

These EXIT Times

Special Earth First! Journal Edition

Les U. Knight

2 February 1995

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Special *Earth First! Journal* Edition
"May we live long and die out"
Pre-2000 Version

VHEMT logo rich in symbolism



- V stands for Voluntary — a value to keep foremost among us as conditions change.
The V shape also depicts the confluence of logic and love to make a receptive and balanced point.
- Our world undergoes a revolution of 180 degrees: the opposite view of what we're used to. Our direction must shift radically to preserve and expand ecosystems.
Upside down emblems are symbols of distress.
- The VHEMT concept goes over the whole world. Hanging banners is essential to getting our message across. Without a label, people won't know what to think.

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Printed on recyclable paper

Of course it's recyclable. *Everything's* recyclable if you wanna spend enough money on it. That doesn't mean it's ever gonna happen.

Rather than recycling this, please pass it along.

Voluntary human extinction: One brick shy of a full solution?

Sounds like paradise, doesn't it? Gaia completely cured of *pox humanus*. Without us meddling humans, all other species would get their fair chance at survival.

Naturally, it's not that simple, but just for fun, let's envision an impossible dream: all human sperm suddenly and permanently loses viability—no impregnated human egg begins meiosis to form a zygote — none transforms into the sacred fetus, is carried to term and sentenced to life. Zero conceptions, wanted nor un.

A wonderful fantasy. Phones in crisis pregnancy centers would fall mysteriously silent. Sperm banks would go bankrupt after fraudulently milking the infertile dry. Adoption agencies would fruitlessly increase baby bounties, and charge an arm and a leg for whoever's in stock, damaged or not. Needless panic would be hilarious. Like people frantically searching for their oars after the boat has beached.

Benefits would begin immediately for both biosphere and humanity. Resources wasted on redundant breeding could be redirected to existing members of the human family in need. Loving care and nurturing now expended raising superfluous heirs could be given over to stopping the killing and beginning the healing. A sweet dream.

However, an alternative birthless future is also possible. One where people see no need to preserve Earth's biosphere since none of our kind will be around to enjoy cartoons of it. Nature's destruction could just as easily continue unabated as we pass into extinction. It doesn't take billions of humans to destroy massive ecosystems, as shown by the exploits of empires from ancient times through the present.

No, human extinction alone won't save Earth's biosphere. Our collective consciousness must evolve from homocentric to ecocentric: to where Earth has first priority. Then, finally, our efforts will shift from desperate, often futile, "damage control" to a hopeful restoration of natural balance in Earth's ecosystems.

Stop at two? Stop at once!

"Stop at two" may have been a radical proclamation when ZPG was founded in 1968, but it was barely adequate even then. Replacement level fertility of 2.1 wouldn't bring about true zero population growth until well into the next century, due to momentum.

Today the message is only slightly revised: "Consider having none or one, and be sure to stop after two."

The notion that producing two descendants simply replaces a couple and creates no increased impact is specious. We aren't salmon — we don't spawn and die. Most of us will be around to see our progeny beget, and those begotten beget to boot.

When a couple of us "replaces" ourselves, our environmental impact doubles — assuming our off-springs' lifestyles are as environmentally friendly as ours, and that they won't reproduce themselves.

The “stop at two” message actually encourages reproduction by “qualified” couples. A wanted child is better than unwanted, intelligent (whatever that is) better than stupid, and well-cared-for better than neglected, but each of us in the over-industrialized world has a huge impact on Nature regardless of these factors.

For example, in terms of energy consumption, when we stop at two it’s about the same as an average East Indian couple stopping at 66, or an Ethiopian couple stopping at one thousand.

Two is better than four, and one is twice as good as two, but to purposely set out to create even one more of us today is like selling berths on a sinking ship.

Regardless of how many progeny we have or haven’t produced, rather than stop at two, we must stop at once.

Positive approach a hopeful alternative to callous exploitation

These EXIT Times doesn’t carry on about how the human race has shown itself to be a greedy, amoral parasite on the once-healthy face of this planet. That type of negativity offers no solution to the inexorable horrors which human activity is causing.

Rather, *These EXIT Times* presents the voluntary human extinction movement’s encouraging alternative to the callous exploitation and wholesale destruction of Earth’s ecology.

The hopeful alternative to the extinction of millions, probably billions, of species of plants and animals is the voluntary extinction of one species: *Homo sapiens*... us.

