

# The Population Council and Population Control in Postwar East Asia

By Yu-ling Huang

Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Sociology  
State University of New York at Binghamton

[yuling13905@gmail.com](mailto:yuling13905@gmail.com)  
[yhuang2@binghamton.edu](mailto:yhuang2@binghamton.edu)

© 2009 by Yu-ling Huang

*Editor's Note:* This research report is presented here with the author's permission but should not be cited or quoted without the author's consent.

Rockefeller Archive Center Research Reports Online is a periodic publication of the Rockefeller Archive Center. Edited by Ken Rose and Erwin Levold. Research Reports Online is intended to foster the network of scholarship in the history of philanthropy and to highlight the diverse range of materials and subjects covered in the collections at the Rockefeller Archive Center. The reports are drawn from essays submitted by researchers who have visited the Archive Center, many of whom have received grants from the Archive Center to support their research.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and are not intended to represent the Rockefeller Archive Center.

## I. PROLOGUE

In their 2006 *Annual Review of Sociology* article, sociologists S. Philip Morgan and Miles G. Taylor affirm that global demographic concerns in the second half of the twentieth century have shifted from rapid population growth to declining, sub-replacement fertility. The phenomenon of low fertility nowadays not only exists in Western Europe and North America but has also spread to the developing world. According to world demographic data, more than half of the global population now lives in countries with fertility at or below the replacement level. To explain the forces that have resulted in declining fertility, Morgan and Taylor develop a framework that covers the theories of fertility transitions from high levels to low. They offer a list of the factors that are closely related to fertility change, including economic, ideological, institutional, and technological (Morgan and Taylor 2006: 385). In spite of their effort to build a comprehensive scheme for understanding declining fertility around the world, Morgan and Taylor have difficulty

accommodating the fertility transitions of East Asia—an area where regional fertility dropped from 5.5 in the 1950s to replacement level in the 1980s (Taiwan and South Korea) and 1990s (China)—within the existing theories. Thus, the authors propose another explanatory category: path-dependence, which emphasizes distinctive national contexts (Morgan and Taylor 2006: 392). The need to come up with this new analytical category—path-dependence with idiosyncratic explanations—has two implications. First, it reveals the shortcomings in the sociological literature of a systematic understanding of fertility change in non-Western areas. Second, it also suggests the potential to distill the dominant forces of fertility change from the distinctive historical trajectories of non-Western states.

Among these dominant forces, the Population Council played a crucial role in shaping the historical trajectories of fertility change by influencing the ideological, institutional, and technological factors in postwar East Asia. This report aims to examine the Population Council's activities in building a transnational network of demographic knowledge, contraceptive technologies, and population policy between East Asia and the United States.<sup>1</sup> Through exploring the interactions and division of labor between American consultants and the local experts and field workers involved in conducting various population research and fertility limiting projects in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, I highlight the importance of expanding upon our existing perspectives on the role of the Population Council in the long history of postwar global population control campaigns. Instead of adopting the emeritus demographers' triumphalist accounts of fertility reduction or some historians' over-generalized accusations concerning Americans coercive intervention in the bedrooms of developing countries, I suggest that the

---

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that the Population Council's influence varied in the four East Asian countries. Because of mainland China's isolation from the non-communist world, especially American influence, the Council had no access to China until the 1970s. Therefore, this report does not include China.

analysis of power of Population Council projects in foreign countries should pay attention to the emerging scientific governance of fertility initiated by the Population Council and embraced by some developing countries, such as Taiwan and South Korea. In addition to this new perspective, the comparisons between East Asian nations and other regions and countries can also enrich our understanding of the history of postwar fertility control relevant to the Population Council beyond the case studies of the United States (e.g., Critchlow 1999; Gordon 2007; Reed 1984; Tone 2001; Watkins 1998), Caribbean (e.g., Briggs 2002), and South Asia (e.g., Connelly 2006, 2008).

