Encyclopedia of
POPULATION

EDITED BY

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VOLUME

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APPENDIX

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Data Protection and Privacy

Linking of registers provides information of potentially great value to government, but also great potential for misuse. The same is true for social scientist users of these data. In both cases, confidentiality and protection of privacy have to be properly taken care of. Virtually every country with register systems that allow linking has a Data Surveillance Authority or equivalent agency with the aim of strict enforcement of privacy requirements. These usually specify that information should never be available for identifiable persons; individual data are to be available only for making statistical tables or estimates. In Europe, this work is regulated by the European Union (EU 1995).

See also: *Census; Data Collection, Ethical Issues in; Demographic Surveillance Systems; Family Reconstitution; State and Local Government Demography; Vital Statistics.*

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POPULATION THOUGHT, CONTEMPORARY

Population thought is the body of work that reflects on the causes and consequences of demographic change. Drawing on studies whose aim is to analyze population trends accurately, it primarily includes works that specify the problematic nature of population trends and works that attempt to induce desired population trends. Individuals with a concern about population, a group far broader than academic demographers, have produced the bulk of twentieth-century population thought so defined.

During the twentieth century most countries have experienced dramatic changes in both the number and the composition of their populations. Many observers have judged that these demographic changes have made the accomplishment of a variety of goals more difficult, whether enhancing national power, maintaining ethnic or cultural hegemony, improving the economy, preserving the environment, or attaining gender equity. These observers have produced a stream of policy-oriented works that highlight an assortment of population problems and argue for a variety of population policies. A chronological treatment of contemporary population thought therefore largely reflects the changing concerns of twentieth-century policymakers.

Academic analyses of twentieth-century population trends both reflected current population concerns and influenced the development of population thought. Demography as an activity has historically contained elements both of a social science and a policy science, and demographers have been motivated both by a desire to understand population trends and a desire to influence them. For instance, the worrisomely low fertility evident throughout much of Europe and the United States during the 1930s clearly influenced the Italian demographer Corrado Gini (1884–1965), who developed a cyclical theory of the rise and fall of population, and the French demographer Alfred Sauvy (1898–1990), who adopted a life-long anti-Malthusianism and a concern for population aging and decline, and the American economist Joseph J. Spengler, who contended that children had become "commodities" like "automobiles" that only would be produced in greater numbers by applying "the economic principles of price." After the baby boom made its appearance during the 1950s the American economists

Gary Becker and Harvey Leibenstein (1922–1994) actually viewed children as a special kind of commodity and elaborated a "new home economics," a key component of which was a sophisticated micro-economic model of fertility. The economist Richard Easterlin, studying the long swings in the growth of population and the economy uncovered by the economist Simon Kuznets (1901–1985), produced a macro-economic explanation of developed societies' fertility trends that focused on the influence played by shifts in cohort sizes over time.

At mid-century, though, rapid population growth in the less developed world attracted the most attention from academic demographers. Frank Notestein (1902–1983) was so alarmed by this population crisis that he left his position as director of Princeton University's Office of Population Research and became president of the Population Council. The Princeton economist Ansley J. Coale (1917–2002) helped convince world leaders of the need for fertility control programs by specifying the economic consequences of rapid population growth. The American demographer Donald Bogue even called for the establishment of a new discipline of family planning research that would have the explicit goal of lowering fertility. Not all academic demographers adopted a neo-Malthusian stance. Alfred Sauvy was a voice of skepticism, and the Danish economist Ester Boserup (1910–1999) argued that increases in population densities historically had been the chief stimulus to the adoption of more productive agricultural methods. The American sociologist Kingsley Davis (1908–1997), believing that a society's fertility level was the result of complex institutional arrangements within its social system, doubted that high fertility could be easily lowered by simply providing individuals with contraceptives. Later in the century Ron Lesthaeghe would take a similar position when examining the potential of increasing the below-replacement fertility of European countries. The American demographer Ronald Freedman and the Australian demographer John C. Caldwell, while believing that fertility levels were largely determined by socio-cultural factors, contended that government policy initiatives to influence fertility ought, themselves, to be considered significant components of the socio-cultural determinants of fertility. Clearly, academic demographers actively participated in twentieth century population debates and both reflected and helped to mold the broader stream of population thought.

