**Chapter 16**

**Population, Urbanization, and the Environment**

Population growth and demographic change will challenge the way we interact with our environment.

**I. Population**

**A. Demography:** the scientific study of populations. This includes population growth and decline, as well as the movement of people. Those who study population dynamics are called **demographers.**

**B. Population Growth:** Issues associated with population growth are often referred to as the “population bomb.” This is important because it requires the greater need for resources to support growth. (Figure 16.1)

**1.** **Trends and Projections**

**a.** Fertility rates are down globally

**b.** The world’s population continues to increase, and is expected to reach 8 billion in 2025.

**C.** **Population Decline**: Social problems like alcohol and drug dependency, AIDS and other infectious diseases, and other issues like low birth rates, high death rates, and emigration will contribute to the population decline.

**1**. **The Impact of Decline**

**a.** Population decline can affect a country’s military and economy. An aging population can create a condition referred to as a “financial time bomb.” This condition is the end result of the increased cost of caring for the elderly and a decline in the number of young people entering the labor force.

**b.** A “demographic dividend” results from favorable ratios of young active workers and fewer senior and young children. Here the younger population is able to work and earn money.

**D.** **The Processes of Population Change**

**1.** The **birth rate** refers to the number of births per 1,000 persons.

**2.** **Migration** refers to the movements of people and the impact of those movements on end locations.

**3. Fertility:** refers to peoples’ reproductive behavior. (Figure 16.2)

**a. Economic factors** and forces, like recessions, affect fertility rates globally.

**b. Social factors** that affect fertility include age and non-marital fertility.

**c. Regional factors** include the low birth rate that is an increasing concern in Western Europe, and the issue of declining indigenous cultures throughout Europe, where the rate of immigration exceeds birth rates.

**d. US Fertility Trends:** the fertility rate in the US is at a replacement level, or a number required only to replace population loss.

**4.** **Mortality** refers to the death rate of a population, measured per 1,000 persons. (Figure 16.3)

**5. Life Expectancy** refers to the time one is expected to live.

**a.** By 2050, women are expected to live between 89.2 and 93.3 years; men between 83.2 and 85.9 years.

**b.** **Macro-Social Factors** that affect the decline in mortality include:

**1.** Improvements in the standard of living, such as quality of housing and nutrition.

**2.** Better public health through improved sanitation and cleaner drinking water.

**3.** Cultural and behavioral factors such as stronger norms about stopping smoking.

**4.** Advances in medicine and medical technologies such as antibiotics and newer drugs, immunizations, and improved surgical techniques.

**5.** Government actions such as disease control.

**6.** Mortality is also greatly affected by one’s position in the system of stratification, race/ethnicity, and gender.

**c.** **Micro-Social Factors:** that affect life expectancy include lifestyle choices like smoking or a failure to exercise.

**6. The Demographic Transition** (Figure 16.4)

**a. Demographic transition theory** suggests population changes are related to the shift from an agricultural society to a more industrialized and urbanized society. 3 stages are associated with the demographic transition:

**1)** The agricultural stage is marked by high death rates and high birth rates, resulting in stable population growth.

**2)** The transition stage is marked with a decline in death rates and relatively high birth rates. This results in rapid population growth.

**3)** The final stage is marked by a decline in death rates, leading to more children in the community. Families begin to consider limiting the number of children they have, and the birth rate declines, resulting in a stabilization of the population.

**b. Reducing Fertility**

**1)** One way to reduce fertility is to stress the importance of economic development.

**2)** Another approach is to encourage voluntary family planning.

**3)** A third approach is societal/cultural in nature, and involves implementing childhood education programs and child labor laws. This approach is viewed as a protective measure to prevent the exploitation of children as cheap labor.

**7. Migration** (Figure 16.5)

**a.** Globalization and immigration have resulted in and increase in the rate of migration of people to different countries.

**b.** Nation states have implemented laws to restrict the movement of people across national borders, especially in the wake of increased concern over terrorism.

**c. Explaining Migration**

**1) Push factors** cause people to leave their home countries, and include the desire for a better life, for employment opportunities, and a desire for freedom from war, poverty, political persecution, and economic depression.

**2) Pull factors** encourage people to move from the home country abroad, and include favorable laws encouraging migration in the receiving country, higher pay and lower unemployment, and a commonly shared language.