## **II. BEFORE THE POPULATION COUNCIL: ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION AND PRINCETON'S OFFICE OF POPULATION RESEARCH**

The Population Council was founded by John D. Rockefeller 3rd (JDR 3rd) in 1952. But national leaders in East Asia, as well as their Western counterparts interested in public health and geopolitics in the Far East, had become concerned about “population problems” even earlier. In 1948 two experts from the Rockefeller Foundation (Dr. Marshall C. Balfour and Mr. Roger F. Evans) and two demographers from the Office of Population Research (OPR) at Princeton University (Dr. Frank Notestein and Dr. Irene B. Taeuber), sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation (RF), spent three months in East and Southeast Asia surveying public health and population issues. They visited Japan, Korea, Taiwan, mainland China, Indonesia, and the Philippines, had meetings with local officials and scholars, and then produced a report that concluded that the increasing population was having a negative impact on people’s welfare. The report also suggested that reducing human fertility was the most important as well as the most difficult task. Due to the politically sensitive nature of fertility, the American experts proposed that, rather than getting directly involved, the Americans should encourage an interest in and

knowledge of population problems among the Asian peoples themselves (Balfour et al. 1950). Fostering indigenous awareness of population concerns and systematic knowledge of demographic dynamics became the first group of projects supported by American organizations in East Asia.

Japan implemented its population control policy and family planning programs soon after the end of World War II, including the influential 1948 Eugenic Protection Law. Since the formation of Japan's postwar population policy happened during the Allied occupation between 1945 and 1952, scholars have been interested in the role the occupation leadership played in shaping these plans. Taeuber, who was a member of the RF's survey team in 1948 and a demographer specializing in Japan, emphasized that the Supreme Command Allied Powers (SCAP) officials maintained a neutral stance and allowed the Japanese themselves to make decisions on these controversial issues. If SCAP did have any influence in declining fertility, she noted that it was indirect—through land reform, education, emphasis on equality, and democratization. Taeuber pointed out two main reasons SCAP might have had for not getting involved: “First, the adoption of population policies by a conquering army might well have furthered the already strong identification of population policy with militarism and war rather than with peace and welfare. Second, the advocacy of family limitation among the Japanese by an army of occupation that was dominantly American would have permitted the accusation of genocide” (Taeuber 1958: 371). Other scholars who later used official documents and interviews have provided a more complicated account of the American influence on the development of Japanese population policies by demonstrating the interactions among Japanese and American officials and population experts. Deborah Oakley uses the term *protective neutralism* to describe SCAP and other Americans: “instead of actively avoiding action ... [they] were actively interested,

facilitative, and sometimes openly directive, using a strategy that protected Japanese population policy from interest-group pressures outside the Japanese political system” (Oakley 1978: 624). The ongoing Nuremburg trials on the abuse of sterilization and the Catholic Church's opposition to birth control first made General MacArthur concerned, as early as 1945, that U.S. interventions in Japan's population policies were both unworkable and undesirable. Later, in 1949, General MacArthur adjusted his stance on Japan's birth control movement and noted that “[t]he movement for birth control in Japan, as in the West, was something that could not be stopped” (Oakley 1978: 625). SCAP, influenced by MacArthur's changing attitudes and its American technical experts, began to protect the Japanese population control movement from external intervening forces such as Soviet harassment and the Catholic Church. Furthermore, the American officials and experts<sup>2</sup> “worked behind the scenes to assist the Japanese in developing policy and program” (Oakley 1978: 626).<sup>3</sup>

Hubert G. Schenck, who had served as Chief of the Natural Resources Section for SCAP in Japan, already was aware of Taiwan's population density when he met with the Rockefeller Foundation's survey team in Japan in 1948. In 1951, the State Department borrowed him from the Army and set him up as Chief of the Economic Cooperation Administration, Mutual Security Agency (MSA) in Formosa (Taiwan). Soon after his arrival, he wrote to Evans of the RF to express his interest in the 1948 survey and to request that the RF send a team of demographers to continue their population studies of Taiwan. Evans exchanged ideas about possible assistance

---

<sup>2</sup> Oakley's article identifies three influential figures: Crawford Sams, chief of SCAP's Public Health and Welfare Section; Daniel Luten, a technical expert in the Natural Resources Section; and Warren Thompson, a demographer who served as a short-term consultant to the Natural Resources Section (Oakley 1978).

