



BOW STREET BULLETIN

News and Ideas from the
**Harvard Center for Population and
Development Studies**

www.hsph.harvard.edu/cpds • Fall 2008

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Center Explores Population Dynamics and Health

What exactly *is* a Pop Center? Here's my definition: the place on a university campus that nurtures the most interesting, cutting-edge and multidisciplinary thinking about population and global health issues. These rich scholarly hubs often serve as a second home to academics whose questions reach beyond their formal area of expertise. At the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies (HCPDS), we have embarked on an exciting new mission to sow fresh intellectual collaborations, supported by the most up-to-date scientific tools and methods.

Since being named Director in October 2007, I have been grateful for the opportunity to guide the Pop Center in these new directions. At HCPDS, we are building on the legacy of an institution that since 1964 has made signal contributions to global health, particularly health care and health systems. (For a look at the distinguished achievements of our recent past Directors, see Page 2.) Today, we are recasting our vision—a change signified by luminous redesigned quarters on both Bow and Plympton Streets—to address key issues facing scientists and policy makers.

This new mission in part reflects the maturing of population sciences. Research in demography, global health and aging societies has shifted from a relatively narrow focus on forecasting to the broader goal of creating complex and nuanced portraits



Pop Center Director Lisa Berkman

of the causal processes behind population health and well-being. Put another way, demographic and health transitions need to be understood etiologically—not just descriptively. This requires fostering connections among many disciplines across campus: public health, public policy, medicine, social sciences, environmental sciences, and others.

At Harvard's Pop Center, we will be addressing four vital topics in global health:

- Social and Environmental Determinants of Population Health
- The New Experience of Migration and Immigration

- Aging Societies, and the Causes and Consequences of Health Transitions
- Workplace Policies and Work Design for Women, Low-Wage Workers and Older Employees

We chose these topics because they build on a deeper understanding of the forces that shape population health. We know, for example, that while diseases are influenced by a number of specific risk factors and agents, men and women who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or excluded from full participation in their societies face increased risk for whatever diseases are prevalent. With the goal of primary prevention, we will tie social and environmental conditions to health outcomes, by conducting both within-country

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BOW STREET BULLETIN

THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

DIRECTOR

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HCPDS Honors Achievements of Recent Directors

The Pop Center's ambitious new agenda builds on the visionary contributions of our previous Directors. As our revitalized work moves forward, we would like to honor the three most recent HCPDS Directors.



Lincoln Chen, M.D.

Lincoln Chen served as HCPDS Director from 1988 to 1997, dramatically expanding the Center's scope. He has published extensively on world social development, especially in the realms of health, population, food issues, and nutrition. Among his accomplishments at the Pop Center: uniting health and population studies with development studies, spearheading the Health Transition Program and bolstering research into family demography. During the 1990s, Dr. Chen launched the Center's exploration of the global interdependence of population health. He also initiated the Common Security Forum, the original Global Burden of Disease Study and the Gender and Population Program. Dr. Chen currently serves as President of the China Medical Board of New York.



Michael Reich, Ph.D.

As Director from 2001 to 2005, Michael Reich promoted research on economic, political and ethical issues in three key areas: population policies and reproductive health, access to medicines in the developing world and the neglected health problems of the global poor. Dr. Reich stimulated the Center's intellectual agenda with new research initiatives on schistosomiasis control programs in Africa, road safety in developing countries and global HIV/AIDS policy. His studies on the political economy of health policy reform, in both developed and developing nations, have led to an applied research tool for analyzing the political dimensions of public policy and health reform. Still active in Pop Center initiatives, Dr. Reich is the Taro Takemi Professor of International Health Policy in the Department of Global Health and Population at the Harvard School of Public Health.



Christopher Murray, M.D.

Christopher Murray served as the Center's Director from 2005 to 2007. He assumed his leadership role when the Center was officially part of the Harvard Initiative for Global Health, an interfaculty program operating under the authority of the President and Provost. During this period, Harvard School of Public Health Dean Barry Bloom provided formal oversight and strategic guidance to the Center. Dr. Murray pioneered the Global Burden of Disease project at Harvard, and more recently initiated new approaches to measuring population health, cost-effectiveness analysis and health systems performance assessment. Dr. Murray is currently Professor of Global Health at the University of Washington. ✨

Center Explores Population Dynamics and Health *continued from page 1*

and comparative cross-country studies. And because analyzing life course trajectories has revealed new insights into risks and resilience, we will be developing innovative approaches to investigate exposures—from the womb through old age.