Each time another one of us decides to not add another one of us to the burgeoning billions already squatting on this ravaged planet, another ray of hope shines through the gloom.

When every human makes the moral choice to live long and die out, Earth will be allowed to return to its former glory. Good health will be restored to Earth’s biosphere — to the lifeform known to many as Gaia.

It’s going to take all of us going.

In defense of parenthood

“Motherhood is a proud profession” the wise old bumpersticker says. Hard to argue with that, except to include both genders. Parenthood is one of the most critical and yet under-valued endeavors we can undertake today.

Earth Firstler parents have written to the *Journal*, complaining about an attitude expressed by others in the movement, especially by the bumpersticker “Love your mother, don’t become one”. Space is short on those stickers, so it’s not possible to

We Win!



**Voluntary
Human Extinction:**
The End of The Race

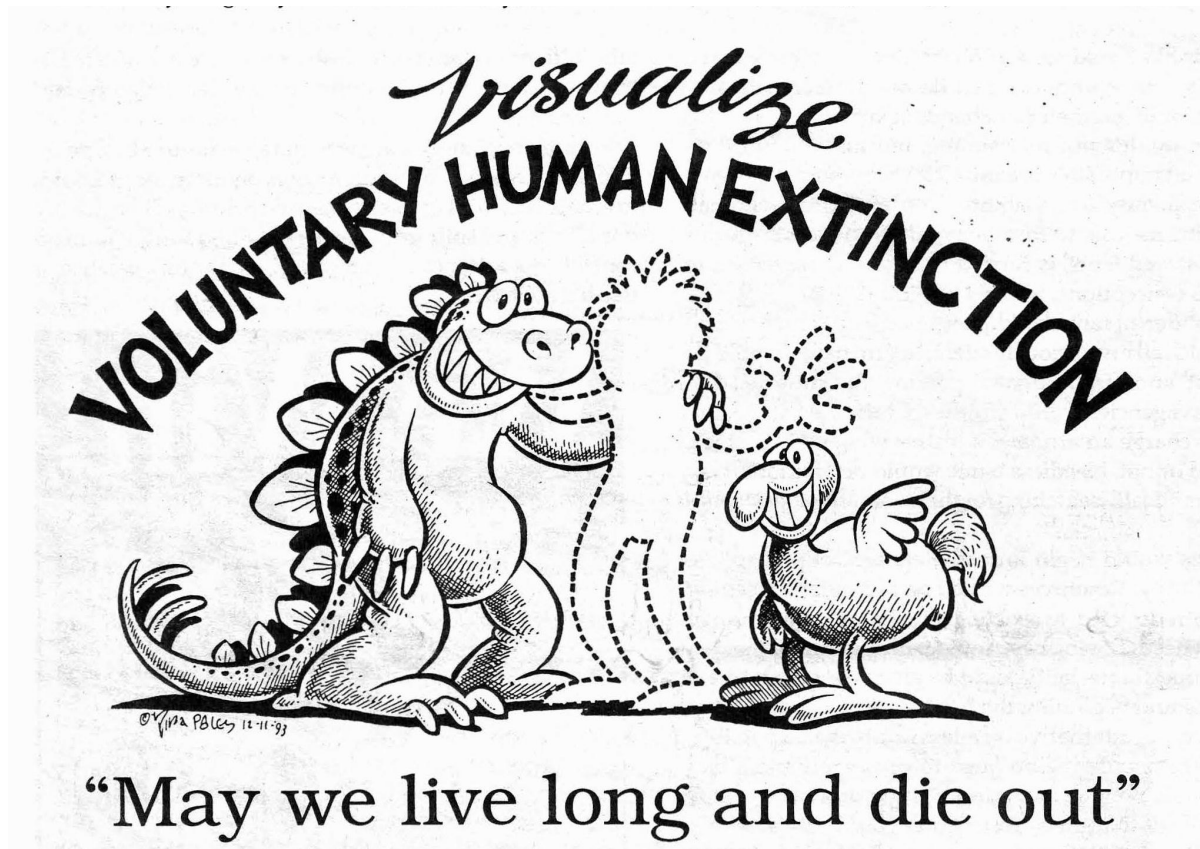
explain that it doesn't mean we should abandon our children nor that mothers can't love Mother Earth.

Many VHEMT Volunteers and EF!ers are parents, having achieved awareness after making their heirs. And many non-breeders are more lucky than righteous. The past is history. What really matters is the number of off-spring we don't create in the future.