<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, JDR 3rd showed great interest in Japanese society, including its population. His papers in the Rockefeller Family Archives include several documents about Japan's postwar population policy, including *White Paper on Japanese Population* published by Institutes for the Research of Population Problem at Tokyo in 1951 and several issues of *Japan Planned Parenthood Quarterly*.

with Taeuber of the OPR and replied to Schenck that the RF believed that encouraging a study of population and relevant problems by the Chinese or by a joint project of both Chinese and Americans would be less controversial than a “staff study” directed and financed by MSA. They also passed along the names of several indigenous individuals and agencies that the American experts considered capable of handling such research. Schenck zealously pursued this, and in February 1952, Evans, as a RF representative, met with Premier CHEN Cheng and other high-ranking officials such as Secretary General Wang Shih-chieh, the Chief of the Joint Committee of Rural Reconstruction (JCRR) Chiang Mon-lin, and Foreign Minister George Yeh. The Premier acknowledged that population control was one of many important issues that the postwar Kuomintang (KMT) regime was facing in Taiwan. In order to avoid tensions, both sides agreed from the start that any project should have “as indigenous, objective, [and] autonomous [a] research character as possible.” Evans and Schenck soon contacted the OPR at Princeton and the JCRR. Notestein, then the director of the OPR, sent a grant proposal drafted by the OPR to Chiang Mon-lin, who later submitted it to the RF on behalf of the JCRR.

With financial support from the RF, Princeton demographer George Barclay, whose dissertation focused on colonial Taiwan's population from 1905 to 1945, was sent by the OPR to Taiwan in 1952 as a consultant to Dr. S.C. Hsu, Director of the JCRR's Rural Medical Division. The OPR's project had three main research objectives: (1) the problems of population growth and how they relate to the development of agriculture and industry; (2) the family system in Taiwan, with special attention to its influence in maintaining high fertility; (3) “maintain[ing] indigenous academic interest in these issues, and [ . . . ] encouraging independent research by those who are equipped for it by familiarity with the details of their own culture, since both research and policy concerning population in Asia must, in the last analysis, be developed by the people concerned.”

In connection with the MSA, the JCRR cooperated with the staff of the RF and the OPR to launch population studies that were indigenous, objective, autonomous, and research-oriented. These agencies and organizations fostered contact between American population scholars and Chinese/Taiwanese officials and experts. They also emphasized that their joint projects were objective fact-finding activities rather than actions with any political agenda. These organizations established the working framework for the Population Council, which had been involved in collaborative work in Taiwan since the late 1950s.

### **III. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POPULATION COUNCIL AND ITS WORK IN EAST ASIA**

After their investigation in the Far East, the RF team suggested that a new population division within the foundation was needed. RF staff, however, were concerned that birth control was such a sensitive and controversial issue that setting up a division explicitly concerned with population might encounter opposition from the Catholic leaders that they worked with, especially in Latin America. In fact, the US federal government had a similar attitude toward the issues of population control and birth control at that time. The RF's reluctance to confront the issue of population control directly resulted partly from the lack of effective contraceptive methods in the early 1950s. In addition, many staff at the RF believed that American agricultural technology would be able to increase the food supply enough to meet the demands of the world's increasing population. These factors kept the RF from going beyond medical and demographic research.

Though disappointed by the RF's conservative position, JDR 3rd decided instead to establish his own organization that would work solely on the population problem. Before the Williamsburg Conference, a memorandum to JDR 3rd outlined how the population problems had

