

CRITICAL MASSES:
AMERICAN POPULATIONISM, EUGENICS, AND WAR, 1945 TO 1975

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

AMERICAN STUDIES

MAY 2019

By

Robert J. Barsocchini

Thesis Committee:

Jonna Eagle, Chairperson

Noenoe Silva

Jeffrey Tripp

Keywords: overpopulation, eugenics, sterilization, Korean War, Vietnam War

DEDICATION

To Anchi, Melrose, Scottie, Patrick, Francis, Fern, and Charlotte.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Jonna Eagle for being generous with her time and comments and Noenoe Silva and Jeffrey Tripp for their helpful insights. I would also like to thank my wife, Anchi, for listening to a lot of talk about populationism and offering her usual perceptive responses and support.

ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that American thinkers in the post-war period (1945 to 1975) who diagnosed global overpopulation made implicit suggestions that “population problems” could be addressed by raising death rates, such as through war. I illustrate that the fear of population growth, which became ubiquitous in the United States during this time, largely derives from eugenically influenced concerns over losing power relative to colonized people of color around the world, but that these concerns also predate eugenics. I then apply this lens to readings of the Korean and Vietnam wars, arguing that populationist thinking is evident in these campaigns and that its prevalence at this time likely intensified American violence and increased a focus on eliminating large numbers of people, including civilians.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
PREFACE.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE	1
CHAPTER TWO	22
CHAPTER THREE	51
CONCLUSION	84
LITERATURE CITED	93

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Percentages of Women Sterilized, 1968 to 1982.....	19
---	----

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1

Figure 1.1: Plan Your Family.....17

Chapter 2

Figure 2.2: The Population Bomb.....27

Chapter 3

Figure 3.3: Tokyo After Firebombing.....56

Figure 3.4: Beefeater Label.....72

PREFACE

In a common method of surgical sterilization, a scalpel is used to open the abdomen above the pubic bone, providing access to the reproductive organs to be excised. In a common method of military attack, an explosive device produces shockwaves, shrapnel, and debris that erupt, bludgeon, or cut into the body and internal organs, often resulting in an inability to produce children as a result of injury or death. These sets of practices were brought into relief, for me, while I was studying the Korean and Vietnam wars and tried looking at them through the lens of black feminist anti-war activism.¹ I learned that in addition to anti-war activism, black feminist groups were resisting coercive sterilization, which, to my surprise, I found had risen sharply in the United States in the post-WWII period. This occurred predominantly in the early 1970s, when, for example, somewhere between 25% and perhaps more than 50% of Native American women were sterilized without consent, as were many thousands of African American, Puerto Rican, and other women.² Scholars of the subject of mass sterilization have noted as recently as the mid 2010s that these events remain understudied.³

I found it unsettling that coercive sterilization driven by what some scholars have identified as a genocidal impulse had spiked at a time when a war that I already knew involved racist, gendered, and classist thinking was being waged against Vietnam. Was there any connection or overlap, I wondered, between the ideas and affects that were driving sterilization

¹ Blandford, Virginia A. (1981). *Black Women and Liberation Movements*. Institute for Arts and Humanities, Howard University. Washington, D.C.

² Hansen, R., & King, D. (2013). *Sterilized by the State: Eugenics, Race, and the Population Scare in Twentieth-Century North America*. New York: Cambridge University Press. P. 254 n107.

³ Pegoraro, L. (2015). "Second-rate victims: the forced sterilization of indigenous people in the USA and Canada." *Settler Colonial Studies*. 5:2. 161-173; Connelly, Matthew. (2013). "The Cold War in the longue durée: global migration, public health, and population control." In Leffler, Melvyn P. and Westard, Odd Arne. *The Cambridge History of the Cold War: Vol III.* Cambridge University Press.

and warfare? I began to look into scholarship on the post-war rise in coercive sterilization and was again surprised by what I found. Respected and accomplished scholars have attributed the spike in part to an ascendant social milieu called the “renaissance of eugenics.”⁴ However, eugenics is a field that I believed (as do many people) to have essentially died with the Nazis. In a sense, this is correct: after the Nazis, eugenics was highly stigmatized. But as the United States took an unprecedented hold on and moved to consolidate global power, another preoccupation arose, principally driven by Americans: the idea that the world was becoming “overpopulated.” I initially avoided the overpopulation aspect of the scholarship on the post-war rise in coercive sterilization because it seemed like a different topic than the one that I was intrigued by, which was eugenics.

But there was another reason why I was hesitant to pursue the subject of overpopulation: the perspective that I had unconsciously and unknowingly gleaned from American culture was that the world *is* overpopulated. There should, I assumed, be far fewer people. Living in Los Angeles, I had been frustrated with traffic and congestion. My partner was familiar with a half-joke that I would make when I heard that someone we knew was having a kid: “Great. Another person on the 405.” I would sit in my office in Burbank and dream of being somewhere in the countryside in green, open spaces.⁵ I felt a kind of frustration or anger towards large masses of people. It is discomfiting now to think about where and how, specifically, much of this anger would have been vaguely directed.

⁴ Kühl, S. (2013). *For the Betterment of the Race: The Rise and Fall of the International Movement for Eugenics and Racial Hygiene*. Palgrave Macmillan; Hansen, R., & King, D. (2013). *Sterilized by the State: Eugenics, Race, and the Population Scare in Twentieth-Century North America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁵ As Paul Virilio points out, this was also a dream of the Nazis, who, as we will see, were similarly obsessed with “overpopulation.” Virilio, Paul. (2009). *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*. Verso. P. 70.

Although I was hesitant to explore the topic, I reached a point in studying the renaissance of eugenics at which looking into the overpopulation thesis became unavoidable. This is because, as I learned, with the post-war stigmatization of eugenics and the gradual rise of civil rights discourses, many people who had previously supported eugenics moved into promoting the idea that the world was overpopulated.⁶ Some scholars even argue that the desire to control “overpopulation” in the twentieth century can be understood as an *outgrowth* of eugenics.⁷

One particularly liberal eugenicist who moved into overpopulation was Raymond Pearl. Pearl publicly condemned the naked racism of many of his colleagues, but characterized his move into population studies with a question that captures much of the ethos of overpopulation theory: if we can’t get desirable people to raise their fertility enough to counter-balance the rising fertility of undesirable people (which turn out to be mostly colonized people of color), is there a way to *decrease* the fertility of undesirable people?⁸ Without directly stating it, this question deals with a classic issue in eugenics: differential fertility. The term captures the concern that the “unfit” within the white race and people of color (generally perceived by white eugenicists, and Euro-Americans in general, as less “fit” than, and thus inferior to, whites) would surpass the fit whites in fertility and eventually contaminate and wipe them out. This was originally dubbed “race suicide,” and at least one straggling book using this phrase openly in its title was published as late as 1945, while most people toned down the explicitness of, or sublimated and consciously denied, the racial, class, gendered, and ableist effects of eugenics.⁹

⁶ Kühl (2013).

⁷ Connelly, M. (2013); Allen, G. E., & Turda, M. (2015). “Eugenics as a Basis of Population Policy.” In J. D. Wright, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 218-223). Elsevier Science.

⁸ Hansen & King (2013). P. 189; Kühl (2013). P. 42.

⁹ McCleary, G.F. (1945) *Race Suicide?* George Allen and Unwin Ltd. London.

The discourse of overpopulation thus became a way for eugenicists to rebrand their pursuits and yet essentially address the same issues with which they had already been concerned. Whereas racial science was increasingly rejected after the war, the concept of overpopulation offered an updated way to claim, using evidence that could still be cited as legitimate, that large numbers of people needed to somehow be made to “go away.”¹⁰ These were largely the same people who had been targeted in eugenic visions only now, instead of being stated outright, traditional eugenicist motives and goals were intuited and signaled in more circuitous ways. This is why scholars have found that the rise in coercive sterilization can be attributed both to eugenics and what became known as the “overpopulation crisis.”¹¹ While the concept of overpopulation had long existed and been promoted within eugenics, now the openly eugenic aspects, which involved racism and social Darwinism, were eschewed while the population elements not only remained, but, as we might say, today, “went viral.”¹²

Like the post-war rise in coercive sterilization, we do not hear much about it today, but the overpopulation crisis became one of the foremost fears in American life in the post-war period through the Vietnam war.¹³ A 1965 poll, for example, found that Americans considered overpopulation to be the second biggest threat that they faced, coming in one spot above communism and second only to giving out foreign aid: three concepts that are interrelated in the American imaginary, as this study will argue. Foreign aid was considered a cause of population growth, which would confer power and thus “leaven the loaf of social revolution” and lead to American vassal states achieving independence, usually characterized using negatively connoted

¹⁰ Connelly (2008). P. 191.

¹¹ E.g., Kühl (2013); Hansen & King (2013).

¹² Social Darwinism refers to survival of the fittest and evolution promoted through struggle and war.

¹³ Claims of overpopulation are also currently resurfacing, as will be discussed in the conclusion.

terms like “communism” or “totalitarianism.”¹⁴ The communist state, with its growing numbers and thus greater power, could then combine with other communist states, take control of key resources, overrun “us” (understood as Anglo-Americans), and rob us, subjugate us, and ultimately kill us.¹⁵ While in the foreign arena this idea was largely focused on Asians, a similar schema was applied to oppressed populations within the United States, such as African Americans and Indigenous people.¹⁶

Given that the overpopulation schema channels concerns related to eugenics, race, power, and politics, some scholars of the post-war overpopulation crisis have found, as mentioned above, that the rise in coercive sterilization in the United States during this time can be characterized as genocidal.¹⁷ Even the relatively conservative among these scholars, those less critical of American eugenicists and populationists, find this conclusion hard to avoid.¹⁸ However, something that the more conservative and the liberal scholars have in common is that they generally agree that while these sterilizations were motivated by overpopulation discourse and its eugenic concerns, the United States, unlike the Nazis, did not go beyond sterilization in acting upon these feelings and ideas.¹⁹ For the more conservative scholars, this argument tends to be more explicit, and for the more liberal scholars, more implicit. Yet, there do not appear to be either publicly available or declassified “smoking-gun” documents revealing direct orders to doctors and nurses to coercively sterilize thousands (and, globally, millions) of people for openly

¹⁴ Organski, Katherine & Organski, A.F.K. (1961) *Population and World Power*. Alfred A Knopf. New York.

¹⁵ Vogt, W. (1948). *Road To Survival*. New York: W. Sloane Associates.

¹⁶ Hauser, P. (1961). *Population Perspectives*. Rutgers University Press.

¹⁷ Ralstin-Lewis, M. D. (2005). The Continuing Struggle against Genocide: Indigenous Women's Reproductive Rights. *Wicazo-Sa Review*, 20(1), 71-95; Pegoraro (2015).

¹⁸ Hansen & King (2013).

¹⁹ For explicit argument, see Connelly (2008); Hansen & King (2013). Argued more implicitly, see: Murphy, M. (2017). *The Economization of Life*. Duke University Press; Kühl (2013).

genocidal reasons. Like eliminationism in the Holocaust,²⁰ the act of elimination through coercive sterilization was largely signaled and intuited. Thousands of doctors independently, during the same time period and with US-government funding, started to coercively sterilize certain women, and sometimes men, such as African Americans, Native Americans, and Puerto Ricans, while regularly expressing hesitancy to sterilize white women.²¹ This was inspired less by direct, explicit, recorded command and more by the concerns evoked by the supposed overpopulation crisis: ultimately, that people of color (and lower class) would grow in number and thus gain power relative to white people, possibly even gaining power *over* them, securing increasing allotments of resources and reversing generations of white colonial and neo-colonial supremacy.

Since genocidal sterilization is a form of killing, in that it targets a group for whole or partial elimination or weakening, the logics motivating it could also have been applied to literal killing. I thus wanted to know: might the overpopulation/eugenics discourse have applied to ideologies of war-making? Did influential overpopulation texts refer to or deal with war and similar pursuits as ways of solving claimed “population problems,” or was war outside of their range of vision? If overpopulation discourse did deal with war and literal killing, could the thinking have affected politicians, commanders, generals, soldiers, and the general public, who were involved in wars concurrent to the spike in sterilization, in ways similar to how doctors, nurses, and government figures were simultaneously influenced regarding sterilization?²² If

²⁰ Stannard, David E. (1995). “Uniqueness as Denial: The Politics of Genocide Scholarship.” In *Is the Holocaust Unique?* Rosenbaum, Alan (Ed.) Westview Press; The highest goal of Goebbels was to “make the German people a mass of *common visionaries* ‘obeying a law that they did not even know but which they could recite in their dreams (Goebbels, 1931).’” From Virilio, Paul. (2009). Pp. 68-69.

²¹ Ralstin-Lewis (2005); Hansen & King (2013).

²² The rise in coercive sterilization correlated with the rise of sterilization, generally, which rose in the post-war period, particularly in the early to mid 1970s. This provided a means of elimination, whereas means also, and already, existed in other areas, such as warfare, economics, etc. See: Hansen & King (2013).

overpopulation was at times considered both a greater threat than and a *form of* communism, then such questions seemed worth consideration.

This study, therefore, is based largely in close readings of seven key primary documents representing the most culturally and politically influential or revealing texts on overpopulation from the post-war period. I argue that while implicitly promoting coercive sterilization, the texts also implicitly promote warfare and other means of raising death rates as methods for solving population problems. In fact, birth control (e.g., sterilization) is regularly characterized in these documents as *ineffective* and contrasted with what would be the greater effectiveness of death control, including warfare. The authors do not directly promote war as a way to solve population problems, just as they do not directly advocate coercive sterilization. Rather, they diagnose situations in which the dominant portion of Western society must either raise death rates in “overpopulated” areas or nations or watch those areas/nations combine their numbers and take a share of national or global power; that is, “go communist.” When making these implications, the authors tend to add disclaimers most of the time, suggesting that the use of force to address these concerns would be unthinkable. In the context of ongoing war and alarming claims that all life and freedom depend on triumphing against overpopulation, however, the qualification does not ring true.

Characterizing the problem as “overpopulation” also justifies eliminationist interventions in multiple ways. It suggests that not only will disposal of “excess”²³ population help middle and upper-class Americans by preserving their wealth, lives, and freedom, but will also help those who are subjected to the solutions. A metaphor is sometimes drawn between human

²³ Balfour, M., Evans, R., Notestein, F., & Taeuber, I. (1950). *Public Health and Demography in the Far East: Report of a Survey Trip September 13-December 13, 1948*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation. Pp. 42-43.

overpopulation and non-human animal overpopulation. It is understood that eliminating surplus animals not only spares the animals from the worse fate of slow death from starvation, but also prevents them from annoying humans or contaminating them with disease: a conjunction between surplus population, contamination, and annoyance that are important in the overpopulation canon. The metaphor further suggests that “predation” is a necessary, natural part of how both human and non-human populations are kept “in check.”²⁴ Thus, eliminating the “surplus” becomes a merciful act; a kind of euthanasia carried out in the interest of those to be euthanized. While people who advocate killing often claim that it will serve a greater good, it is not necessarily for the good of the person being killed. In the overpopulation schema, however, it is. The concept thus makes the tragedy of “collateral damage” into a potentially productive outcome.

Necropolitics provides a useful framework for understanding the work of the overpopulation thesis in this period. The term, coined by the Cameroonian political theorist Achille Mbembe, refers to the political assignment of certain people or groups to the status of being disposable.²⁵ It also means that their disposal is felt, by the disposers, to be productive and helpful.²⁶ Populations may thus be seen as already dead: a kind of living dead or category of worthless body waiting to become productive, or useful and valuable, by being made dead or infertile.²⁷ (There is a parallel here with Anglo-American views of wild and domesticated animal populations invoked in overpopulation literature that will be explored in chapter 2.)

²⁴ Osborn, F. (1948). *Our Plundered Planet*. Boston: Little, Brown.

²⁵ Mbembé, J.-A. (2003). “Necropolitics.” *Public Culture*, 15(1), 11-40. Translated by Meintjes, L.

²⁶ Murphy (2017).

²⁷ Murphy (2017).

The overpopulation canon also manifests Foucault's theory of biopolitics: superiority and power make life and thus have the right to control it. However, although this concept is visible, the concept of necropolitics takes it slightly further. Power that makes life can order and *let* that life perish, but, further, it can *make* it perish. Creative power has the right to determine the moment of disposal that will be of greatest benefit and will make the world more efficient, manageable, and satisfying.²⁸ In the documents are repeated propositions for global programs led by the United States to control or "police" population problems, where "population problems" overwhelmingly occur as a result of an increase in population *size* and are to be controlled by curbing or halting growth and, if possible, reducing overall numbers.²⁹ The implementation of these programs relies on assigning characteristics of disposability (and other kinds of malleability) to populations around the world. Much of what is clearly desired is necropower, or death control.

This study is not about a discovery of previously unknown documents then, but about the application of a different lens to known documents and events. Rather than looking for a hidden smoking gun that reveals that politicians and others sought or secretly conspired to eliminate "excessive" population through warfare and other means of raising death rates, I overlay the necropolitics of the overpopulation canon with the smoking gun in plain sight: the war-making that was concurrent to mass-sterilization. I examine how population growth, national security, communism, freedom, imperialism, and the foreign and domestic blended together in the intellectual/political/cultural complex to foster a broad, opportunity-based dispositive for dealing with the population problem. After establishing the eugenically tinted necropolitics of

²⁸ Mbembé (2003).

²⁹ Vogt, W. (1948). P. 77-111.

overpopulation theory, I reconsider influential figures in the population milieu who pursued both sterilization and war – areas that turn out to be so interrelated that they blend together and become difficult to distinguish.

As a result of researching and writing this thesis, my views on population have evolved. Having studied the concept of overpopulation, I have found that it is not only fairly weak, empirically, but was known to be by its advocates. Even the earliest documents that I examine make grudging acknowledgement of this but continue to promote the overpopulation idea for other reasons. For example, they see an inverse correlation between growth of colonized populations and Western control of global resources. Thus, they perceive that Americans must choose between allowing colonized-population growth or continuing their lifestyles, and they overwhelmingly advocate for trying to suppress the numbers of colonized people.

The concept of overpopulation has been characterized by some scholars as a tool of “populationism.”³⁰ This has been deemed one of the forms of social conservatism like racism, classism, and sexism, albeit one of which there is far less awareness and understanding, which is one of the reasons why it was and is embraced. Most people, recently including myself, do not realize that it channels and gives expression to conservative impulses. By attributing various problems to “overpopulation,” the advocate (possibly unconsciously) blames them predominantly on poor people of color, whose fertility tends to be higher now as they recover from or deal with colonialism and neo-colonialism. When the problem becomes the numbers and fertility of people of color, the solution is to limit or reduce their numbers. Thus, for example,

³⁰ See, e.g.: Kaufman, E., & Nelson, L. (2012). “Malthus, gender and the demarcation of ‘dangerous’ bodies in 1996 US welfare reform.” *Gender, Place & Culture*, 19(4), 429-448; Angus, I., Butler, S., Hartmann, B., & Kovel, J. (2011). *Too many people? Population, Immigration, and the Environmental Crisis*. Haymarket Books. Chicago; Butler, S. (July 31, 2010) “Populationism: A Weapon of Political Conservatives.” *Climate and Capitalism. Monthly Review Online*.

environmental degradation is commonly blamed on overpopulation and high fertility, even though 7% of the world's people – essentially, the (neo)-colonial west – produce about 50% of the world's emissions, and the 50% of the world's people with the highest fertility (overwhelmingly people who have been colonized) produce only about 7% of the world's emissions.³¹ Now, when I sit in traffic or hear about people having kids, I do not think “there need to be fewer people.” Instead, I think, “if we really want to, we can invest in and change our infrastructure to meet changing circumstances.” I have a more humanist attitude and am more conscious of the underlying ideas and histories that were driving my previous frustration with population size. I have found that the daunting issues that we currently face do not inherently stem from the number of people who exist, but from the way in which we distribute, create, and consume resources. As we face imminent environmental catastrophe, though, the old theories are increasingly resurfacing.³² It is thus important to remember not only that this has happened, before, but to understand what is being mobilized and advocated through claims that the world is “overpopulated.”

Chapter one argues that the roots of populationism are in the rise of capitalism and thus that the ideology is firmly rooted in anti-communism, or anti-communalism. The anti-communist connection is not incidental but fundamental. I examine how populationists use various forms of othering including race, class, and gender to advocate for controlling the fertility or otherwise limiting the numbers of targeted groups. I trace the anti-communal, populationist impulse through settler-colonialism and note that pre-war populationist authors were fairly open advocates of using warfare to limit human numbers and thus check the “expansion of [inferior]

³¹ Haberman, Clyde. (2015, May 31.) “The Unrealized Horrors of the Population Explosion.” *New York Times*.

³² Murphy (2017). Conclusion.

racess” and the problems that it would entail.³³ I then go into detail on why populationism rose to such prominence in the post-war period and discuss the coercive sterilization that it helped to produce. Finally, I introduce how the ideas of overpopulation that were driving sterilization appear to have overlapped with ideas and theories that were driving anti-commun(al)ist war-making during the same period.

Chapter two performs close readings of and synthesizes seven key post-war overpopulation texts. The readings advance the argument that, although not discussed as explicitly as in pre-war texts, populationists still saw war and other means of raising death rates as the most effective way of addressing “population problems,” if carried out with enough subtlety. The idea of the population problem, or overpopulation, is here still firmly rooted in combatting commun(al)ism. Commun(al)ism can be read as people coming together in groups large and thus powerful enough to oppose and resist the roles or fates assigned to them by the group advancing overpopulation theory. The notion of overpopulation is a way to advocate and justify limiting or lowering the numbers, and thus power, of the targeted group. The chapter sifts through the various alarmist arguments that are proffered to justify population control and, implicitly, the use of lethal force to check population. It argues that, although more implicitly than in the pre-war period, the texts still ultimately set their sights on colonized people of color as the main targets for population reduction. It finds further insight into internalized Anglo-American capitalist views of colonized people and how they can be treated and used in a recurring populationist preference for the farmed animal body over the body of the colonized person of color.

³³ Woodruff, C. E. (1909). *Expansion of Races*. Rebman Company. New York; Wilkinson, H. L. (1930).

Chapter three examines the presence of populationism in the thinking of key American officials involved in war-making after WWII. It looks for “fingerprints” of populationism in the ideas motivating war-theory at the time and some of the tactics and actions carried out. Having established the characteristics of populationist thinking and its importance to top officials as well as to the broader society, especially elite and militarized elements, it reads aspects of the Korean and Vietnam wars through the lens of populationism.

The conclusion examines some of the aftermaths of the wars and compares resistance to sterilization to resistance to eliminationism through open warfare. It then places the recirculation of populationism in the context of the current rise of American conservatism generally, while noting that the tendencies continue to extend beyond the most overt forms of white supremacy and American exceptionalism, providing a channel for the liberal expression of similar assumptions and affects.

CHAPTER ONE

Structures of Anti-commun(al)ist Populationism

This chapter locates the rise of Euro-American populationist eliminationism in the origins of capitalism in sixteenth-century Britain and its efforts to expand through colonialism and settler-colonialism. It traces the development of populationist thought through efforts to eliminate indigenous communalism and notes its scientized expression in eugenics. It illustrates that war has long been viewed as a method for solving “population problems” (which have also been called “expansion of races” problems), and that this thinking not only continues through the Second World War, but expands in the post-war period, albeit in ways that are modified for new circumstances.