Complaints of mothers and fathers getting dissed aren't entirely imaginary. A kick-buttmentality dominates our society: identify the enemy and kick its butt. Because breeding is the heaviest impact we can have on Nature, some see parents as enemies of the planet. But, if we all hop around in circles trying to kick each other's butts, all we'll get is pratfalls. It's the *causes* of procreation we need to deal with. We don't have to be brain surgeons to figure out that kicking butts isn't the way to change minds.

Plenty of young people could benefit from some responsible parenting. Those of us who are so inclined may rightly be proud of accepting the challenge and responsibility of parenting an existing child.

The work of preserving and restoring what's left of Earth's biosphere won't be finished in our lifetimes, so it's critical that we include younger people, giving them the opportunity to carry on. However, creating more of us to carry on is unnecessary and counter productive.



Vasectomy prevents abortion

Ignorance and superstition continue to surround male surgical contraception, though it's the surest, safest, and most economical contraceptive available. In the US, only 20% of men over 30 have tied the lover's knot. Even subtracting gay, infertile, and celibate cohorts from the computation, this tally is abysmal. Men can do better. Unwanted conceptions strike millions of women — every one caused by a man.

A lack of money may be an obstacle. Men whose Health Maintenance Organization is owned by the Catholic Church, or who have no health insurance at all, may be hard pressed to come up with \$300. Some Planned Parenthood clinics have cut rate procedures for the indigent, or will refer needy men to a source.

Respect for Life, a humanitarian group promoting reproductive freedom, is raising money to help men afford vasectomies. If you can help, or if you need help, contact them at 4326 Woodstock Blvd. No. 419 Portland OR 97206-6270.

These Exit Times



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The search for a human niche

Where on Earth do we fit?

It has been said that our environmental woes stem from being out of touch with the natural world.

Perhaps this check list will help to restore our sense of place in Nature.

Check off as many niches as fit us:

- Evolution's crowning achievement

- Most advanced being on Earth
- Integral part of the web of life
- Exotic invader, parasitic pest
- Dominator, usurper of resources
- Fluke of evolution, apart from nature
- Spiritual unifier of heaven & earth — of divinity and Nature
- Worshipper of Nature as god/goddess
- Transcender of physical realm
- Steward, caretaker of lesser species
- Equal with all life forms
- Link on the food chain
- Restorer of balance, rmdoer of civilization
- Defender of Nature
- Soon-to-be-extinct altruist
- -----
- -----
- -----

“Oh what a tangled field, we seed when first we happen to conceive.”

Les U. Knight

Les Talk

“Am not!”

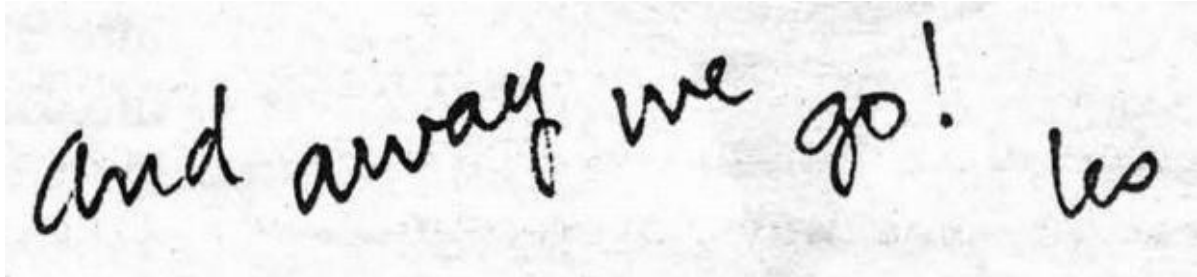
I’ve had it with all these misanthropes dissin’ the human race. Awright, sure, I can understand calling us “killer apes” and “greedy parasites”. After all, we’re only human. But, now it’s gone too far. Some are saying our species is no better than a common cancer feeding off a host organism.



True, empirical scientific evidence shows us behaving exactly like a cancerous growth on Earth's biosphere*. But humanity includes a couple of major attributes that all the scientific calibrations and computations ignore: we got logic and love.

Cancer cells are both mindless and heartless. They can't figure out what's going on and wouldn't care if they did. We're different. We're smart enough to get a grip on the situation and nice enough to go the right way with it. We can choose to bring forth a better world into reality. You'll never see a cancer cell say that with a straight face.