The Goal of Population Thought

Twentieth-century students of population had an overarching disciplinary goal: to summarize accurately the mortality and fertility transitions that accompanied the agricultural, industrial, and political revolutions of the modern era and predict their future course. Their analyses more often than not aroused the concern of policymakers. The provisional nature of demographic knowledge played a role in this process, as did the tendency to project trends to the point where problems would be produced. For instance, as the twentieth century began, students of population were attempting to make sense of a number of demographic trends. What was most notable to Walter Willcox (1861–1964) in 1906 was the "enormous" increase in the world's population from 1 billion in 1750 to 1.5 billion in 1900. Willcox attributed almost the entire increase to the "expansion of Europe" as increased agricultural and industrial productivity brought death rates down both in Europe and in "Europe overseas." He did note, however, that fertility had begun to decline throughout most of that of region and predicted that it would continue to do so.

Causes of Fertility Decline

What captured the attention of Western policymakers were not descriptions of 150 years of substantial population growth but instead predictions of continued fertility decline. By the turn of the twentieth century a consensus had emerged among students of population that fertility decline was due to individuals voluntarily controlling their fertility in response to pressures created by changing economic and social conditions. As Arsène Dumont (1849–1902) posited in his 1890 "social capillarity theory," individuals attempting to improve their social position in increasingly stratified societies had come to view children as encumbrances. They therefore lowered their fertility rate to improve their chances of upward mobility.

Statistics on fertility differentials by class, education, and occupation were just beginning to be compiled in the early 1900s, and the trends they revealed worried the elites. In the United States the sons and daughters of New England's oldest families were delaying and forgoing marriage to such an extent that as the century began, their fertility was barely at replacement levels. President Theodore Roosevelt railed against such "race suicide" and declared that "the greatest problem of civilization is to be found

in the fact that the well-to-do families tend to die out; there results, in consequence, a tendency to the elimination instead of the survival of the fittest"(Roosevelt, p. 550).

The Social Darwinist Perspective

The social Darwinist belief that competition and natural selection produce beneficial change within human societies had become nearly universal among the educated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When they used social class and race as surrogate measures of biological quality, as they were inclined to do, differential fertility assumed supreme importance. In the United States the declining fertility of old-line Americans and the influx of prolific and presumedly "inferior" peoples from southern and eastern Europe came to be viewed as a national catastrophe, a "degradation" of the race.

One policy response to this crisis was the passage in the 1920s of national origin quota acts that severely restricted the entry of supposedly "inferior" immigrant groups. During the first third of the twentieth century many Western nations also passed laws requiring the sterilization of various "defective" groups. In Germany eugenic attempts at race purification eventually led to the implementation of Nazi selective breeding programs and campaigns to eradicate undesired minorities.

The Neo-Malthusian Movement

Early in the twentieth century a neo-Malthusian movement had a very different perspective on fertility decline. Neo-Malthusians believed that growing populations are a major cause of poverty and that lowering fertility by making contraception more accessible facilitates prosperity. The movement originated in Great Britain early in the nineteenth century and had spread throughout Europe by 1900, when the first International Neo-Malthusian Conference was held in Paris.

The Eugenicist and Birth Control Perspectives

By 1900, however, much of the initial concern about population growth had dissipated as fertility decline spread throughout Europe. Neo-Malthusians might praise fertility decline and contraception, but eugenists successfully fought to restrict access to contraceptives, contending that their use harmed the commonwealth since only the "more fit" classes were sufficiently disciplined to use them. Into the fray stepped Emma Goldman (1869–1940), Margaret Sanger (1883–1966), and Marie Stopes (1880–1958), seeking to establish feminist-oriented "birth control" movements in the United States and Great Britain. During a period when high-ranking politicians were publicly reminding educated women of their patriotic duty to marry and have children, these advocates of birth control began mobilizing citizens to legalize a woman's access to contraception.