An impulse toward the admixture of population control, capitalist revolution, anti-commun(al)ism,³⁴ sexism, and various, fluid forms of “othering” can be seen in the sixteenth century, if not earlier.³⁵ Cotton Mather considered opposition to the subordination of women, to empire, and to private property to be an affront to “order.” As Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh note, he dubbed such opposition, found in groups like the Pequot Indians, the hydra. The hydra is a wild, multi-headed beast which, said Mather, had to have some of its heads decapitated so that it could be tamed and domesticated (5-6).

³⁴ The phrase “anti-commun(al)ism” is intended to express that the anti-communist impulse does not mean anti-Stalinism, anti-Marxism, or anti-totalitarianism. Instead, it derives from tendencies long-predating these figures and ideas. It arises from the need of a small, capitalist ruling class to limit or reduce the power of cohering masses of people so that they can be made to produce for the owning class. This can, did, and does involve eliminating parts of the mass through killing, sterilization, forced migration, and more.

³⁵ Page references in this section are to: Linebaugh, P., Rediker, M. (2000). *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston. Beacon Press.

Mather was a manifestation of an emerging capitalist origins project, or “jihad,” involving vast human reconfigurations. This was a “worldwide process spanning five hundred years” that sought to transfer, repurpose and/or dispose of the “common” masses (15-17). Peasants were to be driven from the countryside, their land and resources privatized, and into new urban concentrations where they were set to work for and rent from the new resource-holders, producing what would later come to be called GDP. In the unfolding arrangement, drums called the new subjects to work and emerging “Laws Divine, Moral, and Martial promised terror and death to any who dared to resist.” Torture, mutilation, and killing reinforced a “culture of fear” and coercion that was “indispensable to the creation of labor-power” as an embodied “commodity” and determinant of worth (50, 56).

As argued by Lord Chancellor of England Francis Bacon, war could be seen as a large-scale version of punishing and eliminating insubordination. Parts of the “multitudes” who stood in the way of the revolution were open to elimination and reeducation by either capital punishment or war. He saw the multitudes as “swarms,” “shoals,” and “routs,” all terms referring to groupings of non-human animals. Discourse associated resistant masses with disorder, “monstrosity,” and wild animality, which, along with Biblical influences, worked to foster a “thinly veiled” atmosphere implicitly suggesting and encouraging “extirpation and genocide” (39-40, 61). Others who benefited from the emerging economic structures similarly differentiated themselves from the masses by grouping them in with other “species” seen as inferior and thus open to elimination at any whim of superiors (41). What Rediker and Linebaugh call the “specter of communism,” the constant threat of this wild herd combining its numbers to resist the new order or overturn its structures where already established, was a potentiality that Bacon said must be eradicated “from the face of the earth” (65).

Growth of the masses, with their heretical claim that “all men” have a shared entitlement to the land and its wealth, was thus a fundamental “challenge” to people in Bacon’s position (66). Thomas Hobbes, who also saw the multiplying force as a wild hydra, lamented that a would-be hydra tamer, a Hercules, could cut off one head and watch “two other heads [grow] in its place” (69). The term “proletariat” arose in English usage around this time. It originally signified not only the bottom class of commoner, but “subjects” who simply “multiplie,” adding “nothing to the Commonwealth but children.” Ruling classes seeking to break and profit off of the hydra thus wrung their hands over how to solve the problem of its multiplying heads, or “overpopulation,” leading to more “scarcely veiled suggestions of genocide” (140-141). Rediker and Linebaugh see the era’s mass burning of “witches” as an expression of the ascendant concern over numbers and fertility of the masses intended to be subordinate (93). Specific heads of the hydra consisted of forces such as “‘independent women’ (Cotton Mather),” “‘motley urban mobs’ (Peter Oliver),” and “‘rural barbarians of the commons’ [that is, peasants] (Thomas Malthus).” Malthus’s 1798 *Essay on the Principle of Population* would become one of the most influential Western tracts, combining themes of cleansing evil with exculpating arguments that population limitation was carried out not to limit the power, reorder, and siphon the production of the masses, but for their benefit; not to take their resources and impoverish them, but to relieve their supposed poverty, hunger, and so on. Hydra-tamers could thus circumvent the issues of their exploitationist accumulationism, claim benevolent intent, and conveniently blame poverty and other problems, real or invented, on “overpopulation,” which they would be happy to help relieve. Figures in the upper echelons of the system, though, such as “generals,” “officials, population theorists, policemen, [and] manufacturers,” continued to make clear their contempt for the oppositional power conferred by “growth” of the masses. They “offered up their

courses, which called down Herculean destruction upon the hydra's heads." Elimination of hydra-heads through "hangings, burnings, mutilations, starvings, and decapitations" filled the unfolding "black book of capitalism" (329).

So did war. Eliminating obstacles to capitalist expansion through warfare, by reducing numbers and group solidarities, or commun(al)ism, was integral to hydra-taming and the implementation of "order." To pacify and reorganize Ireland, the British set about "to bring famine" and ruin (said Edmund Spenser), using mass defoliation to expose the wild, defiant mass (22) and cut it down to size, eliminating 504,000 of its constituents between 1641 and 1652 through combination of "the sword, Plague, Famine, Hardship and Banishment" (or forced migration), as William Petty put it (62). The Virginia Company extended the project into the New World (26), productively eliminating and reordering tens of millions.³⁶ Nick Fischer locates the American continuation of the capitalist revolution in the nation's anti-indigenous settler-colonialism, arguing that, as a conquering, capitalist society, anti-commun[al]ism may be the defining American characteristic. Native American group solidarities, or "communal loyalties," were "a source of political resistance" and power; a threat to the philosophy and extension of "private property" and the Euro-American patriarchal family structure.³⁷ Reducing the size of indigenous groups and fractionalizing them (such as through allotment³⁸) became integral to the settler project. Patrick Wolfe similarly sees in American settler colonialism an emergent and persisting, racially-invigorated "logic of elimination" for dealing with the native "communist menace."³⁹

³⁶ Stannard, David E. (1992). *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*. Oxford University Press. New York. Oxford.

³⁷ Fischer, N. (2016). *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anticommunism*. University of Illinois Press. P. 27.

³⁸ Wolfe, P. (2016). *Traces of History*. Verso. P. 166.

³⁹ Wolfe (2016). P. 58, 166, 171.

As the witch-burning connection suggests, anti-commun(al)ist populationism is highly gendered, singling out the feminine for particular reproductive control and punishment for defiance. In opposition, Marie D. Ralstin-Lewis (Cherokee)⁴⁰ notes that most indigenous societies were or are matriarchal: women are sources of strength, resilience, and power. They hold influential and respected positions, are viewed as sources of guidance and spirituality, and are consulted for many reasons, including political decision-making and resource allocation. These characteristics made the subjugation and control of indigenous femininity of tantamount importance to American anti-communist hegemony. As patriarchal structures were imposed on indigenous societies, women were specifically targeted for death and, in life, lost domestic authority, voting rights, and sexual autonomy.⁴¹

The emergence of racialization as form of differentiation adds another element to populationist anti-commun(al)ism. Michael Byrd and Linda Clayton argue that the European belief in the inferiority of people of color has roots in pre-Renaissance Europe's enslavement of African people and 700 years of religious warfare. The resulting perceptions⁴² helped to inform the creation of European modes of science and medicine during the Renaissance, providing foundations for "scientific racism." Scientific racism became a professionalized, "integral part of the intellectual world-view that nurtured the rise of modern biology," anthropology, and other fields. It was adapted to new circumstances, offering rationalizations for settler-colonialism by providing, for example, racial hierarchies.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ralstin-Lewis (2005).

⁴¹ Ralstin-Lewis (2005). Pp. 72-3; Pegoraro (2015).

⁴² Byrd, W. & Clayton, L. (2000). *An American Health Dilemma: A Medical History of African Americans and the Problem of Race: Beginnings to 1900*. Taylor & Francis Group. Pp. 82-3.

⁴³ Byrd & Clayton. (2000). Pp. 82-85.

In the late 1800s, the field of eugenics – the official discipline of scientific studies of race and racial improvement – began to materialize in these atmospheres. The founder of the discipline, Francis Galton, defined its goal as to ensure that “humanity shall be represented by the fittest races.”⁴⁴ Practitioners shared the vision: “all eugenicists” believed that the Western nation-state had an “obligation to protect the white [race].”⁴⁵ As the field emerged, popular discourse and debate around “extermination” of inferior races, associated with savagery and wild-animalism, was common.⁴⁶ For example, L. Frank Baum, future author of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, called publicly in 1890 for the “total extermination of the Indians. Having wronged them for centuries,” he reasoned, “we had better, in order to protect our civilization, follow it up by one more wrong and wipe these untamed and untamable creatures from the face of the earth.”⁴⁷ Baum thus made extermination both an act of eliminating that which could not be domesticated and mercy-killing in the interest of the victim, similar to euthanasia. These ideas shared territory with those of Malthus and were also being employed in eugenics. President Theodore Roosevelt, a proponent of racial science, similarly remarked that at least 90%, and, more likely, 100%, of indigenous people would need to be killed because of their inherent inferiority and wildness.⁴⁸

Roosevelt was also concerned about “race suicide”: the eugenically influenced idea that the white race was allowing its numbers and vitality to decline. The concern was sharpened by the prospect that other races could someday out-breed and overwhelm or contaminate and

⁴⁴ Hansen & King (2013). P. 8-9.

⁴⁵ Hansen & King (2013). P. 58.

⁴⁶ Trafzer, Clifford E. & Hyer, J. R. *Exterminate Them! Written Accounts of the Murder, Rape, and Slavery of Native Americans during the California Gold Rush, 1848-1868*. Michigan State University Press, 1999.

⁴⁷ Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*. City Lights Publishers, 2018. P. 207.

⁴⁸ Stannard (1992). Pp. 134, 245-6.

eliminate the Anglos. The notion of “race suicide” was conceived by sociologist Edward Alsworth Ross, who argued that whites must maintain high fecundity to fuel imperial expansion and settlement and prevent the world and its resources from being claimed by the “children of the brown and the yellow races.” Roosevelt combined this fear with the idea that the act of conquering and colonizing could itself simultaneously revitalize Anglo-American virility through “strenuous” activity and adventurism. At the same time, it would encourage women to keep to their reproductive labor in the home and fulfill their own responsibilities to prevent race suicide.⁴⁹ Yet another necessity for the preservation of whiteness, said Ross, was to create “immigration barriers” to prevent racial contamination from without until “population pressure” in foreign countries could be relieved enough to pre-empt their migration to the US: a policy with similarities to what in the Cold War would be called “containment.” Relief of population pressure could be achieved, Ross inferred, by lowering population growth or numbers of people in colonized countries. The prospect of “differential fertility,” the idea that “unfit” stocks would outbreed, overpower, and then loot (essentially, counter-colonize) the “fit” races, represented a related anxiety. Ideas of eugenics, human numbers, overpopulation, and population pressure merged and intermingled.⁵⁰

The ideas also found expression in American ideas about white fecundity. From the beginning of the British and US settler projects, calls for partial or total reductions in the numbers of people cast as inferior beings and obstacles to hegemony were combined with calls for the superior beings to out-breed them. Cambridge-trained scholar Philip Vincent, excited by the war of extermination against the Pequots and the opportunity to replace them with superior

⁴⁹ Eagle, J. (2017). *Imperial Affects: Sensational Melodrama and the Attractions of American Cinema*. Rutgers University Press. Ch. 1.

⁵⁰ Connelly (2008). Pp. 41-42.

material, boasted in 1638 that the English would now “beget and bring forth more children than any other nation in the world.”⁵¹ While encouraging the elimination of indigenous peoples and their philosophies and social systems, figures like Washington and Jefferson simultaneously encouraged the mass-production of white Euro-Americans. Jefferson called the United States the “nest from which all [the] America[n] [continent], North and South is to be peopled.” He hoped that the nation’s “rapid multiplication” would grant it the power and substance to “cover the whole northern, if not the southern, continent.”⁵² Carroll Kakel points out that “as a lightly populated nation seeking to build a continental empire, maximizing [white] women’s reproductive capacity,” (while attacking the reproductivity and independence of indigenous women), topped the list of American “policy imperative[s].” George Washington, known as the “father” of the nation, said that the most important action for Western settlers to pursue, what he dubbed the “first and great commandment,” was to “Increase and Multiply.”⁵³ In 1846, Senator Andrew Kennedy referred to the US’s then remarkably high birthrates as the “American multiplication table.”⁵⁴ Jacksonian era Democratic Party promoter John O’Sullivan, after consulting with Jackson, asserted that part of why US expansionism is “not to be viewed in the same light as the invasions and conquests of the States of the old world” is “American fecundity,” which illustrates that American expansion is the “manifest design of providence.”⁵⁵ From a population of 250,000 in 1700, the US mounted a “demographic onslaught” against

⁵¹ Drinnon, Richard. (1980.) *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-hating and Empire Building*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis. Pp. 49-50.

⁵² Kakel, Carroll. (2011.) *The American West and Nazi East: A Comparative and Interpretive Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan. P. 35.

⁵³ Kakel (2011). Pp. 49-50.

⁵⁴ Kakel (2011). 143.

⁵⁵ Kakel (2011). 38.

Native Americans, using birth rates, immigration, extirpation and assimilation (or domestication) to build the nation to 63 million by 1890 and well over three-hundred million, today.⁵⁶

Eugenics thus emerged out of a desire to both protect and nurture the white race. But its ideas were also supportive of the capitalist need for a subordinate laboring class. Eugenicists concluded that most people, the masses, were biologically appropriate for performing labor while a small number of people were fit to be owners or managers, deserving of disproportionate claim to the output of the masses' labor. People entirely extraneous to the industrial machine, which could include people for whom jobs were currently unavailable or who were not wanted as part of the society, became "surplus"; part of the constitutive material of "overpopulation." Since a surplus is unproductive under this definition, at least temporarily, it requires an allotment of resources, or social expenditure. In an ideological system in which non-participation (or opposition) means worthlessness and creates a drain, or negative value, surplus populations are often met with ridicule, opening them to forms of malleability. These can include exclusion, sterilization, relocation, or even death. Here, death is productive – a positive value – in that it helps to preclude a diversion of resources. At the same time, it can help to repress or eliminate sources of opposition to the ideological system itself.⁵⁷ Those cast as constituting overpopulation can thus be groups with alternative ideologies and epistemologies.

Sterilization was first used as a way to eliminate unfit members of the white race and was employed alongside extermination of indigenous people. Prior to the second World War, the US

⁵⁶ Kakel (2011). 143-4; Horne notes that the founding fathers designed their legal system in part to attract more white settlers to help maintain slavery. Piketty finds that the US's contemporary lead in economic growth over Europe is attributable to the US's continued population growth and Europe's population stagnation. See: Horne, Gerald. (2014.) *The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America*. New York University Press; Piketty, Thomas. (2017.) *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. P. 378.

⁵⁷ Murphy (2017). P. 84.

passed numerous eugenic sterilization laws and compulsorily sterilized thousands of “unnecessary” white people determined to be unfit, feeble-minded,⁵⁸ idiotic, moronic, imbecilic, criminal, alcoholic, or hysterical.⁵⁹ But as Kerry Kamakaoka‘ilima Ellen Long points out, as elimination of indigenous peoples continued in traditional forms, eugenic propaganda began to be used as an assimilative psychological tactic against indigenous peoples, such as Hawaiians. Designations like feeble-mindedness and hysteria were made based on race as well as class, gender, politics, sexuality, ability, and general social conformity.⁶⁰ This continued in later years in Canada, for example, when indigenous people were disproportionately determined to be “mentally defective,” and would soon come to be overrepresented as “surplus.”⁶¹

Roosevelt’s support for policies to contain Asians to Asia, which included by waging war against them,⁶² was part of a broader Western discourse known as the Yellow Peril. As fears increased that multiplying Asian “hordes” would overwhelm the West, numerous laws against Asian immigration to the United States were passed, starting in the late 1800s.⁶³ While viewing themselves as victims of Asian aggression, Britain and the United States were attempting to colonize China. These efforts shattered indigenous food distributions systems and caused unprecedented famines that have been compared to nuclear holocausts, both because of their destructiveness and their strategic importance in addressing problems of Chinese “overpopulation.” While millions of people in Asia starved, the United States grew the largest grain surplus in world history. An American missionary proposed to Congress that the United

⁵⁸ Long, Kerry K. E. (2014.) “Unfit for a Queen: Mo‘Okū‘Auhau, National Consciousness and Eugenics in Territorial Hawai‘i.” UH Manoa MA Dissertation. E.g., 46.

⁵⁹ Hansen & King. (2013).

⁶⁰ Long (2014). Pp. 46-7.

⁶¹ Hansen and King, (2013). P. 98 par. 3.

⁶² Connelly (2008). Pp. 41-42.

⁶³ Pfaelzer, J. (2007). *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans*. New York: Random House.

States at least stop extorting indemnities from the Chinese government so that it would have additional funds to allocate towards famine relief, but the idea was rejected.⁶⁴ As they had in earlier, similar contexts, economics and food became unspoken weapons of racial and ideological security and expansion, now in the ascendant atmosphere of eugenics as well as populationism.

Roosevelt's idea of using war to eliminate population threats and obstacles to Euro-American structures was mulled over by others. Hoping to secure the "occupation of Australia by European people" in the face of the threat of growing populations of color, H.L. Wilkinson suggests in *The World's Population Problems and a White Australia* (1930) that, given what is already claimed to be the urgency of the population crisis, "war for the purpose of relieving overpopulation in certain countries cannot be regarded as improbable: in some cases no other means seem to be available."⁶⁵ In 1909, Charles Edward Woodruff published his weighty volume on population, *Expansion of Races*. Woodruff was an American doctor, prolific author, associate editor of the journal *American Medicine*, and a US Naval Academy-educated lieutenant colonel who performed two tours in the Philippines. *American Medical Biographies* calls his *Expansion of Races* "an important book that is a treasure house of anthropological and ethnological facts."⁶⁶ In it, Woodruff argues that overpopulation is a disease of peace that can be remedied, at least in part, by "thinning out" populations by raising "death rates," such as by waging "war of extermination." Another way that societies have dealt with population problems, he notes, is by

⁶⁴ Davis, M. (2001). *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*. London. New York: Verso. P. 77-78 and "Gunboats and Messiahs."

⁶⁵ Wilkinson, H. L. (1930). *The World's Population Problems and a White Australia*. P.S. King and Son, Ltd. London. Pp. vi, 318.

⁶⁶ Kelly, H., & Burrage, Walter L. (1920). *American Medical Biographies*. The Norman Remington Company. P. 1,262.

eliminating their most vulnerable members, such as the “crippled” (76, 128-9). This has the double advantage of minimizing the potential for resistance and ridding society of its most worthless resource-consumers. On an international scale, he argues, population is a globally connected pressure system, like a fluid (8-9). Places said to be overpopulated, in large part due to a lack of war, include Japan (particularly Tokyo) and China (125-126), but concerned parties should be wary of the “savage” races, in general. Thus, war could and should be employed to help solve international population problems and contain the expansion of races.

To help on the domestic front, the United States banned interracial marriage between whites and anyone with 1/32nd, or in numerous places “one drop,” of African ancestry. This was part of a system of race-law that restricted citizenship, marriage, freedom of movement, and social standing. These legal innovations made the United States the world’s most racially-based juridical entity of the early 20th century.⁶⁷ When the Nazis came to power and searched the globe for a nation on which to base their own racially-motivated legal system, they thus decided on one model: the United States. However, the more “moderate” Nazis found American race-law too extreme, arbitrary, and pseudo-scientific. Only the Reich’s most “radical” officials favored adopting American race-laws in unadulterated form.⁶⁸ The Nazis thus created a system that they thought was more scientific and “liberal” than the American one, in which Germans were allowed to marry and assimilate people with one-fourth Jewish ancestry.⁶⁹ On the Eastern front,

⁶⁷ Whitman, James Q. (2017.) *Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*. Princeton University Press. 138 par. 2.

⁶⁸ Whitman (2017). Ch. 1.

⁶⁹ Washington, Harriet A. (2006.) *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*. 1st ed., Doubleday. P. 194 par. 5.

Nazis would be allowed to adopt and domesticate people of full Slavic descent, similar to American frontiers.⁷⁰

Once the Final Solution arose from what proved to be the insurmountable “confluence of roadblocks” to German manifest destiny in the Wild East,⁷¹ a term Kakel uses to signify the Nazi “obsession” with American Western mythology, the shock of Nazi genocide against white Europeans stigmatized the field of eugenics and explicit racism, in general. However, in the post-war United States, and contrary to ongoing, general understanding, American eugenic activity and thought expanded and was embraced by a wider public. Eugenic sterilizations began to rise.⁷² Indeed, scholars have called the post-war period in the United States the “renaissance of eugenics” and have illustrated the ascendance of a eugenic “climate of opinion” or general “ethos.”⁷³ But it is also true that the crude, open pursuit of eugenics and explicit racism were increasingly socially unacceptable.

The apparent paradox of the denunciation of eugenics and racism and simultaneous “renaissance of eugenics” was possible because of the transfer of eugenic ideas into, and their being essentially laundered through, alternate disciplines. These were principally demography, economics, and psychology. The pursuit of eugenics, or the affects that had been expressed through eugenics, were now, and in a sense once again, overwhelmingly channeled through the overarching structure and discourse of populationism.⁷⁴ Demography, the official statistical study

⁷⁰ Kakel, C. (2011). *The American West and the Nazi East: A Comparative and Interpretive Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁷¹ Hixson, Walter L. (2013.) *American Settler Colonialism*. Palgrave MacMillan. P. 209, n85; “Wild East” is Kakel’s term.

⁷² Connelly (2008). P. 117.

⁷³ “Climate of opinion”: Hansen & King (2013). P. 192. “Ethos”: p. 7; On the post-WWII “renaissance of eugenics”, see Hansen & King (2013) and: Kühl (2013).

⁷⁴ Kühl (2013); Sharpless, J. (1997). “Population Science, Private Foundations, and Development Aid: The Transformation of Demographic Knowledge in the United States, 1945-1965.” In F. Cooper, & R. Packard,

and analysis of population demographics, would in particular experience a meteoric rise in the post-war intellectual/political complex.⁷⁵ Eugenics could now essentially be pursued covertly, even subliminally, by focusing on “population problems.” Again, Malthus would be invoked to advance claims of benevolent intent that would barely conceal an atmosphere of what Rediker and Linebaugh called “contempt” for defiant masses and a longing for “genocide” and the “extirpation” of communalist resistance to Western hegemony.

While population size had long been a concern and threat to capitalist elites, the anxiety would reach perhaps unprecedented heights in the post-war United States. This is because as the globe essentially became the new American frontier for the expansion of capitalist, anti-commun(al)ist hegemony, colonized populations the world over started to rebound from the effects of colonialism and increase, including within the bounds of the United States. In some cases, rates of growth were similar to those that had been seen in Euro-American societies and, when advantageous, as in American settler-colonialism, celebrated and encouraged by them. In addition to registering this real increase, though, post-war American populationists would also see growth in places where it did not exist or where colonized-population birth-rates had risen but were already declining or stagnating.⁷⁶ In both cases, the perceived increase would register as threatening.

