

Letters to the editor

Dear Vivian,

Surely the Editorial Committee must be joking to include the 'Population Explosion Dooms Mice Colony' report on page 32 (Quest News Services) of the July issue? If, however, no one is amused then Humanistic comment is called for.

The experiment was ostensibly set up in the U.S. 'with the *material* ingredients for a long and happy life' - yet at the same time removing all 'growth' factors i.e. catering for 'happiness' rather than reality, lack of challenge in providing food, drink etc., providing 'comfortable' living quarters (smother-love!) - 'protection' from the elements, elimination of predators (change-agents) and outside stress (challenge to change). Having set up an experiment guaranteed to produce destruction and social death in logical progression - as experienced, i.e. masculine bias gives way to feminine bias with no feed-back loops encouraged or provided in the setting - the 'Researchers' (heaven help us all!) reach the patently obvious conclusion that sexual boredom ensues and the species disappears. Not however through overcrowding but through the predetermined experimental 'control' factors! Here is the lesson for us all: remove freedom of choice, the ability to 'grow', - and monotony crowds in to end the race.

Woe betide us if we forget the need to balance the evolutionary perfection seeking masculine dynamic with the completion female dynamic in creative tension - and woe betide us if we go on accepting such experimental rubbish as a valid contribution to knowledge - of mice or men!
Sincerely,

Ron Shepherd

Middlesex

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the magazines. They are very interesting but they oversimplify too much the solutions to many of the problems.

They also seem to push and hold Group Therapy as the best means of therapy. They do give insights to different schools of thought as far as groups go, but groups themselves are still in the infant stage, and as such, I think individual therapy should be given more space in the magazine.

Yours

Norbert Doll
New York

AN OPEN LETTER TO A CONTRIBUTOR

Dear Conrad Lodziak,

This article, THE DISADVANTAGED (Self & Society, August '73, p.16) is extremely interesting, but there are several comments I would like to make. In particular the section headed Family Background contains so many half-truths, that it could be much more dangerous than actual lies.

Often, a child's curiosity and imagination, if allowed complete self-determination, would certainly be punished. By death or maiming. Does one allow a child to play with fires, matches, electric gadgets, etc. - lean out of upstairs windows wander at will in roads, in water, at cliff edges and do all the forbidden things which excite a child's curiosity?

How and by whom, is it decided which is pseudo-love and which is authentic love? Surely, only by a certain amount of applied discipline can self-discipline be learned. Isn't it lack of self-discipline and complete self-determination which is only another way of expressing "Do your own thing and don't consider anyone else"? Complete self-determination surely eliminates, in many cases, any understanding or consideration for others, and will lead, eventually, to the survival of the strongest, either mentally or physically. Isn't this Jungle Law? Either concrete or actual.

Surely clean, non-offensive activities are preferable to filth and degeneration? Streets are not suitable as childrens' playgrounds. Not only because of private cars. What about vans and lorries which are, perhaps unfortunately, necessities in this age for the distribution of food and other essentials? Parks and recreation grounds are not suitable for children if they are un-supervised. Unhappily, there are at times, groups of self-determined young thugs, whose great delight is to terrorise the younger ones. Also, there are older undesirables who wish to corrupt the young for their own gratification, and find it profitable to haunt the places where these might be found. I agree, wholeheartedly, with the absurdity of killing to ensure peace. What I question is, what do you mean by love? I have always understood that love meant caring. So if one loves, does one sit back and allow a child to self-determine himself into self-destruction?

I find your statements too sweeping, your ideas too drastic. I have no knowledge of your age. If you are about my age you should remember, and if much younger, you should read about the changes which have taken place during the last few decades. Some good, some bad. I am not certain whether you and I are Advantaged or Disadvantaged, but I venture to suggest that possibly you have not very much common sense.

You obviously feel, as do I, that there is a great deal wrong with society as it is, but total destruction of all the accepted ways is NOT the answer. Moderation may be slower, but often the less dramatic course achieves better results.

Joyce Godwin

Bromley