So, when some loud bragger tries to put us down, says we be tumorous and bad, just tell 'em right away, "Hey, what's the matter buddy, ain't you heard of our logic and love? They're number one in the cosmos." We're not malignant, we're benign.



"Hern, Warren M., 1990, "Why Are There So Many of Us? Description and Diagnosis of a Planetary Ecopathological Process." *Population and Environment* Vol 12 No 1.

Eschewing Homo fecundity

For many of us Homo sapiens, it isn't enough to say, "just don't do it". Most, who aren't already parents, need alternatives.

Both men and women can feel a need to nurture and, rather than seeking satisfaction through procreation, nurturing Earth's "children" can be a viable alternative. Wildlife rehabilitation and protection, habitat preservation, reforestation, Adopt-A-Stream, and gardening are some possibilities.

For those who can't substitute Nature for humans, there is no shortage of children in need of parenting. Adoption, step and foster parenting, borrowing relatives' children, hosting exchange students, and big brother / sister programs might fill the need. Also, occupations in child care and education provide ample opportunity for sharing and caring.

Young people aren't the only ones in need of care. Helping the elderly, handicapped, or other disadvantaged folks could also satisfy altruistic needs.

Pets have less of an impact on the environment than humans, and many childfree couples find a dog or cat from the Humane Society to be an emotionally rewarding surrogate child.

The first step to finding an alternative to procreating is to rethink the pronatalist mindset of the past. From an early age, we are told we'll have children of our own some day. The questions are: when and how many? The day we answer: never again and enough already, alternatives begin to have meaning.

Balanced Love

by Chuck Swift

She is my love, she is my wife,
she wants a child, another life.
Another soul, to breathe the air,
to eat the food, to need our care.
I realize now, that I just can't,
I want to give our Earth a chance.
Emotions now, are at their worst,
but in the end, the Earth comes First!

Red herrings raise stink in think tank

How many times has this happened to you? Discussion is rolling along and everyone seems to be making progress in awareness, when all of a sudden someone drags out a red herring and you're off on some dead end trail. Maybe it's that new world odor. Here are a couple of typical stinkers you may have caught wind of:

"Over-population is more a symptom than a cause of our fundamental problems."

So, this means that Earth has too many people on it *because* of our problems rather than Earth having problems because there are too many people on it.

It's like:

"Gee, Dear, there's sure a lot of noise and pollution in the air."

"Yeah, I wish we could breathe."

"Huh? Oh, we can still breed. C'mon, coff, coff, let's make more of us."

Or maybe you can imagine:

"I'm outta work, homeless, and got a bad disease... makes me feel like creating an heir to share all this with."

Our biggest problem, destruction of Earth's biosphere, is undoubtedly a symptom rather than a cause of over-population.

But to be fair, it's true that some of our problems promote higher birth rates—especially mental problems like mindless conformity and massive denial.

In addition, problems like high mortality rates, a lack of care for the elderly, low status for women and their subsequent loss of reproductive freedom, all significantly contribute to high birth rates. In return, an excess of humans makes each of those

problems worse. In some ways, over-population is both a symptom and a cause: a self-perpetuating, malicious cycle.

In contrast, voluntary human extinction is a positively motivated, beneficial cycle of solutions and benefits for all. Besides being a “symptom” of a heightened awareness, The Movement is “causing” a higher awareness. (Do I hear an “Amen, Sibling”?)

Whether our problems are symptoms or causes, they’ll be more easily solved when there are fewer of us.

This distraction is a statistic: “Extinction is natural. 99.9% of all species of plants and animals that have ever existed have gone extinct.”

Puts it into perspective, doesn’t it? We shouldn’t get peeved about a few million extinctions today. It’s all part of the natural process of life on Earth.

By the same reasoning, we shouldn’t care about people dying young. Most people who have ever lived are already dead, and all of us will die eventually. It follows that extinction of the human race shouldn’t raise an eyebrow, either.

However, if it’s true that species alive today represent only 0.1% of Earth’s entire biological history, their extinctions are all the more tragic. After evolving at the expense of kabillions of other species, and passing genetic coding on through hundreds of millions of years, any species alive today deserves profound respect and reverence, including our own.

In a sense, all living things are at the peak of evolution. Sacrificing the very existence of any lifeform for something as superfluous as money is an outrageous crime against Nature.

