

## Letters to the Editor

Thank you for publishing Samuel Miller McDonald's article about the "panic" over lower fertility rates. I've seen stories presenting declining fertility rates as a problem, and it makes me really angry. We should be rejoicing about declining fertility rates. We have been destroying this planet because there are too many of us. Habitat destruction, extermination of wildlife, pollution, climate change, poverty, starvation, unemployment, competition for resources, and even war are all byproducts of overpopulation.

I've heard some overpopulation deniers worrying about a shrinking workforce and fewer workers paying into Social Security, etc. This is a very narrow view in my opinion. And this attitude that humans are more important than other animals has got to go. We are all part of the ecosystem, and the sooner people figure that out, the better for the whole world.

Barry Ulman  
Bellingham, WA

The population challenge requires collaborative effort. If the trend of human population growth is left unchecked, it will lead to great environmental impact on future generations. This is the right time we acted on it.

Peter Joel Chisangwi  
Malawi, Central Africa

I read every issue of *Population Connection* magazine and recommend each one to my friends and sometimes in my weeklies on climate. The September 2025 issue is a most welcome contribution to your campaign to stop and reverse population growth. Your publication of Samuel Miller McDonald's article, "There Are Many Threats to Humanity. A Low Birth Rate Isn't One of Them," reinforced by your president's and editor's notes, will sharpen and widen the campaign.

Several years ago, enthusiasm for the campaign was blunted by the publication of *Too Many People? Population, Immigration, and the Environmental Crisis* by Ian Angus and Simon Butler which, according to the publisher, "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."

But McDonald makes the case that human population became catastrophically imbalanced with the rest of life. I hope Population Connection will enlarge McDonald's arguments to counter the Angus/Butler book and other books and articles that promote their disastrous arguments, until human population growth and the decline and extinction of other species have been reversed.

Dick Bennett, PhD  
Fayetteville, AR

## Letters to the Editor, continued

I'd like to add another perspective to Konrad Kumml's thoughtful comment about the connection between religion and human population. I doubt a "religion gene" will ever be found in our genetic code but I do think the genetic wiring in humans contains the foundations for religion. As a hypothesis (oversimplified and not to be taken too seriously), humans probably developed traits for strengthened social structure and cooperation that were based on being able to accept behavioral norms and survival techniques that relied on correlations we would describe today as irrational superstitions. Nevertheless, religion (and proto-religion) is, and was, a powerful force that helped make humans the most successful species on Earth.

Furthermore, humans with genetically based predispositions toward what became religious belief (whether true belief or manipulated by alpha leaders) would have been selected for, as religious groups would have had a strong competitive advantage over humans with weaker organizing drives.

We can debate whether this theory is plausible, but the important point is that confronting challenges related to population means dealing with our powerful genetic baggage and not just hoping that rational arguments will carry the day.

George Redden  
Idaho Falls, ID

You are quite mistaken in your claim on the cover of the September issue that "humans are not threatened with extinction." Humans are indeed threatened with extinction. Regardless of what we do, we have sufficiently poisoned and abused the air, land, and water that we will be extinct within 100 years.

Kendrick Miller  
Salisbury, NC

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