Thus, after WWII, the “overpopulation”⁷⁷ concern and sub-discipline of eugenics were sustained while open eugenics was sublimated and outwardly rejected.⁷⁸ Scores of former

International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge (pp. 176-200). University of California Press; Murphy (2017).

⁷⁵ Hartmann, H., Unger, C. R., & Dörnemann, M. (2014). *A World of Populations: Transnational Perspectives on Demography in the Twentieth Century*. New York, Oxford, England: Berghan Books.

⁷⁶ Connelly (2008).

⁷⁷ Hansen & King (2013) note “population control” was intended to “ward off race suicide”. P. 186 par. 2.

⁷⁸ Pegoraro (2015). P. 161.

eugenicists and others with similar concerns moved into populationism and began advocating for checks on population growth.⁷⁹ As Stefan Kühl notes, “the scientists who at the end of the 1940s took up the struggle against overpopulation were practically all connected to one another through the American and European eugenics movements.”⁸⁰ That the swathes of supposedly overpopulated people who were supposed to disappear⁸¹ were largely the same ones who Anglo-Americans wanted to triumph over in openly racial and eugenic visions was now said to be mere coincidence. “Legitimate” Malthusian reasons (such as poverty, environment, and political tension) cast combating population growth as not only benevolent, objective, humanitarian, and necessary, but incredibly urgent. However, stitches of traditionally expressed concerns continued to show. For example, one prominent figure in the population milieu, a descendant of Charles Darwin, stated in 1959 that measures had to be taken to prevent the United States and the world from falling into the hands of the “black” or “yellow” people.⁸²

As Americans began to view people like the Vietnamese as Indians on the new American global frontier,⁸³ concerns about overpopulation reached the level of frenzy. However, the concerns had also found expression *during* WWII. As Gotz Aly and Susanne Heim have argued, in the Nazi attempt to expand German structures into the “wild East,”⁸⁴ German overpopulation theory became central to justifying campaigns of resettlement, reassignment, and

⁷⁹ Hansen & King (2013). P. 197 par. 2.

⁸⁰ Kühl, S. (2013). *For the Betterment of the Race: The Rise and Fall of the International Movement for Eugenics and Racial Hygiene*. Palgrave Macmillan. P 151.

⁸¹ Connelly (2008). P. 91.

⁸² Hansen & King (2013). P. 197 par. 4.

⁸³ Courtwright, D. (1996). *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to The Inner City*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press. P. 106.

⁸⁴ Kakel, C. (2011). *The American West and the Nazi East: A Comparative and Interpretive Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan.

eugenic/genocidal extermination.⁸⁵ Populationism rose along with demography in the German state/intellectual complex, a tight relationship between academia and state, theory and praxis, on which Americans had modeled *their* state/intellectual complex in the early 20th century.⁸⁶ During the war, Nazi demographers coordinating with the state crafted scenarios in which it was understood that, in order for the German industrial, state-corporate machine to expand and thrive, the surplus population in overpopulated areas would need to be transferred, tamed and ordered. This would relieve population pressure and benevolently alleviate its negative effects. Suggestions to make the eliminations necessary to relieve pressure (and eliminate resistance) were rarely explicit. Instead, they were imparted through implication. Nazi populationism gradually moved to supplant racial anti-communism with more “legitimate” and benevolent justifications.

After the war, and as Native American populations began to rise, American overpopulation theory helped to renew the attack on indigenous femininity, offering benevolent justifications for the sterilization of indigenous women and other colonized or stigmatized people around the world.⁸⁷ Whereas in earlier periods, elimination had been justified as relieving the misery of the “red devils” while serving the greater good of world progress,⁸⁸ proponents of sterilization now claimed that Native Americans were poor because there were too many of them and that they wanted to help enrich them by lowering their numbers. Thus, again, elimination was carried out for the sake of indigenous people. Once enriched through numerical reduction,

⁸⁵ Aly, Gotz & Heim, Susanne. (2002). *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, N.J.

⁸⁶ Rodgers, D. (1998). *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Pp. 110-111.

⁸⁷ Hansen & King (2013) note that the “battle for reproductive rights was waged by individuals whose previous aim had been large-scale coerced eugenic sterilization.” P. 183 par. 1.

⁸⁸ Pfaelzer, J. (2007). *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans*. New York: Random House. P. 19.

populationist theory posited, indigenous people would *choose* to be complacent regarding American hegemony. Complacency would not derive from their disempowerment via population reduction but from reductions in their population making them wealthy converts to American capitalism.

This argumentation was part of an ascendant ideological maneuver in the post-war period in which Westerners blamed economic hardship among colonized people on what was said, in longstanding tradition, to be their irresponsible reproductive behavior. Once again, this would divert attention (at least in the minds of those advancing the claim) from colonial/capitalist siphoning of wealth from colonized people by blaming the victims.⁸⁹ As white women fought for the right to *access* sterilization (doctors were often reluctant to sterilize white females even where doing so was legal) indigenous women were thus aggressively pressured or coerced into sterilization. Federal programs aimed sterilization campaigns at indigenous families:⁹⁰

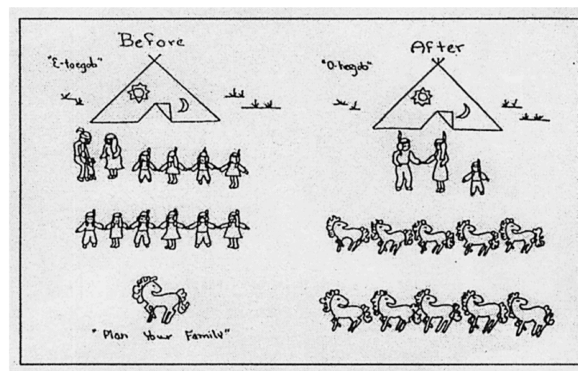


Figure 1.1: Plan Your Family

⁸⁹ Kühl, S. (2013). *For the Betterment of the Race: The Rise and Fall of the International Movement for Eugenics and Racial Hygiene*. Palgrave Macmillan. P. 151.

⁹⁰ Ralstin-Lewis (2005). Information and images.

Pamphlet issued by Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) in 1974 titled “Plan Your Family.”⁹¹ The implications of the image – in which an indigenous family is better off with ten horses instead of ten children – takes on additional meaning in context with close reading of populationist thought in chapter 2.

Although health and life-expectancy on reservations was vastly lower than in the general population, the Indian Health Service “always seemed to be short of personnel and equipment.”⁹² Yet, when the opportunity came to carry out mass sterilization of indigenous people, enthusiasm, energy, resources and ambition materialized in abundance. Government-funded doctors began to sterilize thousands of native women.⁹³ Indigenous researchers and others who have studied what followed find that, in a few years in the early 1970s, 25 to perhaps more than 50 percent of all indigenous women of childbearing age (and 10% of indigenous men) in the United States were coercively sterilized.⁹⁴ The rate of sterilization of some indigenous nations reached 80%. Overall, as many as 60,000 to 70,000 indigenous women in the US were coercively sterilized by federally-funded doctors.⁹⁵ During this period, while birthrates for black women declined 100%

⁹¹ Ralstin-Lewis (2005).

⁹² Johansen, Bruce E. (2014.) *Encyclopedia of the American Indian Movement*, ABC-CLIO, LLC. P. 238.

⁹³ Johansen (2014). P. 236.

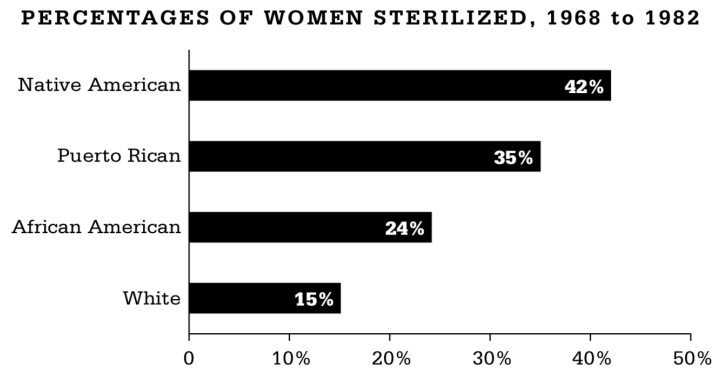
⁹⁴ Hansen & King. (2013). P. 254 n107.

⁹⁵ Three-thousand-four-hundred is the government-recognized number of sterilizations that were performed. This is the number of sterilizations that were found to have been carried out in a government inquiry that investigated only 3 IHS hospitals and then ceased its inquiry. It also interviewed no indigenous women. Thus, the finding of 3,400 itself, as it is not extrapolated to include any sterilizations that occurred in the other hospitals and districts, “did not even begin to arrive at a total number of sterilizations.” As of 1977, IHS operated some 187 hospitals or clinics (*Encyclopedia of AIM*, 237). Nevertheless, Ralstin-Lewis points out, this underestimate equates to the per-capita equivalent of 452,000 white women at the time being coercively sterilized. The higher and more likely numbers, then, equate to many millions. See: Ralstin-Lewis (2005); Torpy, Sally J. "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization: On the Trail of Tears in the 1970s." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 24, no. 2 (2000): 1-22; Carpio, Myla Vicenti. "The Lost Generation: American Indian Women and Sterilization Abuse". *Social Justice: San Francisco*. Vol. 31, Iss. 4, (2004): 40-53; Lawrence, Jane. "The Indian Health Service and the Sterilization of Native American Women." *The American Indian Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2000): 400-19; Peal, Tiesha Rashon. "The Continuing Sterilization of Undesirables in America." *Rutgers Race and the Law Review* 6, no. 1 (2004): 225-246; Volscho, Thomas W. "Sterilization Racism and Pan-Ethnic Disparities of the Past Decade: The Continued Encroachment on Reproductive Rights." *Wicazo Sa Review* 25, no. 1 (2010): 17-31.

more than those of white women, birthrates for indigenous women fell 700% more than those of white women.⁹⁶

Table 1.1: Percentages of Women Sterilized, 1968 to 1982

Source: Ralstin-Lewis (2005).



In a 1974 lawsuit brought by victims, Federal District Court Judge Gesell stated that "over the last few years, an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 low-income persons have been sterilized annually under federally funded programs," an unknown number of whom were "improperly coerced." Chase notes that, overall, sterilizations in the US during this period were carried out at the same rate "at which poor people were subjected to compulsory sterilization in Nazi Germany," whose sterilization laws of 1933 had been modeled on those of the United States.⁹⁷

The majority of the physicians who performed these sterilizations were "white, Euro-American males."⁹⁸ In surveys that asked why they supported sterilization, some doctors admitted that they felt that there were already "too many minority individuals causing problems in the nation," such as those involved in the Black Panthers and the American Indian Movement.

⁹⁶ Graph: Ralstin-Lewis (2005).

⁹⁷ Byrd, W. Michael., and Linda A. Clayton. *An American Health Dilemma, V. 2: Race, Medicine, And Health Care in The United States 1900-2000*. New York: Routledge, 2015. Pp. 452. you only need to provide full citation the first time you cite the source

⁹⁸ Lawrence, Jane. (2000.) "The Indian Health Service and the Sterilization of Native American Women." *The American Indian Quarterly* 24, no. 3: 400-19.

In part through their numerical growth, this idea expresses, African and Native Americans were gaining too much power and visibility. Adding to the incentive to try to disempower indigenous people, corporations (also predominantly led by white, Euro-American males) were prospecting indigenous lands and discovering oil, gas, copper, coal, and uranium.⁹⁹

Egregious as it was, the mass sterilization of Native Americans, African Americans, Puerto Ricans and others within the jurisdiction of the United States was just one element of a broader, emerging effort that saw the globe as its ideal domain. As Woodruff saw global population as an interconnected system, like a fluid, domestic and foreign population problems were seen as essentially identical and interconnected. If allowed to progress, population growth anywhere would lead essentially to the same undesirable outcomes. These included disorder, environmental degradation, and seizure of resources by growing masses of people seen as moving towards sovereignty by increasing their numbers, or communalizing. If numbers in the United States or elsewhere grew high enough, populationists feared, the masses could combine their numbers, form great powers, and jeopardize Western hegemony and consumption. As these ideas swept American society, the United States became the central hub in the global promotion and funding of sterilization, birth control, and “family planning” campaigns that aggressively sterilized millions of people in colonized countries around the world. This was often done in brutal, unsterile, assembly-line-like camps.¹⁰⁰ The efforts included making famine relief contingent on sterilization – a modified version of simply providing no famine relief while colonizing and extorting resources from famine-stricken populations.

⁹⁹ Ralstin-Lewis (2005).

¹⁰⁰ See, e.g.: Connelly (2008); Connelly, M. (2006); Hansen & King (2013).

While sterilization campaigns motivated by American populationism could be pushed in nations around the world whose governments were allied with the US, sympathetic to its aims, or seeking its support, concerns about rising numbers did not end with allied nations. The greatest concern may have been with nations that were either openly opposed to or unaligned with American capitalism, particularly those currently under Western vassalage but where people were growing in population and organizing for independence. These cases were usually cast as on the precipice of communism, the perceived evil and barbaric condition of empowerment of the masses who are intended to be subordinate to capitalist elites. In this view, an area that is commun(al)ist is overpopulated; if an area exists where people are mounting successful opposition to American hegemony, then there are too many people there, and their numbers should be checked or reduced. With demographers and other populationists taking positions of unprecedented centrality in American strategic and popular discourse,¹⁰¹ supposed population problems in US vassal states became top priorities.

Scholars of the post-war ascendance of demography and overpopulation theory Corinna R. Unger and Heinrich Hartmann have pointed out that post-war demographic thinking was being applied to both foreign and domestic policy. Social science knowledge achieved praxis via the American state “particularly” in two areas: 1) the administration of life-support to the colonized world (i.e., foreign aid) and 2), “the Korean War and the Vietnam War.”¹⁰² The authors stop the second line of inquiry at this provocative statement. But, indeed, while the populationist desire to check and eliminate (particularly non-white) communal resistance to Western

¹⁰¹ Kühl (2013).

¹⁰² Hartmann, Unger, & Dörnemann (2014). P. 65.

hegemony by eliminating swathes of people can be seen in sterilization efforts, this goal and way of thinking did not end with areas where sterilization campaigns were possible. In the next chapter, thus I look closely at how post-war populationist thinking encouraged the use of warfare for solving population/commun(al)ism problems in areas where population was rising and which were seen as crucial to the maintenance of American global power.

CHAPTER TWO

A Window into Post-War Populationism

This chapter briefly looks more closely at the specifics of how populationism rose to prominence in the post-war period, then devotes most of its length to close readings and synthesis of populationist thinking as expressed through seven important texts by post-war populationist authors. The principle argument of the chapter is that post-war populationist thinking still viewed war and other means of raising death rates as methods for solving diagnosed “population problems.” Authors cannot advocate using warfare to solve what were formerly called these “expansion of races” concerns as openly as some mainstream authors, like Woodruff, did in the pre-war period. But even though they can no longer openly advocate death-control solutions for controlling population, authors still want to make clear that death-control would not only be effective, but far more effective than birth-control.

The Holocaust did not become a part of the common discourse in the United States until more than two decades after it took place. After the war, the United States was allied with West Germany against the Soviet Union and there was significant overlap in officials of the Nazi State and the post-Nazi West Germany. Raising the issue of the Holocaust, especially as former Nazi officials were brought into the United States for official tours of the country, was considered a leftist/Soviet/communist talking point and something for Americans to downplay and omit.¹⁰³ However, knowledge of the Reich’s application of eugenic/populationist logics to white people – European Jews – was still disquieting. Feelings of discomfort, gravitas, and embarrassment arose

¹⁰³ Finkelstein, N. (2015). *The Holocaust Industry*. Verso Books. Introduction.

as a result of this display of industrial, ethnically-based killing in ways that it had not done when those targeted by Euro-Americans had been people of color.¹⁰⁴ As a result, overt eugenics and racism in the United States were largely eschewed in mainstream discourse, both as a result of this self-reflection and for purposes of Cold War strategy.¹⁰⁵

As openly practiced eugenics declined, populationism went into ascendance. The following texts, on which this chapter performs close readings, are merely some prominent examples of its expressions. The rise of populationism registered in 1948 when two works diagnosing global overpopulation (particularly in Asia) became best-sellers: *Our Plundered Planet*, by Fairfield Osborn, the son of a prominent eugenicist, and *Road to Survival*, by William Vogt. The more belligerent, aggressive, and violent of these two books sold significantly better and based on this success its author, Vogt, became a travelling lecturer.¹⁰⁶

1948 also helped to initiate the rise of populationist American demography. The Rockefeller Foundation, which had long been a concerned player in eugenic/populationist issues and endeavors, was supported by the US government in a demographic mission to the Far East, including Korea.¹⁰⁷ It diagnosed overpopulation and recommended solutions, both explicit and implicit. In 1950, its report was distributed to a “who’s who” list of the most powerful figures in Washington, including the head of the CIA, the chief of international intelligence in the State Department, and the chief of the ECA, the predecessor organization to USAID.¹⁰⁸ In the 1950s, “the population explosion” became a household term. Demographers in the early 1960s

¹⁰⁴ Marcus, D. (2009). “William Wyler's World War II Films and the Bombing of Civilian Populations.” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 29(1), 79-90. P. 80.

¹⁰⁵ Blackmon, D. A. (2012). *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. London: Icon.

¹⁰⁶ Connelly (2008). P. 129; Hartmann, Unger, & Dörnemann (2014). P. 112.

¹⁰⁷ Connelly (2008). P. 119.

¹⁰⁸ Connelly (2008). P. 134, 138; Sharpless (1997). P. 198.

continued to diagnose it, warn of its existential urgency, and recommend (or signal) solutions. These figures included eugenics society-member, leading demographer, and pioneer of city-planning Philip Hauser.¹⁰⁹

In 1954, Hugh Moore, the founder of the Dixie Cup corporation, began distributing a populationist/anti-commun(al)ist pamphlet called *The Population Bomb* to thousands (and eventually millions) of Americans in the elite social tiers.¹¹⁰ Moore and others also bought space in elite-oriented publications like the *New York Times* to continue to emphasize the claimed danger. By 1965, polling indicated that the “crisis,” already ubiquitously known, was a top public concern: Americans considered overpopulation to be the second-biggest threat that they faced, sandwiched in between foreign aid (#1) and communism (#3). Texts, articles, and TV air-time continued to be devoted to discussing the problem. Perhaps the most impactful book on the subject, Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb*, self-consciously named after and conspicuously supportive of Moore’s overpopulation/communism-alchemy booklet, was first released in 1968. Ehrlich appeared on the Johnny Carson talk show “at least twenty times” to discuss his work.¹¹¹ As Charles C. Mann puts it in the *Smithsonian Magazine*, the text contributed to the American-centered populationist “wave of repression around the world.”¹¹²

Although millions of people, including many thousands in the United States, were coercively sterilized in this wave of repression, the populationist thinking that undergirded it

¹⁰⁹ Kühl (2013). P. 226, n105.

¹¹⁰ Mosher, S. W. (2008). *Population Control: Real Costs, Illusory Benefits*. Transaction Publishers. Part II; Sharpless (1997). P. 198; Ehrlich, Paul. (1971.) *The Population Bomb*. Buccaneer Books. Cutchogue, New York. Dedication page.

¹¹¹ Sabin, P. (2013). *The Bet: Paul Ehrlich, Julian Simon, and Our Gamble Over Earth's Future*. New Haven: Yale University Press. P. 3.

¹¹² Mann, C. C. (2018, January 01). “The Book That Incited a Worldwide Fear of Overpopulation.” *Smithsonian Magazine*. Smithsonian.com.

went beyond dreams of controlling numbers through birth-control. Populationist authors in this period, as well as ones who published after 1968, such as Edward Pohlman in his *How to Kill Population* (1971), illustrate that raising death rates through means like war was still being felt, understood, and implicitly suggested as a solution to claimed population problems. In fact, these texts all imply that death-rate solutions like war would be *more* effective than birth-rate solutions. Birth control, they convey, will ultimately be ineffective for solving the “population problem.” This chapter uses these and some other texts as windows into post-war overpopulation theory. It will look at how they diagnose a problem, gesture towards certain targets, and implicitly suggest deadly methods for achieving goals that align with eugenics and emerge from Euro-American capitalism.

Alarmism and urgency are recurring themes in post-war populationism. Authors strenuously argue that population growth is going to destroy the planet and that large masses of people who are unfit power may combine their forces to enslave and kill everyone.¹¹³ Humans will experience various problems on the way to this death. One is that they will run out of living-space, or what Hauser refers to in his 1961 *Population Perspectives* as “*lebensraum*.”¹¹⁴ The reference may be intended to be slightly wry, but the author, Hauser, is deadly serious about the issue of running out of room. His eugenics-society membership further suggests that he might have wanted to allude to some of the ideas associated with the term while maintaining some distance. The issue of space thus provides one illustration of how an anxiety shared by the Nazis could be navigated in the post-war period and used to incite feelings of urgency, being under racial threat, and a need for an effective response.

¹¹³ See, especially, Vogt (1948), Ehrlich (1971), and Pohlman (1971).

¹¹⁴ Hauser (1961). Pp. 7-8.

Authors give descriptive predictions to instill in readers a sense of what running out of space will *feel* like. They note that it will not be long before we all must live, for example, within a single square foot.¹¹⁵ They paint mental pictures of a planet covered in teeming mass of people.¹¹⁶ These images also received prominent visualization in publications like the *New York Times*. This one centers Africa, an atypical choice for an American paper:

THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE POPULATION BOMB THREATENS THE PEACE OF THE WORLD



SO WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

Eight years ago there were 2.5 billion people on earth. Today there are 3.5 billion—and projections are that by the year 2000 there will be more than 5 billion. The world's population is growing at a rate of 1.5 percent a year. At this rate, the world's population will reach 6 billion by the year 2000. At that time, the world's population will be so large that it will be impossible to feed, clothe, house, employ, and educate all the people. The world will be a vast, teeming mass of human beings, with no room for error. The world will be a vast, teeming mass of human beings, with no room for error. The world will be a vast, teeming mass of human beings, with no room for error.

CAMPAIGN TO CHECK THE POPULATION EXPLOSION

CAMPAIGN TO CHECK THE POPULATION EXPLOSION		TOTAL POPULATION EXPLOSION	
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE	\$100,000,000
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY	\$100,000,000	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY	\$100,000,000

Figure 2.2: *The Population Bomb*

This placement attributes the communist uprising in Vietnam to overpopulation and says that if the wider population problem is not solved, the Vietnamese “revolution” will pale in comparison to what will happen on a global scale. The ad lists government expenditures to argue that too

¹¹⁵ E.g., Hauser (1961). Pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁶ E.g., Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 62-72.

little is being spent on overpopulation. “Rat Control” is placed next to “Population Control.” Endorsers of the ad include the president of Rockefeller University and Rockefeller Prentice, a member of the Rockefeller family and a cattle-breeder who developed the technique of artificial insemination to streamline the mass-breeding of cows and other large, domesticated mammals.¹¹⁷

Also listed is Moore’s collaborator General William Draper, Jr., described as a “former ambassador to NATO.” Philip Hauser is also an endorser.

