What’s at stake:

Years it took for the human population to grow from 1 billion to 2 billion: 123;
Years it took to grow from 6 billion to 7 billion: 22. >From YES! (Summer 2013).

Contents: Stabilizing Population Newsletter #10, July 9, 2016

What we can do

Population Today
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The goals for a sustainable planet (p. 183)—“stabilizing climate, stabilizing population, eradicating poverty, and restoring the economy’s natural support systems—are mutually dependent.” Which is the most important, for which the others serve? “All [goals] are essential to feeding the world’s people.” That is, humanistic values, especially inclusive compassion and generosity, are primary to Brown.

“The fossil fuel-based, automobile-centered, throwaway economy that evolved in western industrial societies is no longer a viable model….we need to build a new economy, one powered with carbon-free sources of energy—wind, solar, and geothermal—one that has a diversified transport system and that reuses and recycles everything.” (183).
What we can do to stabilize population:

Change the economic system. Brown: “The key to restructuring the economy is to get the market to tell the truth through full-cost pricing” (183). But it’s complicated, and we might not agree with all of his details. See *The Collapse of Western Civilization by Oreskes and Conway*.

Donate to and or join a good population organization—Planned Parenthood, Population Connection, NARAL, etc. Subscribe to its magazine. Give a subscription to a library. See earlier OMNI population newsletters.

Organizers of OMNI350 Book Forums: Repeat relevant forums at another venue and in another town (NWACC).

Purchase another copy of Weisman’s book to give to libraries and pass around.

Publicize the new IUD and how important and cheap are contraceptives to population control.

Population Today

FROM Aggressive, Ceaseless, Relentless POPULATION GROWTH: AUTO SALES, BUSINESS GROWTH, HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION, TAXES, INCREASING CO2

Arkansas

“17. 4 Million Car Sales Set U.S. Record in ’15.” Compiled by *AD-G Staff*. *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (Jan. 6, 2016). “Analysts expect sales could go even higher this year as unemployment continues to decline and more young buyers enter the market. . . .It was the sixth straight year of growing U.S. sales....” Just one more reason why we must stop population growth.

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

three years.” The economic engine continues to respond to the growing population.

Ron Wood. “Change Coming for I-49 Interchange.” AD-G (March 20, 2016). The widening of “the interstate from Fayetteville to the north end of Bentonville” continues. “We’ll have six lanes of interstate, three in each direction through that interchange. . . .estimated to cost some $55 million.” “In addition to adding capacity, the project should eliminate kamikaze merging…. ” The pressure of population has been increasing steadily as we who live here know well. The remedy? Increasing highways and sizes of highways while major human and species needs are under-served. Why no attempts to reduce the cause of such ultimate destruction (9 lanes next and parking lots?)?

“Ongoing Paving Work to Close Interstate Lanes.” AD-G (June 5, 2016). Costing $28.3 million, the project is part of AHTD’s Connecting Arkansas Program.

Michael Wickline. “Group Urged to Move to Next Step on Roads.” AD-G (July 1, 2016). Hutchinson exhorts the Arkansas Good Roads Foundation to support his highway plans. The AGRF is a collection of Arkansans dedicated to promoting roads. Google the name for member list. Naturally they do not spend time comparing Arkansas needs and priorities. –Dick

The three core neo-capitalist (neocon) values are: private property, growth, and consumerism. Significantly reducing those massive behaviors in the short time available to us seems unlikely. But perhaps we can stop and even reduce population. –Dick

Spencer Willems. “State Prisons Projected to Hold 22,781 by ’26.” AD-G (July 1, 2016). “The state should expect to see its inmate population continue climbing…. ” Even unwelcome growth is welcome? That is, given the urgent need for a sustainable planet, prison growth is not absolutely inevitable, any more than is road growth.