been perceived and what already been done to deal with these problems. Three groups of activities around the world were mentioned: (a) analytical- or statistical-oriented (such as the United Nations, Scripps Foundation for Research and Population Problems at Miami University, OPR at Princeton University, Milbank Memorial Fund, etc.); (b) control-oriented (such as The Malthusian League at England, The Eugenics Society of England, International Committee on Planned Parenthood, American Planned Parenthood Federation, American Eugenics Society, etc.); and (c) resources-oriented (such as Conservation Foundation and Nutrition Foundation, etc.). The memo suggested the new institution could assist other agencies or leaders in the field by simply providing fellowships and grants-in-aid. Or it could be a “central agency for the collection, classification, correlation and dissemination of information relating to the population problem in all of its aspects” because the information about activities on population was scattered and a clearinghouse was needed. In June 1952, under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences (its president was also president of the Rockefeller Institute at that time), 31 scholars from the fields of public health, economics, sociology, demography, biology, medicine, agriculture, geology, psychology, and other fields proposed establishing an organization that could provide scientific research and coordinate the field of population studies. JDR 3rd established the Population Council (PC) shortly thereafter in November 1952.

Since its establishment, the PC has relied on a group of highly esteemed scientists in many fields, having determined not only that their experience could guide the organization’s agenda but also that “their reputations as men of science shielded the Council from critics of birth control and lent prestige to both the organization and the population field” (Population Council 1978: 15). As a central agency focusing on conducting scientific research and finding solutions to the world’s population problems, the PC's objectives and missions included: studying the



increasing population of the world and its pertinent problems, disseminating the knowledge resulting from such study, serving as a center for the collection and exchange of facts and information on population issues, coordinating individual and collective efforts in the development of population programs. To attain these objectives, scientific research would be conducted on reproductive physiology to enhance scientific knowledge about human fertility; this research and knowledge would be applied to contraceptive methods; the social, cultural, and ethical implications of contraceptive methods would be studied; experiments would be conducted to determine the different factors, such as the effect of contraception and economic development on birth rates (Population Council 1978: 15-16). In 1954 the PC divided itself into two major branches: the Demography Division and the Medical Division. Since 1955 the PC has provided assistance on demography and family planning, including conducting surveys, training, research, and information exchange to India (1958), Pakistan (1958), Taiwan (1961), South Korea (1962), Turkey (1963), and Tunisia (1963). In 1964, the PC established its new Technical Assistance Division, and this division continued to expand its work to other countries in Asia, and later to countries in Africa and Latin America.

## **Japan**

Soon after the PC was established, JDR 3rd noted that though the PC's concerns were worldwide, "it unquestionably would have a special interest in Asia because the most seriously overpopulated areas are located there." In terms of dealing with Asia's population problems, he expected that the PC would work more on the analytical and control side, i.e., exploring demography and fertility, than on the resources side. In accordance with the differing national situations, the PC began its work in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan with different emphases. Japan's total fertility rate (TFR) declined from 4.3 in 1949, to 2.0, around replacement level, in 1957, and

remained stable into the 1970s (Atoh 2004: 42-43). The decrease in the birth rate was attributable to the availability of various birth control methods and the legalization of abortion. The 1948 National Eugenics Law and its later amendments in 1949 and 1952 liberalized provisions for abortion and made abortion legal for economic reasons and expanded provisions for practical instruction about contraception. The revised pharmaceutical regulations also lifted the ban on manufacturing and selling contraceptives in 1949 (Norgren 2001).

It is noteworthy that the government framed its support for contraception as a measure supporting maternal health instead of as a solution to population problems. Not until 1953 did the Cabinet establish a permanent Council for Population Problems to deal with Japan's overpopulation and its consequences—lack of sufficient jobs, difficulty in establishing a self-supporting economy, confusion of social order, and hindrance of international peace. The population policies were adopted, although not through the Cabinet's direct support for birth control per se, but by its relying on public health programs, such as family planning programs and local health centers, to disseminate contraceptive information and tools (Taeuber 1958: 371-379).

