

# **Scientists and Environmentalists for Population Stabilization: Who Said Academics are Hopelessly Timid or Hopelessly Globalist?**

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## **1. Title**

Thanks to Leah Durant and PFIR for this opportunity to tell you about our new organization and how it is doing. Like many of our sister organizations our primary objective is halting US population growth, but we have a unique strategy and modus operandi. This compliments the activities and programs of our sister organizations. Basically our m.o. consists of operating exhibitor booths on population at the annual meetings of scientific societies, especially those in the environmental sciences. Following this outline here let me tell you how we began, what our objectives, principles and strategies are and what we've accomplished so far. At the outset let me thank the Weeden Foundation, US Inc, and NumbersUSA for the support that has gotten us going.

## **2. Africans**

Lets start with some basics. I suspect everyone here agrees the world is overpopulated relative to current and future resource availability. The cause is large families, especially in the third world. A recent piece of bad news is that fertility rates in Africa are barely declining at all. For the continent as a whole the TFR is about 4.9.

## **3. Republican candidates**

But it's large family sizes in the developed nations that have the greatest environmental impacts. This is because of our high material standard of living, hence our high resource consumption and pollution production rates. So families of these Republican presidential candidates do, on average, about 20-times more damage to the planet than does the average Chinese family, with 1.5 kids per mother. Reducing the US population by a million people would have a much, much more salutary effect on the planet than would reducing the population of India, China or Nigeria by a million people.

## **4. Human population spike**

Most scientists and environmentalists are approximately aware of such things, and also familiar with the red line in this chart. It plots human population growth over the past 10,000 years. That we are at 7.2 billion and projected to add at least a few billion more are likewise well-known, as are probable draconian effects of that growth on ourselves, other species and our environment. But it's a global problem, so how can we do anything about it? In colleges and universities the potential solutions mentioned in courses and textbooks typically are more recycling, cleaner forms of energy, more efficient vehicles, less meat-eating, and more bicycle-riding in the developed countries, and family planning and education and empowerment of girls and women in the Third World. All great ideas, for sure. But the desirability of population reduction in ALL countries, including the US, is rarely discussed, and indeed usually is not even mentioned as an option. The students are betrayed. They then go on to become congressmen, teachers, journalists, lawyers, talk show hosts, businessmen, carpenters, doctors, and social workers – the uninformed voting public. Uninformed because the mainline media also suppress information on US population issues, reinforcing the damaging silence and political correctness of colleges and universities.

## **5. Historical trajectory**

For Americans the most important lessons concerns the details of how our own current overpopulation came about and the details of the options we have for the future. Here's the last 80 years of our demographic history. Don't worry about all the detail, as this chart was drafted as a handout [available

on the SEPS website] and has additional text on its back. But the blue line is for TFR, the red one is for legal immigration, the green one for population size, and the pink bars are for amnesties. This is a useful graph for pointing out to people how the end of the baby boom coincided with the beginning of a 500% increase in immigration rates. And for pointing out how those increased immigration rates have been the result of Congress and the White House consistently doing exactly the opposite of what various national commissions have recommended.

## 6. Future trajectories

Lesson #3 shows different possible demographic futures according to that immigration level scenario we select or Congress and the White House impose on us. Five of these curves are the standard five projections done by the USCB and two are based on a 2006 report by FAIR. The highest curve is the one FAIR predicted if the 2006 immigration bill had passed. The lowest one is the trajectory that would have resulted if we had gone to zero net immigration in the year 2000. The next to lowest curve, the olive green one, was generated by assuming a gradual reduction of immigration with zero net immigration not being achieved until 2021. Again this chart as a handout also comes with explanatory text on the back.

