls it, because: "The idea that today is like a patriarchy which excludes women or oppressed in our modern society, is nonsense."

Well, a nice patriarchy is, say the advocates of women rights with undisguised cynicism that men send in the war, most of the tax paid late and let it do the most dangerous jobs.

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A number of speakers at the conference wearing a clear right-wing, conservative agenda. Phillip Davies is billed as the only British parliamentarian who dares to challenge the tendency to give women

privileges. He concentrates on law and order and find the legal system too mild, especially for women. Davies wants them to just get such severe penalties as men when they commit the same crime. Another speaker, Herbert Purdy, feminists accusation that they want to introduce Marxism through the back door. And called on the communist leaders to the abolition of the family. "What is the way to a revolution?" Purdy asks his audience. 'Start a coup. How to make the head of state harmless. "And what do the feminists? "They do the same with the head of household:. Father 'And she succeeded well, says Purdy. About half of all marriages end in divorce. therefore many boys lack a role model. But for others in the movement that conservative family values irrelevant. Called MGTOW'ers (one going their Own Way "), the counterpart is. They believe that the costs and risks of a relationship with a woman does not outweigh the benefits. These are men who no longer wish to update and in extreme cases, closure of the society.

Someone else comes from the community of pickup artists - you know, men who have attended workshops on how to get a girl in bed. There will be looked down on the men's rights activists; 'Seen as crybabies, wimps, "says someone. A few people dare to be active in both groups.

"I feel a little uncomfortable," said Robert Russell, in a confidential tone. We have been for a while in conversation. Russell, a retired English teacher from London, has long been disillusioned with the Labour Party where he voted in his life. Coincidentally he was on the trail of anti-feminists and, as sometimes happens with young Muslims, Russell said with some self-deprecating, he radicalized. Feminism has "certain scary similarities with Nazism," he says. "It is based on biology and a vocabulary full of incomprehensible nonsense terms."

But now, at the conference, he will be surrounded by mainly right-wing people - "and I still see myself as a lefty!" He's not always agree with what he hears here. Feminists were no Marxists, he claims, because Marx was a man and that feminists should not. And the Conservative Party is not a socialist party, as they seem to think here. Anyway, with friends talk about it, he does not. Decided: "Oh no, I do not want to jeopardize my friendships."

That is a commonly heard sentiment. Internet use many activists a pseudonym when blogging or respond. Outside the digital world it is scary to start over. At the conference, everyone wants only too happy to tell his opinion, but more than once we hear rather not by name in this article. The photographer must swear that he photographs people do not recognize who do not want. Not for nothing says Paul Elam: 'What I have done over the last decade would have been professional suicide for others. "

Your roving reporter is therefore met with a mixture of suspicion (the media are in the hands of feminists) and a need to convince him and to be included in the ranks. So send Jari Selin, who has been raised in Finland as men rights activist, after our conversation an email with up to 168 links - for "if you are really interested."

There are also stacks of flyers, brochures and densely printed A4 pages to draw attention to the injustice done to men. Did you know that circumcision in boys men six times more often than girls and women? Did you know that 84 percent of the male prison population would be stuck if the legal system had treated them as women? Did you know that 78 percent of people who commit suicide man? Did you know that in 70 percent of cases of domestic violence rises one direction, the woman is the perpetrator? (Aside: domestic violence is most prevalent in lesbian couples.)

This emphasis on man as victim is not all good. Kathy Gyngell, a conservative blogger, sighs: "Everyone in our modern society to compete to be the victim." The question is whether such a game about who the most pitiful is an effective strategy. And what's the use anyway? Are gender-specific laws are abolished, whether they should be extended for men?

For now it is mainly a game to be about feminists as offensive as possible. Mike Buchanan: "One of the many flaws of feminists is their lack of moral compass." Chuckling. Herbert Purdy: "I hate feminism. Feminism is a dangerous parasite that sucks the power out of our society. "Welcoming nods. Cautious

applause. Janet Bloomfield: "Feminism is a hateful, backward ideology that is immune to facts."
Laughter. Booming.

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Will the men's rights movement have any influence? That answer varies by country. Michael Odijk doubt from the Netherlands, but sees an opening. Odijk see more and more protests against a technocratic elite that arranges the society as they find that they need and which sees democracy as an obstacle, "he says. And because feminism is part of the worldview of the political class, would that ideology may come under fire.

A Belgian delegate is not in London. Guy Van Sanden, working in the IT sector, a website run, mannenrechten.be but reported to be too busy - own company, four children - to go. For two and a half years twitters Van Sanden (@mannenrechten) on these topics. It does not storm. He has 33 followers. That something has to change in order to be noticed, is clear. "Let's keep ourselves not fooled and think that the tide is turning," holds conference organizer Mike Buchanan his audience. "We want to believe, but it's still not fast enough." Some, like Lucian Valsan from Romania, advocacy infiltration into political organizations and personnel departments: "Feminists do that very well, we do not." Others prefer the strategy of small-scale living-room meetings or one-on-one conversations with colleagues at the coffee machine.

Janet Bloomfield, a prominent blogger and social media director of A Voice for Men, recognizes "a marketing problem." There are too many outspoken anti-feminists and too little bridge builders. There is no reason to believe that will curb the triumph of the feminists of itself and no indication that politicians will listen to men's rights activists. All that approves the present bleak.

Still, there are some developments that present positive votes. Someone notes that the robots just will eliminate the jobs in which women are specialized, such as in health care and education. Then they themselves are soon so nice at home, while the surgeons, software developers and plumbers are still working.

Also, more and more men are affected by family - and so there are more people who know men who are disadvantaged. First you still think: yes, he will not tell the whole story of why his children hardly can see more. But if there are constantly these stories are seemingly sympathetic men there may be more going on. That's how Frenchman David Loup got into the theme, through a friend who has to bear the cost of the medical treatment of his 3-year-old epileptic daughter, but can not see her. "Such injustice," said Loup, "can not remain forever under the radar."

"I think many people subcutaneous or sense that something is not right," says Alison Tieman, a Canadian cartoonist and founder of the Honey Badger Brigade, a collective of artists around men's rights. "Maybe they can not properly articulate whether they dare not about to start." Anyway, it seems to her that there still once the conviction must break that women mature people with their own will, which do not require excessive protection for themselves standing in this society to take.

Janet Bloomfield completes her presentation, she says, "Feminism is cancer" - not coincidentally the text on her bright pink T-shirt - "and we are the cure." A stormy applause is rising.