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## Letter on The Dilemmas of Laissez-Faire Population Policy in Capitalist Societies

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## To the Editor:

I would like to mention several factual errors in the review of *The Dilemmas of Laissez-Faire Population Policy in Capitalist Societies* (CH, Jun'97).

The book's second sentence states that it is about the consequences of laissez-faire population policies for capitalist labor markets—a subject otherwise not systematically studied. Instead of noting this novel perspective, the review mischaracterizes the book as being about "beliefs regarding the relationship between population and poverty"-which hundreds of authors have discussed. It reinforces this misleading description by withholding the fact that the longest chapter (50 pages) is not about beliefs, but an extended data presentation-readers of the review would be astonished that the book contains 23 tables-and that the second longest chapter is about state family allowance programs. The review compounds the error by calling it a source book on prominent social theorists' views on population without mentioning that half the chapters have nothing to do with such theorists, but deal with social movements and state intervention. Although the review calls the book a compilation, as if it were a mere narration, it offers detailed, fundamental criticism of all prominent social theorists. The review faults the book for failing to reveal "who [sic], if any, of the people are right," without recognizing that the book's point is to show that theorists failed even to recognize that there was a problem in need of articulation. Finally, it expresses disappointment that the book includes only passing reference to feminist theory. The index includes only passing references to "feminist theory," but the entire chapter on the birth strike is about feminist theory.

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