## 7. 1972 key contributions

In the early 1970s, there were three key contributions that formalized environmental impacts as a function of both population size and per capita consumption rates. The modeling study by Donella Meadows and colleagues, the IPAT equation of Ehrlich, Holdren and Commoner, and the concept of demotechnic growth of Jack Vallentyne, a Canadian limnologist. These were precursors to the ecological footprint concept which was developed shortly thereafter. [For more on Vallentyne, see recent online articles in *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics*, 2012, vol. 12, pp. 5-13, 15-20, 21-34]. If every college student, every voter, every congressman saw and fully understood the last three charts and the combined effects of population size and per capita consumption, the US population stabilization movement would make more rapid progress. Why don't these groups already understand this stuff? In large part it is because of censorship and political correctness in environmental organizations, in scientific societies and in our colleges and universities.

## 8. Sierra Club

Because of very public battles within the Sierra Club in the 1990s, its bad behavior on these issues is well known. It dropped its long-standing policy of advocating US population stabilization. It went from being primarily an American environmental organization to being a globalist social justice organization as far as population issues are concerned. The decal at the top is an old one that the Sierra Club it no longer uses. You can find it under Google Images only because it is on a poster presentation I developed 13 years ago and still have online. Note its phrase "Protect America's Environment". You will rarely see the word "America" in current Sierra Club literature. Just as well, they'd probably spell it with a K. As exposed by the Los Angeles Times, the shift in policy was in exchange for a \$100 million contribution from a wealthy software developer made on the condition that the Sierra Club would not touch the immigration issue. In a membership ballot, the policy shift was endorsed by 9% of the Sierra Club membership. This was enough to approve it as 85% of the members abstained. It is likely that the great bulk of Sierra Club members do not favor the direction the Sierra Club board has taken. Indeed, many Sierra Club members have already joined SEPS.

## 9. Sustainable Biosphere Initiative

The misbehavior of the scientific community on US population issues is much more insidious than that of environmental organizations and has mostly flown below the radar of everyone, even that of scientists themselves. Let's consider two organizations as examples. The first is the Ecological Society of America, the largest environmental science society in the U.S. In the late 1980s, leaders of ESA

decided to develop a statement on research needed to achieve sustainability, and in 1991 published what is now a famous white paper called the The Sustainable Biosphere Initiative. Soon a few people began chastising it for its failure to say anything substantial about population growth and population policies. Why this irresponsible omission? In hinting at money, these three distinguished scientists from the University of Washington and University of British Columbia were on the right track. This perhaps was the beginning of the population-oblivious and now very popular Sustainability-Lite Movement (SLM). That contrasts with the Strong Sustainability Movement (SSM) as early exemplified by the formulations of Meadows, Ehrlich, Holdren, Valleryne, and others.

#### **10. Pulliam and Brown**

Ron Pulliam of the University of Georgia and one of his grad students, Nick Haddad, also chimed in to express dismay at the failure of the SBI to address the population factor. Ron was actually on the committee that produced the document and president of ESA when the SBI was published. Two years ago Jim Brown, another former ESA president, spilled the beans to me in an email [quoted with his permission]. Prior to publication of the SBI, he, Ron Pulliam and three other senior ecologists were asked to comment on a draft version. When Jim and Ron asked why the population factor was so irresponsibly omitted, they were told that population was a controversial topic and to bring it up might affect future funding for ecological research. That behavior is one example of what is called *el fenómeno microcojónico*. Not very brave and not very smart: the Sierra Club at least got \$100 million for doing essentially the same thing. And not very wise if ecologists want to retain the confidence of the general public and an image as straight-shooters.

#### **11. Two more white papers**

In 2004 and 2009, the ESA put out two more white papers on sustainability matters. And these also completely ignored population growth as an obstacle to sustainability. At the 2012 ESA annual meeting there were over 100 half day sessions, each with its own title. 14 of these had “sustainable,” “sustainability,” or “sustaining” in the title, yet of the 140 papers presented in them none dealt with population policies on their own or as drivers of population-environment interactions. [Further documentation on ESA’s population shyness is found in online articles in *The Social Contract*, vol. 10, pp. 193-194 (2000), vol. 21(3), pp. 47-49 (2011), vol. 23(1), pp. 68-76 (2012)]

#### **12. AAAS in decline**

The second organization I’ll tell you about is the biggest scientific organization in the US, the American Association for Advancement of Science. These two papers summarize strong evidence that AAAS has an unwritten policy of suppressing discussion of US population and immigration policies in its meetings and publications. Before giving examples of that, let me say a few words about John Holdren, President Obama’s chief advisor on science and technology. He served as president of AAAS shortly before he moved to the White House.