**d. Types of Migrants**

**1) Refugees** are migrants who are forced to leave their homeland for safety reasons and because of fear.

**2) Asylum seekers** are people who flee their home country to escape political oppression or religious persecution.

**3) Labor migrants** are people who leave their home country because they are driven by labor issues like a lack of employment opportunities and/or better paying jobs.

**4) Undocumented immigrants** are those who either migrate to a receiving country without valid authorization or remain in that receiving country once their valid documentation expires.

**5) The Case Against Migration Restrictions:**

i. Economically, immigration has had a positive economic effect in the United States.

ii. Immigrants are not a drain on public finances and pay more in taxes than they cost in services.

iii. Politically, immigration can contribute to greater democratization.

iv. Morally, free migration is a universal human right. It also means greater freedom to achieve economic and political justice.

**II. Urbanization**

**1.** By 2050, 70% of the world’s population will live in urban areas.

**2. Cities** are large, permanent, and spatially concentrated human settlements. Their importance has progressively increased.

**3.** The term **urban** refers to city-dwelling populations that consist of more than 50,000 inhabitants.

**4. Urbanism** refers to a distinct way of life that emerges in urban areas.

**5. Simmel, Wirth, and Park and Burgess on the City**

**a.** Georg Simmel viewed city life as the center of the money economy. Rationality and calculability are a dominant way of doing things.

**b.** Louis Wirth describes urban social relationships as superficial and anonymous. He suggests urban dwellers are indifferent, reserved, and have a “blasé attitude.”

**c.** Robert Park and Ernest Burgess developed a kind of analysis of the city based on differences among districts called **concentric zones.** This allows the city to be analyzed based on its spatial nature and character.

**6. Ever-larger Urban Areas** (Figure 16.7)

**a.** The **metropolis** is a large, powerful, and culturally influential urban area that contains a central city and surrounding communities that are economically and socially linked to the center.

**b. Suburbs** are surrounding communities that are adjacent to large central cities.

**c.** A **megalopolis** is a cluster of highly populated cities that can stretch over great distances.

**d.** **Mega-regions** refer to a number of integrated cities as well as their surrounding areas.

**7. Suburbanization** is a process where a large number of people move out of the city into less densely populated areas.

**a.** Criticisms of suburbanization include:

**1.** The creation of sprawl – tract housing and strip mall businesses.

**2.** **Suburbia disturbia** – the concept of suburban homes as split level traps.

**3**. **Suburban sprawl** that promotes high levels of traffic congestion and environmental degradation.

**4**. The rise of **gated communities** where gates, surveillance cameras, and guards provide security for residents.

**b. Post-Suburban Era:** refers to the realization that the suburban lifestyle is ecologically unsustainable.

**1. Exurbia:** refers to developments between the suburbs and rural areas, which are generally upper middle class communities.

**2. Edge Cities** are developments at the outermost rings surrounding large cities.

**3. New Urbanism** refers to simulated American small towns with neighborhoods, “walk-a-bility,” and facilities within close proximity for residents.

**4. Aerotropolis** is used to refer to planned cities that are built around a vast international airport and its associated shipping facilities and business hubs.

**9. The Decline of Major US Cities:** Contributing factors that lead to the decline include:

**a.** The decline of industry

**b.** Natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina

**c.** The Great Recession

**d.** **White flight**, or the mass exodus of white residents from the city to the suburbs.

**e. Gentrification,** which refers to a process where real estate capital is reinvested in blighted inner city areas in order to rebuild houses and create a new infrastructure for the well-to-do.

**III. Cities and Globalization**

**1.** Cities viewed as cosmopolitan are open to a variety of external and global influences.

**2**. Cities views as local are more internal, looking inward rather than to the globe for influence.

**3. Global and World Cities**

**a.** Cities are classified as **global cities** when they are:

1) Key locations for industries and marketplaces, and high-level management and specialized services.

2) Centers of production and creation for innovative, cutting-edge financial services.

3) Home to new financial, legal, and accountancy products.

4) The settings from which businesses and organizations exercise global command and control.

**4. World cities** are a large group of cities that act as centers for immigrants.

**5. Megacities** are defined as cities with a population greater than 8 million people.

**6. The Main Site of Global Problems**

**a.** Global and/or world cities are primary targets for global problems such as terrorist attacks, illegal immigration, and poverty.