Ehrlich offers a warning that if current growth rates continue, Earth will eventually turn into a ball of people expanding outwards “with the speed of light!”¹¹⁸ Fictitious scenarios and stories about the overpopulated future emphasize that being packed in with so many people will be horrible, frustrating, and stifling.¹¹⁹

Several authors offer pastoral imagery as an example of a reward that will follow from defusing the population bomb. If the population problem is not solved, we can anticipate lifetimes of being swamped and suffocated by people. Conversely, if the population problem is solved, we will be able to enjoy green, open spaces and rejuvenating outdoor leisure time with our families.¹²⁰ In post-war American populationism, population growth thus leads to suffocation and death, while stopping the population explosion leads to the relaxing relief of a kind of Garden of Eden, spacious and lush. The Eden image draws on shared understandings and images also expressed in visual media, such as *The Andy Griffith Show*, which emerged in 1960 and ran through 1968, tracking the populationist fervor with its depiction of a slow-paced, idyllic,

¹¹⁷ From website of ABS, “The World Leader in Bovine Genetics.” Retrieved from the Internet Archive: <https://web.archive.org/web/20110411213849/http://www.absglobal.com/company-info/abs-history/>

¹¹⁸ Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 3-6.

¹¹⁹ See, e.g., Vogt (1948). Pp. 13-16; Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 53-73.

¹²⁰ See, e.g., Ehrlich (1971). P. 142; Hauser (1961). P. 138-155; Caroll Kakel (2011) notes that idyllic pastoral-life imagery has pleased Americans from early in their history, and that similar imagery can be seen in Nazi discourse.

pastoral, white town. Some authors also express a feeling that the pastoral existence is the font of true American democracy – a kind of *herrenvolk* democracy that population growth threatens to destroy.¹²¹

Malthusian arguments prominently resurface in the post-war literature. Overpopulation theorists warn that the world is on the brink of running out of resources. Growth, they say, will ensure that Earth will be utterly drained and thus become uninhabitable. Some authors, such as Osborn and Vogt, explicitly cite Malthus as a basis for this argument.¹²² Rising numbers of people means that there will be fewer resources per person. Population growth must thus be stopped so that humans can avoid mass deprivation and starvation. There are clear logical problems with the argument, such as that a greater number of people can produce *more* resources; the amount of resources is not fixed at current levels; resources can be used sustainably, etc. Some authors, such as Pohlman, even list these counter-arguments, but feel so confident that the populationist arguments will be supported in the current environment that they do not need to be countered, specifically. It quickly becomes clear, even in the earliest post-war overpopulation texts, that argumentative validity is not the real issue. There is a deeper concern being expressed: that American levels of consumption will be jeopardized. It is understood, and sometimes mentioned explicitly, that Western wealth, power, and consumption levels are possible because of the siphoning and redistribution of resources away from colonized populations and into the West. It is also understood that population growth in colonized areas will endanger Western control over resources in these areas and thus the American ability to consume them disproportionately. That

¹²¹ Hauser (1961) says that the US was closer to the ideal of the democratic Greek city-state when it was more “rural” and “agricultural” and had a more “homogenous” population. The contemporaneous “explosive growth of the Negro population in metropolitan areas” will “undoubtedly be the most serious problem of human relations in the years which lie ahead” (138-155).

¹²² Osborn (1948). Ch. 1; Vogt (1948). Pp. 226-237.

the worry is over maintaining American levels of consumption and not necessarily over dying is emphasized, for example, when Ehrlich notes that Americans have a right to take action against population growth not just if they feel mortally threatened but when they feel that their lifestyle “values,” such as their current consumption of “amenities,” are being threatened.¹²³

When readers are warned that population growth will result in the destruction of the global environment, it is also clear that there is an underlying fear: if colonized countries grow large and thus powerful enough to control their own resources and begin to use them to industrialize, like the Western countries, this will likely hasten environmental destruction. Current American levels of consumption, the argument says, require not only the resources of colonized regions, but that only Western countries use them at such high levels of consumption and pollution-production. Resistance to population growth in the post-war period thus also highlights an American desire for only the Western countries to be industrialized, at the peak of the global power hierarchy. To help justify and inspire measures against population growth, authors characterize it as a cancer that will kill its host (Earth) and then kill itself - humanity.¹²⁴ Like a cancer, then, growth must be killed before it kills “us,” the latter term mostly signifying Anglo-Americans and Europeans.¹²⁵

Yet another of the claimed problems of population growth, and one of the most prominently invoked, is the Malthusian idea that population growth causes poverty. Just as we hear that population growth augurs the total elimination of Earth’s resources, authors claim that an increasing number of people means that there will be less wealth per person. As Kühl notes, this argument diverts attention from (neo)-colonial redistribution of wealth and blames colonized

¹²³ Ehrlich (1971). P. 10.

¹²⁴ E.g. Ehrlich (1971). P. 151-153.

¹²⁵ See: Pohlman (1971). Pp. 46, 169.

people for their own poverty. It also assumes (sometimes explicitly) their stupidity and inferiority, asserting that their birth-rates could not be intentional and must therefore be the result of a lack of education or birth-control.¹²⁶

Post-war populationists suggest that the poverty that they claim will result from population growth leads to communism, and sometimes to fascism, or simply “totalitarianism.” The argument is that through population growth, people will become poor and hungry and, as a result, overthrow whatever government is in place and take control of the resources of the area for themselves. This means that the masses of people will come to constitute the state, a situation that here arises only out of desperation, not free choice or preference.

Population growth is implicitly argued to impart both power and weakness, each invoked when they best serve arguments for curbing population. It is claimed that the poor, desperate state that results from overpopulation may invade other countries and take their resources. Here, the underlying fear is that a formerly colonized, now large and empowered communist government will take *American* resources in a sort of reverse-colonization.¹²⁷ It is thus posited, somewhat self-contradictorily, that numerically growing, increasingly poor countries will mount war efforts against colonial states to attempt to relieve their hunger.

Contained within these often conflicting assertions is a belief and awareness that population growth itself will probably *not* lead to impoverishment. Rather, it will most likely *increase* a group or nation’s power and thus its ability to eschew vassalage and become independent, decide its own fate, control its own resources, and make its own political decisions. This anxiety saturates the literature and is affirmed in, for example, a 1961 demographic study

¹²⁶ See, e.g., Osborn (1948). P. 92-100.

¹²⁷ E.g., Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 128-131.

geared more towards informing a specialist, professional populationist audience of the real issues of population growth.¹²⁸ It comes through more as an underlying anxiety though, for example, when Hauser notes that growth of the native, black population in apartheid South Africa would negatively affect “world order.”¹²⁹

Because population growth is understood as a form of empowerment, it is seen as a crucial factor in the Cold War. To dominant American/Western factions, this was a war to continue the expansion of capitalist anti-commun(al)ism. By definition, this requires elimination of resistance. Particularly for colonized and/or non-industrialized people, resistance to industrial states must rely heavily on communalism, and it becomes increasingly successful as the size of the communally resisting body increases. As in the sixteenth century, post-war figures in the upper echelons of capitalist society fixated on population size, especially the size of peasant populations.¹³⁰ They saw growth in targeted or current vassal regions as movement towards successful defiance of Western capitalist vassalage; that is, as movement towards successful commun(al)ism.¹³¹

The problem of overpopulation is thus said to be most urgent in populations that have been colonized but are now growing, especially those teetering on the brink of reaching sizes at which they might achieve increased political power or, especially, independence. In 1961, Katherine and A.F.K. Organski, influential in demography and international relations,

¹²⁸ Organski & Organski (1961).

¹²⁹ Hauser (1961). Pp. 26-29.

¹³⁰ See, e.g.: Robin, R. (2001). *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military Intellectual Complex*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. P. 186 *et passim*; Connelly (2008). P. 119; Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). Pp. 60-74, 118, 119, *et passim*; Organski & Organski (1961). Pp. 15-17, 144, *et passim*.

¹³¹ Sometimes other scare-words are used to characterize the kind of government that populationists say will emerge from population growth. These include fascist and totalitarian. However, communism is the most common and best captures what populationists fear: power and resistance resulting from the size of unconquered people-groups.

determined that countries can achieve independence once they reach human numbers in the range of 45 to 50 million.¹³² This means that growing areas where talk of eschewing Western imperial control is prevalent, such as Korea and Southeast Asia, are of highest concern: “Size gives a clue to which colonies will be next to receive their independence.”¹³³ Both Korea and Vietnam are seen as growing and overpopulated and, in part for that reason, in danger of reaching commun(al)ism.

While the alchemy from population growth to communism is said to apply globally, race helps to increase the felt potency of the threat and the severity of the potential response. No author examined here openly cites race as a point in favor of reducing population growth in the colonized, non-white world as they did in the pre-war period. On the contrary, they now claim to be (and may well feel) staunchly anti-racist. However, race as a chief concern still comes through: the outcome to be avoided above all others in these texts combines growing numbers of poor people of color and resistance to Western domination.

Populationist antagonism toward non-white populations growing and achieving oppositional political power also applies globally, across lines of domesticity and foreignness. Thus, while Korea and Vietnam are two crucial sites of overpopulation, so are non-white areas within the United States. Domestic communities of color, likewise, are seen as moving through their numerical growth towards increased control of material resources, wealth, and political influence, or commun(al)ism. Hauser, for example, sees African American population growth in this way, describing it as a kind of sickly brown/grey (the latter color signaling communist drudgery) cancer spreading from inner cities towards white suburbs.¹³⁴ The feeling that

¹³² Organski & Organski (1961). Pp. 13, 61.

¹³³ Organski & Organski (1961). P. 61.

¹³⁴ Hauser (1961). P. 155.

oppositional, non-white hordes will grow in number and achieve communal domination over the West thus applies both to domestic and foreign “hordes,” as Asians are often called in the early post-war period.¹³⁵

Race also intensifies the visceral threat of being closely packed in with or overwhelmed by teeming masses of people. Hauser warns of the animosities that will be stirred if growth of African American populations, which he sees as the greatest population threat internal to the United States, is not brought to a “halt.”¹³⁶ The inciting incident for Ehrlich’s entire treatise is a visceral experience, which he says resulted in an “emotional” understanding of the population problem, that he had in the midst of a teeming crowd of poor, brown “people, people, people, people” in post-colonial India.¹³⁷ He imagines a future scenario in which population growth, which he sees as a “cancer” and disease, spreads from Africa, where growth-rates were stagnant or going down when Ehrlich was writing, to the United States, and then from Africa to India, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. This “expansion of races” (Woodruff) simultaneously brings sicknesses that spread through brown people to the Western countries, killing hundreds of millions worldwide.¹³⁸

Adding to the American fear of oppositional, non-white empowerment through numerical growth is American awareness of knowledge in the colonized world about the wealth differential between colonizer and colonized. Populationists usually account for this wealth differential by attributing the poverty of the colonized world to ineptitude, laziness, stupidity, and sex drive, and the wealth of the colonial world to higher intelligence and stronger work ethic.¹³⁹ Some authors

¹³⁵ See, e.g.: Vogt (1948). P. 212-213.

¹³⁶ Hauser (1961). P. 8, 155, 158.

¹³⁷ Ehrlich (1971). P. 1.

¹³⁸ Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 62-72.

¹³⁹ Hauser, P. (1961). P. 16.

complicate this. Ehrlich, for example, plays both sides, acknowledging the effects of colonialism while vaguely referencing Darwinism to create a sense that the West is more biologically advanced.¹⁴⁰ However the author chooses to account for the wealth disparity, fear over it is palpable and often explicit. Ehrlich's fear is among the most potent. He warns that large, impoverished populations, empowered by their numbers, may sweep over and loot the West ("overwhelm us"), destroying the pastoral American dream and possibly wiping out much or virtually all of human life, in the process.¹⁴¹

The fear of growing, non-white populations that are intended to produce wealth for Westerners means that post-war population theory can be seen as similar to dynamics also seen in the management of chattel-slave populations in the United States. Robin Blackburn notes that the US is one of only five societies that have been "fully fledged" slavery-based cultures in world history (all of them Western), and¹⁴² Rediker and Linebaugh posit that the capitalist revolution consisted of the expansion of a "new kind of slavery." This suggests that the way in which American chattel-enslavers approached their work was not entirely particular to enslavement of African Americans, but that it drew from a shared owning-class view of human populations as resources and assets.¹⁴³ Considering the dynamics on an American slave plantation thus provides further insight into how population problems were understood in the post-war period and is a fitting stepping stone towards how authors suggest that the stated population problems should be addressed or solved.

¹⁴⁰ Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 12-13.

¹⁴¹ Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 128-131, 142-143.

¹⁴² Blackburn, R. (2013). *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights*. London: Verso. P. 7.

¹⁴³ Linebaugh & Rediker (2000). P. 40.

Plantation owners, with good reason, lived in constant fear of uprising. Resistance to enslavement was continuous in various forms, and often deadly.¹⁴⁴ While enslavers had to take measures to guard against uprising, at the same time, they wanted their enslaved assets to produce as much as possible – production being a plantation’s microcosmic equivalent of GDP. American enslavers found that they could wring the highest amount of production from enslaved people through the systematic, precisely applied use of torture.¹⁴⁵ But profit was also correlated with the number of assets that an enslaver could own and manage. The more enslaved people an owner could manage, the higher the potential profits. Awareness of this dynamic resulted in some of the first official American laws, which ruled that enslavers owned the offspring that resulted when they raped enslaved women.¹⁴⁶ Thomas Jefferson, for example, was one who recognized both the productive value of pain, and thus tortured African American children so that they would increase the line-speed of nail production in his factory, and the value in breeding enslaved people, including personally, whom he could sell or put to work.¹⁴⁷

However, there is a delicate balance between having the highest possible number of enslaved people for production and having too many to control, which increases the chance of uprising and thus begins to correlate negatively with production. At a certain point of increase of the enslaved population, and largely irrespective of the differential in technology between worker and owner, more human numbers are needed on the owner side to manage and control

¹⁴⁴ Horne (2014).

¹⁴⁵ Baptist, Edward E. (2016). “Toward a Political Economy of Slave Labor: Hands, Whipping-Machines, and Modern Power.” In *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

¹⁴⁶ Roberts, D. E. (1997). *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Pantheon Books. P. 23.

¹⁴⁷ Wienczek, H. (2013). *Master of the Mountain: Thomas Jefferson and his Slaves*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

the workforce. American enslavers were acutely aware of this. The American legal system also reflected efforts to increase white immigration and eliminate religious boundaries between various white groups so as to increase the size of the white population united not just in conquest of indigenous people, but against the enslaved African American population.¹⁴⁸ Thus, chattel slavery as well as settler-colonialism helped to further establish cultural precedents for ways of understanding and approaching population. Control of the group intended to be subordinate and subject to the rule of the dominant party, including in terms of reproduction, could be maintained by means including the application of pain, reproductive control, increasing the numbers and solidarity of the dominant group, and death. Used wisely, death, such as executions after a rebellion and perhaps the display of body parts, such as heads on spikes, would have the doubly productive effect of reducing the numbers of the subordinate group and demonstrating the result of rebelliousness.

In the post-war period, since former eugenicists, now largely populationists, had given up on trying to encourage “out-breeding” the opposition, the focus shifted to trying to manage the numbers of populations intended to be subordinate and/or that were desired as vassals and imperial assets. Populationist texts reflect, now on an international scale instead of an individual plantation and national scale, the same broad dynamics that enslavers faced in walking the numbers line between achieving maximum production, maintaining the position of power on the plantation and in the society, as a whole, and precluding uprising or a shift in the power relationship. In their study 1961 study, *Population and World Power*, the Organskis explain that there is essentially a direct correlation between population size and power. The higher a

¹⁴⁸ Horne (2014).

population grows in number, the more powerful and wealthy it becomes and the greater its chance of achieving independence from imperial overlords – much like the Americans did. Limiting or lowering the numbers of a group or nation thus limits or reduces the group’s power and ability to be independent. The authors note that lowering of indigenous populations aided in Euro/American conquests and that the rise in the American population also helped the United States to achieve independence from Britain. This creates a parallel to Vietnam, which the authors note is, at the time, heading towards reaching a number of people at which it could achieve self-determination, an outcome the text refers to both as “independence” and “communism.”¹⁴⁹ Though other, less frank authors claim that they want to limit or lower populations in colonized regions in order to help them become rich, stable, and powerful, the knowledge and fear that increasing population means increasing power comes through clearly and palpably. Advocating lowering population to fight poverty thus becomes, in large part, a gloss for discussing how to limit a population’s power.

Lowering population growth, and simply population, is dramatically depicted as something that will prevent the imminent, violent destruction of humanity, preserve freedom, save the planet, preserve “order” (largely intuited as racial, class, and national/international hierarchy) protect Western “values” (like hyper-consumption and Anglo-pastoralism), fight commun(al)ism, and both justify and aid American imperialism. The stakes are thus said to be incredibly high – essentially as high as it is imaginably possible for them to be short of the destruction of the universe. (Ehrlich even flirts with preservation of the universe when he warns illustratively that, if growth rates continue, Earth will turn into a ball of people expanding at the

¹⁴⁹ Organski & Organski (1961). Pp. 55-82.

speed of light and “turn the universe into solid people!”¹⁵⁰) The American way of life, and all life itself, are thus in utter peril. The way to combat the foreign and domestic enemies of life, freedom, and hyper-consumption is to relieve population pressure; to check or lower population levels. What do populationist thinkers suggest, then, will accomplish this urgent, justified, and necessary task?

Within white Western populations, one way to relieve overpopulation and thus to fight communism is immigration.¹⁵¹ People could be removed from an area where communist uprising is seen as looming and relocated to another white-dominant country, thus decreasing the possibility of commun(al)ist uprising in the “overpopulated” area. Preventing uprising and securing American political control of the precarious group can thus be achieved by reducing the number of people in the area by physically removing them and placing them in a different context where there is little to no risk that they will be able to mount any viable opposition to capitalism. Most likely, they will be vulnerable and need to conform to the norms of the society to which they are moved. Therefore, not only do they represent reductions in the power of the anti-capitalist mood in their original area, they can add power to the capitalist society to which they are transferred. Thus, as immigration (and assimilation) helped to support anti-communalist/indigenous conquest and prevent uprisings of enslaved people in the nineteenth century, it would continue to do so in the twentieth. Thomas Piketty notes that in the twenty-first century, population growth would stand as the sole reason for remaining American economic growth over Europe.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 6, 87-88.

¹⁵¹ Truman, Harry S. (24 March, 1952). “Special Message to the Congress on Aid for Refugees and Displaced Persons.” Public papers of Harry S. Truman. Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum. Online.

¹⁵² Piketty, Thomas. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014. P. 378.

Another recurring possibility proposed for Western countries is to breed fewer farmed animals.¹⁵³ Authors point out that animal farming requires cycling crops through the animals before consuming their bodies and bi-products, which means that most of the calories that are invested in producing farmed animal products are lost. For example, it is noted that producing 100 calories of cow-meat requires 1,000 calories of plant-food as well as the land to both house the animal and grow his or her food. The process, authors note, is also significantly harmful to the environment. Populationist authors thus perceive that continuing the mass, industrial production and consumption of animal products, a practice that evolved in the United States and remains overwhelmingly centered in Western colonial countries due to its high cost, resource demand, and caloric expenditure,¹⁵⁴ will require maintenance of global inequalities that will be imperiled by human population growth. These inequalities include power over deciding, for example, how land is used and how the calories that it produces are allocated.

Those who raise this issue see a trade-off dilemma. They suggest that maintaining and increasing the current number of artificially bred, farmed animal bodies will require curbing or reducing the numbers of human bodies. If the number of human bodies increases, they realize, then the number of animal bodies available to Westerners will decrease as resource-deprived humans, empowered through their growing numbers, assume increasing control of and use resources to feed themselves rather than to breed and feed animals to be consumed by Westerners. But if the number of human bodies levels off or decreases, the authors posit, then current numbers of farmed bodies might be able to be maintained or increased.

¹⁵³ See, e.g.: Vogt (1948). Pp. 197-198; Pohlman, E. (1971). P. 163. Overpopulation will mean “more eaters” and thus necessarily “fewer animals,” since animals are also eaters.

¹⁵⁴ Weis, T. (2013). *The Ecological Hoofprint: The Global Burden of Industrial Livestock*. Zed.

The prominence of this theme in the canon is related to the fact that, by this point in time, consuming these products at high levels had become strongly interwoven with American values and identity, particularly in terms of masculinity and entitlement to various forms of mastery and control over bodies viewed as inferior in Western/American thought.¹⁵⁵ Five of the seven texts closely examined for this chapter raise the issue, usually prominently and repeatedly. Four authors (Vogt, Hauser, Ehrlich, and Pohlman) clearly favor suppressing human fertility so that Westerners can continue to industrially breed and consume animals like pigs, cows, chickens, and fish. The other author who raises the issue, Osborn, does not take a solid position either way. He leaves up to readers whether they want to combat overpopulation by reducing the numbers of Western farmed animals, the numbers of humans in colonized regions, or both. However, the ultimate focus is on human numbers, which are illustrated as most threatening in Asia. Authors such as Vogt note that while reducing the number of farmed animals and consuming plant-foods directly would be the “only intelligent thing to do” in times of actual resource scarcity, if the number of human bodies in colonized areas can be reduced, then Westerners can continue and possibly increase their current habit of regularly consuming “beefsteaks” – which they did.¹⁵⁶ Addressing this same dilemma, Ehrlich bluntly notes that, faced with a choice between allowing the proliferation of humans in colonized countries or precluding this proliferation and thereby preventing a thirty-cent per-pound rise in the price of beef, Americans would rather avoid the

¹⁵⁵ See, e.g.: Rothgerber, H., & Levant, Ronald F. (2013). “Real Men Don’t Eat (Vegetable) Quiche: Masculinity and the Justification of Meat Consumption.” *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 14(4), 363-375; Ruby, & Heine. (2011). Meat, morals, and masculinity. *Appetite*, 56(2), 447-450.

¹⁵⁶ Quotations: Vogt, W. (1948). Pp. 197-198, 286; Widespread and frequent American beefsteak consumption was found in a 1953 study of the bodies of tens of thousands American soldiers killed in the Korea war to be linked to the development of heart disease. The conclusion, however, was dismissed by numerous scientists, not for scientific reasons but cultural ones. They viewed not eating large amounts of steak (etc.) as feminine. See: Campbell, T., & Campbell, Thomas M. (2006). *The China Study*. Dallas, Texas: BenBella Books.

price increase.¹⁵⁷ He later proposes a populationist's list of human rights on which the right to control the fertility of other people and the right to breed and consume animals are in the top four, before even the right to live (by having access to potable water).¹⁵⁸ Thus, while curbing or reducing the growth and numbers of the farmed animal population is understood as one possibility for addressing claimed population problems, populationist authors want to avoid this path by instead focusing on curbing the growth of colonized human populations.

The post-war population canon thus makes comparative valuations between humans and non-humans. In 1948, in what chapter one points out is a longstanding Western elite view, Vogt draws explicit similes between colonized people and animals, herds, and insect colonies. For example, he compares Asian people to sponges: not quite rising to the level of “animal,” but instead the first species to have branched off from the common ancestor of animals to become the “sister to all other animals.”¹⁵⁹ This helps to establish a hierarchy in which Western/American people and society are at the top, above animals and colonized humans, who are associated with animals or are considered even lower than animals. The longstanding Western practice of asserting these kinds of human/animal comparisons and hierarchies becomes less explicit after 1948 but continues to be strongly asserted and implied by the valuation of farmed animal bodies over colonized human bodies. While, in the United States alone, perhaps more than fifty percent of Native American women (and also many men) were targeted for coercive sterilization in the early 1970s, Ehrlich and Pohlman were simultaneously warning people to be careful not to accidentally sterilize farmed animals. As a proposal for how to mass-sterilize humans, they both

¹⁵⁷ Ehrlich (1971). Pp. 128-131.

