

MIND PETALS



EUGENICS

MAN'S DESIRE TO
CONTROL BREEDING
OR A STRIKE
AGAINST DISEASE?

YOU DECIDE

[PAGE 3]

PLUS

Lolita, or, what it is to Write.

[page 5]

// WWW.MINDPETALS.COM
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Peace Mind Petalers,



How many of you own a calculator? Well whether you own one or not, so many of us find ourselves attempting to calculate every situation -- trying to figure out and reduce things to their minutest details... to the point of exhaustion.

We believe that this intense calculating will lead us to an understanding, a breakthrough. Because in order to attain something, we must work "hard," right? No. Because we can easily -- without even knowing -- calculate ourselves out of success entirely. And who wants that?

Sometimes the best thing you can do is just continue flowing on, sliding forward without stopping to consider every possibility or every inevitable hiccup that arises. Don't become complacent, but also don't become obsessed with the details.

There's a beauty in the mystery. As light shines through a tree, it produces (or projects) a disorderly and stochastic pattern of shade. And in this randomness, there is no calculation. No consideration of how/why the light shines through the leaves. It's just created and presents itself.

Whatever it is that you are pursuing, remember to be that same light cutting through the leaves, leaving yourself open to randomness and the mystery of what will be projected.

Love, Happiness, and Peace

David Askaripour
Editor

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CONTRIBUTORS:

DOUG SILVER
NICHOLAS BENDER
DAVID KUGELE

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Active Chapters:

MP New York City
contact:
nyc@mindpetals.org

Mind Petals Boston
contact:
anna@mindpetals.org

Mind Petals Bluegrass
(Kentucky) **contact:**
EPM@mindpetals.org

The Merits of Shortcuts

A deeper look at Eugenics and the Ethics of Selective Breeding

At the moment, the total world population is over 6 billion people. Worldwide, the birthrate has dropped and the mortality rate has become unstable due to the outbreaks of AIDS and devastating natural disasters. There are famines, genocides, and wars raging all over the world. Despite all of this, the U.S. Census Bureau says that the population will continue to rise and by 2020 be 7.6 billion. As the world overpopulates, resources will become scarce and everyone will suffer. We need to find an answer to this problem and fast.

Some would say that eugenics is the answer. The idea behind eugenics is that science is somehow actively involved in procreation; the point of which being to create the best possible offspring to further the human race and weed out the diseased or the weak. As a result, there would be less people and the people who would be here would be genetically better. Essentially speeding up the process of evolution and creating a shortcut to a better genetic pool. This can be achieved through a number of ways. One of the ways is

selective breeding. That's when the father and mother are chosen for their genetic characteristics and then asked/told/forced to procreate. If your genetics aren't up to muster then you are not allowed to have children. Another way is to make "designer babies." This is when the baby is genetically engineered or altered to have more desirable

traits or not have undesirable ones. But those are just some of the more well known ways.

Most people seem to feel that eugenics is an infringement on their basic human rights and no one should ever have power of another person's ability to have children. Many also conjure up images of Hitler or other maniacs who have used eugenics for their evil plans.

Historically speaking, primitive forms of eugenics have been used for everything from the systematic destruction of a certain races to the Viking choosing to only kidnap tall blond women. However, these acts of evil have been unfairly intertwined

with eugenics.

Eugenics, in and of itself, has no evil or good attached to it. It is simply a scientific idea the same way that gravity or the speed of light. But it becomes personal to us because it has to do with our children and whom we have sex with. Our instincts kick in and we tell



ourselves that no one can tamper with our children, or that we love our partners and they are the only ones that we should have children with. Unfortunately, the reasons behind procreation have been muddled up by religion and society. We are led to believe in romance and the miracle of childbirth. But on a purely scientific level, an individual has offspring in order to continue his or her genetic line, or more accurately, the species' genetic line. Also the individual should seek out a mate who has desirable traits for the species. Once you understand and accept that line of thought, seeking help from science in the form of eugenics is a natural conclusion.

But how do you seek help? How can you scientifically say that one baby is better than another? The only realistic way that eugenics can be used responsibly is if you only deal with the health of the child. Genetic alterations so your child has blue eyes or other meaningless things are uncalled for and dangerous. There should be as little tampering with the DNA as possible, no one can be sure what they are doing when they fiddle with that code. If you know that the DNA of the parents would lead either their children or their grandchildren to be severely ill (mentally or physically), then they should not risk it. Adoption is always an option. I think everyone can agree that if they knew their child was going to be sick or somehow not well they would want to fix it anyway they could. Sometimes, the only way to fix the child is to not make the child. It takes a great deal of self-control and humility to choose to not have children for genetic reasons but they are some of the most honorable reasons you can have.

// by David Kugele

BUILDING

COMPANIES

CAREERS

RELATIONSHIPS

Lolita, or, what it is to Write.

Sitting on the floor—a cold ceramic tile, with white grout — the one that we had been on many times before. We were unwinding from work and discussing the job of a writer. We were talking about ethics as an artist. I had attempted to explain this once or twice before, on different tile. She's not exactly the most receptive girl when it's something she'd rather not listen to — and this was, of course, one of those something's she'd rather not listen to.

“So wait, when you're writing about sex, you're imagining having sex?” she said.

“No, that's masturbation. Masturbation doesn't get published.”

