

sequence can run through properly. Everything is fragmented. Eventually there are so many deaths that the population is cut back to a lower density and can start to breed again, but not before there has been a catastrophic upheaval. If, in such a situation, some controlled anti-reproductive device could have been introduced into the population when the first signs of over-crowding were apparent, then the chaos could have been averted. Under such conditions (serious over-crowding with no signs of any easing up in the immediate future), anti-reproductive sexual patterns must obviously be considered in a new light.

Our own species is rapidly heading towards just such a situation. We have arrived at a point where we can no longer be complacent. The solution is obvious, namely to reduce the breeding rate without interfering with the existing social structure; to prevent an increase in quantity without preventing an increase in quality. Contraceptive techniques are obviously required, but they must not be allowed to disrupt the basic family unit. Actually there should be little danger of this. Fear has been expressed that the widespread use of perfected contraceptives will lead to random promiscuity, but this is most unlikely -the powerful pair-formation tendency of the species will see to that. There may be some trouble if many mated pairs employ contraception to the point where no offspring are produced. Such couples will put heavy demands on their pair-bonds, which may break under the strain. These individuals will then constitute a greater threat to other pairs that are attempting to rear families. But extreme breeding reductions of this kind are not necessary. If every family produced two children, the parents would simply reproduce their own number and there would be no increase. Allowing for accidents and premature deaths, the average figure could be slightly higher than this without leading to further population increase and eventual species catastrophe.

The trouble is that, as a sexual phenomenon, mechanical and chemical contraception is something basically new and it will take some time before we know exactly what sort of repercussions it will have