The current extinction rate is nearly one thousand times the average for the eons, and virtually every species’ demise stems from the activities of one species. Guess who.

Our voluntary extinction for the eternal good of all other life on Earth will be the ultimate demonstration of the best qualities of humanity: compassion and reason.

Why people really breed

People who decide to continue breeding can’t give the true reasons they plan to repeat themselves. We have to interpret:

- To carry on the family name. = Trying to please Dad. Cult of the bloodline dupe.
- I want my kids (who don’t exist yet) to have all the things I didn’t have. = Unfulfilled childhood desires and fantasies.
- We’d like to try for a boy/girl this time. = Ego extension. Gender identity insecurity. Disappointment with existing progeny.
- Just love children. = Out of touch with inner child. • Want someone to visit me when I’m old. = Insecurity. Fear of aging. Exploitative personality.

- We want to give our parents grandchildren. = Still seeking parental approval.
- I have superior human genes = oxymoron.

Although most conceptions in the US are unintended, conformity is probably the number one cause of *wanted* pregnancies. There's a fear of being different, and a reluctance to question tradition. Surprisingly, many have never *considered* not continuing to breed. Pronatalist propaganda is as rampant as it is insidious.

Presenting an antinatalist viewpoint often triggers inappropriately hostile reactions, indicating a repressed realization that continued breeding is morally unjustifiable.

Being patient while helping people break through their denial minimizes anger.

Basic programming for McLife: First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes (your name here) with a baby carriage.

Vaso-Rap

By Thom Metzgar

My band Health and Beauty did a rap which included the following:

Hey everybody now listen to me

My name is Tommy M, I had a vasectomy

They cut me open and they tied that thing and now I can't have any offspring

I give it to you straight, no if ands or buts

If you want to be a man you got to get yourself cut Now you may say "Tommy that's a big disgrace" Well I won't be happy 'till there ain't no human race.

Resource conservation tip

Each new North American human we don't create is the equivalent of 72 years of 100% recycling. We save 56 years of car driving, avoid tons of pollution, and prevent the potential for additional procreation 20 years later.

When the impact our descendants' descendants would have had on Earth's biosphere is added to what we are saving, it becomes astronomical. And, if we decide to not make two more of us, it's astronomical doubled.

Volunteers who are ready to make even more of a commitment might consider not producing 10 new people: 720 human-years of industrial consumption and pollution saved by just one pair of us. Congratulations!



Official Movement Position

Since the Voluntary Human Extinction Movement isn't alive with a brain or a mouth, it can't take positions, have opinions, or get punched for being a smart-alec. Like Earth First! there is no national organization to become self-serving over time.

No committee of Movement shakers has to decide what position everyone else should take because the name is it.

Most VHEMT Volunteers subscribe to the philosophy embodied in the motto: "May we live long and die out," but if someone doesn't want to live long that's their business.

All may consider themselves VHEMT Volunteers simply by choosing to support voluntarily phasing out the human race. A couple could conceivably be expecting and decide to become Volunteers. That new human would be the last one they produced.

VHEMT Volunteers are so diverse in their religious, political, and philosophical views that formulating official Movement positions could only be divisive.

Beware of dogma.

We speak with our own voices.

License to Breed?

Should everyone be required to pass a minimal intelligence test before receiving a “License to Breed?”

In light of the 40,000 children dying of malnutrition each day, and considering the number of species going extinct as a result of our excessive reproduction, do you think it would be a good idea to create another of yourself?

YES NO

If you answered YES: Sorry, your intelligence is not high enough to perform basic logic. Thank you for trying. Please consider the many options to creating “one of your own”.

If you answered NO: Congratulations! You’re smart enough to pass on your genes. Thanks for not doing so.

Subscribe

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Only \$25 for eight big issues packed with news
of radical eco-actions from all over the planet:
PO Box 1415 Eugene, Oregon 97440.

Facing Cybernetic Reality

by Frank Forencich

It’s just like a thermostat, you know, only bigger. When something gets too hot, too cold, too big, too acidic, too strong or too numerous, the power of selfregulation kicks in and gives it a dose of opposition. This is the way of all healthy eco-physiologies, from the micro to the macro.

All animal bodies regulate the growth of their individual parts. Failure to control the proliferation of cells is what we call cancer. If a population of cells manages to overcome the chemical and genetic checks on its number, it spreads throughout the body, killing it.