Seeking Stabilization

Individuals

IF POPE FRANCIS REALLY WANTED TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE, HE’D BE A FEMINIST

The world will never be healed of its ecological ills as long as women cannot control their fertility. By Katha Pollitt

SEPTEMBER 9, 2015
http://www.thenation.com/article/the-popes-blind-spot/

Young mothers at a health clinic in Manila. In 2012, the Catholic Church opposed a bill guaranteeing access to
If the world consisted only of straight men, Pope Francis would be the world’s greatest voice for everything progressives believe in. He’s against inequality, racism, poverty, bigotry and, as his recent encyclical *Laudato Si’* made eloquently clear, the rampant capitalism and “self-centred culture of instant gratification”—including excessive meat eating—that fuel climate change and may well destroy the planet. He has a gift for adding warmth to harsh and inflexible dogma, as with his famous comment on gays: “Who am I to judge?” As I write, he has just announced a special year in which any priest may absolve a woman for having an abortion, as long as she is “contrite.” No wonder leftists and liberals and even secular humanists love him. Naomi Klein seemed positively starstruck in her *New Yorker* piece about her recent visit to the Vatican, where she spoke at a press conference and symposium about the encyclical. Indeed, she was so impressed with the pope’s “theology of interconnection” and “evangelism of ecology,” she forgot to mention that he had nothing to say about the gender inequality that undergirds and promotes our onrushing disaster.

I know I risk being the feminist killjoy at the vegan love feast, but the world, unlike Vatican City, is half women. It will never be healed of its economic, social, and ecological ills as long as women cannot control their fertility or the timing of their children; are married off in childhood or early adolescence; are barred from education and decent jobs; have very little socioeconomic or political power or human rights; and are basically under the control—often the violent control—of men.

For example, consider **population growth.** Because of its association with coercion, racism, and doomsday predictions that failed to materialize, it’s hard for progressives to talk about overpopulation. But we must: There are 7.2 billion people on the planet—since 2000, we’ve added around 1.2 billion, roughly equivalent to the entire population of North America and Europe. At the current rates of increase, there will be 9.6 billion people by around 2050. Population density affects everything: climate change, species loss, pollution, deforestation, the struggle for clean water, housing, work, and sufficient food. How can we take the pope seriously if he refuses to face these facts?

Pope Francis places the blame for the sorry state of the planet only on **excess consumption** by the privileged and says that international campaigns for “reproductive health” (scare quotes his) are really all about population control and the imposition of foreign values on the developing world—as if the church itself was not a foreign power using its might to restrict reproductive rights in those same places. But why is it an either/or question? Why not: There are billions of people who want a modern standard of living, which makes a lot of sense compared to the alternative—backbreaking farm labor in a poor village with no electricity or running water—and those desires can only be satisfied if people have fewer children, which happens to be what they want anyway.

True, Pope Francis did say that Catholics needn’t breed “like rabbits,” but he waved away the need for “artificial” birth control. If only those rabbits would use natural family planning! Interestingly, he made that comment as he was leaving the Philippines, a largely Catholic country where the powerful church hierarchy has fought tooth and nail against realistic sex education and government funding of contraception. Not coincidentally, the Philippines has the highest fertility rate among the 10 countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

According to a recent report from the Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health at the University of California, San Francisco, providing family planning to the 225 million women around the world who...
want it but can’t get it could meet 16 to 29 percent of the necessary decrease in greenhouse-gas emissions. Doesn’t meeting a desire that women already have seem a strategy more likely to succeed than turning the world vegetarian or keeping the new middle classes in China and India from buying cars and taking vacations? Educating girls, keeping women in the workforce, and providing good healthcare for women and children are crucial human-rights goals that also reduce the number of children a woman has.

It’s remarkable that the pope didn’t address a single sentence of his encyclical to these issues, especially since it otherwise deals so intelligently with the interconnection of so many disparate phenomena. Francis has often said that men and women have different gifts and “complementary” roles. He has spoken sweetly of motherhood and femininity and derided the movement for women’s equality as “female machismo.” Yet in *Laudato Si’*, the word “women” appears only in the phrase “men and women”—that is, people. Don’t women have anything special to contribute to solving climate change beyond serving their too-numerous children less fast food?