“Yeah right”

“All I'm saying is that just because you've written something, doesn't mean it's your history. It means that you're inventive enough—”

“Or perverted enough”, she interjected.

I sighed and continued explaining, “-to invite the reader to watch something happen.” She looked at me puzzled, still not getting it. It was a long day at work and I was stressed enough as it was with food coming out of the kitchen very slow, bad tips all day; and she had the nerve to press me for a justification on artist ethics.

“So, where do you draw the line? Does an actor just go around kissing people because he's rehearsing?” She even gave the finger quotes. “Or do you sit around at your typewriter, jay off to some porn, and then write about what you just saw?”

Exasperating.

I was sitting at a typewriter in my mind. I had writer's block. I couldn't think of anything to say. I was thumbing through past conversa-

tions for inspiration on where to go next. But I was out of words. I couldn't break it down in any words that she would understand any easier. She wasn't going to listen to me.

There was a knock at the door. I invited a character from one of my stories over to speak for me because I was out words. As a writer, that's supposed to be my job, I'm supposed to put feelings and thoughts into words — and it should sound good — but I was past eloquence or even remote semblance. So I opened the door and let Lolita into the kitchen. I wanted her to explain that sex is everyone's least common denominator; therefore, a sexual scene is something that everyone can have a feeling about. (your first time, in the car, your first O face) And as for the readers, they have no other release for their feeling filled libido than shop therapy, i.e. buying my book and giving it to everyone that they know as a Christmas or Hanukkah or “I Miss You” gift and using it as a conversation



piece. Then, everyone starts reading like a whirlwind and I single handedly re-invent reading as an art and pastime.

But it wasn't enough to be a literary messiah. And to be honest, she was still a bit baffled as to why this tall red head had walked into her kitchen and pours herself a glass of rice milk from her refrigerator. She was gorgeous and sensual. Everything about her was sensual.

I suggested that we move back to New York. And then we started arguing about what kind town it was. Lolita just sat and observed. She was wearing a big grey sweatshirt and these hot pink booty shorts that allowed for her long mermaid legs to pour out onto the ceramic like cream.

We continued the argument. She asked if we should even move anywhere at all. What was wrong with staying here? Lolita just watched, sipping the rice milk, with a very sensual pair of thin red lips. When we stopped arguing, she finished drinking and slid the glass down her chin close to her breasts. It was so quiet in the room that after she stopped drinking the milk, you could hear her trace her wet, red lips with her tongue.

The breasts, of course, were covered by her oversized sweatshirt. And the lip licking was nothing more than a reflex from drinking. But the room was so stiff from our tension that everything that she did – that was a very obvious attempt to be quiet – looked graceful and sexy.

“Okay” She said, “but what money do you intend we use to move back up there? And why is it okay for you to write that stuff.” She still didn't get it.

Lolita got it, but she didn't want to say anything given the nature of the conversation. So she, instead, pulled her knees up to her chest and wrapped her arms around them – swirling the last bit of rice milk left in her glass. It was easier to play innocent and watch.

And that's when I was unblocked and my eloquence came back. Lolita didn't have to say anything. She was invited, in essence, to watch. And by becoming a voyeur to the masochistic conversation that we were hav-

ing, she had the feelings (herself, her boyfriend, that night) from the scene as though she was watching two actors. And per chance she could retell the story in an essay, for a magazine, from my point of view – she becomes the writer, who has finally put into words why it is okay to write a sex scene.

// by Nicholas Bender

[illustration credit: PAUL PETRUCK]

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SO OLD SO YOUNG

We who kissed and told through an iron lung,
How did we become old men so young?
Composing epitaphs in the same breath as first love,
Yes, how did we become so old so young?

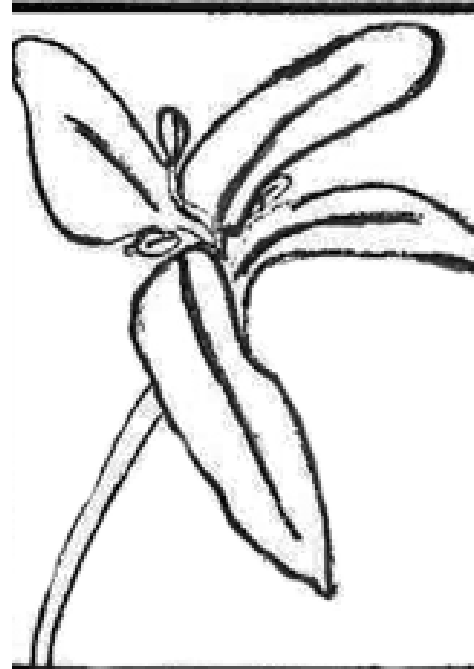
Bred from summer license, we flaunted those moments that made sense.
Assured at home, we built houses wherever we went.
We who grew gray hairs out of loss and pretense,
Yes, how did we become so old so young?

Our flaws sat inside those gems like the brittle dead,
And from that day on we bore castrated intent.
We, whose lives began and ended on the tongues of ecstasy and dread;
How did we become so old so young?

We who respected consequence and toasted waning belief,
Traded in force for bitters and rocking chairs,
Hedged bets on pints and comic relief.
Yes, how did we become so old so young?

We who knew what we wanted, knew that to be our curse.
We who made bread from verse, preferred disease to shun.
Awaken, stirred by morning whispers of gravel submersed.
So old so young; once exuberant and naked, now a cult overrun.

// by Doug Silver



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