

*Oh what a tangled field we seed when first we happen to conceive.*

~Les U. Knight

Social progress steadily allows more of us to join in on formerly exclusive aspects of the dominant culture, and freedom to choose can be a liberating feeling. More of us than ever are now encouraged to follow the default life: “First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes a baby in a baby carriage.”

While we freely define love and its expression in our own ways, and with fun new names, entanglement with the dominant social order doesn't have to follow. We're allowed to marry whomever we please—if we please anyone—and advantages are doled out to reward our conformity. We can always undo the contract: “divorced” is another box we're allowed to check.

But that last entanglement can't be undone. When we choose to create a new human life, regardless of the details, we are jumping headlong into the established order with both feet. Just because we can doesn't mean we truly want to.

Pressure to conform in natalist society starts early and never lets up. Indoctrination to breed is so strong that it feels biologically driven to some of us. If we choose not to procreate, we need an excuse.

Those of us presenting as male get a pass most of the time, especially if we're gay.

But women are expected, almost required, to breed—one in the couple at least. Conformity is comforting at first, but it won't end social pressure. In fact, the more we acquiesce, the more we're expected to go along and get along.

If we think our procreative choice all the way through, honestly ask ourselves “Why?” and consider the consequences, I think most of us will forego this obsolete activity. It won't be easy, though dedicating 20 years to caring for another person isn't exactly a walk in the park.

Not breeding has benefits for planet, society, ourselves, and paradoxically, the non-existent human.

Each person not created avoids considerable damage to Earth's ecosphere, and preserves potential wildlife habitat needed to avoid extinctions.



If there were fewer of us each day instead of a quarter million more, our potential for ending hunger and providing potable water and shelter for all would greatly increase.

The industrial future we have been working so hard to create is not one it would be ethical to sentence anyone to life in. Non-existent people do not suffer. Do we have the right to bring them into existence where they will surely experience suffering? A question we might ask when considering procreation is, "Would I create a new person if I knew they would have the same level of happiness and sorrow as I've had?"

We still have a long way to go toward liberation, especially globally, but we have the power within ourselves to decolonize our existence by foregoing the default life. There's so much more to our lives when we design them ourselves.

Thank you for thinking before breeding.