#### **13. Holdren 1973**

As a brash young physicist in the 1970s Holdren was very outspoken on population issues and was a close colleague of the Ehrlichs. In 1973, he was saying that 210 million people was too many for the U.S. And also warning us not to be complacent. Many later scientists have agreed with him that a US population larger than 200 million cannot be sustained economically and environmentally over the long term.

#### **14. Holdren 2007**

Now fast forward 34 years. Holdren has been elected president of AAAS and is giving his presidential address. We listen carefully to all 9300 words. He only manages 24 words on population. What aging

does to us! What a brave soul! What **complacency!** As Yogi Berra would say, it's el fenomeno microcojonico all over again.

### **15. Holdren vs Vitter 2009**

Fast forward another two years. The well-behaved physicist is now Obama's nominee for his science advisor and needs Senate confirmation. Holdren's performance at the hearing was sad. However, there is rumor that prior to this hearing Holdren was told by Obama "to not make news." OK, sometimes strategy has to have priority over candidness, so perhaps we shouldn't pre-judge. But by his own words, Holdren implied that he was no longer "preoccupied" with estimating or even discussing an optimal or sustainable US population size. Holdren seemed to be promising that he would not bring up this "tough question" in the future. He seemed to be promising that if, by chance, Congress decided to increase US population growth by way of mass amnesties for illegal aliens and increased quotas for legal immigration, he, Holdren, would raise no objection. Five years later we now know that Holdren has kept his implicit promise to Senator Vitter. He's become a major de facto supporter of increasing US overpopulation...by way of his silence and complacency.

### **16. Holdren vs rightwingers 2009**

Nevertheless at the time of the hearings far rightwing websites go beserk painting Holdren as satan incarnate, intent on imposing a planetary regime of forced abortions, mass sterilization, and mandatory bodily implants. And the same rightwingers are still at it in 2013, harassing him at public events with their standard distortions. Such a meek fellow now so well-trained to the short leash does not deserve this! Perhaps this is poetic justice for someone who has become a de facto supporter of the agenda of the Cato Institute, the Wall Street Journal, the building industry, and cheap-labor-loving corporations?

### **17. Shape-shifter**

But Hardin didn't get to be a perferesser at Berkeley and Harvard for nothin'. A confirmation hearing is a piece of cake for a shape-shifter. So he made it into office, and the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology has been putting out more population-oblivious, sustainability-lite white papers such as *Sustaining Environmental Capital: Protecting Society and The Economy* (2011) since. And all for naught! To this day, the attack on Holdren by uninformed troglodytes of the radical right continue, despite his own long ago withdrawal from the field of battle.

### **18. Science population issue**

Back to AAAS. In July 2011 Science magazine put out an issue dedicated entirely to population issues and problems – essentially without a single mention of U.S. population issues. Plenty on population issues in the rest of the world. Three of us at CAPS -- Ben Zuckerman, Otis Graham and I – submitted to *Science* a polite letter questioning the wisdom of that omission. Later we learned that Al Bartlett and Phil Cafaro had done the same thing. Perhaps other people did too. But no letter of protest was ever published by *Science* --- and they do publish lots of letters. Surely they wanted to publish at least one letter on the population issue, but just ran out of space...

### **19. Curious case**

The scientific community was long ago called out for its censorship by a retired manicurist by the name of Clara Peller, in a very, very short unpublished manuscript. This was actually the inspiration for the classic piece by Roy Beck and Leon Kolankiewicz on the "environmental movement's retreat."

