

## BOOK REVIEWS

### FERTILITY AND FAMILY PLANNING A World View

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1969, viii + 503 pp. \$12.50

The student of population will find this book a useful hodgepodge of demographic articles. For the benefit of the potential reader, this review will be prefaced with a few general comments about the book—what it is and what it is not.

First, many of the articles deal with such specialized, yet diverse, topics that the reader will likely find himself following the “reading one, skipping one” pattern. Few persons, even among demographers, will fully comprehend, for example, *all four* of the following: Ryder’s procedure for assessing the relative importance of the quality and tempo of nuptiality and marital parity for changes in the level of period fertility; Easterlin’s thesis that fertility variations in time and space reflect variations in the relevant preferences and/or constraints; the argument presented by Sutter on the effect of birth limitation on genetic composition of populations; and Garcia and Wallach’s discussion of the biochemical changes and implications following long-term use of oral contraception.

Second, and contrary to the impression conveyed by the title, this book is not a source book of specifics on family planning programs in the various areas of the world. A much better

job on that score was done by the earlier **FAMILY PLANNING AND POPULATION PROGRAMS** (Berelson, *et al.*, Editors, University of Chicago Press, 1966).

Third, this book does not give a concise, systematic presentation of the various dimensions and facets of fertility in the world. In fact, and again contrary to what one might expect as a result of its title, only six of the book's 20 articles are devoted to fertility analyses and trends, and only three of the six seem to offer any new ideas or insights.

Fourth, the reader has not been provided with any article-to-article cross-reference assistance. The book has no subject matter index, nor even an index of personal names.

Finally, this book is not even an edited reader. Although it is divided into five major sections, it has no section introductions or summaries nor even an indication of why papers were solicited on these particular topics. In fact, the reader will not find one word in the entire 503 pages of the volume, excluding a preface and a note that together comprise about two pages, that was written by the editors.

Well, then, what is this book? *What it is is a conference!*

As part of its Sesquicentennial observances, the University of Michigan sponsored a "Fertility and Family Planning" conference on November 15-17, 1967. The papers presented at that conference constitute the articles provided in this book. The editors inform us that these papers "were discussed in five sessions, each opened by a world authority with a summation of issues raised in the papers." Unfortunately, the editors have not provided us with the comments made by these five world authorities.

The first section, "Fertility Trends in the Modern World," begins with Coale's report on "The Decline of Fertility in Europe from the French Revolution to World War II." In an attempt to explain why fertility in much of Europe was reduced well below that in any other area of the world prior to any widespread resort to voluntary birth control, Coale discusses a three phased nuptiality-fertility pattern: a decrease in the

proportion married among women in the childbearing ages, followed by an increase in controlled marital fertility, and concluded by an increase in the proportion married combined with controlled marital fertility. He concludes, however, “. . . that the process was more complex, subtle, and diverse than anticipated; only an optimist would still expect a simple account of why fertility fell.” (p. 19)

In his report on “Fertility Trends in Europe Since the Second World War,” Glass picks up the “nuptiality” discussion where Coale left off: “in the span of time between 1931 and 1963 . . . there has been a fundamental change in marriage propensity and patterns, with marriage as such no longer acting, as it did for some centuries, as a brake on natural increase.” (p. 29) Because of an increase in the proportion married in those countries where late marriages were customary prior to World War II, combined with a compression of marital fertility into a narrow band of family sizes in most countries, the levels of fertility have evened out in Europe as a whole. Even though family limitation is now widely practiced in Europe, Glass cautions that the full effects of fertility control have not necessarily been displayed and, further, that much fuller official data on marriage and fertility are needed for meaningful analyses of short-term movements in the birth rate.

In Kirk’s report on “Natality in the Developing Countries: Recent Trends and Prospects” the scene shifts from Europe to younger nations. Even though various factors would suggest a more rapid demographic transition in the developing countries than occurred in the West, these nations have not achieved a major breakthrough in fertility reduction during this decade. Further, major fertility reduction may not be possible prior to major economic and social advances, and fertility may actually increase during the initial stages of modernization. Despite the growing use of new contraceptives, Kirk concludes that it is unlikely that the high birth rates will be lowered quickly in the developing nations.