As climate change heats up, it’s women who will bear the brunt of it, because they are the majority of the world’s poor. Especially in the developing world, they’ll be contending with drought, food shortages, flooding, and forced migration, along with increases in the usual brutalities like rape, violence, trafficking, and war. Under such circumstances, to deny them the ability to control how many kids they bring into the world is to condemn millions of women to the hardscrabble desperation that the pope says he wants to prevent.

There is a great deal of research on how women’s rights, including reproductive rights, can ameliorate a range of global ills, including poverty and ecological disaster. The pope prefers to elide the whole issue, except when it comes to abortion, which he sees as close to the root of the problem: “Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion. How can we genuinely teach the importance of concern for other vulnerable beings, however troublesome or inconvenient they may be, if we fail to protect a human embryo, even when its presence is uncomfortable and creates difficulties?” Given that the church is such a latecomer to concern for the earth—until recently, the standard theological view held that God put nature here for humans to use—there’s a certain chutzpah in using this last-minute conversion to push the same old forced-birth agenda.

Never mind the 47,000 women who die every year in illegal abortions, and the even greater number who are injured: Abortion causes glaciers to melt and species to vanish. From Eden to ecology, it’s always women’s fault.

**Books**

Several books read for OMNI350 Climate Change Forums included attention to the necessity of stopping population growth. Here are two of them. Richard Heinberg, *The End of Growth: Adapting to Our New Economic Reality* (we must end economic and population growth quickly before massive suffering occurs, pp. 212-215, and elsewhere). p. 282: “need to curb both human appetites and human numbers”). We did not discuss Firor and Jacobsen, *The Crowded Greenhouse* (p. 189: two revolutions are necessary “if human beings are to flourish safely on Earth”—social and technical).
The New Worlds of Thomas Robert Malthus is a sweeping global and intellectual history that radically recasts our understanding of Malthus's Essay on the Principle of Population, the most famous book on population ever written or ever likely to be. Malthus's Essay is also persistently misunderstood. First published anonymously in 1798, the Essay systematically argues that population growth tends to outpace its means of subsistence unless kept in check by factors such as disease, famine, or war, or else by lowering the birth rate through such means as sexual abstinence.

Challenging the widely held notion that Malthus's Essay was a product of the British and European context in which it was written, Alison Bashford and Joyce Chaplin demonstrate that it was the new world, as well as the old, that fundamentally shaped Malthus's ideas. They explore what the Atlantic and Pacific new worlds—from the Americas and the Caribbean to New Zealand and Tahiti—meant to Malthus, and how he treated them in his Essay. Bashford and Chaplin reveal how Malthus, long vilified as the scourge of the English poor, drew from his principle of population to conclude that the extermination of native populations by European settlers was unjust.

Elegantly written and forcefully argued, The New Worlds of Thomas Robert Malthus relocates Malthus's Essay from the British economic and social context that has dominated its reputation to the colonial and global history that inspired its genesis.

Alison Bashford is the Vere Harmsworth Professor of Imperial and Naval History at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Jesus College. Her books include Global Population: History, Geopolitics, and Life on Earth. Joyce E. Chaplin is the James Duncan Phillips Professor of Early American History at Harvard University. Her books include The First Scientific American: Benjamin Franklin and the Pursuit of Genius.
ALAN WEISMAN, COUNTDOWN: OUR LAST, BEST HOPE FOR A FUTURE ON EARTH?  Little, Brown, 2013.

COUNTDOWN wins a Los Angeles Times Book Prize! Read the announcement here.