**7. The Center of Culture and Consumption:**

**a.** A **fantasy city** is one where great emphasis is placed on creating a spectacle in the areas of consumption, leisure, tourism and real estate

**b.** The emergence of online shopping has resulted in the decline of cities used for consumption.

**IV. The Environment**

**1.** Analysis of the environment involves the analysis of **ecology**, or the study of people and their relationship to one another as well as to the larger context in which they live.

**2. Theories of Environment and its Problems**

**a. Structural functionalism** focuses on large scale social structures and systems, and their impact on environmental problems.

**b.** The **conflict (critical)** perspective focuses on capitalism and the need for corporations to grow and increase profits.

**1)** Capitalism is said to create a ***treadmill of production,*** where everyone in the system depends on continuous growth in production and in the economy. This leads to the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources and dramatically effects the environment.

**c. Symbolic Interactionists** focus on the ways in which we define environmental issues as problems.

**d. Rational choice theorists**  focus on the rewards afforded to us and how those adversely affect the environment.

**3. Urban Areas and the Environment**

**a.** Environmental problems lead to urbanization, i.e. the need for more natural resources in the city can lead to the depletion of those resources in rural areas.

**b.** Cities contribute to environmental degradation as well:

**1)** Pollution from CO2 or greenhouse gases, through emissions from the large numbers of motor vehicles and centralized power plants that characterize modern cities.

**2)** Paving over of natural habitats associated with increasing urbanization.

**3)** Heat retention in the “treeless concrete jungles of cities” that can greatly worsen the negative health effects of heat waves.

**4)** The massive creation of waste such as organic matter rich in nutrients that could be used as fertilizer to benefit the environment in rural areas but which become byproducts in need of disposal in the cities, and the necessary sewage treatment plants that use a lot of energy.

**5)** Other environmental toxins and pollutants that lead to health problems such as asthma.

**4. Globalization and the Environment**

**a.** The environment performs 3 functions for humans:

**1)** It acts as a supply depot, providing us with the natural resources needed to live.

**2)** It serves as a sink to absorb of dispose of the waste produced through consumption.

**3)** It provides us with living space to work, play, and travel.

**b. Global Issues Challenged**

**1)** Those from the most developed countries are mostly responsible for global environmental problems.

**2)** Not all will be affected by environmental because the issues are region and problem specific.

**3)** The sources of environmental problems change over time.

**c. The Leading Environmental Problems**

**1) Ozone Depletion**

**a.** Depletion of the ozone layer can lead to significant health issues like skin cancer and cataracts.

**b.** Depletion is caused by increased use of Styrofoam and chlorofluorocarbons used in refrigeration, air conditioning units and aerosol cans.

**2) Destruction of Natural Habitats**

**a.** Population growth and the conversion of natural habitats into those for human use have produced many environmental problems.

**3) Adverse Effects on Marine Life**

**a**. Over-fishing has had an adverse effect on the environment as well. A large portion of the protein consumed by humans comes from seafood. Without seafood, humans would have to rely more on meat for protein, which comes at a greater cost.

**b**. **Aquaculture** involves growing seafood under controlled conditions, like fish farms.

**4**) **Decline in Fresh Water**

**a.** Concerns about water issues are:

**1) Water inequality:** the US consumes twice as much water as the rest of the world.

**2) Water pollution**

**3) Marine pollution**

**4) Flooding**

**5) Desertification** is the decline in the water supply as a result of the degradation and deterioration of soil and vegetation. Water is becoming a valuable and privatized commodity due to the fact that drinkable water is running low.

**6) Global Warming**

**a.** Humans and industries have produced greenhouse gases that have damaged the atmosphere and caused an increase in the temperature of the earth.

**b.** The burning of fossil fuels, carbon emissions, and the accumulation of greenhouse gasses are said to result in global warming.

**1)** The result is the increase in the rate of natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, and typhoons.

**2)** The increased rate of waterborne diseases like cholera and food borne infections like salmonella.

**d. Global Responses**

**1)** Many environmental problems are traced back to capitalist economic development.

**2) Sustainable development** involves economic and environmental changes that meet the needs of the present without jeopardizing the needs of the future.

**3)** Globalization can aid sustainable development by the spread of modern, less environmentally destructive technologies and the creation of standards for efficient resource utilization.

**4) Geo-engineering** refers to ways to address ecological problems while leaving discussions of global warming open for continued dialog.