We will explore the shifting experience of migration over the past few decades. Today's immigrants are “transnationals,” truly living in two worlds—their country of origin and their new residence. Unlike earlier waves of immigrants, modern transnationals incorporate values and norms from both places. Yet the health consequences of this new experience are poorly understood. At HCPDS, we will be delving into the ways migration affects health, identity, mobility, and social integration.

As industrialized nations experience increases in life expectancy and declines in fertility, the challenges of aging societies are becoming more urgent. Joining the U.S., Europe and Japan are India, China and much of Southeast Asia—all of which have devoted few resources to accommodate the needs of the future labor force, pension system and health care establishment. Researchers at the Pop Center will explore interventions to delay or reduce declines in physical and cognitive function, and new ways to measure biomarkers and to estimate morbidity and mortality.

Finally, the Pop Center will examine how labor policy, work organization and workplace design influence the health of workers and their families. While occupational health has traditionally concerned itself with physical and toxic exposures, today's labor protection policies—worker compensation, unemployment benefits, minimum wage—may exert equally profound effects on health through entirely different mechanisms and pathways. Other aspects of the work environment—such as job control, job flexibility and work/family balance—may also shape health outcomes. We hope to shed light on the health consequences of these workplace conditions. This research is

especially relevant for low-wage workers with few options, and for women and older employees who must often grapple with complicated situations at home.

What makes Harvard's Pop Center unique are not only the provocative questions we are asking, but the milieu in which we seek the answers. We will become a true University-wide center—a magnet for population researchers from a broad array of disciplines. Our Faculty Steering Committee—made up of representatives not only from the Harvard School of Public Health but also from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Departments of Economics and



“What makes Harvard's Pop Center unique are not only the provocative questions we are asking, but the milieu in which we seek the answers.”

Sociology, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Medical School, the Institute for Quantitative Social Science, and the Center for Geographical Analysis—dramatically enlarges the scholarly conversation.

We will also cultivate connections to outside institutions. As Director, I will continue to serve on the advisory boards of the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS), the Longitudinal Survey of Aging in India (LASI), and other cross-country studies of aging. I will also keep up my collaborations with Professor Johan Mackenbach, of the Erasmus Medical Centre in Rotterdam, who has studied health inequalities in the European Union. Through this year's Bell Fellows, Mauricio Avendano Pabon and

Kavita Sivaramakrishnan, the Center will initiate two-way exchanges with European Union researchers and with the new Public Health Foundation of India. The Program on the Global Demography of Aging Fellowship will be housed here, as will seminars for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health and Society Scholars Program. And the Center will continue to train young researchers and frontline practitioners from around the world.

Driving this dynamic academic enterprise will be a state-of-the-art research infrastructure. The Pop Center's research core will maintain and manage complex data sets, and provide advanced quantitative modeling and interpretation. Our data specialists will work closely with affiliated investigators—from doctoral students to senior faculty—enabling these scientists to efficiently conduct studies that would otherwise take months or years. In addition, we hope to make transparent the datasets, analytical methods and fruits of the Center's research, in order to inspire more creative work on population issues. It's no surprise that our sophisticated research platform—core capacity that will grow as the Center itself expands—represents the most costly part of our new enterprise.

Personally, I hope that HCPDS will become a vibrant second home for researchers whose curiosity takes them outside their familiar academic niches. Indeed, that vision is what compelled me to accept the Director's job last fall. Having devoted my career as an epidemiologist to studying social determinants of health in the U.S., I was intrigued by the prospect of tackling the same issues from a global and interdisciplinary perspective.

I realized that to meet my next career challenge, I, too, needed a Pop Center. At the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, we intend to be that congenial and inspiring home for many scholars over the coming years.

—Lisa Berkman

Pop Center Redesign Combines Architectural Beauty and New Technology

After six months of top-to-bottom renovations, Harvard's Pop Center has an airy new look that harmonizes with its expanded mission. The Victorian house at 9 Bow Street will continue to operate as the Center's hub, accommodating faculty and staff. Among its upgrades: newly installed central air conditioning; a sleek full-service kitchen (in anticipation of an increase in the number of Center-hosted functions); a technologically advanced teleconferencing room; and new interior and exterior paint and flooring. State-of-the-art computing facilities feature wi-fi throughout.

Even more dramatic is the redesign at 22 Plympton Street—the low concrete structure formerly dubbed “The Bunker.” Inspired by the concept of “building collaborations,” the interior demolition removed walls and raised the ceiling. A 35-foot-high skylight illuminates the expansive space—before the renovation, a grim warren of offices. Half of the interior is completely open, with contemporary workstations and groupings of comfortable chairs and couches. Six glass-enclosed double offices, to be used by the Center's fellows, flank the open workstations.