Countdown is a gripping narrative by a fair-minded investigative journalist who interviewed dozens of scientists and experts in various fields in 21 countries. “ – The Wall Street Journal

A new book by the author of THE WORLD WITHOUT US. “A riveting read….a major work….rigorous and provoking.” —Booklist (starred review)

With a million more of us every 4½ days on a planet that's not getting any bigger, prospects for a sustainable human future seem ever more in doubt. For this long awaited follow-up book, Alan Weisman traveled to more than 20 countries to ask what experts agreed were the probably the most important questions on Earth-and also the hardest: How many humans can the planet hold without capsizing? How robust must the Earth's ecosystem be to assure our continued existence? Can we know which other species are essential to our survival? And, how might we actually arrive at a stable, optimum population, and design an economy to allow genuine prosperity without endless growth?

The result is a landmark work of reporting: devastating, urgent, and, ultimately, deeply hopeful. By vividly detailing the burgeoning effects of our cumulative presence, Countdown by Alan Weisman reveals what may be the fastest, most acceptable, practical, and affordable way of returning our planet and our presence on it to balance.

Don’t Overlook Consumption and Fertility Rates

Too Many People? Population, Immigration, and the Environmental Crisis  by Ian Angus and Simon Butler. Haymarket, 2012. Too Many People? provides a clear, well-documented, and popularly written refutation of the idea that “overpopulation” is a major cause of environmental destruction, arguing that a focus on human numbers not only misunderstands the causes of the crisis, it dangerously weakens the movement for real solutions. Click to Listen to Ian Angus Speak About the Book
Has world population reached its limits?

Too Many People?
By Ian Angus and Simon Butler
Reviewed by Bill Hopwood

ONE OF the major divisions within environmentalists is on the issue of population and ‘overpopulation’, with many claiming that a key cause of environmental damage is too many people. The British Royal Society recently released a report, People and the Planet, which argued that, to avoid "a downward spiral of economic and environmental ills", the world’s population needs to be stabilised. Ian Angus and Simon Butler’s book, Too Many People, examines these claims and explores their implications.

On the surface, the argument is straightforward. All other things being equal, more people will consume more food, need more shelter, produce more waste. The world’s population has grown rapidly, from two billion in 1927 to seven billion in 2012. At the same time, environmental damage has increased significantly. So, the argument goes, too many people are causing mounting environmental problems. MORE
http://socialistalternative.ca/posts/974

Organizations (see earlier newsletters)

Population Action International
UN Population Fund
Sierra Club’s Global Population and Environmental Program
President’s Note

I. Causes of Crisis of great number of poor people ignorant of reproductive rights and methods, not allowed either, or cannot afford contraception

Catholic Church, Helms Amendment, Soaring Population, Poverty/slums

II. Good news

Martin Luther King, Jr., “the modern plague of overpopulation is soluble by means we have discovered and with resources we possess” (1966).

Both Secretary Clinton and Senator Sanders are firmly committed to fix Helms after becoming president.

Significant article on overall progress in falling birth rates in Latin America except for the poor, who are far behind wealthy families in controlling family size, perpetuating inequality, reprinted from The Christian Science Monitor, pp. 16ff. Several other items on the virus.


Editorials reprinted from the The New York Times (employers’ religious objections to providing contraception) and the Los Angeles Times (many women in Latin Am. are not allowed to control their bodies and the virus is making the situation for them worse).

And more. PC and its magazine are important for a better future for the women and men of the world and deserve our support.

Is the U.S. imposing its own values about reproductive health and family planning on other countries?

Not at all. The U.S. generally provides assistance to other countries through two avenues: the
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

UNFPA assists governments and organizations at the receiving countries’ request. The agency maintains a democratically organized and implemented agenda, agreed upon by the 179 countries that took part in the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994. UNFPA extends assistance to countries at their request and works in partnership with governments, all parts of the United Nations system, development banks, bilateral aid agencies, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. Under internationally agreed upon population and development goals, each country decides for itself what approach to take in order to meet the specific needs of its residents. At the Cairo conference, developing countries agreed to provide 75% of the funding needed to provide family planning to everyone who wants to use it in their countries, and the industrialized nations agreed to provide the remaining 25% of the funding.