¹⁵⁸ Ehrlich (1971). P. 171.

¹⁵⁹ Feuda, Dohrmann, Pett, Philippe, Rota-Stabelli, Lartillot, Pisani, et al. (2017). “Improved Modeling of Compositional Heterogeneity Supports Sponges as Sister to All Other Animals.” *Current Biology*, 27(24), 3864-3870.e4; Vogt (1948). Pp. 212-213.

float the idea of putting sterilizing drugs in water supplies. The idea would unfortunately not be feasible, they lament, because it would incite resistance from the ignorant masses, but also because it could accidentally sterilize “calves and chickies.”¹⁶⁰ Warm language is applied to cow and chicken babies while terms like “cancer,” “monsters,” and “killers” are applied to human babies and adults.

Another connection to chattel-enslavement arises from the populationist weighing of human and farmed animal bodies. The anxiety over power, uprising, and defiance that populationist authors see arising from human population growth does not apply to farmed animal populations. The preference for farmed animal bodies provides insight into the nature of the body preferred for coexistence with the American in the Anglo-pastoral vision. Chattel-enslavers wished to prevent enslaved people from being able, for example, to read and communicate, since these tools fostered communal resistance.¹⁶¹ This is an indication that the ideal body would produce for its “owner” without the possibility of significant resistance, similar to a domesticated, farmed animal. For the vast majority of the general American public, the farmed animal body exists overwhelmingly out of sight and out of mind. When images of it appear in public space, they depict passive enjoyment and happiness rather than suffering or death. This body can offer little to no significant resistance to its assigned role. Its fertility and numbers are completely controlled, as is the duration of its life. It can be killed at will, achieving its ultimate productive value through death. The populationist preference for and relationship to the farmed animal body can thus provide additional insight into American ideals for relationships with other kinds of subject bodies, such as colonized bodies of color, which are sometimes cast as

¹⁶⁰ Ehrlich (1971). P. 128-131; Pohlman (1971). P. 59.

¹⁶¹ Scott, Julius S. (2018). *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution*. Verso; Zinn, H. (2015). *A People's History of the United States: 1492-Present*. Routledge.

hierarchically lower than farmed animal bodies. The word “chattel,” of course, contains concepts of “capital,” “property,” and “livestock” or “cattle,” pointing towards a blending of inferior human and animal and total commodification in service of superior bodies.

Part of the American justification for total industrial fertility, body, and death-control of farmed animals is that since humans are breeding them into existence, they own their lives and bodies and can thus manipulate and end them at any time. Herein lies another parallel to how the relationship to colonized humans is constructed in post-war populationist literature, as colonized humans are depicted in similar ways. Authors repeatedly claim that the main reason for the proliferation of humans in colonized regions is the benevolence and intelligence of colonizers.¹⁶² Through proximity, colonizers are said to have transferred their intelligence and technologies to the colonized, which allowed colonized populations to grow. This is cast as an unfortunate, harmful and destructive accident for which colonizers bear responsibility. Thus, colonized populations can be read as having been *accidentally* farmed, or created, by Euro-American colonizers, and to devastating effect. This makes clear that Westerners have not only a responsibility to remedy the claimed overpopulation problems that they have created by themselves catalyzing the proliferation of colonized people, but, since it is Western intelligence that allowed this proliferation – Westerners created the bodies and gave the gift of life – Westerners have the *right* to dispose of them as necessary (or desired). This relationship is, of course, not stated directly but is felt. With this understanding, colonizing groups not only have a right to control the existence of the colonized for claimed reasons of self-defense, environmental preservation, and preservation of lifestyles based in disproportionate control and consumption of

¹⁶² See, e.g.: Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). P. 90.

resources. They also have the right because they feel that they are the *creators* of the parts of colonized populations beyond numbers that they believe constitute “reasonable bounds,” as Vogt puts it.¹⁶³ Pohlman, for example, makes this felt relationship fairly explicit when he characterizes Western countries as the parents of colonized countries, which are cast as badly behaved, ungrateful, irresponsible and dangerous teenagers.¹⁶⁴

The populationist preference for the farmed animal body over the colonized human body provides a route into the canon’s suggestions for how overpopulation of colonized, non-white bodies, as opposed to that of white Western bodies, can be combated. The phrase “overpopulation” itself evokes similarity not just to how animal populations in general are controlled – farmed animals are not usually said to be “overpopulated” – but more specifically to how what are called “wild” animal populations are controlled. These populations are seen as controllable by humans through either birth control or death control. By the present, nearly one-hundred percent of wild land-mammal populations have been wiped out. Their bio-mass has been replaced by domesticated, farmed-animal populations raised in factory farms to be processed through industrial slaughterhouses, mainly by and for Americans and the West, generally.¹⁶⁵ Even within the realm of non-human bodies, then, there is therefore room for selecting and creating a body that is even less capable of resistance and more conducive to its assigned purposes. Populationist thinking thus links the surplus, colonized human not just to non-human animal populations, in general, but to *wild*, undomesticated animal populations.

¹⁶³ Vogt (1948). P. 228.

¹⁶⁴ Pohlman (1971). Pp. 135-136.

¹⁶⁵ Carrington, D. (2018, May 21). “Humans just 0.01% of all life but have destroyed 83% of wild mammals – study.” *The Guardian*.

The link to being wild, savage, or undomesticated signals an urgent need for taming and control through violence. Native Americans and other indigenous people resistant to settler-colonization were (and are) characterized in these ways in Euro-American discourse and thought. Jonathan Goldberg-Hiller and Noenoe K. Silva note that settler colonialism contrasts the “cultivated, civilized man” with the “savage,” which is “a human etymologically linked to both undomesticated animals and uncultivated plants.”¹⁶⁶ Manifesting these linkages, early post-war populationists Osborn and Vogt go beyond the implied connections between human and non-human overpopulation to draw overt parallels between combating human overpopulation and hunting. They note that the vast majority of animals are herbivores and state that predation by the one percent of animals who are carnivores helps to keep the herbivore populations “in check.”¹⁶⁷ Thus, even a small but potent, consistent amount of predation, or hunting, can help to mitigate the effects of overpopulation, as can, the authors note, famine and disease. It is the United States, these authors propose, that must take the reins and check world population, assuming the role of the hunter/predator.

It could be assumed that the predation implied by the phrase “overpopulation” is only a non-violent metaphor for sterilization, or birth control. However, every author examined makes clear that birth control will be *ineffective* for combating overpopulation.¹⁶⁸ One of the main reasons that it will be ineffective, it is argued, is that people will refuse to use it.¹⁶⁹ This provides an indication of awareness – which is also expressed explicitly¹⁷⁰ – that people overwhelmingly

¹⁶⁶ Goldberg-Hiller, J., & Silva, N. (2015). The Botany of Emergence: Kanaka Ontology and Biocolonialism in Hawai‘i. *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, 2(2), 1-26.

¹⁶⁷ Osborn (1948). P. 62; Vogt (1948). Pp. 77-111.

¹⁶⁸ E.g., Vogt (1948). Pp. 264-282.

¹⁶⁹ Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). Pp. 66-68.

¹⁷⁰ Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). Pp. 66-68.

want to have the children that they are having and are doing so intentionally. Readers are left with the question of whether death-control could be an effective means for combating the claimed devastating effects of overpopulation. As all texts indicate that birth control will be ineffective, all texts also indicate that death control – that is, increasing rates of death to curb or lower population – would be *effective*. For example, the Rockefeller report stresses that birth control will not be adopted by people in “overpopulated” Korea due to a desire for large families. However, it notes, deaths in war achieve the same effects that birth-control would achieve, were it adopted and consistently implemented. That is, death control and birth control are interchangeable, but birth control will not be accepted.¹⁷¹ The report goes so far as to conclude that, because birth control will be ineffective and body-removal through migration from Asia will be impossible, demography can *only* offer death-control solutions to the “population problem.” However, death-control solutions – eliminating people who are “already born” – cannot be advocated and are difficult to employ “under normal circumstances.”¹⁷² This assessment, combined with the report’s recommendation to nonetheless build a focus on demography “at the governmental level,” is an important commentary on the meteoric rise that demography would then undergo in the American intellectual/political complex.¹⁷³ That rise was in significant part spurred and influenced by this report, which set a precedent that “all” subsequent demographic missions would follow.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). Pp. 27-40.

¹⁷² Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). Pp. 27-34, 40, 42-43. “Under normal circumstances numbers of people already born can be altered only slowly and within fairly narrow limits” (40). However, the problems of overpopulation are “huge and urgent” (120).

¹⁷³ Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). P. 114.

¹⁷⁴ Connelly (2008). P. 134, 138.

Beginning with Osborn and Vogt, authors repeatedly make clear that elimination through death-control would be the most effective way to solve the population problem. They point out that this can and has been achieved through disease, famine, economic manipulation, and/or war.¹⁷⁵ In terms of war, there is an emphasis throughout the post-war period on how area weapons can eliminate large numbers of people.¹⁷⁶ Aldous Huxley, author of *Brave New World*, was involved in the population milieu and has an approving blurb on the back of Osborn's book. Huxley's brother, Julian, was a eugenicist who headed a UN population agency and worried about such population problems as differential fertility rates between African Americans and Euro-Americans. Aldous weighed in on the issue, stating in a study funded by the UN agency, UNESCO, then headed by his brother, that such differential fertility is a threat to the West as it means that "the least intelligent persons" are overwhelming the superior stocks. Elsewhere, Aldous noted that differential fertility would also open the West to aggression from the rapidly multiplying East, which would force Westerners to consider turning to area-weapons to counter the "effect" of the large numbers,¹⁷⁷ or what Osborn and Vogt call the "hordes." Ehrlich argues strenuously that large numbers of people, those who cannot achieve a status of worthiness by being "self-sustaining" like the colonizing countries,¹⁷⁸ will need to be walled in and exterminated.¹⁷⁹ Communism, of course, is understood as leeching off of productive people and countries, similar to the way that Welfare is understood. As Korea and Asia, generally, are characterized as overpopulated early in post-war populationist theory, Southeast Asia,

¹⁷⁵ E.g.: Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). P. 79.

¹⁷⁶ E.g.: Ehrlich (1971). P. 44-45.

¹⁷⁷ Connelly (2008). Pp. 121, 128-130.

¹⁷⁸ These populations are thus similar to the Nazi idea of the "useless eater." Images of people as "mouths" and "rat-holes" recur in the post-war American population literature.

¹⁷⁹ Ehrlich (1971). P. 146-148.

particularly Vietnam, are then marked as key locations where “sheer numbers of men” are increasing human power and allowing people to move towards the independence, or commun(al)ism,¹⁸⁰ that Bacon said had to be “eradicated.”

While authors claim or indicate that death control, including war, will be more effective than birth control for combating overpopulation, they also embody a climate in which such solutions can no longer be frankly advocated, as they could be pre-war. They offer disclaimers noting that while birth control would be ineffective and eliminating people through war, economics, disease, and famine would be effective and the fate of the world (etc.) rests on winning the battle against overpopulation, they do not advise death-control approaches.¹⁸¹ This both provides plausible deniability and indicates clear awareness of leading their audiences towards situations in which eliminationist violence will be understood as necessary for the maintenance of power and justified for the myriad other reasons being proposed. However, it is also done for the sake of the reader, who is led towards acknowledgement and understanding of the underlying meaning of “population policy” – that is, power control – and then encouraged to feel above *intentionally* acting on such crude and brutal principles. Readers are, as described above, put in “us or them” scenarios in which the preservation of virtually every imaginable good (in Ehrlich nearly including the existence of the entire universe) depends on curbing or lowering population. They are made aware that they must thus act to curb or lower population by raising death rates, but are simultaneously relieved of feelings of guilt for doing so by being told that even though “we,” as benevolent Westerners, do not want to act on these underlying power/population principles, we cannot help but do so. We are simultaneously consciously aware

¹⁸⁰ E.g.: Organski & Organski (1961). Pp. 52, 58-59, 82, 223; Hauser (1961). Pp. 23, 26-29; Pohlman (1971). P. 137.

¹⁸¹ E.g.: Balfour, Evans, Notestein, & Taeuber (1950). Pp. 40-45; Organski & Organski (1961). Pp. 176-179; Vogt (1948). Pp. 264-282.

and unaware of what we are doing, and thus free of malign intent or guilt and harder to accuse of any wrongdoing.

Ultimately, post-war populationism diagnoses a world in which preservation of the “order” of power, both domestic and foreign, rests on curbing or lowering the numbers of people who, under structures of Anglo-centric capitalism, need to be subordinate. On the American domestic front, under the rules of what might be considered more “normal circumstances,” the populationist epistemology contributed to the mass sterilization of colonized people of color, and probably to other emerging trends like the mass incarceration of African Americans, which increases their premature mortality. The next chapter looks at situations where the rules of “normal circumstances” were formally suspended as warfare in the openly military sense was engaged in. In these places, the effects of diagnosed overpopulation were cast as leading imminently towards communism, or empowerment of masses intended to be subordinate to capitalist elites. However, Western birth control infrastructure was unwelcome in these places, and populations were powerful enough to prevent its installation, making even coercive sterilization like that performed on millions of other people around the world impossible. With the outbreak of military warfare, though, populationist understandings for using death-control – area weapons, economics, famine, and disease – to help control numbers, maintain or gain vassalage, and triumph in the continuing drive to eliminate anti-capitalist commun(al)ism, could be implemented against those seen as undomesticated, wild-animalized humans.

CHAPTER THREE

The Most Effective Way to Solve Population Problems

It was common for mid-century Western leaders to consider overpopulation “one of the gravest problems” that the world faced, as Truman put it the midst of the Korean war.¹⁸² While the President was referring to certain countries in Western Europe, such as Greece and Italy, he would have seen Asia as overpopulated, as well. As authors like Osborn, Vogt, and those of the Rockefeller report concluded that Korea was overpopulated and the Korean war officially began, anxieties about being “overrun” by massive formations of “nonwhite,” communalized “hordes” were “deeply felt” by Western leaders.¹⁸³ In his speech, Truman warned of the overpopulation-to-communism alchemy, arguing that lowering the number of people in a politically precarious area would help to stop it from going communist. In the case of Western Europe, such reductions could be accomplished partially through migration. In Asia, as the Rockefeller report had noted, any migration not “internal” to a country in question would be politically impossible, and thus other methods for lowering numbers would need to be employed.

One of the stated goals of numerous populationists was to prevent countries or groups from going communist or otherwise agitating against a Western-dominant status quo by curbing population growth and thereby making targeted groups wealthy and happy under Western hegemony. However, as has been noted, this is more a pretext for lowering a group’s numbers, and thus power, than an actual desire. The populationist understanding that growing populations will likely become *more* wealthy and powerful is highlighted by internal government documents showing that Americans were more concerned that communist states like North Korea would

¹⁸² Connelly (2006). P. 117.

¹⁸³ Connelly (2006). P. 120.

“outstrip” growth in capitalist states than that they would grow increasingly poor and run out of resources. A National Security Council assessment, for example, expressed “discouragement at the failure to make as much progress economically and politically” in South Korea “as North Korea.”¹⁸⁴ In 1959, a US intelligence estimate noted that the US-backed regime in South Vietnam would, like the one in South Korea, “lag behind” the North in terms of “development.” Thus, drastic action had to be taken in these regions seen as overpopulated, not to aid development and growth but, as the documents note, to “retard” it. That is, the United States felt it need to itself use military force to perform the action – “retarding” economic growth – that American populationists claimed was accomplished by population growth. Blocking economic growth in growing anti-capitalist regions would prevent a “demonstration effect” wherein defiant, cohering groups could show that they could offer an effective development model for resistance that included, and was even fueled by, population growth.¹⁸⁵ Thus, despite the stated goal of populationists being to help growing groups of people become wealthy by curbing their numbers, the evidence again suggests an actual goal of disabling and weakening them by doing so. With the diagnosis of Korea as overpopulated, and as the country moved to vote for unification and independence, the United States thus intervened.

Much has been made of how close the United States came to using the supposedly ultimate population-hammer, nuclear bombs, to try to “offset the effect of the big battalions,” as Aldous Huxley said might be necessary due to population growth outside of the Western world.¹⁸⁶ But the focus on nuclear weapons has been as distracting as revelatory, mainly for two reasons.

¹⁸⁴ Chomsky, Noam, & Herman, Edward S. (1979). *The Political Economy of Human Rights*. Boston: South End. Pp. 305, 423.

¹⁸⁵ Chomsky & Herman (1979). Pp. 305, 423.

¹⁸⁶ Connelly (2008). Pp. 121, 128-130.

First, the US came even closer to deploying nuclear weapons than is generally understood. While a common belief is that Truman removed General Douglas MacArthur because he was too eager to use nuclear weapons, Bruce Cumings finds the opposite: Truman removed him so that there would be someone more reliable in place if *Truman* decided to use nuclear weapons. And, indeed, Truman did decide to use them: he ordered them to be deployed, but in the chaos during McArthur's removal, the order was not transmitted in time for the strike to take place (149).¹⁸⁷

Second, the emphasis on nuclear weapons in the post-war period as tabooed for their ability wipe out swathes of a population and as always on the *cusp* of being deployed is itself misleading. This is because in World War II, the United States had determined that the ultimate population-bludgeon was not nuclear, but incendiary.

Fire-weapons have been used for thousands of years.¹⁸⁸ One term used for them was “wildfire;” another was “Greek fire,” as incendiaries were widely used by the Greeks. Some ships were equipped to shoot other vessels with flaming oils emitted from tubes in their bows. Individual soldiers were equipped with flaming oils that they could shoot through reeds in a kind of fire-breath. But the use of incendiaries declined as longer-range projectiles were created, such as rockets. Incendiaries were always regarded with particular awe and horror, as they invoked the terrors of Hell and being burned to death.¹⁸⁹

As the ability to project incendiaries over long ranges increased in the nineteenth century, the weapon again came into use. The major turning point that would see an unprecedented rise of fire-weapons was World War II. With Germany leading the way, Japanese and British forces

¹⁸⁷ Cumings, Bruce. (2010). *The Korean War: A History*. Modern Library Edition. Random House, Inc. New York. P. 149.

¹⁸⁸ Page number references in this section refer to: Neer, R. (2013). *Napalm: An American Biography*. Cambridge, Mass. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

¹⁸⁹ Neer (2013).

also used incendiaries to devastating effect. But the weapon would be taken to new heights by the United States.

As noted by the Organskis, the Rockefeller report, and Woodruff, Americans and other Westerners had observed Japanese population growth with trepidation for many years. John Dower finds that during the war, while a small but significant portion of American society wanted to wipe out the Japanese entirely, the desire among America's political elite and the military was widespread. For example, the British ambassador to Washington during WWII reported that there was an "exterminationist" attitude toward the Japanese that was "universal" among Washington leadership and elites. A 1943 poll found that about 50% of American soldiers wanted the US to kill off the Japanese, entirely.¹⁹⁰ The war provided a suspension of "normal circumstances" and thus an opportunity to act on some of these desires.

However, US officials were initially hesitant to engage in the "area bombing" (wiping out large swathes of people and infrastructure) that was being carried out by other powers on various cities.¹⁹¹ Americans had long engaged in similar kinds of "total war" practices towards people of color, but applying them to white Germans proved more difficult.¹⁹² Eventually, though, the US applied the tactic against Germany, but the greatest incendiary energy was unleashed upon Japan.¹⁹³

Hoping to increase the American ability to quickly wipe out large swathes of people, the US Chemical Warfare Service assembled a team of chemists at Harvard to design an incendiary weapon that would be optimal for this goal. This approach was partially inspired by the wooden

¹⁹⁰ Dower, J. (1986.) *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon Books. Pp. 53-54.

¹⁹¹ Neer (2013).

¹⁹² Marcus (2009). P. 80.

¹⁹³ Dower (1986).

structures of Japan, but usage of and references to napalm after WWII¹⁹⁴ suggest that there is more to the technique than just this. Authors have noted, for example, that populations of color evoke greater inspiration in Americans to “exterminate” with fire,¹⁹⁵ and some examples of American thinking reveal a general desire to use flame to cleanse the world of the unfit.¹⁹⁶

The efforts against Japan reveal a particular motivation to check the numbers of the masses. As the Chemical Warfare Service progressed in its work, the military built replicas of German and Japanese civilian homes – complete with furnishings, with the most attention devoted to bedrooms and attics – so that the new weapon, dubbed “napalm” (a portmanteau of chemicals naphthenate and palmitate) could be tested. In all of these replica structures, which were built, burnt, and rebuilt multiple times, only civilian homes were constructed – never military, industrial, or commercial buildings (37). In 1931, US General Billy Mitchell, regarded as the “founding inspiration” of the US Air Force, remarked that since Japanese cities were “built largely of wood and paper,” they made the “greatest aerial targets the world has ever seen.” In 1941, US Army chief of staff George Marshall told reporters that the US would “set the paper cities of Japan on fire,” and that there “won’t be any hesitation about bombing civilians” (66).

The campaign of “area bombing” of Japanese civilians was led by a man with the “aura of a borderline sociopath” who had, as a child, taken pleasure in killing animals (70): Curtis LeMay. LeMay imagined target populations as a whole and from an aerial perspective, similar to global visions of population as a pressure system covering the globe that are found in Woodruff, Osborn, Vogt, and the others. LeMay thus formed the goal of using area weapons – a recurring

¹⁹⁴ See, e.g.: *The Exterminator*. (1980.) Directed by James Glickenhaus. Interstar Pictures.

¹⁹⁵ Doherty, T. (1993). *Projections of War: Hollywood, American Culture, and World War II*. Columbia University Press. New York. Ch.: “Properly Directed Hatred.”

¹⁹⁶ *The Exterminator* (1980).

motif in populationism for their ability to make significant, palpable dents in large groups – to “wipe” entire Japanese cities “right off the map” (74).

To this effect, on March 9, 1945, American pilots traced out and ignited a giant “flaming cross” of napalm, its dimensions measured in miles, in the center of Tokyo, the city diagnosed in 1909 by Woodruff as the heart of Japanese overpopulation. Crew information sheets informed pilots that this was the most densely populated city in the world at the time: 103,000 people per square mile. In the first hour, 690,000 gallons of napalm were used on the by now virtually undefended city. Japanese fighters, mostly unable to take flight, could not shoot down a single US aircraft, and air-defense batteries had been damaged or destroyed.



Figure 3.3: Tokyo After Firebombing

By the next morning, fifteen square miles of what had been understood as the most densely populated area in the world had been alchemized to ash, depressurized by the conversion of 100,000 live “mouths” (to use the recurring populationist image) to dead ones. Streets were

strewn with people who had been burned to death and rivers, where people had sought relief from the firestorms, were “clogged” with bodies.¹⁹⁷

On the American side, multiple pilots reported vomiting in their cockpits from the overpowering smell, blasted skyward by the windstorms, of the “roasting ... flesh” of an animalized, out-of-control herd checked by fire – a strangely “sweet” odor (81). In Washington, officials congratulated each other. General Arnold cabled LeMay that he had proved that he “had the guts for anything.” Mission commander Power boasted that there were “more casualties than in any other military action in the history of the world.” The assessment was correct: the use of area-weaponry and industrial technology made this move against “overpopulated” Tokyo the deadliest one-night military operation in the world history of warfare, up to present day (83). Thirty-three million pounds of napalm were used in the campaign overall, with 106 square miles of Japanese cities wiped away. The population was checked by about 330,000, which Chief of Air Staff Lauris Norstad called “nothing short of wonderful” (84).