Ryder’s report on “The Emergence of a Modern Fertility

Pattern: United States, 1917-66" concludes the first section. In his review of Ryder's paper at the Michigan conference, Philip Hauser suggested that it was one of the most important contributions to demography in this century. In addition to presenting his procedure for assessing the relative importance of the quality and tempo of nuptiality and marital parity for changes in the level of period fertility, Ryder concludes that "the future of fertility is likely to be increasingly bound up with questions of fluctuation rather than of trend . . . the implication for research is that we should devote a large part of our attention to the determinants and consequences of the changing tempo of cohort fertility." (p. 116)

Space limitations permit no more than "one-liners" on the remaining sixteen reports included in this book.

In section two, "Causes and Consequences of Fertility Trends," Easterlin argues that in developing a socioeconomic theory of fertility the general aim should be to develop better measures of both preferences and the resource constraints. Kuznets suggests that it is unwise to emphasize the economic benefits of lower growth rates in the less developed countries; rather, growth policies should be geared to a broader set of determinants and ideas than is provided by economic analysis. Brown states that the "energy transition" theoretically increased eight-fold the "carrying capacity" of the earth, but a great deal of capital assistance from the richer countries to the poorer ones will be needed to complete that transition. Hawley stresses that we need to know much more about how the process of covariation of population with the structure of a social system operates under varying conditions.

"Biologic Aspects of Fertility Control" is the title of the third section. According to Sutter, inasmuch as family limitation leads to differential fertility, which results in a great number of consanguineous marriages, we are witnessing rapid genetic transformations whose exact incidence cannot be specified. In reviewing the mass of literature on endocrine control of fertility, Garcia and Wallach conclude that the implication of the un-

wanted pregnancy appears to be far more serious than the potential hazards of the oral contraceptives. Segal discusses research on new contraceptive techniques and in so doing points out the biologic aspects of fertility regulation. Tietze gives a brief report on the legal status and incidence of induced abortion in the United States, Europe, Japan and developing countries, and proposes that an international program of research in safe and simple methods of inducing abortion should be started.

Section four is somewhat mis-titled for only one of its four reports deals with "Public Programs for Family Planning." Using data from large, more-or-less official family planning programs in the developing world to report on the status of national efforts at family planning, Berelson discusses the establishment of programs, their operation, the target population, the contraceptive technology, the programs' impact and guidance, and concludes that such programs have made considerable progress in the past few years, but they still have a long way to go. Westoff and Ryder report that during the 1955-1965 decade American women developed a more favorable attitude toward contraception and, also, that an increase was seen in the proportion who have ever used or expect to use contraception—by 1965 approximately 90 per cent of American married women, regardless of race or religion, both favored the use of contraception and had used or expected to use some form of contraception. Potter presents a method for estimating births averted by an IUD program, and stresses that for a serious evaluation of the demographic effectiveness of a specified contraceptive we need much better data on lengths of successful usage by acceptors and on the potential fertility of acceptors relative to the rest of the population. Baumgartner gives a brief history of governmental activities in the realm of family planning in the United States, and suggests that although a greater commitment is needed it is dangerous to push too hard and move too fast without adequate knowledge of what to do and how to do it.

Views from Taiwan, Turkey and Chile on "Fertility Planning in the Developing World During the Next Decade" are pre-

sented in section five. Chow and Hsu feel that lack of knowledge among the population is a major barrier to the spread of fertility control practice, and that highly imaginative and dynamic leadership is needed to develop "variety" in fertility control programs. According to Fisek, future developments in Turkey's family planning program will depend on such factors as adult education, the extension of health services to rural areas, and the utilization of scientific methods in administration. Requena indicates that the decline in fertility has been intensified by the Chilean Program of Abortion Control and Fertility Planning and forecasts that a rapid decrease of fertility will occur during the next decade.

In closing the Michigan conference, and this book, with a statement entitled, "The Citizen's View of Public Programs for Family Limitation," John D. Rockefeller, III, warned, "there is a call to greatness in the population field and we dare not fall short." This reviewer feels that despite the fact that the editors of this volume and its contributors have answered that call, the contents of the book document how dangerously close we are to falling short.

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