USAID grants assistance to foreign organizations that apply for funding and technical assistance. There is no U.S. funding for family planning in any country where it is not specifically requested by either the government or a local organization.

Basically, we’re advocating that the U.S. government increase the foreign aid it contributes to international family planning programs through USAID and UNFPA, so that the 225 million women worldwide with “unmet need” for family planning can gain access. Unmet need means that they are of childbearing age and want to use contraceptives, but cannot obtain them. We simply want to empower women to make the best decisions for themselves—that’s true around the world, and it’s true right here in the U.S.!

Shauna Scherer Population Connection

A Reply to George Monbiot’s, essay on Overconsumption and Overpopulation

"Give women power over their own lives and the population problem should go away!” We wholeheartedly agree on this point, except for one very important caveat: **Without access to affordable contraception and the education to use it properly, women cannot reliably gain power over their own lives in the first place.** This is the very premise of the
concept of unmet need for family planning—the 225 million women in the developing world who are estimated to have unmet need want to prevent or delay pregnancy but aren’t using contraception. Why? Because they afraid of what their families and communities will think, they are wary of side effects, they don’t believe it’s in their control to plan their pregnancies (because it is something controlled by god), and they don’t have reliable and affordable access to contraceptives and family planning education and services.

Without increasing access to contraception, women simply cannot escape the patriarchy because they will spend their entire reproductive lives pregnant, breastfeeding, and taking care of young children. On the flip side, there are several countries that come to mind where women are still not fully equal to men (including our own), but where the total fertility rate has dropped precipitously because of access to birth control: Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Tunisia, Iran, and the list goes on.

In the United States, and the rest of the developed world, conspicuous consumption is absolutely imperative to reduce and, if possible, end. We are in total agreement on that.

The one area where I’m not sure you’re right is on women’s perception of population issues in the global south. Women play a huge role in the family planning programs in aid-recipient countries, as educators, nurses, doctors, advocates, and patients/consumers of contraception. It’s true that a hundred years ago eugenics was a driving inspiration for population programs, but that has changed along with most other socially outdated causes. (We used to have separate water fountains in this country for blacks and whites, but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t have water fountains.) The money that the U.S. gives to international family planning programs is granted at the request of recipient governments and NGOs. It’s not something we’re pushing—rather, there is not enough funding to go around to all the organizations who wish to receive it. By Starkey at Population Connection
My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/

See: abortion.doc, OMNI Climate Change Forums. doc, Planned Parenthood, OMNI Population Poverty Hunger Watch.doc (these should be one with OMNI population warming watch.doc), Sierra Club Population Project, Worldwatch Institute, OneWorld US, Population Action International, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

JUNE 2013, CO2 SPIKED AT 400PPM AFTER 10,000 YEARS NEARLY CONSTANT AT 280PPM.

Contents: Over-Population Newsletter #4, June 28, 2014

FORUM ON WEISMAN’S COUNTDOWN, Sunday July 6, 1:30

July 11, United Nations World Population DAY

CONDITION OF THE WORLD

Alan Weisman, Countdown, a Review by Nathaniel Rich in NYTBR
Population and Climate Change

Paul and Anne Ehrlich in *The Population Bomb* (1968) concluded that population growth was a significant danger to the planet. They were falsely reported in the mass media and maligned by various organizations. The Republican Ford Administration in NSS Memorandum 200 connected population and warming/climate change in 1975. The report was quickly suppressed. Little attention has been given to these connections by the mass media, and strong business and religious denial has also silenced official and public discussion and action. Now at last, strengthened by books and articles like that of Alan Weisman’s *Countdown* which give comprehensive analysis (population numbers and consumption, women's desires and needs), significant progress can be made against the harms of population growth. --Dick
Blog: http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

For research purposes, specific subjects can be located in the following alphabetized index, and searched on the blog using the search box. The search box is located in the upper left corner of the webpage.

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