Given the involvement of both the government and civil society in policy-making and research, the PC limited its work in Japan to providing consultation to the government agencies (e.g., Institute of Public Health) and supporting demographic and medical research through fellowships to study abroad and grants-in-aid. When Japan's TFR dropped to replacement level in 1957, the PC staff decided to assist Japanese scholars in promoting their success in solving their population problems through the use of family planning to other Asian countries, in other words, to help the Japanese use their knowledge and leadership to support other Asians. Meanwhile, the PC wanted to assist Japanese scientists in the field of reproduction, public health,

and demography to carry out advanced experimentation. The research projects the PC financed included: studies on antigenicity of the ovarian constituents; evaluations of compounds as potential anti-progestins; applications of tubal staples under culdoscopy; studies on the role of flavonoid compounds in the control of pro-gestational proliferation; studies on immunological induction of infertility with homologous sperm and semen; studies on the control of hypothalamus-hypophysical-ovarian function; just to name few. In doing so, the PC carefully presented itself as an information clearinghouse with constructive actions and an agency that “emphasized scientific study as opposed to propaganda and quiet consultation as opposed to controversial advice.”

## **Taiwan**

Like Japan, Taiwan faced overpopulation in the early 1950s due to immigration and high birth rates. Between 1949 and 1954, around 1.5 million people migrated from Mainland China to Taiwan with the defeated KMT regime and constituted around 15% of Taiwan's population. Taiwan's relatively small territory worsened the pressure of overpopulation. However, as a country that was still under the threat of civil war from Communist China, the KMT regime maintained its prewar ideology regarding population as a symbol of national wealth and strength. The KMT claimed that the country needed great manpower to fight against the People Republic of China (PRC). Some politicians also believed that when the regime returned to Mainland China, the problems regarding overpopulation would no longer exist given the much larger land than the island. In other words, any measures that were endorsed by the KMT regime to control its population's growth would convey the impression that the regime had given up the hope of retaking Mainland China. The government, including many political leaders who retreated to Taiwan, certainly wanted to avoid such political implications. On the other hand, some

administrative officials believed that rapid population growth would retard the country's economic development, which was the top priority of the nation recovering from World War II. One of the most earnest advocates was the JCRR, a Sino-American Joint Commission established in 1948 and moved to Taiwan in 1949. The JCRR was known for its projects in land reform and improving agricultural productivity to solve poverty. It was led by five commissioners, three of whom were Chinese and two of whom were American. Because of its history and organization, the JCRR had strong connections with the U.S. government as well as private American institutions, such as the RF and the PC.

The PC staff was aware of the political sensitivity of the population problem in Taiwan in the 1950s through the contact with the JCRR and staff visits there. Because of the JCRR's arrangements, the PC staff had the chance to meet with both the private Family Planning Association and the governor, who was positive about the population's growth. Because of its political situation and ideology, the government seemed against population control. Yet the Family Planning Association of China received modest funds from the government through the Department of Social Affairs. As Marshall C. Balfour mentioned in the diary notes from his visit to Taiwan in December of 1958: “[Family planning] is a 'touchy subject'. . . [and] already I begin to feel that family planning is an undercover movement in Taiwan.” In fact, it took three years after Balfour's visit for both the JCRR and the PC to determine that the political environment was favorable enough to initiate their first joint population study project.

In 1961 the PC approved a grant of \$58,000 to a population field study in Taichung City that was sponsored by the JCRR and conducted by the Maternal and Child Health Institute of the Provincial Health Administration. As a pilot population study, this project proposed to investigate the demographic data (birth, death, and migration) and socio-economic information (education,

occupation, and income) of the households; reproductive histories of 1500-2000 women; the factors that motivated people toward or against family planning; and interviewees' knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP) of family planning. Nevertheless, this project was more than a study. Its “action-cum-research” orientation was stated clearly in the proposal: “At an appropriate stage in the study, methods of FP can be explained and taught to selected groups. The acceptability and effectiveness of different methods should be measured in the specific groups under investigation.” In other words, the action-oriented research regarded women's reproduction as an objective of demographic observation as well as of scientific experiment and social engineering.