With most academic population experts at the time siding with the eugenists, advocates of birth control had to work hard to develop convincing counterarguments proving that legalized contraception would be socially beneficial. Margaret Sanger was the most successful, fashioning a case for a woman's right to access to birth control by deftly weaving together eugenic and neo-Malthusian themes: Restrictive laws could not keep contraception out the hands of the educated classes and only served to slow the adoption of birth control among the less motivated "inferior" classes, an adoption that would benefit both the individual and the society.

The Pronatalist Position

Fertility decline did spread throughout the classes in many Western populations during the 1910s and 1920s, even in places where access to contraceptives was legally restricted. It reached such a high level that fears of actual depopulation developed, and with them a backlash against the birth controllers' message. France, for example, had an active birth control movement in the early twentieth century, the production and sale of contraceptives were legal, and the national fertility level was low. After the devastating military losses of World War I, however, worry grew among French leaders over what population decline might mean for the nation's competitiveness.

In 1920 the French government, advised and aided by French population experts, enacted a strongly pronatalist population policy that sought to encourage fertility through a combination of positive programs that enhanced couples' ability to care for children and repressive programs that limited couples' access to contraceptives and abortion. The law of February 13, 1920, made manufacturing, selling, or advocating the use of contraceptives illegal, punishable by fines or imprisonment. The French

birth control movement found itself under a systematic attack and without much public support.

In the United States Louis Dublin (1882–1969) and Alfred Lotka (1880–1949) developed "intrinsic" vital rates that controlled for the influence of the age structure on crude birth rates and dramatically announced that the average American woman in 1920 was having only half a child more than was needed to maintain a stationary population. P. K. Whelpton (1893–1964) devised the cohort-component method of population projection in 1928 and forecast a significant slowdown in U.S. population growth. Dublin followed with a call for more "birth release" and less "birth control." U.S. leaders began worrying less about declining population quality and more about declining numbers.

The Effects of Fertility Decline

By 1930 a number of Western countries had ended their modern period of population expansion as their fertility rates reached the low levels already achieved by their mortality rates. At that time students of population in the United States (Warren Thompson [1887–1973]), France (Adolphe Landry [1874–1956]), and Great Britain (A. M. Carr-Saunders [1886–1966]) brought forth very similar summations of modern population dynamics.

Generalizing from the Western experience, they all contended that a shift from high to low vital rates was associated with the transformation of agrarian societies into industrial societies. Because mortality declined earlier and more quickly than did fertility, a period of population growth accompanied the shift. The United States and Western Europe had already experienced this "demographic revolution," eastern and southern Europe and Japan were in the middle of their expansion stage, and much of the rest of the world had just begun the revolution.

This summary of modern population dynamics, which reemerged after World War II as demographic transition theory, represented a great achievement for academic demographers. However, its appearance in the 1930s proved troublesome. Germany and Japan both were engaged in imperialist moves into their neighbors' lands that they claimed were necessitated by their growing populations. Western policymakers rejected the legitimacy of such moves. They also largely ignored these early transition treatments of modern population movements that seemingly imparted scientific legitimacy to such *lebensraum* rationales for Axis expansionism.

In general, the 1930s was a period when nationalistic chauvinism made any examination of international population trends controversial. The International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems (IUSIPP), launched in 1928, planned to hold its first meeting in Rome in 1931. Hints that the meeting would be used to promulgate Mussolini's racial theories caused the IUSIPP's leadership to convene a hastily planned counter-conference in London. The IUSIPP's next official meeting was held in Berlin in 1935, and several national committees that correctly feared that it would be used to spread Nazi racial theories boycotted that meeting.

Postwar Developments

Among countries engaged in World War II older mercantilist notions that equated larger populations with enhanced state power tended to reemerge immediately after entry into the conflict and to remain in place until the war ended. The period after World War II was one of dramatic change in both population trends and population concerns. The unexpected baby boom that occurred in many Western low-growth populations ended fears of depopulation. The enormity of the Holocaust dissipated any remaining enthusiasm for eugenics. The removal of German and Japanese military threats broke the association between transition accounts of modern population dynamics and population-pressure rationales for territorial expansion. In fact, the transition framework in the postwar world was a valuable tool for Western policymakers, serving as a way to interpret the unprecedented demographic changes arising in the world's "underdeveloped" regions during the 1950s and 1960s.