But did Roy and Leon even mention her in their acknowledgments? Not on your life. It's the same-old, same-old. Women do all the thinking and men get all the credit.

### **20. New strategy**

After a couple of decades of complaining about the “disappearing P” it occurred to us that there was a fast, efficient way to get into the belly of the beast – set up and operate an exhibitor booth on population at the annual meetings of scientific societies. And why not start with the biggest rogue elephant, AAAS itself. So CAPS put in an application for a booth at the 2012 AAAS meeting in Vancouver, Canada. Friends in the Population Institute of Canada agreed to help out. Our application was accepted and then, two weeks later, rejected. We appealed all the way up to the AAAS board of directors, and they also received a protest letter signed by 100 US and Canadian scientists. No dice. AAAS said CAPS was focused just on California and immigration (false) and was too political (unlike AAAS, of course!). So the Population Institute of Canada applied for a booth. That application was also accepted and then rejected a few weeks later. AAAS objected to PIC’s plan to display articles, books, charts and so on from a wide diversity of organizations and authors. Against regulations, the AAAS muckety-mucks said. That would be “booth sharing,” a regulatory no-no. If the booth had on display an article by a PIC member and a book by Garrett Hardin, a long deceased University of California Santa Barbara professor, that would represent PIC and UCSB “sharing” a booth. And for such a crime PIC was told, exhibit hall managers would close the booth down with no refund of fees. Truly amazing that the entire AAAS board of directors and its Executive Director were willing to support such hypocrisy and twisting of AAAS regulations simply to suppress information on and discussion of US population policies.

## **21. Social Contract issues**

So instead of spending thousands of dollars on a booth at the AAAS meeting, we wrote up an account of this battle, included all our correspondence verbatim with AAAS, and The Social Contract put the article in their next issue, decorated with 3 chimpanzees. The title of the article was as shown earlier: *The American Association for the Advancement of SILENCE (on National Population Policies) Muffles Obnoxious Canadians Too*. We sent pdfs of that article to 14,000 scientists and others throughout the US and Canada, declared victory and went home. Earlier The Social Contract had put out a special issue on “Scientists as Censors” documenting instances of not-so-subtle censorship on population issues by several other scientific organizations. Many scientists are now starting to realize that this is just the tip of the censorship iceberg floating in the scientific community.

## **22. Peter, Paul and Mary**

The editors at The Social Contract kindly let us end the article on AAAS’s bad behavior with this little poem and picture. Peter, Paul and Mary always tell it like it is.

## **23. SCB booth**

Our first boothing opportunity was at the North American Congress for Conservation Biology meeting in July 2012. Dick Schneider, Ric Oberlink and Tim Aaronson of CAPS operated this trial run of our ideas. The booth’s location wasn’t ideal and the meeting not too big, but we got positive feedback on the operation, got some literature out and raised a flag saying, “Here we come!”

## **24. Third time’s a charm**

Our third try – at the ESA’s 2013 meeting -- was a big success. It was the biggest ESA meeting ever – 5000 people – and we participated in two ways. We were part of the official program of speakers, I having organized, with Bob Costanza as moderator, a half day session on population, environment and sustainability issues in the U.S. We had an excellent cast of speakers, starting off with Marilyn “Missy” DeYoung, a veteran of the 1970-72 President’s Commission on Population Growth and the American Future. For our booth we had expanded displays and new charts. Several people helped run the booth, including Leon Kolankiewicz. Most indications are that Leon is a reasonably smart guy. On the other hand you have to wonder about anyone who runs a population stabilization booth while wearing a red salmon T-shirt that says, “Spawn til you die!” I mean, it would be understandable if he wanted to be a Republican presidential candidate. But otherwise, VERY poor judgment.

