

## Re: Earth's Carrying Capacity

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**From:** John Schilling ([schillin\\_at\\_spock.usc.edu](mailto:schillin_at_spock.usc.edu))

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Date: 19 Aug 2004 10:20:23 -0700

"Pete Lynn" <[pete@peterlynnkites.com](mailto:pete@peterlynnkites.com)> writes:

>"Keith F. Lynch" <[kfl@KeithLynch.net](mailto:kfl@KeithLynch.net)> wrote in message  
>news:cg15gu\$770\$1@panix3.panix.com...

>> Evolution is selecting for people for whom standard methods of  
>> contraception don't work. In a few centuries, we may be left with  
>> no effective means of birth control.

>I doubt it. Greater control of birth timing, might actually be an  
>evolutionary advantage. For example, menstruation tends to stop when  
>women get too skinny, a naturally evolved and advantageous  
>contraceptive.

>I expect human evolution to now select for birth rates that depend less  
>on \*accidents\* and depend more on planned pregnancies, which it theory  
>might be more advantageous. Human fertility is no longer primarily  
>constrained by available food supply, it is no longer optimal to become  
>pregnant whenever possible.

>From the standpoint of maximizing reproductive advantage, it is \*clearly\*  
suboptimal to become pregnant at the rate prosperous and educated people  
chose to become pregnant. What babies are produced may be produced at  
the optimal time, but if the number of babies produced is zero or one  
per woman, as it now is in Europe, no optimization of the timing is  
going to offer a net reproductive advantage.

In pursuit of optimal reproductive fitness, then, evolution will seek  
some combination of immunity to contraception, increased preference for  
childbearing, reduced ability to obtain and keep wealth, and immunity  
to education.

If immunity to contraception is the easiest chromosomal hack, it can be  
expected to dominate the evolutionary adaptation to declining TFRs.  
Not clear that this is the case, but worthy of speculation at least.

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\*John Schilling

\* "Anything worth doing,

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sci.space.policy: Re: Earth's Carrying Capacity

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