

**Demography and Ecology Written Preliminary Examination
January 8, 2001**

Part II: Afternoon Exam

IV. Answer either A or B

- A. For several decades, demographers have attempted to assess the relative effects of material conditions, culture, and contraceptive access/use on fertility change. First, identify the major theoretical explanations for fertility decline, paying attention to the way in which they incorporate (or not) material conditions, culture and contraceptive access/use. Second, assess the evidence for these explanations in ONE of the following contexts: (a) fertility decline in Europe during the 19th century; OR (b) fertility decline in poor countries during the latter half of the 20th century.
- B. Describe trends in wealthy nations, including but not limited to the United States, in nonmarital fertility. What are the changes in union formation and fertility that underlie changes in nonmarital fertility? Describe and discuss the predominant explanations for these changes. Pay attention to race/ethnic and cross-national differences.

V. Answer either A or B

- A. How have the living arrangements of the elderly changed during the 20th century? Review and discuss explanations for these changes and assess the evidence in relation to each explanation.
- B. In 1997 the statistical policy unit in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) redefined for U.S. federal agencies the manner by which race and ethnic data are collected. (The 2000 Census was the first federal activity to include this new definition.) In the context of the U.S., discuss the meaning of the statistical concepts of race and ethnicity. How have these concepts been defined in the past (say, since the late 1970s) and what changes were introduced by the OMB in 1997? Discuss two problematic issues caused by the introduction of this new "race/ethnicity standard" and any solutions you might recommend to minimize the problems associated with these issues.

VI. Answer either A or B

- A. Most nations in the European Union (EU) have below replacement fertility (indeed, some countries substantially below replacement). Not surprisingly this demographic trend has been accompanied by mounting concern and policy

research regarding the future viability of national pension systems throughout the EU. This has prompted some observers to recommend increasing immigration to these countries (from high fertility countries in the region) as a likely solution to this dilemma. Others have commented that immigration cannot solve the problem of deficit state pension systems. Discuss the demographic literature surrounding these issues, commenting first on fertility trends in the European Community and second on migration/immigration trends in Europe. What link might you make between these trends and the apparently growing call from political parties on the right in parts of Europe to place further restrictions on immigration.

- B.** Review some of the ways in which migration, as a demographic event, differs from other demographic events such as births and deaths. Your answer should include attention to conceptual differences, measurement issues, the construction of appropriate rates, and theories underlying individual decision making