After both atomic bombings, which individually each inflicted less damage than the March 9 Tokyo firebombing, and after the Japanese surrender but before it had been officially accepted, General Hap Arnold called for “as big a finale as possible.” Accordingly, 1,014 aircraft were used to further “pulverize Tokyo with napalm and explosives,” as if in expression of a desire to salt the earth of population growth. The US did not incur a loss in the raid, (85) which became the biggest single use of explosives in history, up to that point. For Japan’s part, its ability to attack the US mainland during the war was seen when it hung bombs from balloons and drifted them into the eastward Jetstream, which killed five people in Oregon.

¹⁹⁷ Neer (2013).

The atomic bomb, a technological breakthrough compared to napalm (essentially pouring gas on targets and lighting them on fire) received the most public attention. Meanwhile, napalm had been established in American elite circles as the ultimate weapon of population reduction. Each atomic bombing cost \$13.5 billion. Incinerating cities with napalm was not only more effective, but it cost only \$83,000 “per metropolis,” or 0.0006% of the cost of a nuclear bombing. The use of the incendiary would increase in the next major American military campaigns. While essentially universally available, no other group has used it to the extent of the United States (193).

In the post-war environment, the exterminationist ethos that Dower finds existed during the war did not “go away; rather, [it] went elsewhere.” It carried over into the “Cold War” and was transferred to “communists,” “Koreans,” “the Vietnamese,” and “Third World” movements seeking to buck American hegemony.¹⁹⁸ As political tensions built in Korea, the United States, popularly and professionally, began to diagnose the country as “overpopulated.” It also determined that Koreans were seeking to unify through a nationwide vote that the US expected would be won by the rapidly strengthening, anti-imperialist/commun(al)ist North.¹⁹⁹

With this knowledge, the US-controlled government of South Korea, the Republic of Korea (ROK), began a campaign of rounding up and executing hundreds of thousands of peasants, including women and children. Before what Americans remember as the start of the “forgotten” war, the ROK, over a period of weeks, summarily executed some 100,000²⁰⁰ to 1

¹⁹⁸ Dower (1986). Pp. 13-14, 311.

¹⁹⁹ Stone, I. (1969). *The Hidden History of the Korean War*. New York: Monthly Review Press. Pp. 177-118, 120-122.

²⁰⁰ Associated Press. (2008, May 18). “Thousands of Koreans executed early in the war.” *NBC News*.

million²⁰¹ peasants, many of whom were lured into camps with the promise of food. Instead of being provided sustenance, the living were made to “go away” into death, relieving some of the critical mass’s building, communalizing population pressure. What a truth commission led by historian Kim Dong-choon calls this “mass civilian sacrifice” was carried out with American knowledge and supervision. The orders for the campaign “undoubtedly came from the top,” which was the “US-installed,” democratically rejected president, Syngman Rhee. Ultimately, though, the United States “controlled South Korea’s military.”²⁰² After the war, the US both helped subsequent regimes to quell investigations into the extermination and helped them to establish a demography discipline and birth-control infrastructure in South Korea that, before the conquest, as the Rockefeller report noted, would have been rejected.²⁰³

In the wake of other campaigns of pressure reduction in the South, Rhee’s electoral defeat and propping up by the US, as well as signs of pressure building in the North, imperial Japanese consultants with experience in what happens when vassal states (including Korea) start to grow agreed with the United States that national unification elections should be prevented and that the US should launch a full invasion of the North.²⁰⁴ In the ensuing campaign, the US napalmed virtually “every city, town, and village in North Korea.” It also used the opportunity to continue pressure-reducing body-deletions below the parallel, napalming many towns in South

²⁰¹ Boggs, C. (2010). *The Crimes of Empire: Rogue Superpower and World Domination*. Pluto Press. Distributed in the United States by Palgrave MacMillan. P. 74.

²⁰² Associated Press (2008); Stone (1969). Pp. 120-122.

²⁰³ DiMoia, John P. (2014). “Counting People: The Emerging Field of Demography and the Mobilization of the Social Sciences in the Formation of State Policy in South Korea since 1948.” In Hartmann, H., Unger, C. R., & Dörnemann, M., *A World of Populations: Transnational Perspectives on Demography in the Twentieth Century* (p. 129). New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books.

²⁰⁴ Stone (1969). Pp. 120-122.

Korea.²⁰⁵ American pilots began to comment that it was “hard to find good targets.” From their totalizing aerial perspective, almost “everything” was “burned out.”²⁰⁶

Though American actions in Korea evoked little domestic opposition, in part due to continued limitations and restrictions of media, some Western leaders in other countries expressed concern. Winston Churchill, for example, a man “haunted by the fear” that Asia would “eclipse Europe,”²⁰⁷ and who had participated in the torture and killing of countless people in British colonies, was alarmed by the American use of napalm in Korea. Americans were “very cruel” with the substance, he said, dousing “great masses” of the “civilian population.”²⁰⁸

The Chinese eventually entered the conflict to defend their border and support their ally. While the weaponry of the Koreans and Chinese was at this point in time no match for the US – which sometimes mocked them for, as General Matthew Ridgeway put it, their attempt to face the United States with “crude [bamboo] spears that were in style five-thousand years ago”²⁰⁹ – Americans did not see this infirmity extending to numbers. The Koreans and Chinese appeared to them as “fleas,” “goats,” “waves,” and a great “mass” – technologically vulnerable but capable of weaponization through communalization of bodies.²¹⁰ The term “hordes” started to be used so frequently that war correspondents began to jest about it becoming an official military term, wryly asking officials “how many hordes there were to a platoon.”²¹¹ Although a “horde” is already racially distinct from a population of “settlers,” additional racialization was applied.

²⁰⁵ Franklin, H. (2000). *Vietnam and other American Fantasies*. Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press. Pp. 72-5; 79; Cumings (2010). P. 162.

²⁰⁶ Stone (1969). P. 257.

²⁰⁷ Connelly (2008). P. 120.

²⁰⁸ Neer (2013). Pp. 102-103.

²⁰⁹ Stone (1969). P. 261.

²¹⁰ Stone (1969). P. 264.

²¹¹ Stone (1969). P. 336.

“Gook” referred to Korean hordes and “chink” to the mass of Chinese.²¹² These and other designations helped to conglomerate military and civilian into a single sub-human, animalized, indigenized, “savage,” godless mass to be dissolved and shrunken down, its growth “contained,” held at bay, and “retarded” via the application of napalm.²¹³ America’s “interior intent” for the war, Cumings assesses, was to dissolve away the mass “down to the individual constituent.”²¹⁴

Curtis LeMay, who helped to execute this air campaign, as well, saw the population as a “pile” of excrement, a uniform mass with a few errant individuals visible as “flies,” marking them as hierarchically lower than non-human mammals. He used the percentage of the pile that he was able to alchemize (mostly through area-cremation) into a more inoffensive material – ash and inanimate death – as a marker of success, estimating that he reduced the total “population” by “twenty percent.” Dean Rusk, Assistant Secretary of State for Eastern Affairs from 1950 to 1951 and later Secretary of State and, like Truman, a concerned member of the overpopulation-management establishment, later noted that the US grouped all life in North Korea into a (Pohlman-like) circle of disposability. It used what he called “complete air superiority,” or if the view is reversed, complete air disability, to eliminate “everything that moved.”²¹⁵ This included on-the-ground executions of thousands of civilians, the list of which “goes on endlessly.”²¹⁶ Carl Boggs finds that the American strategy of eliminating masses of people, including by

²¹² Cumings (2010). P. 81.

²¹³ Cumings (2010). P. 153.

²¹⁴ Cumings (2010). P. 146.

²¹⁵ Dean Rusk interviewed by Thomas J. Schoenbaum and Thomas W. Ganschow. (Circa 1985). Dean Rusk Oral History Collection, Part 2 of 2.

²¹⁶ Boggs, C. (2010). *The Crimes of Empire: Rogue Superpower and World Domination*. Pluto Press. Distributed in the United States by Palgrave MacMillan. P. 75.

“target[ing] civilians,” was “planned and systematic,” emanating from “the top of the power structure.”²¹⁷

A comparison to the approach of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), generally regarded in the West as the most brutal communist regime, to that of the US and its client-state in the South can help to isolate the influence of populationism in American thinking. In the competing occupations of Seoul, the point at which the war-time behavior of the US and ROK can be most directly compared to that of the DPRK, both sides committed extrajudicial executions of prisoners, military and civilian. However, while true, it is not specific enough to say that both sides were atrocious and leave it at that. Comparatively, the US/ROK committed over 330% more executions than did the communist regime, leaving scholars with the “conundrum,” notes Cumings, that the DPRK “conducted itself better.” The latter assessment depends on one’s interpretation of “better.” An analysis less concerned with ethical evaluation and more with epistemology might be that the distinct contemporaneous goals, ideas, locations, beliefs, affects, methodologies, and mental apparatus of culture and perception between the two sides led them to conduct themselves *differently*. One side was operating from an epistemology that produced, as expressed by Truman, the notion of overpopulation, its alchemy to commun(al)ism, and body-eliminations as a solution. The other was operating from an epistemology that (at least theoretically and at times) rejected the notion of overpopulation as an invention of capitalism and racism and embraced population growth as productive and empowering.

²¹⁷ Boggs (2010). Pp. 54-55.

Eisenhower took over as President during the last several months of the Korean War, before which he had served in several prominent military positions and as president of Columbia University. In 1951, the US had also started giving aid for France's attempt to quell the independence movement in growing, communalizing Vietnam. Similarly to the situation in Korea, the Vietnamese independence movement, centered in the Northern part of the country bordering China, was known by the United States to have the support of the vast majority of the nation's people. Registering this human obstacle to Western hegemony, the US supplied colonial France in 1951 with 120 thousand tons of military equipment, such as 39 million rounds of ammunition – which would soon climb to 500 million – and 7,700 automatic weapons. Supplies also included napalm, aerial vehicles, and tens of millions in direct financial support. Aid from 1951-2 totaled 4 billion. Eisenhower expanded the program, making the pacification campaign a top priority and supplying the vast majority of its equipment and funding.²¹⁸ The supplies helped to eliminate hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Vietnamese people.²¹⁹

To Eisenhower, the “most serious problem” that the world faced was “exploding population growth.”²²⁰ His “greatest nightmare” arose from the overpopulation to communism alchemy: that growing masses of people would communalize and upend world order. He tracked progress on this front by “counting” numbers of people in various, critical areas. Speaking to the National Security Council, he called population growth in the colonized world a “menace” that caused him “constant worry” and fear.²²¹ After his tenure as President, Eisenhower would go on to serve, along with Truman, as an honorary co-chairman of the Planned Parenthood Federation

²¹⁸ Cain, Frank. (2016). *America's Vietnam War and Its French Connection*. Taylor and Francis.

²¹⁹ Smith, J. W. (2000). *Economic Democracy: The Political Struggle of the Twenty-First Century*. M.E. Sharpe. P. 99.

²²⁰ Connelly (2008). Pp. 185-186.

²²¹ Connelly (2008). P. 5.

of America (PPFA). In 1965, he expressed his concern that “population growth among responsible families” was being “slow[ed]” while “financial incentives” were being provided “for increasing production” of the “ignorant, feeble-minded or lazy.”²²²

The effort to prevent the vote mandated in the 1954 Geneva Accords, which would have unified Vietnam under the Northern independence movement that the US knew was supported throughout the nation, was passed from Eisenhower to Kennedy. The new president soon introduced US troops (at first euphemized as “advisors”) and authorized the American use of napalm and cancerous defoliation chemicals. As a Catholic, Kennedy was reluctant to publicly advocate for population control. He was also wary, he said, of the “psychological” effects that might be induced in growing populations if it appeared that the US wanted to bring about the “limitation of the black or brown or yellow peoples,” whom, he added, were “increasing no faster than [people] in the United States.”²²³ He thus expressed a concern similar to that seen in the Organskis and Pohlman, that being too explicit in the fight against “overpopulation” – even under the banner of benevolent poverty-reduction – could be counter-productive as people would see through the pretext and resist. Thus, it was in private that Kennedy was more candid about population growth. He repeatedly suggested that the Ford Foundation devote “all of its resources” to what he called the “population problem around the world.”²²⁴ In a laundering approach that would remain prevalent even as direct government participation in global population control programs would continue to expand, Kennedy wanted to see population

²²² Connelly (2008). P. 247.

²²³ Connelly (2008). P. 187.

²²⁴ Connelly (2008). P. 198.

control pursued through “the UN, foundations, and private associations,” giving him a degree of separation from the sensitive issue.²²⁵

Robert McNamara, whom Kennedy would appoint Secretary of Defense at the beginning of 1961 and who would remain in the position up to early 1968, similarly refrained from speaking directly about the issue while in government. However, he had started his professional career in the Ford Foundation, a major player in the overpopulation milieu, and became its first president from outside of the Ford family. The Ford Foundation would describe its population control efforts in the colonized world as the “thin red line,” a reference to “Rudyard Kipling’s image of the defenders of empire.”²²⁶ Known for his efficiency-based “systems analysis” approach, a point of commonality with the methods of demography,²²⁷ McNamara became the chief architect of the Vietnam War.

After leaving office, McNamara transitioned into being president of the World Bank. He used the platform to “transform” the institution and make reducing population growth a top priority – always for purposes of promoting monetary enrichment (or at least offering money in exchange for accepting population-limitation).²²⁸ Pohlman, author of the 1971 text *How to Kill Population*, cites World Bank President McNamara as approvingly as he does Ehrlich as an example of someone who understands the stakes of overpopulation.

McNamara called overpopulation the “greatest single” factor making the colonized world poor. Removing the obstacle of surplus population, he argued, would allow poor nations and populations to grow rich and powerful – similar to what proponents claimed it would do for

²²⁵ Connelly (2008). P. 198.

²²⁶ Connelly (2008). P. 312.

²²⁷ Hartmann, Unger, & Dörnemann (2014). P. 62.

²²⁸ Connelly (2013). P. 491.

Native Americans. Pohlman points out that McNamara shares his assessment that the population problem will be solved one way or another. Summarizing McNamara's argument, he warns that people can either accept "rational, humane, and dignified techniques" of population control, or refuse such techniques and descend into "riot, ...insurrection, ... starvation[,] ... wars of aggression and expansion," and "famine"²²⁹ – which can in part be read as a kind of "easy way" or "hard way" ultimatum: population reduction or death.

McNamara, who lived to 93 and died peacefully in his sleep, had a populationist understanding of the importance of death for preserving life. He was disinclined, as head of the World Bank, to help improve substandard healthcare infrastructure in the colonized world "because usually health facilities contributed to the decline of the death rate, and thereby to the population explosion." The overpopulation-fighting former Secretary of Defense knew that intervening in mortality – at least to reduce it – would be counterproductive to solving population problems.²³⁰ To receive aid for improving healthcare infrastructure, said McNamara, programs would need to be "very strictly related to population control."²³¹ This was often literal, with population control being virtually the only kind of healthcare offered, as in the case of many Native American reservations. As World Bank president, McNamara made loans in general contingent on population control, offering a loan to Kenya, for example, once it agreed to address what McNamara called its "frightening" birth rate.²³²

If Kennedy and McNamara were careful about discussing the population problem while in government, Johnson, under whom McNamara served for most of his time as Secretary of

²²⁹ Pohlman, E. (1971). Pp. 37, 128.

²³⁰ The Rockefeller mission and the Organskis had also noted that healthcare services, like food, can be a tool of population control through raising death rates.

²³¹ Connelly. (2008). P. 263.

²³² Connelly (2008). P. 349.

Defense, became less hesitant as the crisis was said to be intensifying. Like Kennedy, Johnson initially wanted to at least avoid “visibly touch[ing]” population matters. But he would go on to discuss the issue publicly and with the US military.²³³ He told US forces at the Korean DMZ in 1966 that United States was an island in an exploding world of people bearing down and pressing in, possibly to conquer and loot Americans. “There are 3 billion people in the world and we have only 200 million of them,” he said. “We are outnumbered 15 to 1. If might did make right they would sweep over the United States and take what we have.”²³⁴ Here, the world again becomes a fluid, population pressure-system. Growing numbers make might and confer a potential ability to counter-colonize the colonizer. The sentiment, later mirrored by Ehrlich, could be lifted from a Vogt or a Moore, or even a Huxley, as it infers a correlation between population size and power that the white West cannot match with numbers and thus can only hope to contain with, for example, area-weapons. In a 1965 speech at an anniversary celebration for the United Nations, Johnson had already identified “multiplying populations” as the “most profound challenge to the future of all the world.”²³⁵

As in the case of the Native Americans, the challenge could be overcome, he said, by reducing the amount of human life. This would allow the colonized poor to become the voluntarily-capitalist rich, content and complacent under the current order. Johnson calculated that every dollar invested in voiding life would offer a 2,000% increase on investment.²³⁶ Life prevention thus offered some of the biggest business opportunities since the thousand percent

²³³ Connelly (2008). P. 210.

²³⁴ Connelly. (2006). P. 310.

²³⁵ Connelly. (2008). P. 213-214.

²³⁶ Pohlman, E. (1971). P. 35; Connelly (2008). Pp. 213-214.

returns that could previously be had by purchasing or breeding chattel slaves.²³⁷ Elsewhere, Johnson expressed that the United States should “exercise whatever persuasion it could” towards fighting the population problem, referencing the spectrum of conceivable ways for eliminating life. One method that he employed was “using food as leverage,” giving it out only on condition of life avoidance²³⁸ – the implicit ultimatum once again becoming population control one way or the other; the easy way or the hard way. Rejection of sterilization makes the physical elimination of a target even more justifiable, and likely, than it already is.

Like Ehrlich, Johnson was adamant that colonized populations like that of India finally learn to stand on their own feet and achieve self-sufficiency and worth, as countries like the United States and Britain had done. When an advisor floated the idea of increasing food-aid to India, Johnson thus erupted: “Are you out of your fucking mind?” Although in reality population growth rates in the 1960s were already declining in most of the world, with little to no correlation to birth control campaigns, and although “even the most rapid population growth could never be proven to have caused any particular crisis or emergency,” something was compelling American leaders to overlook these factors or see them as irrelevant. Johnson thus refused to “piss away foreign aid” in areas with “population problems.”²³⁹ The attitude recalls Vogt and Pohlman’s population “rathole” theory in which pouring (or pissing) foreign aid into the bottomless population “mouth,” or “rathole,” merely leads to more mouths and holes. This,

²³⁷ Horne, Gerald. (27 June, 2014). “‘Counter-Revolution of 1776’: Was U.S. Independence War a Conservative Revolt in Favor of Slavery?” *Democracy Now*. Horne notes that “profits for the slave trade were tremendous, sometimes up to 1,600 or 1,700 percent. And as you know, there are those even today who will sell their firstborn for such a profit.”; On Jefferson: Wiencek, Henry. (2012, 14 November). “Henry Wiencek Responds to His Critics.” Retrieved from Smithsonian website.

²³⁸ Connelly (2008). Pp. 217, 220.

²³⁹ Connelly (2008). Pp. 221; 237-8; 256.

as the Organskis put it, “leavens the loaf” of population, increases its communalized power, and thus confers an ability to mount “social revolution” against capitalist hegemony.

Instead of pissing aid into the population rathole and making matters worse, Johnson aided in the construction of an international effort to solve population problems. The campaign linked overpopulation in foreign countries to that in American “territories, Native American reservations, and what [Urban Affairs advisor to Nixon Daniel Patrick] Moynihan” would call the “the urban frontier.” African Americans were thus aligned with indigenous people in the United States and Vietnamese “Indians” on the new American frontier of Southeast Asia.²⁴⁰ Indeed, there was a feedback loop between the staff that comprised this global program to productively limit colonized life and the staff that comprised the Vietnam war. The most dedicated participants in the program were pulled from teams in Vietnam whose task there, fighting “communism,” had been referred to as “population control.”²⁴¹ The director of the new program, Reimert Ravenholt, channeled this military continuity when he said that he and his men approached their task “much as army quartermasters must do when girding an army for battle: making sure enough ammunition is made available in advance so that the troops can defeat the enemy.”²⁴²

Under Johnson, dealing with problems in terms of population and swathes of bodies became one of McNamara’s trademarks, or “fingerprints.”²⁴³ In 1964, Johnson approved contingency plans for a pre-emptive nuclear attack on the “Sino-Soviet” bloc, which would include the USSR, China, and all states considered to be part of the mass of commun(al)ism. In

²⁴⁰ Courtwright (1996). P. 106.

²⁴¹ Connelly (2008). P. 311.

²⁴² Connelly (2008). Pp. 286-288.

²⁴³ Burr, William. (2018, 15 August). “U.S. Nuclear War Plan Option Sought Destruction of China and Soviet Union as ‘Viable’ Societies.” George Washington University. National Security Archive.

the event that an unprovoked first-strike by the Soviet Union was detected (which neither the Soviet Union nor United States ever planned to carry out), the exploding mass of communists was to be eliminated in one stroke, regardless of differences like the Sino-Soviet split. The goal was to eliminate percentages of the mass high enough to make it non-“viable.” McNamara’s influence is evident as “industrial damage” in the planning is relegated to more “collateral” importance. The emphasis is shifted instead to the physical material of communism – which is masses of people, or overpopulation. Eliminating percentages of humans – lowering population – thus becomes the “primary yardstick for effectiveness” in “destroying” the mass’s ability to communally cohere and thus constitute a problem. Using area-weapons to fully eliminate China as a nation could be accomplished, the plans suggest, by using nuclear weapons to lower the Chinese urban population by 30%, which would disband, or de-communalize, the society as a whole. Basing goals on percentages of population eliminated thus became foundational to Pentagon thinking.²⁴⁴ With fundamental links between population size, power, and self-determination assumed, the question becomes how much power (and thus population size) needs to be reduced in a given situation to achieve a desired result.

This would be the key question American planners would ask regarding their hegemonic goals for the growing nation of Vietnam. The fingerprints of using population as a measure of power and attempting to influence population levels to limit or reduce power can be seen in the campaign. Vietnam is raised directly by the Organskis (and other authors) in their 1961 study of how to maintain vassal states by limiting their power through limiting population size, a task most effectively accomplished by raising death rates. While it has long been deduced that the

²⁴⁴ Burr (2018).

number of casualties in the US attack on Vietnam (as well as Cambodia and Laos) is too high to have been incidental to planning,²⁴⁵ discoveries in US government archival records by Nick Turse have bolstered this analysis.²⁴⁶ Document troves suggest that eliminating units of life until a point was reached at which the population could no longer resist vassalage was indeed a strategy formulated by the leadership core. The primary source of this approach was Robert McNamara. The method, dubbed the “body count” policy, made eliminating Vietnamese people – seen as the primary obstacle to American hegemony – the essential focus of and order emanating from the Pentagon; the point of the “entire American military effort” (40-4). While in one sense the policy can be understood as *producing* corpses, another is as *reducing* bodies, lowering population, relieving population pressure, or reducing the size of the national body and thus its ability to resist.