“The results are amazing,” said Lisa Berkman, Director of the Pop Center. “Our original goal with the redesign was to maximize and modernize space so faculty, fellows and staff could comfortably gather. This enhances the educational experience for everyone. We also look forward to using it as a carrot to attract new faculty and researchers.”

The public is invited to tour the new facilities during an open house on Tuesday, October 7, from 1:30–3:30 pm. ✨



Formerly known as “The Bunker,” 22 Plympton Street has been transformed into a bright and airy workspace.



“Our original goal with the redesign was to maximize and modernize space so faculty, fellows and staff could comfortably gather. This enhances the educational experience for everyone.”

—Director Lisa Berkman



The conference room on Bow Street melds modern lines with a treasured tapestry donated by Center founder Roger Revelle, Ph.D.



A full-service kitchen will enhance HCPDS seminars and meetings.

Bell Fellows Embark on Cross-Cultural Research and Leadership Training

The Bell Fellowship Program fosters research and leadership training for academics and practitioners across a range of population and development issues. Named in honor of the late Pop Center Director David E. Bell and funded by the Revelle Endowment Fund, the Fellowship selects candidates with strong multidisciplinary perspectives and interests that reflect the mission of the Pop Center. This year's Bell Fellows have made impressive contributions to public health scholarship in Europe and South Asia.

Mauricio Avendano Pabon, Ph.D., is a research fellow at the Department of Public Health at the Erasmus University Medical Centre, in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. His thesis explored the impact of socioeconomic status on stroke risk across the globe and offered explanations for regional differences. More recently, he has helped design and analyze the European Union-funded project SHARE (Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe), a comparative study in 15 nations to examine how social and economic factors influence health.

At HCPDS, Avendano Pabon will explore how wealth shapes health in Europe and the United States. "Even though health disparities exist on both sides of the Atlantic," he notes, "we hypothesize that the mechanisms through which social and economic exposures influence health may differ across societies. We will try to understand these cross-country differences by using internationally comparative data for several countries."

Having visited Harvard in 2005, Avendano Pabon is eager to reconnect with local cultural landmarks. "I will enjoy visiting the Museum of Fine Arts and the Institute of Contemporary Art, as well as the famous Middle East restaurant for new Boston bands. I like the life in Boston. It's good to live in a city where you can walk or cycle to work, and where there are people from everywhere in the world. Somehow, I never felt like a stranger there."

Kavita Sivaramakrishnan, Ph.D., is senior program manager for the Public Health Foundation of India. In her current role, she has helped build in-house academic teams and has collaborated with networks of academic partners in India and in schools of public health abroad to develop a PHFI curriculum. Sivaramakrishnan has also assisted



"I am hugely looking forward to debate and engagement with other academics, practitioners and policymakers."

—Kavita Sivaramakrishnan

in planning situation analysis reports on capacity-building needs across five Indian states, and has helped develop a multidisciplinary Centre for Excellence for research in society and health in India.

"The Bell Fellowship opens up the possibility for me to work on health-related

problems with wider disciplinary insights and perspectives," she explained. "I hope that this program will be an opportunity to plan a wide collaborative network in South and Southeast Asia for research relating to critical concerns in society and health. I have a specific interest in understanding the political economy of aging. I am hugely looking forward to debate and engagement with other academics, practitioners and policymakers."

Sivaramakrishnan received her Ph.D. at the School of Social Sciences at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, in Delhi. In 2008, she was awarded a Balzan Fellowship at University College, London, for research in social epidemiology. For recent international conferences, she has written on the politics of health and on population aging. Sivaramakrishnan also served as a research fellow and program coordinator at the Initiative for Cardiovascular Health, in Delhi.

Although this will be Sivaramakrishnan's first time in the Boston area, she already feels a resonance with Harvard. "Having done my undergrad in the old Cambridge University, in England, I look forward to relocating in the newer and younger one!" ❁



UPCOMING FALL 2008 SEMINARS

POP CENTER SEMINARS

Pop Center, 9 Bow Street, 4:00–6:00 PM (unless otherwise noted)