## **25. New organization**

CAPS decided it did not have the manpower and time to keep running these booths, so we formed less than a year ago a new organization dedicated exclusively to doing just that. Most of our board members will be known to most of you: Joyce Tarnow is our treasurer and also president of Floridians for a Sustainable Population; Leon, wildlife biologist and environmental planner is our vice-president; University of Alberta limnologist Dave Schindler was a North Dakota boy originally but made his career in Canada where he is one of that country's most honored environmental scientists. His group starting in the late 1960s provided the scientific basis for getting phosphates removed from detergents in North America, they did the first whole lake studies on effects of acid rain, and lately he's been holding the Canadian governments feet to the fire over pollution of the Athabasca River from tar sands operation. Paul Nachman is a retired physicist in Bozeman Montana where he writes on population issues and operates the Montanans for Immigration Law Enforcement website. The curve at the left end of our logo represents the population trajectory that all nations should be shooting for but that apparently only China has as an official long term policy objective.

## **26. Advisory Board**

We also have an advisory board of excellent scientists: agricultural ecologist Dave Pimentel from Cornell, limnologist Jon Cole from the Institute for Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook NY, fish ecologist Karin Limburg from State University of New York at Syracuse, anthropologist Ken Smail from Kenyon College, and Madeline Weld a toxicologist for Health Canada and President of the Population Institute of Canada. The intent of the impromptu sign is to lay a guilt trip on environmental scientists. Since via grants and contracts they collectively benefit tremendously financially from population-driven environmental degradation, they should become population reduction activists, in addition to continuing to document and study the degradation and occasionally offer (usually) short-term fixes for parts of it.

## **27. SEPS principles**

Over a couple of months, members of both our boards worked together to develop an official set of principles. They are pretty much the same principles as advocated by CAPS, NumbersUSA, FAIR, and the other major population stabilization organizations: halt illegal immigration, no mass amnesties, large reductions in quotas for legal immigration, support for moving from neoclassical to ecological economics, plus a couple of ideas on financial incentives for delaying childbirth and having small families. To become a member is not easy: you have to fork over \$50 for a life membership AND you have to agree to be publicly listed on our website as a member of SEPS. Membership is open to all, but initially our focus is on getting signed up more US environmental scientists, conservation biologists, ecologists and so on. Especially those who have not previously felt comfortable publicly supporting an agenda like that of SEPS, even though they recognized it to be one of highest integrity and value to society. We plan to delay putting our membership up on our website until we have 100 or so members. If you want to be a charter member, sign up now! Just in the past few weeks we've had some of the most respected senior conservation biologists in the country come on board.

## **28. Booth operations**

In 2013 we've already had booths at 6 scientific meetings and made continuous refinements in our exhibit format, content, and salesmanship. Usually we have a corner booth measuring 10ft x 10ft, for which the optimal layout is that seen in the photo on the upper left. We always have a display of about \$500 worth of books, 20-25 titles, all of which we give away at the end of the meeting. At smaller meetings sometimes all we get is a 6ft table, but we've gotten pretty good at fitting a 10x10 booth onto a 6ft table as the photo on the upper right shows. That's Gretchen Pfaff of CAPS peeking out there. Several of our sister organizations have been of great help with these booths, providing, variously,

personnel, multiple copies of certain books and articles, and booth hardware. PFIR was especially helpful, for example, with the logistics of our booth in Baltimore in July.

### **29. 2013 meetings**

Here's a tabulation for the booths SEPS has run in 2013. Our primary metric of success is how many articles, op eds, charts, etc. get taken by booth visitors. For the larger meetings usually we get out around 2000, plus 30 or so books. For the year we've already gotten over 10,000 pieces out, almost entirely into the hands of professors and students in the sciences.

### **28. Coming attractions**

The next two booths we will do are indicated here. Our applications have been accepted, and we've gotten corner booths again. Some new excitement may come when in a few weeks we put in an application to AAAS for a booth at their meeting in Chicago next February. Whether they give us a booth or deny us a booth, we will arrange a victory of one sort or another. Unlike our sister organizations, SEPS has a military wing. This is skilled in converting into lemonade, lemons lobbed at us by enemy mortars. We have an unlimited supply of juicers, sugar, ice, water and pitchers.

Thank you for your attention.