The use of newly developed antibiotics and the application of effective methods for eliminating malaria produced unprecedented mortality decline throughout much of the "Third World," an entity engendered by postwar decolonization. The resultant rapid population growth was problematic for both political and demographic reasons. From the perspective of postwar versions of demographic transition theory put forward by population experts working at Princeton's Office of Population Research, the economic strains associated with rapid population growth might prevent the transformation of traditional agrarian societies into modern industrial societies. Rapid population growth in the Third World might forestall the very socioeconomic

changes—industrialization and urbanization—that would induce fertility decline and complete the demographic transition. Without fertility decline, the Third World's period of population expansion would come to an end with mortality rising as starvation and disease increased.

The Populating Dilemma of the Third World

Politically, the Third World was a Cold War battleground where the United States and the Soviet Union fought for supremacy. Starvation, economic stagnation, and growing poverty were judged to be propitious for the spread of communism. There appeared to be only one way to humanely resolve the Third World's emerging population dilemma and, incidentally, the geopolitical threat to the free world: inducing fertility decline in societies that were still agrarian.

American population experts expounded this vision of the postwar global population situation, and by the early 1950s, John D. Rockefeller 3rd and the leadership of the Ford and Rockefeller foundations had accepted its validity. They began establishing a neo-Malthusian movement with a global focus. Their goal was to lower fertility and lessen population growth throughout the Third World by setting up family planning programs. They recognized that only governments could implement effective family planning programs, and their immediate task became to convince policymakers in both the First World and the Third World that high fertility was a major social problem that required state intervention.

At first the population crisis appeared to be a peculiarly "Asiatic problem" to those foundations. Would food and natural resource supplies be adequate to feed, clothe, and shelter increasingly large and dense populations? By the end of the 1950s, however, the crisis had grown in their minds to include all countries with high population growth rates. Any population with a 3 percent annual rate of growth of its population would need an equally high rate of growth in the economy simply to assure that its current standard of living would not slip even lower and a much higher rate to experience significant economic development. Simulation models to quantify the economic benefits of lowering fertility were developed. They found the benefits to be substantial, and movement advocates used those findings to persuade many Third World leaders to adopt antinatalist policies.

Opposition to Neo-Malthusianism

There were voices in opposition to this global neo-Malthusian movement. At the first United Nations-sponsored population conference, which was held in Rome in 1954, the Soviet delegation presented a Marxist critique: Poverty and lack of development were caused by imperialism and colonialism, not population growth. In France a long-standing pronatalist tradition among demographers and government leaders produced skepticism about the validity of neo-Malthusian precepts. Many Third World leaders, especially in low-population-density regions of Latin America and Africa, believed that population growth would aid their countries' development, not detract from it. Finally, the Roman Catholic Church strongly objected to neo-Malthusians' advocacy of "artificial" birth control. With the development of new nonbarrier contraceptives in the late 1950s, especially the birth control pill and the intrauterine device, neo-Malthusians hoped that Catholic opposition might end, but Pope Paul VI's 1968 encyclical on the regulation of birth, *Humanae Vitae,* contained no change in the church's position even though it recognized the existence of a "population problem."

The Neo-Malthusian Movement in the 1960s and 1970s

In the 1960s the global neo-Malthusian movement developed deeper roots among First World policymakers and the public, especially in the United States. In 1965 the U.S. government, at the direction of President Lyndon Johnson, began offering family-planning aid to developing countries and quickly became the major source of such funds. In 1968 Paul Ehrlich published a neo-Malthusian tract, *The Population Bomb,* that sold over 3 million copies. In the same year Zero Population Growth was founded, an organization committed to bringing about global population stabilization; within three years its membership had exceeded 30,000. The Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, established by U.S. President Richard Nixon, issued a 1972 report advocating population stabilization for the United States itself.

A somewhat different course of events, however, was occurring in the Third World. Beginning in the mid-1960s, a variety of First World institutions