DATE	SEMINAR LEADER	TOPIC
September 8	Jim Smith Senior Economist, Rand Corporation	The Impact of Childhood Health on Adult SES Outcomes
October 6 5:30–6:45 PM Kresge Building, HSPH	Gita Sen Professor of Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management, India	<i>10th Annual Sol Levine Lecture</i> Health Inequalities: Gendered Puzzles and Conundrums
October 20 4:00–5:30 PM	John Bongaarts Vice President and Distinguished Scholar, Population Council	Has the Global HIV Epidemic Peaked?
November 3	Elizabeth Pisani Author and Epidemiologist	Public Health Prostitution: Selling HIV Programs to the Highest Bidder
November 17	Ken Hill Professor of the Practice of Public Health, Department of Global Health and Population Studies, HSPH	The 1918 Influenza Epidemic in a Poor Country: Disaster in India
December 1	Lisa Berkman Director, Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies	Social and Labor Force Interventions Needed to Improve Population Health
December 15	Gary King David Florence Professor of Government, Dept of Government, Harvard	The Future of Death in America

ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION HEALTH AND SOCIETY SCHOLARS SEMINARS

Pop Center, 9 Bow Street, 4:00–6:00 PM (unless otherwise noted)

DATE	SEMINAR LEADER	TOPIC
September 11	Ichiro Kawachi Chair, Dept of Society, Human Development, and Health, HSPH	Population Health and Strategies for Prevention (G.Rose revisited)
September 25	Subu Subramanian, Associate Professor in Society, Human Development, and Health, and Mahasin Mujahid, RWJ Health and Society Scholar, at HSPH	Intro to Multi-Level Framework
October 9	Pat Sharkey RWJF Health and Society Scholar, Columbia University	The Lingering Influence of Neighborhoods over Years and across Generations
October 23	Jason Beckfield Assistant Professor of Sociology, Harvard	Income Inequality and Health: New Directions for Research
November 6	Jack Shonkoff, Julius B. Richmond FAMRI Professor in Child Health and Development, and Maria Glymour, Assistant Professor of Society, Human Development and Health, HSPH	TBD
November 20	Jo Ivey Boufford President, New York Academy of Medicine	TBD
December 4	David Williams Florence and Laura Norman Professor of Public Health at HSPH	The RWJF Commission to Build a Healthier America: Challenges and Opportunities
December 18	David Canning Professor of Economics and International Health, Dept of Global Health and Population, HSPH	TBD

THE PROGRAM ON THE GLOBAL DEMOGRAPHY OF AGING SEMINARS

Pop Center, 9 Bow Street, 4:30–6:00 PM (unless otherwise noted)

DATE	SEMINAR LEADER	TOPIC
September 15	Reeve Vanneman Professor of Sociology, Univ of Maryland	Disempowered by Whom? Inlaws' Influence on Decision Making in Indian Families
October 27	Andreea Balan-Cohen Assistant Professor of Economics, Tufts University	Sobering Up: The Impact of the 1985–1988 Russian Anti-Alcohol Campaign on Child Health
November 10	Paul Schultz Malcolm K. Brachman Professor Emeritus of Economics, Yale University	Do Family Planning Programs Promote Development?: Evidence from a Long Term Social Experiment in Matlab, Bangladesh, 1977–1996
December 8	Thies Lindenthal Ph.D. Candidate, Dept of Economics, Maastricht University	Demographic Change, Human Capital, and the Demand for Housing: British Evidence

Recent Publications of Center Faculty and Researchers

Avendano M, Soerjomataram I. “Monitoring Trends in Acute Coronary Syndromes: Can We Use Hospital Admission Registries?” *Heart*. 2008 Aug 12.

Berkman L, Epstein AM. “Beyond Health Care—Socioeconomic Status and Health.” *N Engl J Med*. 2008 Jun 5;358(23):2509-10.

Bloom, David E., David Canning, Guenther Fink and Jocelyn Finlay. “Does Age Structure Forecast Economic Growth?” *International Journal of Forecasting* (forthcoming).

Green, E.C. “The Invisible Cure: Africa, The West, and the Fight Against AIDS.” *JAMA*. 2008;300(5):587-589.

Canning, David, et al. “Assessing the Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on Nigerian Households.” *AIDS* (forthcoming).

Cutler, D. “Why Is the Developed World Obese?” *Annual Review of Public Health*. 2008: 29; 273-295.

Ertel KA, Glymour MM, Berkman LF. “Effects of Social Integration on Preserving Memory Function in a Nationally Representative US Elderly Population.” *Am J Public Health*. 2008 Jul;98(7):1215-20. Epub 2008 May 29.

Hill K, Seltzer W, Leaning J et al. “The Demographic Impact of Partition in the Punjab in 1947.” *Population Studies* 62(2): 17-35, 2008.

