

**Study Questions
Week 2**

Topic for the Week:

Understanding Demographic Change

Readings for the Week:

Kingsley Davis. 1945. The World Demographic Transition. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 237: 1–11.

Emile Durkheim. 1893. The Causes, from *The Division of Labor in Society*. The Free Press, New York (1933). Book II, Chapter Two, pp. 256–282.

Lester R. Brown, Gary Gardner, and Brian Halweil. 1998. *Beyond Malthus: Sixteen Dimensions of the Population Problem*. Worldwatch Paper 143, Worldwatch Institute, Washington, DC. pp. 40–77.

Study Questions:

- (1) What demographic change initiated the demographic transition, according to Davis? What evidence supports this contention?
- (2) Identify some of the causes of mortality decline. Explain how each leads to a reduction in mortality.
- (3) Identify some of the causes of fertility decline. Explain how each leads to a reduction in fertility.
- (4) What is the relationship between population change and efficiency? Explain the mechanisms through which this connection operates.
- (5) What impacts have demographic shifts had on Western countries? According to Davis, are these shifts cause for alarm? Why or why not?
- (6) According to Davis, can the world's population continue to increase indefinitely? Will it? What factors might affect future population increase?
- (7) Explain Durkheim's general theory of social change. Describe characteristics of populations that are, in Durkheim's scheme, early in the process of development, and characteristics of populations that are in the later stages of development.
- (8) What does Durkheim mean by the division of labor? Identify factors that produce the division of labor.
- (9) Identify three factors that contribute to an increase in population density, according to Durkheim.
- (10) Why does increased population size and density produce a division of labor, according to Durkheim? Explain the processes and how they operate.

(11) For each of the following issues, explain (a) the nature of the issue and why it is a problem, (b) the relationship between this issue and population change, (c) the factors that have contributed to or produced this problem, (d) trends in this issue over the past half-century, and (e) projected trends over the next half-century:

- Energy Production and Consumption
- Urbanization
- Protected Areas and Recreation
- Education
- Sanitation and Waste Disposal
- Livestock and Meat Production
- Income

(12) According to Brown et al., what is the current status of the demographic transition internationally? What are the prospects for future population growth?

(13) What is meant by the *demographic trap*? Explain how population change and the availability of food and water produce the demographic trap. What is the result?

(14) What effects do sustained rapid population growth have on a country's political and economic systems? Identify specific issues and explain their potential political and economic consequences.

(15) What must be done to control world population growth, according to Brown et al.? Identify specific programs and explain how they can contribute to controlling population growth.