The parallel is too obvious to be ignored. The scale is different, but the fundamentals are the same: an excess proliferation and a failure of control. We have met the neoplasm and it is us.

In *The Hot Zone*, Richard Preston describes the discovery and near-apocalyptic spread of the super-lethal Ebola virus:

“In a sense, the earth is mounting an immune response against the human species. Perhaps the biosphere does not ‘like’ the idea of five billion humans. Nature has interesting ways of balancing itself. The rain forest has its own defenses. The earth’s

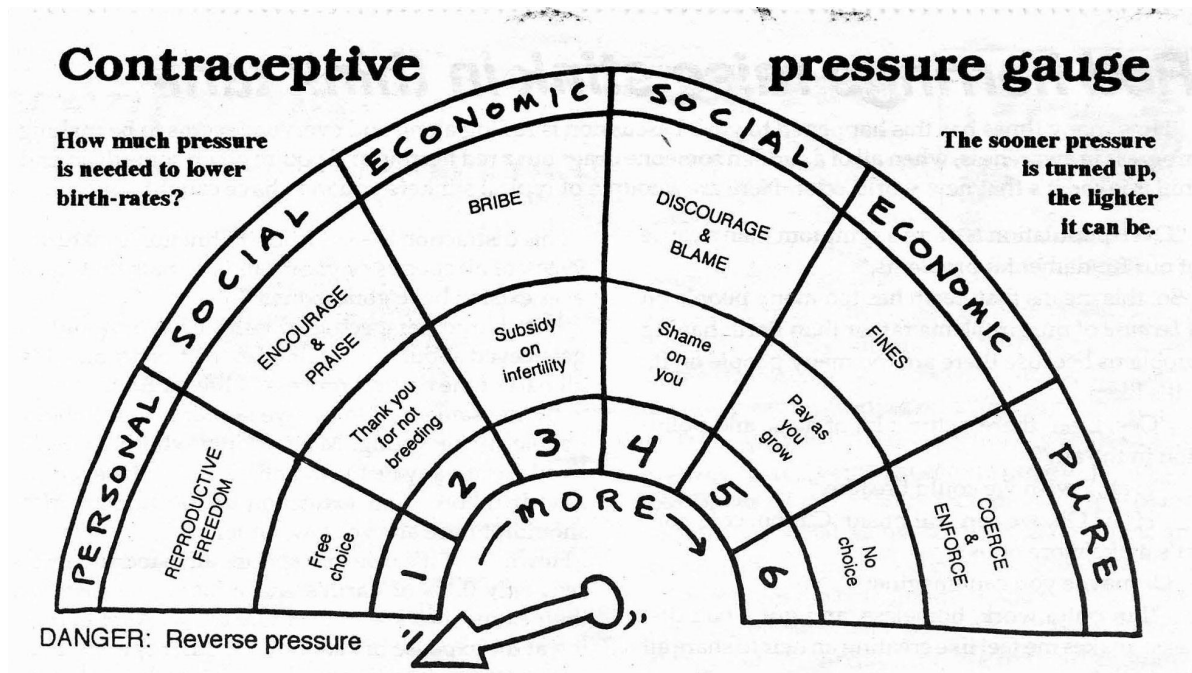
immune system, so to speak, has recognized the presence of the human species and is starting to kick in.”

The traditional methods of cancer treatment — cut, burn, or poison — are obviously out of the question. But what if the cancer cells were sentient? What if they had enough intelligence to become aware of what they were doing? Surely they would change their ways. After all, even the cancerous cell depends on the host for its continued survival. If cancer cells could think, they would realize that the only rational solution would be to stop their proliferation.

The choice is simple. Either we draw the line on our proliferation, or we suffer the effects of the negative feedback which will surely come our way. Gaia is no mere billiard ball. Pump another million tons of carbon into the atmosphere and raising sea levels will do another kind of regulating act. Nothing personal, you understand, just Gaia taking care of her own health.

Contraceptive pressure gauge

If you were ruler of the world, where would the contraceptive pressure gauge arrow point when you announced your global family planning policy? Each level has pros and cons to consider. Join the fun and add your own.