The body-reduction ethos was nurtured in military training, in which mostly teenaged US recruits were conditioned (on top of what had already been established culturally) to see Vietnamese people as “dinks,” “gooks,” “slopes,” “slants,” and “rice-eaters” (28, 30, 34). While all of the terms resonate with populationist affect of racial superiority and de-individuation into the inferior mass, the term “rice-eaters” adds layers of populationist meaning by evoking the bottomless “mouth” image or “useless eater” theme central to overpopulationism. It is also feminizing, conjuring an herbivorous weakness, *a la* Osborn and Vogt, that stands in opposition to something like the manly, predatory Western “beefeater” status coveted by populationists. The term is also an old nickname for British soldiers and guards of the Tower of London,²⁴⁷ the mascot

²⁴⁵ Andersen, R. (2006). *A Century of Media, a Century of War*. New York: Peter Lang. P. 59.

²⁴⁶ Turse, N. (2013). *Kill Anything that Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam*. New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Co. Page number references in this section refer to this text.

²⁴⁷ *Oxford English Dictionary*.

of the eponymous London spirit. On the illustrative Beefeater label, a stout Tower of London guard proudly grasps his spear, combining multiple themes (nationalism, superiority, imperialism, hegemony, militarism, masculinity, individualism, reproduction, sexism, and carnism) that are dissolved and swirling in the cocktail of overpopulationism.



Figure 3.4: Beefeater Label

US recruits for the Vietnam war were conditioned to expel, control, and want to prey on an herbivorous, animalized femininity already associated with Asia.²⁴⁸ In 1948, Vogt cited the possibility of having to resort to the more plant-based “Asiatic diet” in an overpopulated world as a reason to fight population growth. This predatory masculinity and anti-femininity augured particular difficulty for many Vietnamese women.

Like the poor countries that World Bank president McNamara wanted to enrich through population control, Defense Secretary McNamara considered the Vietnamese to be “backward” (49), a status that “many demographers and family planners” of the post-war period were attributing to overpopulation instead of colonialism.²⁴⁹ Backwardness implies retrograde influence

²⁴⁸ Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage.

²⁴⁹ Kühl (2013). P. 151.

within a conception of progress that sees white bodies in proper, forward-moving orientation, using the language of economics rather than race to signal malleability and need for helpful adjustment.²⁵⁰ Johnson considered Vietnam “a piddling piss-ant little country,” linking the nation to phallic impotence, urine, teeming pests, and, perhaps wishfully, inadequate size. Others referred to it as a “garbage dump” or the “asshole of the world.” One slogan was to “kill ‘em all and let God sort ‘em out” (49). Vietnamese were widely seen as subhuman, a notion from which the “Mere Gook Rule,” or MGR, emerged. MGR meant that the Vietnamese were, as Turse distills the meaning, around non-human animals in the American hierarchy of life (50) – said to be inferior because of looks, behaviors, and mental abilities. Animalized inferiority to the American ideal meant that, as bodies, they could be controlled and manipulated through predatory, procedural elimination at the whim of their superiors, owners, or, following populationist imperial logics, their creators.

Once they reached Vietnam, soldiers experienced an overwhelming pressure down the chain of command to start lowering population, eliminating bodies. One described the atmosphere as “all about body count. Our commanders just wanted body count.” A medic described the atmosphere as: “Get the body count. Get the body count. Get the body count. It was prevalent everywhere... [T]he mindset of the officer corps from the top down” (44). The reductionist approach was further implemented through a system of punishments and rewards. Lower reducers had to stay in the field longer, risking their own lives. Higher reducers spent less time in the field and received awards such as resort-vacation passes, “medals, badges, extra food, extra beer, permission to wear non-regulation gear, and light duty at base camp” (43-44).

²⁵⁰ For full length treatment of how economics replaces eugenics, see: Murphy (2017). P. 11 *et passim*.

Veterans called this an “incentivization” and a “competition,” the winners being those who eliminated the most Vietnamese people. Some soldiers became highly effective, personally voiding thousands of lives (43-44). Units commonly raised their numbers by executing prisoners (46-7) and using Vietnamese people as human shields, such as by sending them into minefields – making them doubly productive as tools and then corpses (121, 217).

Overarching assignment of Vietnamese life to sub or lower-humanity helped to amass all stages and abilities of human, non-human animal, and plant-life into a circle of productive elimination, or disposability. When one soldier asked if his unit was supposed to “kill women and children” as well as men, he was instructed to be inclusive: “kill anything that moves” (2). In addition to defoliation, non-human animals were thus processed along with people, such as at My Lai, an event that, in broader context, becomes part of a systematized, routinized effort (13, 40-44). There, in what the *New York Times* originally reported as Americans killing “128 enemy soldiers” in a “pincer movement,” troops slaughtered 502 civilians and, with them, 870 cows (40-44).²⁵¹ Authors in the overpopulation canon were recommending care to avoid eliminating farmed animal populations in the United States, but at the same time noting that reducing farmed animal numbers is the most intelligent thing to do in times of scarcity. Body reductions in Vietnam, a point of crucial inflammation in the global population-pressure system, may thus be read in part as an elimination of someone else’s animals. The disposal of someone else’s animals is equally as productive in terms of pressure-reduction, but affects Americans less and is not only more palatable, but offers the broadest range of benefits. It might also be read as productive

²⁵¹ Andersen (2006). P. 58-59.

mercy-killing; sparing the pitiable infirm from the inevitable, worse fate of slow death from starvation while preserving resources and global control for the victorious fit.

American population-lowering strategies, again, revolved around population-scale area-weapons and industrial technological superiority repeatedly cited in population theory. Facing peasants armed mainly with rifles and improvised, soda-can grenades, or North Vietnamese troops armed with rifles and regular grenades, the US constructed the most colossal killing apparatus in history. Sometimes recorded funeral music and sounds of moaning and shrieking,²⁵² intended to invoke ghosts and death like a haunted-house soundtrack, was interspersed with bombardment. This helped to notify those in earshot of their presence on the floor of the “[dis]assembly-line” and to tell them that resistance would merely increase the speed of the conveyor belt. By 1975, the machine had processed Southeast Asian bodies through the energetic deconstructive equivalent of 640 Hiroshimas. Once again, an American killing operation achieved the status of being the largest that had ever been conducted in history (40-44; 79-80). The heaviest work was done in South Vietnam, where resistance to installation of the infrastructure was most ineffective (as there were no air defenses; that is, there was greatest vulnerability) and the problem was most concentrated in the flesh, bone, and fiber of population and protective foliage, as opposed to indigestible concrete and metallics. In terms of napalm, while the US had used the sticking gas to incinerate every city in Japan with a population of over fifty-thousand (with the exception of four cities set aside for possible atomic testing), 300% more was used on Vietnam, necessitating production reaching 500 million pounds per year.²⁵³

²⁵² Part of a psychological warfare operation called Operation Wandering Soul. Listen to a tape of the recording here: Operation Wandering Soul (Ghost Tape Number 10). Online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4d9H_1yEv8

²⁵³ Franklin (2000). Pp. 72-5; 79.

Carcinogenic defoliants were sprayed over vast swathes of forest, farmland²⁵⁴ and “4.8 million people.” Cancers and birth defects are ongoing (96), along with deaths from unexploded ordnance.

Like some of the most enthusiastic sport-hunters, many Americans, such as General George S. Patton III (son of the famous WWII General), processed their prey by hand, further asserting the status of Vietnamese people as wild animals marked for elimination and domestication. This included taking and displaying “souvenirs” and trophies. Casting Vietnam as a sort of factory farm and industrial slaughterhouse, accidentally bred, colonized bodies were eliminated and processed for the maintenance of American “values” (Ehrlich) and self-perception. US personnel chopped Vietnamese heads off to keep or “exchange for prizes offered by commanders.” Most coveted were ears, which were sometimes made into necklaces, though consumers also demanded “scalps, penises, noses, breasts, teeth, and fingers.” One soldier reported that there were people “in all the platoons with ears on cords.” Another said ear-necklaces, displayed as hunting trophies and testaments to prolific body-counting, were an “everyday” sight.²⁵⁵

Rather than fighting overpopulation by eliminating or sterilizing domesticated animals in the United States, Americans were hunting, eliminating, and attempting to domesticate wild animals on the frontier. To log, prove, and prolong the predatory pleasures of conquest, soldiers took photos of their work and made scrapbooks. A journalist noted that “thousands” of albums that he reviewed “all seemed to contain the same pictures”: “the severed head shot, the head often resting on the chest of the dead man or being held up by a smiling Marine, or a lot of the

²⁵⁴ Andersen (2006). P. 58.

²⁵⁵ Turse (2013). Pp. 161-163.

heads, arranged in a row, with a burning cigarette in each of the mouths, the eyes open,” signaling submission, complacency, and domestication. Some of the pictured victims were “very young.” He estimated that “half the combat troops” kept these images. Recalling a tactic used on Southern slave plantations, some units mounted heads on pikes, employing the dual effect of body-reduction and fear incitement. Others tied human corpses, like deer, to the hoods of their military vehicles and paraded them through towns (161-3).

As checking the wild Vietnamese population became increasingly unlikely and support for the war began to wane, McNamara was accused of trying to decrease opposition from dominant American society by noticeably darkening the “color of the [American] corpses” – changing recruitment rules so that a higher percentage of brown people would be drafted.²⁵⁶ Death rates for black and Hispanic soldiers were disproportionately high, indicating that they were more likely to be assigned to dangerous tasks. Soldiers of color found racism to be prevalent and saw it applied to Vietnamese bodies as well as their own.²⁵⁷ In the early 20th century, eugenicists had begun to worry about the “dysgenic” effects of inter-European warfare: war between European countries seemed to wipe out the most virile, patriotic young white men.²⁵⁸ This, of course, was no reason to stop waging war on non-industrialized people of color, who took the vast majority of the casualties in any contest. But as McNamara may have suggested, there might even be a way for casualties of war to have some eugenic effect on the metropole – or at least

²⁵⁶ Hersh, S. (2018.) *Reporter*. Knopf-Doubleday Publishing Group. Ch. 8.

²⁵⁷ Sturken, M. (1997). *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press. P. 114.

²⁵⁸ See, e.g.: Jordan, D. S., & Jordan, H. E. (1914). *War's Aftermath: A Preliminary Study of the Eugenics of War as Illustrated by the Civil War of the United States and The Late Wars in the Balkans*. Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin Company; Eugenics and War. (1915, February 20). *The British Medical Journal*, 1 (2825), 345-346.

little to no dysgenic effect – by recruiting and sending the lower stocks into battle against other unfit bodies.

Sexual violence and rape of Vietnamese women, or the sense that Americans had a right to dictate and control their reproductive activities and choices, was “omnipresent.” In the field, rape, a conjunction of reproduction and tyranny, or “reproductive tyranny”²⁵⁹ – a good description of much of the ethos advocated by authors explored in chapter two – was a weapon linking various forms of establishing predatory dominance (164-68). Although it has been largely expunged from American memory of the war, rape was a widespread, normalized event that was essentially “condoned,” even encouraged, by the military.²⁶⁰ The scale was so large that many soldiers considered it to be part of the army’s “standard operating procedure.” It was seen as “systematic and collective;” an “unofficial,” “mass military policy.” Asserting totalitarian control of the reproductivity of Vietnamese women, followed by bolting them in the head and thus converting their present, negatively valued lives into productive, valuable death, was “so common that American soldiers had a special term for the soldiers who committed” rape and murder “in conjunction: a double veteran.”²⁶¹

Sometimes the productivity of rape and murder consisted not just in sexually dominating and voiding a life but in the hierarchical, predatory mastery asserted by processing the flesh. Soldiers reported that female prisoners would be “raped, tortured, and then ... completely destroyed – their bodies were destroyed.” Others reported cases where double veterans earned

²⁵⁹ Solinger, Rickie. "Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice (review)." *NWSA Journal*, vol. 17 no. 1, 2005, pp. 239-241; Muller, S. (2018). “Zombification, Social Death, and the Slaughterhouse: U.S. Industrial Practices of Livestock Slaughter.” *American Studies*, 57(3), 81-101.

²⁶⁰ Quotations and information in this section are sourced from: Weaver, G. (2010). *Ideologies of Forgetting: Rape in the Vietnam War*. Albany: State University of New York Press. Ebook.

²⁶¹ Weaver (2010). P. 35.

their titles: “They raped the girl, and then, the last man to make love to her, shot her in the head.”²⁶² In another case, two soldiers dragged a young, naked woman out of a “hooch,” a slang term for a grass hut that also seems to link the feminine to the land itself, connecting the body to the structure, the structure to the earth and the national body.²⁶³ The testifying soldier said that the woman was tossed onto a “pile” of nineteen women and children, and soldiers around the pile “opened up on full automatic on their M-16s,” a practice that was “pretty SOP” (Standard Operating Procedure). Another soldier reported seeing a girl pulled out of a bomb shelter and raped her in front of her family, as if demonstratively punished for trying to resist American reproductive and death-control. The witness said that he knew of “10 or 15 of such incidents at least.” His platoon leader, he said, “condone[d] rape.” Another sergeant reportedly told his platoon, “if there’s a woman in a hooch ... rape her.”²⁶⁴ Populationism was asserting the right to reproductive and necropolitical control of the feminized Vietnamese human and national bodies.

When Nixon and Kissinger came into office, they intensified population-bludgeoning. Increased area-bombing, they hoped, would check what Kissinger wishfully characterized as the “little fourth-rate power” of Vietnam, revealing a concern with increasing size. Their use of area-attacks to wipe out thousands of people in single raids led some Vietnamese to feel that they were being “exterminated by American bombs.”²⁶⁵

Like LBJ, Nixon had perceived a tension between poverty in the colonized world and wealth in the colonial world and was disturbed by the growing ability of vassal populations to attempt to alter their lot. Also like Johnson, he linked the foreign and the domestic, applying

²⁶² Weaver (2010).

²⁶³ *Merriam-Webster*.

²⁶⁴ Weaver (2010).

²⁶⁵ Schwenkel, Christina. (2009). *American War in Contemporary Vietnam: Transnational Remembrance and Representation*. Indiana University Press. ProQuest Ebook Central. P. 72.

across the global board the “law and order” platform on which he was boosted into office. Connecting the landscape in Southeast Asia with what some called colonized pockets of the domestic space, problems in what Nixon dubbed the American “city jungle” would unfold like problems in vassal nations like Vietnam. As if channeling Hauser, he warned that, as colonized populations would band together communally to sweep over the West and retake the wealth of their colonizers, so would “the brutal society that now flourishes in the [American] core cities ... annex the affluent suburbs.” That is, growing populations of color the world over were, in essence, breeding armies that could allow them to alter the “status quo.”

Nixon thus stressed that “population control” was “a must,” meriting designation as a “top national priority.” He intensified population control in domestic and foreign spheres, expressing through an appointed commission that the US would “attack our own population problem as well as theirs” as part of a campaign of “world-wide population control.”²⁶⁶ On the domestic frontier, he worked to provide the Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) department with the funds that were used to coercively sterilize thousands of Indians. The head of the new population control unit in HEW stated that while voluntarism would be ideal, the urgency of the problem may “dissipate the last hope of a voluntary solution.”²⁶⁷ Plans for containing the brutal core of American cities and other multiplying domestic legions through deployment of troops and equipment also began to merge with containment tactics applied to Vietnam.²⁶⁸

While what the HEW official called “involuntarism”²⁶⁹ (sic) might be necessary for the containment of disorder and the maintenance of status quo, it was always to be employed for the

²⁶⁶ Connelly (2008). P. 254-255.

²⁶⁷ Connelly (2008).

²⁶⁸ Robin (2001). Pp. 204-205.

²⁶⁹ Connelly (2008). P. 254-255.

good of the targets, as stated in a 1974 study of population issues dubbed the “Kissinger Report.” The “universal objective” was to raise the target group’s “standard of living,” thereby ultimately contributing towards raising the standard of living of the entire “world.”²⁷⁰ Like Nixon, Moore, the Organskis, and so on, the Kissinger Report sees population problems as virtually uniform across the domestic and foreign and sees population control as helping to prevent “separatist movements” and “revolutionary” actions. Becoming wealthy by having their numbers reduced, as opposed to becoming disempowered by having their numbers reduced, would cause targeted groups to accept American hegemony.

In the mid 1980s, a bipartisan presidential commission under Henry Kissinger would lend support to a USAID campaign to cut down on births in central America at a time when the United States was supporting genocidal military campaigns against indigenous people in the region.²⁷¹ By the time Kissinger was pressing for adding other forms of disappearance into the mix, some 140,000 Indians, the descendants of those nearly wiped out by the Spanish, had been “disappeared” since 1971. In per-capita equivalence, David E. Stannard points out, this is “almost six times the number of American battle deaths in the Civil War, World War One, World War Two, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined.”²⁷²

Yet, it was only part of a broader campaign in which millions of indigenous people were being displaced, their lands seized and cleared,²⁷³ often to make space to breed and feed the bodies that would comprise the Western “beefsteaks” of the overpopulation canon. The population control continuum in Latin America would breach the eighties, as, for example, 200,000 to

²⁷⁰ Murphy (2017). P. 64.

²⁷¹ Connelly (2008). P. 353-354.

²⁷² Stannard (1992). Pp. xiii-xiv.

²⁷³ Stannard (1992). Pp. xiii-xiv.

300,000 “poor indigenous women” in the American client state of Peru were aggressively sterilized with the assistance of USAID between 1996 and 2000.²⁷⁴ In the mid 1960s, McNamara had assisted in eliminating Peruvian independence movements inspired by Inca leaders Manco Cápac, Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui, and Túpac Amaru, last head of the Inca state, executed by the Spanish.²⁷⁵ At about the same time, the US greenlit and helped to carry out the commun(al)ist purge of Indonesia, in which some 500,000 to 3,000,000 people were killed in a year, “most [of the] victims” being the “peasants” that represent a top concern in the populationist literature.²⁷⁶

Nixon was succeeded in late 1974 by his vice president, Gerald Ford, who said that he had found Ehrlich’s *Population Bomb* “quite startling,” as had multiple congressmen and senators.²⁷⁷ Ford approved the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, which ended up wiping out some 21% to 26% of the Timorese population, the same proportion lost to the Khmer Rouge killings in Cambodia, which the United States in large part instigated and then supported, hoping that the regime might last longer against the Vietnamese invasion.²⁷⁸ Not only could war-based population reductions work towards precluding communist uprising, but inter-communist warfare itself, this suggests, could help to cut the hydra down to size. Ford’s vice president was Nelson Rockefeller, a member of the prominent oil, banking, cattle-ranching, political and philanthropist family that had sent the Rockefeller Commission to the Far East to study the

²⁷⁴ Hansen & King. (2013). P. 205.

²⁷⁵ Yupanqui, Titu Cusi (2005). *An Inca Account of the Conquest of Peru*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado; Blum, W. (2000). *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*. Monroe, ME.: Common Courage Press.

²⁷⁶ Quotation: Yale University Genocide Studies Program. (2019). *Indonesia*. Retrieved from Yale University website; For other estimates of casualties, see, e.g.: Perry, Juliet. (21 July, 2016). “Tribunal finds Indonesia guilty of 1965 genocide; US, UK complicit.” *CNN*; BBC News. (2 June 2016). “Looking into the massacres of Indonesia's past.” *BBC*.

²⁷⁷ Connelly (2008). P. 269.

²⁷⁸ Yale University Genocide Studies Program. (2019). *East Timor*. Retrieved from Yale University website; Quotation from: Kiernan, B. (2003). “The Demography of Genocide in Southeast Asia: The Death Tolls in Cambodia, 1975-79, and East Timor, 1975-80.” *Critical Asian Studies*, 35(4), 585-597.

population problem. Before becoming Vice President, Rockefeller had been Assistant Secretary of State for American Republic Affairs under Roosevelt and Truman and served as Under Secretary of HEW for Eisenhower in the early to mid 1950s.

As evidenced across this chapter, the ideas and logics of populationism have been expressed in American war-making. They became particularly pervasive in the period known as the overpopulation crisis. The thinking can influence the types of weapons used, the goals in using them, and how targeted groups are perceived and why they are targeted. The populationist desire to limit colonized human numbers so as to preserve American power and resource usage, such as the prominently discussed mass consumption of farmed animals, fosters valuations of colonized humans as inferior and of negative value, and of their elimination as valuable and productive.

CONCLUSION

With the deeply ingrained belief that “population problems” can be most effectively addressed through war and a rise in death rates, what kinds of numbers do American populationist thinkers suggest must be eliminated to have a helpful, pressure-relieving effect? Answers suggest some level of generalized understanding, and that efforts in the Korean and Vietnam wars, and sterilization campaigns against indigenous people, can indeed be read as vigorous and legitimate efforts to check population and stave off the “overpopulation” to commun(al)ism alchemy. Returning to Woodruff, even a reduction as small as 0.00075% is productive as part of a broader system to check the expansion of races. Pohlman advises that a reduction as small as 0.8% would be a “significant” step in the right direction (107). This is comparable to Osborn’s observation that 1% of the non-human animal population are carnivorous predators that must keep the 99% herbivore population “in check.” (This is also a kind of inverted preview of the 99% vs. 1% image that would later emerge from the Occupy Wall Street movement.) Osborn’s proportions also recall the Rockefeller mission’s equation of 1.3 million sterilized women who could have been mothers to 1.3 million Japanese soldiers killed in war, where the bounds of “normal circumstances” are suspended. In his speech during the Korean War on how to relieve the overpopulation emergency in Europe and thus combat commun(al)ism, Truman called for the United States to allow immigration of 0.08% of the Italian population of approximately 47,400,000 into the United States. Together with immigration to several other European countries, he said, the elimination of these bodies from

the area would aid the American anti-commun(al)ist agenda and contribute towards solving the “emergency problem.”²⁷⁹

In terms of how these general numbers were intuited or arrived at, some lessons may have been taken from WWII, in addition to experiences with indigenous and enslaved people, and then reinforced in Korea. The population of Japan in 1940 had climbed to over 73 million, and by November 1945 had been cut down to under 72 million – a 1.5% reduction followed by American conquest. In Korea, the death toll of the war has been estimated at 4 million, “mostly civilians” and “mostly resulting from US aerial bombardment,” but estimates go “much higher.”²⁸⁰ The population of North Korea was thus checked by about 9.3% from 1950 to 1954 and was successfully walled off from the South: the peaceful unification vote was prevented, and South Korea was held under democratically rejected American-backed dictatorship for decades. (The US would go on to attempt and temporarily accomplish the same thing in Vietnam.) The Korean overpopulation problem was thus partially solved, and, after eliminations through mass execution and area-*napalming* addressed the emergency problem in the Southern districts, the United States assisted in the installation of demographic institutions in the South to help keep the population within the bounds of populationist reason.

In Vietnam, though, despite similar and increasingly intensified rhetoric, tactics, and even more widespread and prolonged efforts, the birthrate continued to defiantly rise. In 1972, the population breached the 45 million mark identified by the Organskis as the warning light for proximity to the critical mass of independence/commun(al)ism. By 1975, it had reached 48

²⁷⁹ Truman (1952).

²⁸⁰ Boggs (2010). Pp. 54, 67-68, 74.

million and was still increasing towards the final benchmark of 50 million. The US was then driven out.

