

## **Topics for Changing Demographics** (including my comments) Feb.28

**Projections on world population growth and distribution** (pp. 6-8) plus the video. Also impact on resources

### **Mortality** pp. 8-9

Here what is missing is the important comparison between life expectancy of men in comparison to women. Every thing being equal women will live longer than men. In Sweden men's life expectancy is 81.3 and women's is 84.7; in the United States men's life expectancy is 76.3 and women's is 81.4 (before the pandemic). In general women's life expectancy has improved in developing countries. Nevertheless when women's life expectancy is less than 2 years higher than men's life expectancy this indicates problems with women's access to health care among other factors. These countries (in order) are Liberia, Ghana, Niger, Togo, Pakistan, Burkino Faso, Sierra Leone, Bahrain, Mali, (.9), Guinea (.8), Bhutan (.4).

### **Fertility and Aging** pp.9-11 (and video)

I put the two together since lower fertility generally has the consequence of population aging. What are the consequences of population aging for developed countries and what are the consequences for developing countries?

**International Migration** pp. 11-12 (and video) From south to north; voluntary and involuntary.

**Internal migration** Rural to Urban in video. Proportion of the population that is urban. Here the video combines developed and developing countries showing about the same population in urban as in rural areas. In fact it is the developed countries which have a high urban population and the developing countries which typically still have a large rural population and a high proportion of the labor force working in agriculture. The video points out some of the problems of urban areas –i.e. pollution and slums, etc.

**Equality of Women and Family Composition and Households** (pp.12-14). Here I have serious problems with his presentation on women's economic activity and household composition. He ignores the last 50 years of research and also tends to put all women together ignoring the important differences between developed countries and developing countries. Detailed comments below:

1. "Progress... in women's health, urbanization, delayed marriage and childbearing, and declines in family size." (p. 12). This is important progress but it applies primarily to women in developing countries as it had already been achieved in developed countries.

2. Also defined as progress is... "the traditional stay at home mom is being replaced by the working mom in developed countries, and increasingly in urban areas of less developed regions." (p. 12). Also "The family consisting of a working father, stay at

home mother...appears no longer the societal norm..."(p. 13). Here again he generalizes without noting the very limited prevalence of this norm throughout history. He also obscures the important differences between developed countries and developing countries.

a. My generalization, critical of the statements above, is based on an enormous amount of research: In working class and poor families *everybody* works: mothers, fathers and often adolescent children. The only exception to this is the situation of urban working class families in the 30 years after World War II in the developed world. (Sweden fewer years; Germany 60 plus years; still the situation in Japan). In the United States this norm was enforced by employer's discriminating against mothers.

b. In developing regions working class and poor mothers in cities have historically worked as domestics in middle class households. These urban mothers have also earned money in activities like sewing and taking in laundry. These work activities are not new; these mothers have never been mothers whose activity is limited to childcare and house work. And in most countries of Asia and Africa the majority of families are in rural areas. Mothers have always worked in agriculture, in the fields and kitchen gardens as well as tending to livestock, e.g. guinea pigs, chickens, goats, cows. Note the UN definition of "working" is earning an income, i.e. taking in laundry or working as a farm worker or as an unpaid family worker on a family farm (or business) for more than 15 hours a week.

c. In developed regions married mothers who are working also do more than 50% of household tasks and childcare-  
i.e. men have more leisure time

In developing regions this disparity is much greater, in part, because the tasks of running a household are much more time consuming, e.g. fetching water.