King, Gary and Ying Lu. “Verbal Autopsy Methods with Multiple Causes.” *Statistical Science*. Volume 23, Number 1 (2008), 78-91.

Mah, T. L., & Halperin, D. T. (2008). “Concurrent Sexual Partnerships and the HIV Epidemics in Africa: Evidence to Move Forward.” *AIDS and Behavior*. [EPub July 22 - doi:10.1007/s10461-008-9433-x].

Mujahid MS, Diez Roux AV, et al. “Neighborhood characteristics and hypertension.” *Epidemiology*. 2008 Jul;19(4):590-8.

Reich, Michael R., Keizo Takemi, Marc J. Roberts, and William C. Hsiao, “Global Action on Health Systems: A Proposal for the Toyako G8 Summit.” *Lancet*. 371:865-869, 2008.

Sampson, Robert J. “After-School Chicago: Space and the City.” *Urban Geography*. 29: 127-137 (2008).

Sampson, Robert J. “Ironies of Immigration: Rethinking Crime and Societal Change.” *Contexts*. 7:28-33 (2008).

Sampson, Robert J. and Patrick Sharkey. “Neighborhood Selection and the Social Reproduction of Concentrated Racial Inequality.” *Demography*. 45:1-29 (2008).

Subramanian S V, Elwert F, Christakis NA. “Widowhood and Mortality among the Elderly: the Modifying Role of Neighborhood Concentration of Widowed Individuals.” *Social Science and Medicine* (forthcoming).

HCPDS Grand Opening Celebrates New Home and Hosts Health Scholars

On Tuesday, October 7, the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies will hold an open house and a series of talks to celebrate its new mission, remodeled quarters and growing academic collaborations. The all-day program, “Exploring the Dynamic Links between Social and Environmental Conditions and Population Health”—co-sponsored by the Harvard School of Public Health Leadership Council—will highlight the Center’s exciting transformations.

From 1:30–3:30 pm, guests can tour the Center’s renovated facilities at 9 Bow Street in Cambridge and meet informally with faculty. Registration for the evening’s activities will take place from 3:30–4:00 pm in the ballroom of the Charles Hotel, also in Harvard Square. From 4:00–6:00 pm, faculty and invited speakers will present lectures on frontline issues in population health.

Welcoming the evening’s guests will be Harvard School of Public Health Dean Barry R. Bloom. Describing the Pop Center’s dramatic transformations and expanded agenda will be Director Lisa Berkman.

Samuel H. Preston, Fredrick J. Warren Professor of Demography at the University of Pennsylvania, will deliver the evening’s keynote address: “Recent Portraits of American Mortality.” Throughout his career, Dr. Preston’s major interest has been the health of populations—particularly, refining methods that measure and analyze health status.

In a classic 1975 paper, “The Changing Relation between Mortality and Level of Economic Development,” Dr. Preston described what has come to be known as The Preston Curve, which maps a country’s life expectancy against its real per capita income—a concept that has opened rich scholarly discussion and debate. Preston has also focused on cause-of-death patterns across space and time; the impact of cigarette smoking on aggregate mortality levels; and the factors that have driven massive mortality improvements in the past century.

Dr. Berkman will discuss “Social and Labor Force Interventions Needed to Improve Population Health.” An epidemiologist whose work focuses on social determinants of health, Dr. Berkman has examined the role of both social networks and social and economic policies that raise the risk of the early disability, disease and mortality. More recently, she has studied the impact of workplace conditions, especially flexible work policies, on the health of older workers and their families. Her co-edited volume *Social Epidemiology* is the first textbook on the topic. Dr. Berkman is past president of the Society of Epidemiologic Research and a member of the Institute of Medicine.

David E. Bloom, Chair of the Department of Global Health and Population, will discuss “Global Demographic Change and Its Economic Consequences.” Dr. Bloom, the Clarence James Gamble Professor of

THE HARVARD CENTER FOR POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES:
EXPLORING THE DYNAMIC LINKS BETWEEN SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND POPULATION HEALTH

Hear leading scientists discuss

- Health Inequalities
- Migration
- Aging Societies
- Women and Labor Policies
- Population and the Environment

Tuesday, October 7, 2008
The Charles Hotel
Cambridge, Massachusetts

HARVARD
Center for Population and Development Studies
Co-sponsored by the Harvard School of Public Health Leadership Council

Economics and Demography, is an economist whose work covers health, demography, education, and labor. He has written extensively on primary, secondary and tertiary education in developing nations, and on the links between health status, population dynamics and economic growth. Dr. Bloom is a leading researcher on the measurement and consequences of population aging. ✨



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