Working in coordination with local officials, public health nurses, midwives, and private obstetricians and gynecologists, the projects funded by the PC between 1961 and 1966<sup>4</sup> devoted close attention to study, monitor, and manage women’s fertility through local administration and organization, such as lins’<sup>5</sup> meetings, mothers’ meetings, farmer associations, and health stations. Some new communication means, including newspaper articles, radio broadcast, film strips, mailing of FP materials, posters, field workers’ home visits and interviews, were employed to foster and spread the awareness of family planning and contraceptive measures. Bernard Berelson, a behavior scientist of Columbia University working on communication and mass media, joined the PC in 1962 and applied “mass media campaign” as the essential part of FP programs in Taiwan in order to get FP “in the air.” He emphasized that “[t]he idea here is not simply to alert and inform the population that a family planning program is going forward, but

---

<sup>4</sup> These include several grants from demographic, medical, and technical assistance divisions: FP program (1962), FP Services (1963), IUCD Follow-up Study (1963), FP Action Program (1964), Medical Follow-up Study on IUD Cases (1964), FP Action and Research Program (1965), Follow-up Study of IUD Cases (1965), and FP Evaluation and Training program (1965).

<sup>5</sup> Lins are a type of locally administrative division in Taiwan, managed by a county or city government.

also to spread the idea so that it will be taken for granted more in normal conversation as well as to promote the perception that FP is legitimate and has a good deal of social support (that is, that ‘everyone’ is doing it).” Beyond basic vital statistics, the KAP field workers were trained not only to record the detailed information about sample couples’ knowledge and attitude toward FP, but also to investigate very private matters such as what contraceptive methods the couples used and how often. Moreover, the KAP research elicited information and knowledge of birth control from the sample groups. For the PC staff and their Taiwanese colleagues, the KAP studies provided scientific, objective data that justified their further action research even though the KAP questionnaire’s programmatic agenda may have undermined its research validation.

Under the supervision of American experts in the fields of demography and public health, the Taichung Studies collected data on Taiwanese women's reproductive behaviors, educated them about contraceptives, and monitored their fertility by mobilizing public health nurses and staff to carry on detailed surveys and home visits. Lippes Loops—an intrauterine device (IUD) recently developed by the PC—was introduced into Taiwan in the first large-scale experiment in the world involving the cooperation of midwives and obstetricians and gynecologists. As mentioned above, for reasons of political sensitivity, the early stage of the Taichung Studies was framed as pre-pregnancy counseling, instead of family planning, but its remarkable accomplishment of gathering fertility data, organizing medical providers, and achieving impressive IUD insertion rates soon made the Taichung Studies a model of family planning in the developing world from the standpoint of the American experts and international agencies who were eager to disseminate effective contraceptive ideas and practices. Berelson and Freeman’s article of 1964 *Scientific American* about fertility control in Taiwan attained positive feedback. One can argue that it is because the image of scientific governance of fertility and the

international fame of FP programs in Taiwan that were coordinated by the PC, together with other domestic concerns, finally brought about formal advocacy and the institutionalization of family planning by the Taiwanese government.

## **Korea**

After World War II, a million Koreans returned from Manchuria and Japan. Soon the division of Korea at the 38th parallel forced thousands more to flee to the south. During the Korean War from 1950 to 1953, the political instability drove populations to the southern part. The migration and baby boom after the soldiers returned home changed South Korea's demographic structure. How to absorb such rapidly increasing population in the difficult postwar living conditions became a huge challenge for the Korean government. South Korea initiated its official national family planning in 1961. Before that there were few organized social responses to the demographic pressures. The political leaders had several concerns when they contemplated if they should employ family planning as a means of population control. The preference for big families and sons was still prevalent in the Korean society. So were the worries that contraception would corrupt sexual morals. In addition, the ideologies that saw a great population as an asset to the nation's labor force and enabled it to exert its international influence had not yet faded away in the 1950s.

After the military revolution in May 1961, economic growth became a priority for the new military government under President Park Chung Hee (1961-1979). Given the assumption that the increasing population would offset economic development that was taking off, South Korea needed effective policies to control its population. The Maternal and Child Health Section under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs soon launched the laws and policies to implement family planning programs (including the rules to allow the importation of

contraceptive devices), which were integral to a special national reconstruction movement and were supported by other government agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Subsequently the PC granted funds to several Korean universities, voluntary organizations and governmental agencies for cooperative projects on population studies and family planning. The recipients of these grants included: Yonsei University for FP research (1962, 1964, 1965); Seoul National University for vasectomy experiments in animals (1963), for the establishment of a demography library (1963), for a field survey of fertility trends (1964), and for a population research center (1965); Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea (PPFK) for several FP and IUD studies (1963, 1964, 1965); and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs for a consultant on the manufacture of contraceptives (1963) and for a demographic and medical advisor (1965).