However, Americans had done great damage in their attempt to cut the wild-animalized, Native-Americanized national body of Vietnam down to size and domesticate it. Battered and sickened and with little chance of achieving much of a “demonstration effect,” the Vietnamese path to recovery would be arduous despite the nation’s tenacity and resilience. A 2008 Harvard Medical School study put the number of deaths due to the Vietnam war and the systematic atrocities of “every” significant American unit at 3.8 million, though Turse says that his findings indicate that this is likely an underestimate. The number (which excludes the US-backed French effort to reconquer Vietnam in the 1950s) equates to over 13% of the population of 1955, over 10% of the 1960 population, and about 8% of the 1975 population, or about a hundred times what Truman suggested the US absorb from Italy. It also leaves out the numbers of refugees that the US began to absorb once leadership decided that the sacrifice would be worth furthering the goals of anti-commun(al)ism.²⁸¹ The total number of civilian casualties (people killed and wounded) is some 7.3 million. This includes 8,000 to 16,000 paraplegics, 30,000 to 60,000 blinded, and 83,000 to 166,000 amputees (13, 21). In spite of these Herculean efforts, the “hydra’s heads” continued to multiply and survive. The population defiantly rose, today standing at 95.54 million.

As it became increasingly apparent in the late 1960s that, as Britain was unable to conquer the rapidly multiplying United States, the US would be unable to put a dent in and conquer a growing population of Vietnamese people working together, populationist frustrations

²⁸¹ Fischer, N. (2016). *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anticommunism*. University of Illinois Press. Pp. 286-288.

increased. In 1948, although Vogt made clear that voluntarism would be ineffective for population control, that force would be effective, and praised the life-preserving benefits of high death rates,²⁸² he still did not explicitly advocate involuntary coercion for controlling human numbers. By Hauser's 1961 text, this reluctance weakened, as overpopulation was tied even more strongly and authoritatively to the global struggle for space, freedom, homogeneity, and anti-commun(al)ism. In 1968, for Ehrlich, voluntarism was no longer part of the equation: the time for sugar-coating was "long gone."²⁸³ In Pohlman's 1971 text, voluntarism becomes "insanity," the equivalent of "fighting the killer enemy," which in Pohlman is human population growth outside of the US and Europe, with a "pea shooter" (48-54). In the frustration over being unable to limit the numbers of the Vietnamese "Indians" and thus subjugate them to vassalage, a longing to return to the days of being able (in large part through happenstance) to virtually wipe out and conquer entire civilizations, such as in the Americas, the Pacific Islands, and parts of Africa, is palpable.

People around the world, including those engulfed within the borders of the United States, rejected the populationist ultimatum of birth-control or death-control. In India, populationist elites who had coordinated with Americans were kicked out of office. Indians successfully held elections, took power for themselves, and declared that they would both have food (i.e., live) *and* make their own decisions about reproduction.²⁸⁴ In the United States, indigenous people and others who were abused by populationists rejected the claim that Anglo-Americans wanted to "help" them by forcefully controlling their reproduction and reducing their

²⁸² Vogt (1948). E.g., p. 186: "One of the greatest national assets of Chile, perhaps the greatest asset, is its high death rate."

²⁸³ Ehrlich (1971). P. 152.

²⁸⁴ Connelly (2008). Ch. 9.

numbers. Doctors, scholars, activists, and groups such as Women of All Red Nations (WARN) waged political campaigns, pursued policy changes, and filed class-action lawsuits in the 1970s, calling attention to the assault. WARN was formed by activists Janet McCloud, Lorelie DeCora Means, Phyllis Young, and Madonna Thunderhawk.²⁸⁵ DeCora expressed WARN's overarching mission and captured a major part of what was at issue in combating populationist eliminationism with her statement that "the only agenda that counts for American Indians" is "decolonization" (WOC, 144-5). While occupying a Bureau of Indian Affairs building in 1972, WARN discovered files that bore signs of a "national eugenic policy" brought to fruition with federal funding. In 1974, the group released a study concluding that 42% of indigenous women in the US had been sterilized through the HIS – far beyond the 30% elimination rate that the McNamara-tinged nuclear contingency committee had decided would eliminate China as a viable, cohering group, and 525 times higher than the percentage of Italians Truman was willing to absorb to help fight Italian commun(al)ism.

As a result of and in testament to the tenacity of WARN and other activists, the IHS was transferred from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the Department of Health and Human Services in 1978, and the mass sterilization ceased.²⁸⁶ In a sense, the post-war populationist fear of detection and opposition through being too overt in their actions and goals had come true. However, as scholars have pointed out even in the mid 2010s, the mass sterilization campaigns of the era remain understudied and little-known, at least to Americans outside specialist circles and indigenous and other minority communities.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ See: Connelly (2013); Pegoraro (2015); Hansen & King (2013). P. 6 par. 2.

²⁸⁶ Other issues that arose include human experimentation on mentally disabled indigenous women with the Depo-Provera birth control drug, decades before it was approved by the FDA, although it was considered a possible carcinogen. See Ralstin-Lewis (2005) and Harriet Washington, *Medical Apartheid*.

²⁸⁷ See: Connelly (2013); Pegoraro (2015); Hansen & King (2013). P. 6 par. 2.

Those who exposed the campaigns are recognized in their communities for playing a fundamental role in securing the survival of native people.²⁸⁸ As appears to have been the case in Vietnam, indigenous women fought back by “having more children than they did before the genocidal birth control and sterilization” campaign. While the number of births to indigenous women in 1975 stood at 27,542, by 1988 it had reached 45,871.²⁸⁹ Native people likewise refuse to be “checked” into domestication.

While people in Asia were subjected to American solutions to “population problems,” Asian American women in the United States also faced “racism, class segregation, patriarchy,” and other forces seeking to control their reproductive freedom (176).²⁹⁰ To push back, the National Asian Women’s Health Organization (NAWHO), for example, was founded in 1993 by Mary Chung, mobilizing thousands of women at the local and national level. NAWHO thus addresses the “physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of Asian women and girls” (198). The group expanded rapidly and became a strong advocate with a presence in the mainstream pro-choice movement.

As Michelle Murphy notes, claims of a need to eliminate “overpopulation” are again proliferating as climate chaos intensifies.²⁹¹ As I have been studying populationism and becoming attuned to its tendencies and expressions, I have found that the window into the thinking provided by my readings of post-war populationist texts remains applicable. During this time, I have begun to notice recurring trends in those who evoke overpopulation. In my experience, it has invariably been conservative-leaning American men influenced by American toxic

²⁸⁸ Johansen (2014.) Pp. 290-292.

²⁸⁹ Johansen (2014). Pp. 239.

²⁹⁰ Silliman, J. M., Fried, M. G., Ross, L. J., & Gutierrez, E. (2004). *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice*. Cambridge: South End Press.

²⁹¹ Murphy (2017). Conclusion.

masculinity culture, which involves hierarchical thinking and uses violence to assert and maintain the desired order.²⁹² This is an anti-communalist ideological tendency that rejects climate change as a consequence of capitalist resource usage and instead blames it on the proliferation of humans in places like China, as I have heard one man argue and as psychological studies have found is a recurring assertion.²⁹³ Hierarchically and violently inclined Americans are thus again blaming the imperilment of their privilege (such as the ability to breed billions of non-human bodies for consumption) on people who are or have been their victims. Heads of state and influential figures like Emmanuel Macron and Hillary Clinton (and inevitably Donald Trump) have also continued to blame precarity in colonized regions of the world, like Africa, on birthrates, circumventing generations of Western colonialism and the ongoing net drain of billions of dollars every year from African economies into the West.²⁹⁴

Indeed, a recent article in the *New York Times* illustrates the robustness of the main findings in this thesis. In a report titled ‘*Overrun, Outbred, Replaced*’: *Why Ethnic Majorities Lash Out Over False Fears*, Max Fisher and Amanda Taub note that academic studies are detecting a sense of “demographic peril” from majority populations that feel, including sometimes without any basis in reality, that they are being “outnumbered.”²⁹⁵ White Americans merely exposed to a single news article on a demographic increase in a non-white group

²⁹² E.g.: Dhont, K., Hodson, G., & Leite, A. (2016). “Common Ideological Roots of Speciesism and Generalized Ethnic Prejudice: The Social Dominance Human–Animal Relations Model (SD-HARM).” *European Journal of Personality*, 30(6), 507-522. In American sample, hierarchical views of non-human animals were “positively related to ethnic prejudice.”

²⁹³ Macdiarmid, Douglas, & Campbell. (2016). “Eating like there's no tomorrow: Public awareness of the environmental impact of food and reluctance to eat less meat as part of a sustainable diet.” *Appetite*, 96, 487-493. Western subjects noted that they could maintain their current level of meat consumption if “population growth” in “certain countries like India and obviously China” could be “controlled.”

²⁹⁴ Interview with Baba Aya. (9 July, 2018.) “France’s President Macron Tells Africans to Just ‘Move on’ After a Century of Murderous Colonialism.” *The Real News*. Online. Parts 1 and 3.

²⁹⁵ Fisher, Max & Taub, Amanda. (30 April, 2019.) “‘Overrun, Outbred, Replaced’: Why Ethnic Majorities Lash Out Over False Fears.” *The New York Times*. Online.

expressed “more negative attitudes toward Latinos, blacks, and Asian-Americans,” “more automatic pro-white/anti-minority bias,” and more opposition towards immigration and allocation of resources to welfare.

The feelings roused by this kind of perceived demographic peril are also considered a “major factor” in the current rise of white supremacist violence against minorities. The urge towards a violent response to non-white population growth extends to a state and global scale: Americans who hear about non-white/minority population growth become more supportive of Donald Trump and of transferring state resources to the military. In terms of how many people have these feelings, a recent poll found that 57 percent of white Americans believe that they face as much discrimination as African Americans and other minority groups. Thus, not only do these findings support the arguments in this thesis and illustrate their ongoing relevance and importance, they suggest that my findings are in some ways conservative. While I argue that post-war populationist authors implicitly suggest violent responses to non-white population growth, Fisher and Taub report that all that is needed to incite American feelings and acts of violence is to receive a small amount of information about demographic change.

Claims that the problems that we currently face are being caused or exacerbated by the proliferation of non-white, colonized or formerly-colonized people will thus increasingly foster a climate conducive to violence. This violence may be seen as helping to “solve” the problems, making human life-elimination an act of value-creation and productivity. As in the post-war period, this may intensify and broaden what would already be the potent violence of American

imperialism. Perhaps those who recognize and reject the “ideological detritus” of populationism and who seek humane, equitable solutions should communalize in opposition to its expression.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁶ Connelly says that the idea that various “problems” like war, famine, disease and degeneration will arise from “overpopulation” is “ideological detritus.” Connelly (2008). P. 328.

LITERATURE CITED

- Allen, G. E., & Turda, M. (2015). "Eugenics as a Basis of Population Policy." In J. D. Wright, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 218-223). Elsevier Science.
- Aly, G., & Heim, S. (2002). *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Andersen, R. (2006). *A Century of Media, A Century of War*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Angus, I., Butler, S., Hartmann, B., & Kovel, J. (2011). *Too Many People? Population, Immigration, and the Environmental Crisis*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Associated Press. (2008, May 18). "Thousands of Koreans executed early in the war." *NBC News*.
- Aya, B. (2018, July 9). "France's President Macron Tells Africans to Just 'Move on' After a Century of Murderous Colonialism." *The Real News*.
- Balfour, M., Evans, R., Notestein, F., & Taeuber, I. (1950). *Public Health and Demography in the Far East: Report of a Survey Trip September 13-December 13, 1948*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation.
- Baptist, E. E. (2016). "Toward a Political Economy of Slave Labor: Hands, Whipping-Machines, and Modern Power." In *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- BBC News. (2016, June 2). "Looking into the massacres of Indonesia's past." *BBC*.
- Blackburn, R. (2013). *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights*. London: Verso.

- Blackmon, D. A. (2012). *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. London: Icon.
- Blandford, V. A. (1981). *Black Women and Liberation Movements*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Arts and Humanities, Howard University.
- Blum, W. (2000). *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*. Monroe: Common Courage Press.
- Boggs, C. (2010). *The Crimes of Empire: Rogue Superpower and World Domination*. Pluto Press; Distributed in the United States by Palgrave Macmillan.
- Burr, W. (2018, August 15). "U.S. Nuclear War Plan Option Sought Destruction of China and Soviet Union as 'Viable' Societies." *George Washington University National Security Archive*. Retrieved from George Washington University Website.
- Butler, S. (2010, July 31). "Populationism: A Weapon of Political Conservatives." *Monthly Review Online*.
- Byrd, W., & Clayton, L. (2000). *An American Health Dilemma: A Medical History of African Americans and the Problem of Race*. New York: Routledge.
- Cain, F. (2016). *America's Vietnam War and Its French Connection*. Taylor and Francis.
- Campbell, T., & Campbell, T. M. (2006). *The China Study*. Dallas: BenBella Books.
- Carpio, M. V. (2004). "The Lost Generation: American Indian Women and Sterilization Abuse." *Social Justice*, 40-53.
- Carrington, D. (2018, May 21). "Humans just 0.01% of all life but have destroyed 83% of wild mammals – study." *The Guardian*.
- Chomsky, N., & Herman, E. S. (1979). *The Political Economy of Human Rights*. Boston: South End.

- Connelly, M. (2006). "To Inherit the Earth. Imagining World Population, from the Yellow Peril to the Population Bomb." *Journal of Global History*, 1(3), 299-319.
- Connelly, M. (2008). *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Connelly, M. (2013). "The Cold War in the Longue Durée: Global Migration, Public Health, and Population Control." In M. P. Leffler, & O. A. Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Vol. III: Endings* (Vol. III, pp. 474-495). Cambridge University Press.
- Courtwright, D. (1996). *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cumings, B. (2010). *The Korean War: A History*. New York: Random House. Modern Library Edition.
- Davis, M. (2001). *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*. London; New York: Verso.
- Dhont, K., Hodson, G., & Leite, A. (2016). "Common Ideological Roots of Speciesism and Generalized Ethnic Prejudice: The Social Dominance Human–Animal Relations Model (SD-HARM)." *European Journal of Personality*, 507-522.
- Doherty, T. (1993). *Projections of War: Hollywood, American Culture, and World War II*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dower, J. (1986). *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Drinnon, R. (1980). *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire Building*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Dunbar-Ortiz, R. (2018). *Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment*. City Lights Publishers.
- Eagle, J. (2017). *Imperial Affects: Sensational Melodrama and the Attractions of American Cinema*. Rutgers University Press.
- Ehrlich, P. (1971). *The Population Bomb*. Cutchogue, New York: Buccaneer Books.
- Eugenics and War. (1915, February 20). *The British Medical Journal*, 1(2825), 345-346.
- Exterminator, The*. (1980.) Directed by James Glickenhaus. Interstar Pictures.
- Feuda, D. e. (2017). "Improved Modeling of Compositional Heterogeneity Supports Sponges as Sister to All Other Animals." *Current Biology*, 3864-3870.
- Finkelstein, N. (2015). *The Holocaust Industry*. Verso Books.
- Fischer, N. (2016). *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anticommunism*. University of Illinois Press.
- Fisher, Max & Taub, Amanda. (30 April, 2019.) "'Overrun,' 'Outbred,' 'Replaced': Why Ethnic Majorities Lash Out Over False Fears." *The New York Times*. Online.
- Franklin, H. (2000). *Vietnam and other American Fantasies*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Goldberg-Hiller, J., & Silva, N. (2015). "The Botany of Emergence: Kanaka Ontology and Biocolonialism in Hawai'i." *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, 1-26.
- Haberman, C. (2015, May 31). "The Unrealized Horrors of the Population Explosion." *New York Times*.
- Hansen, R., & King, D. (2013). *Sterilized by the State: Eugenics, Race, and the Population Scare in Twentieth-Century North America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Hartmann, H., Unger, C. R., & Dörnemann, M. (2014). *A World of Populations: Transnational Perspectives on Demography in the Twentieth Century*. New York, Oxford, England: Berghan Books.
- Hauser, P. (1961). *Population Perspectives*. Rutgers University Press.
- Hersh, S. (2018.) *Reporter*. Knopf-Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Hixson, W. (2013). *American Settler Colonialism*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Horne, G. (2014, July 27). "Counter-Revolution of 1776': Was U.S. Independence War a Conservative Revolt in Favor of Slavery?" *Democracy Now*.
- Horne, G. (2014). *The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America*. New York University Press.
- Johansen, B. E. (2013). *Encyclopedia of the American Indian Movement (Movements of the American Mosaic)*. Greenwood.
- Jordan, D. S., & Jordan, H. E. (1914). *War's Aftermath: A Preliminary Study of the Eugenics of War as Illustrated by the Civil War of the United States and The Late Wars in the Balkans*. Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Kühl, S. (2013). *For the Betterment of the Race: The Rise and Fall of the International Movement for Eugenics and Racial Hygiene*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kakel, C. (2011). *The American West and the Nazi East: A Comparative and Interpretive Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kaufman, E., & Nelson, L. (2012). Malthus, gender and the demarcation of 'dangerous' bodies in 1996 US welfare reform. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 429-448.
- Kelly, H., & Burrage, W. L. (1920). *American Medical Biographies*. The Norman Remington Company.

- Kiernan, B. (2003). "The Demography of Genocide in Southeast Asia: The Death Tolls in Cambodia, 1975-79, and East Timor, 1975-80." *Critical Asian Studies*, 585-597.
- Lawrence, J. (2000). "The Indian Health Service and the Sterilization of Native American Women." *The American Indian Quarterly*, 400-419.
- Linebaugh, P., & Rediker, M. (2000). *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Long, K. K. (2014). *Unfit for a Queen: Mo'Okū'Auhau, National Consciousness and Eugenics in Territorial Hawai'i*. Manoa: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Dissertation.
- Macdiarmid, D., & Campbell. (2016). "Eating like there's no tomorrow: Public awareness of the environmental impact of food and reluctance to eat less meat as part of a sustainable diet." *Appetite*, 487-493.
- Malthus, T. R. (1798). *An Essay on the Principle of Population*. J. Johnson.
- Mann, C. C. (2018, January 1). "The Book that Incited a Worldwide Fear of Overpopulation." *Smithsonian Magazine*.
- Marcus, D. (2009). "William Wyler's World War II Films and the Bombing of Civilian Populations." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 79-90.
- McCleary, G. (1945). *Race Suicide?* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- Mosher, S. W. (2008). *Population control: Real Costs, Illusory Benefits*. Transaction Publishers.
- Muller, S. (2018). "Zombification, Social Death, and the Slaughterhouse: U.S. Industrial Practices of Livestock Slaughter." *American Studies*, 81-101.
- Murphy, M. (2017). *The Economization of Life*. Duke University Press.
- Neer, R. (2013). *Napalm: An American Biography*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

- Organski, K., & Organski, A. (1961). *Population and World Power*. New York: Alfred A Knopf.
- Osborn, F. (1948). *Our Plundered Planet*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Pegoraro, L. (2015). "Second-rate victims: the forced sterilization of Indigenous peoples in the USA and Canada." *Settler Colonial Studies*, 5(2).
- Perry, J. (2016, July 21). "Tribunal finds Indonesia guilty of 1965 genocide; US, UK complicit." *CNN*.
- Pfaelzer, J. (2007). *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans*. New York: Random House.
- Piketty, T. (2017). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Pohlman, E. (1971). *How to Kill Population*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- Ralstin-Lewis, M. D. (2005). "The Continuing Struggle against Genocide: Indigenous Women's Reproductive Rights." *Wicazo-Sa Review*, 20(1), 71-95.
- Roberts, D. E. (1997). *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Pantheon Books.
- Robin, R. (2001). *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military Intellectual Complex*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Rodgers, D. (1998). *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Rothgerber, H., & Levant, R. F. (2013). "Real Men Don't Eat (Vegetable) Quiche: Masculinity and the Justification of Meat Consumption." *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 363-375.
- Ruby, & Heine. (2011). "Meat, Morals, and Masculinity." *Appetite*, 447-450.

- Sabin, P. (2013). *The Bet: Paul Ehrlich, Julian Simon, and Our Gamble Over Earth's future*.
New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage.
- Schwenkel, C. (2009). *American War in Contemporary Vietnam: Transnational Remembrance and Representation*. Indiana University Press.
- Scott, J. S. (2018). *The Common Wind: Afro-American Currents in the Age of the Haitian Revolution*. Verso.
- Sharpless, J. (1997). "Population Science, Private Foundations, and Development Aid: The Transformation of Demographic Knowledge in the United States, 1945-1965." In F. Cooper, & R. Packard, *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (pp. 176-200). University of California Press.
- Silliman, J. M., Fried, M. G., Ross, L. J., & Gutierrez, E. (2004). *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice*. Cambridge: South End Press.
- Smith, J. W. (2000). *Economic Democracy: The Political Struggle of the Twenty-First Century*.
M.E. Sharpe.
- Solinger, R. (2005). "Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice (review)." *NWSA Journal*, 239-241.
- Stannard, D. E. (1992). *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*. New York.
Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stannard, D. E. (1995). "Uniqueness as Denial: The Politics of Genocide Scholarship." In A. Rosenbaum (Ed.), *Is the Holocaust Unique?* Westview Press.
- Stone, I. F. (1969). *The Hidden History of the Korean War*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

- Sturken, M. (1997). *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Torpy, S. J. (2000). "Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization: On the Trail of Tears in the 1970s." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 24(2), 1-22.
- Trafzer, C. E., & Hyer, J. R. (1999). *Exterminate Them: Written Accounts of the Murder, Rape, and Enslavement of Native Americans during the California Gold Rush*. Michigan State University Press.
- Truman, H. S. (1952, March 24). "Special Message to the Congress on Aid for Refugees and Displaced Persons." *Public Papers of Harry S. Truman*. Retrieved from Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum Website.
- Turse, N. (2013). *Kill Anything that Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam*. New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Co.
- Virilio, P. (2009). *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*. Verso.
- Vogt, W. (1948). *Road To Survival*. New York: W. Sloane Associates.
- Volscho, T. W. (2010). "Sterilization Racism and Pan-Ethnic Disparities of the Past Decade: The Continued Encroachment on Reproductive Rights." *Wicazo Sa Review*, 17-31.
- Washington, H. A. (2006). *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present*. Doubleday.
- Weaver, G. (2010). *Ideologies of Forgetting: Rape in the Vietnam War*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Weis, T. (2013). *The Ecological Hoofprint: The Global Burden of Industrial Livestock*. Zed.
- Whitman, J. Q. (2017). *Hitler's American Model: the United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

- Wiencek, H. (2013). *Master of the Mountain: Thomas Jefferson and his Slaves*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Henry Wiencek Responds to His Critics*. (2012, November 14). Retrieved from Smithsonian website.
- Wilkinson, H. (1930). *The World's Population Problems and a White Australia*. London: P.S. King and Son, Ltd.
- Wolfe, P. (2016). *Traces of History: Elementary Structures of Race*. Verso.
- Woodruff, C. (1909). *Expansion of Races*. New York: Rebman Company.
- Yale University Genocide Studies Program. (2019). *Indonesia; East Timor*. Retrieved from Yale University Website.
- Yupanqui, T. C. (2005). *An Inca Account of the Conquest of Peru*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.
- Zinn, H. (2015). *A People's History of the United States: 1492-Present*. Routledge.