<p>PRO: Neutral pressure. Equalitarian. Birth rate reduced to one half. Child mortality drops dramatically. No enforcement required.</p> <p>FREEDOM Deprives misogynists of enforcing mandatory motherhood. Would not be enough pressure to lower birth rate to equal death rate. Positive. Optimistic. Minimal cost.</p> <p>PRAISE Saves money in long run. Provides alternative to being paid to breed.</p> <p>BRIBE Lets people know that what they're doing is not good for Nature and humanity.</p> <p>BLAME Costs of increasing population are more justly charged.</p> <p>FINE Deprivation of right to breed better than sentencing child to life of exploitation, suffering, and early death. Birth rate reduced to below death rate.</p> <p>FORCE</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>CON:</p> <p>2. Condescending. Judgmental</p> <p>3. Males' eligibility hard to determine, making it gender biased.</p> <p>4. Negative. Pessimistic. Fault-finding.</p> <p>5. Collection problems, especially from single men. Rich have more freedom than poor.</p> <p>6. Fascistic. Politically unworkable in most regions. Creates other problems, such as infanticide, black-market babies, and genocide.</p>
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Today, tragically few areas in the world have reached level one. Regardless of how much pressure we think is needed to improve population density, can we all agree that justice demands freedom as a minimum?

You may already be a VHEMT Volunteer

Although this may be the first you've heard of the voluntary human extinction movement, you may already be a VHEMT Volunteer. With an Earth First! perspective, the decision to make no more of us comes naturally.

In fact, anyone who accepts the facts, and applies an ecocentric morality to their thinking, will eventually reach the conclusion that humans are incompatible with Earth's biosphere and should be phased out.

When Ice Age humans hunted animals to extinction, at least one of the Neanderdunces among them must have grunted in bewildered disapproval.

As the Fertile Crescent became a barren desert, and the Cedars of Lebanon were sacrificed for ships, someone must have thought, "this bodes ill," or words to that effect.

When the Romans created the ever-expanding Sahara by clearcutting forests to fuel their empire, someone must have remarked, "Humanus non gratis." *Someone* had to get the idea that the planet would be better off without this busy horde.

Today the situation is critical on a global scale. As a result, there must be thousands, if not millions, of people around the world whose innate sense of justice has guided them to make the moral choice.

A large portion of today's VHEMT Volunteers were vehement extinctionists before they read *These EXIT Times*. Some are Volunteers for humanitarian reasons, some out of ecological considerations, and most are motivated, to some degree, by a combination of concern for both planet and people.

Subscribing to *These EXIT Times* isn't necessary, but if you'd like to keep abreast of human extinction issues, simply fill out and mail in the form below. You need not agree to subscribe.

Sex ● Sex ● Sex

Sex is the way most babies are started, but is sexual intercourse *really* the primary cause of human reproduction? Let's consider the statistics:

The World Health Organization estimates that 100 million couples engage in sexual intercourse on an average day, which is only 3.6% of the world's 5.6 billion humans. This pitifully low figure results in around 910,000 pregnancies. For a variety of reasons, 55% of these zygotes don't make it through fetushood to live birth. According to a current Population Reference Bureau estimate, 385,679 do make it daily.

So, less than 0.4% of each day's heterosexual trysts result in the creation of new humans — a statistically insignificant correlation for proving causation.

Try it for yourself. Estimate how many times you've engaged in sexual activity in your lifetime. Now estimate how many times you were trying to make a baby. Divide the little number by the big number to give you the percent of times sex and procreation have simultaneously motivated you.

Perhaps if there were more opportunities for sexual gratification, so many people wouldn't feel the need to fill a nagging emptiness with a needy dependent.

Handy Volunteer, Supporter, or Subscriber form

- VHEMT Volunteer: "All of us should voluntarily refrain from reproducing, bringing about the eventual extinction of Homo sapiens." Volunteers receive all mailings.
- VHEMT Supporter: "Intentional creation of one more C:f us by any of us is unjustifiable at this time, but extinction of our species goes too far." Supporters receive most mailings.
- These EXIT Times Subscriber: "Just send the newsletter and stop trying to put words in my mouth."

Send me T.E.T. No, 1: SASE No. 2: \$1 No. 4: \$1 8 copies of this edition:
\$1 Booth kit: \$20

Name _____ e-mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Code _____

Please mail to: *These EXIT Times* PO Box 86646 Portland OR 97286-0646 NA

Earn Big Fun in Your Spare Time

These EXIT Times provides technical support for those who wish to share the VHEMT concept at environmental events such as Earth Day. A basic Volunteers' Booth Kit includes an inventory and helpful hints for a good time. See form at left to order.

The Ted K Archive

Les U. Knight
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