The government's determination to carry out FP programs with rigorous efforts impressed the American consultants (Connelly 2008). On the other hand, the launch of nationwide family planning programs did not provoke serious social debates in the 1960s, due in part to the military regime's firm stance. Nevertheless, the literature of science studies suggests that Korean society viewed Western biomedicine, including reproductive technology such as IUD and sterilization, as a symbol of modernization, and that this explains why medical interventions prompted virtually no social resistance but were quickly accepted by the Korean people. The similarities and differences of FP programs' effectiveness in the "most successful" developing countries—Taiwan and South Korea—were discussed by the PC staff as well as by scholars of both countries. However, we still know little about the decision-making and "field work" of these FP programs, which require further comparative studies.



#### IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The global campaign for population control, along with low fertilities around the world has finally become history, but the investigation, writing, and interpretation of this history has just begun (Connelly 2003). In 2007 two former PC advisers, Warren Robinson and John Ross, co-edited a collection that recorded three decades of population policies and programs by the experts who were involved in the family planning programs of 23 countries. These demographers and ob-gyn physicians recall the societal and personal benefits that FP and contraceptive technologies brought to couples in the then developing countries, such as “giv[ing] women greater control over their own childbearing” and “relieving families from the unexpected burdens of raising more surviving children” (Robinson and Ross 2007: x). They believe that the tasks that they undertook from the 1950s through 1980 “represent one of the important social experiments of the post-World War II period” (xi) and in return they accomplished a “quiet revolution of human history” (421). From the PC archives that document these FP personnel’s work on a daily basis, the reader can feel that most FP experts considered their devoted engagement in FP as an influential scientific undertaking. On the other hand, some critical social studies argue that the world population controllers, dominated by American nongovernmental organizations (including the PC) and government, in fact took away the reproductive choices from couples in developing countries. Connelly argues that in the history of global population control, “the temptation to plan other people’s families was pervasive and persistent” and “the great tragedy... was to think that one could know other people’s interests better than they knew it themselves” (Connelly 2008: 378). He reminds us that this is “a story far too important and complex to reduce to a conspiracy” (377) and we need to be aware of “the link between population control and imperialism,” which is “not merely conceptual, but historical” (378).

How can we understand these two polar images of population controllers and the PC's joint projects in developing countries? My preliminary findings based on the archival research in the PC documents suggest that two directions are crucial to a constructive framework of investigating this history. First, while situating the history in a transnational network of family planning, demographic knowledge and contraceptive technologies, we should still pay attention to an individual developing country's domestic conditions and its project of development and modernization. After all, even if American influence was hegemonic, different countries (East Asian nations, for example) might be able to maintain various levels of agency—from political or cultural factors—in conditioning the directions of population control policies and FP programs. Second, in what historical context did the demographers and reproductive scientists consider their work on human fertility to be “scientific” endeavors, and to what extent did they perceive their social experiments on women's bodies as legitimate? From their perspectives, where was the line between scientific research, action program, and intervention? Did such a line even exist? If not, why? To sum up, I suggest that further studies on the histories of the Population Council and postwar population control should: (1) take both the transnational and national backgrounds into considerations, and (2) examine how the PC staff and their co-workers in developing countries defined their work as “scientific” and “objective” and the implications and impacts of such claim/framing.

## REFERENCES

- Atoh, Makoto, Vasantha Kandiah, and Serguey Ivanov. "The Second Demographic Transition in Asia? Comparative Analysis of the Low Fertility Situation in East and South-East Asian Countries." *The Japanese Journal of Population* 2: 1 (March 2004), pp. 42-75.
- Balfour, Marshall C., Roger F. Evans, Frank W. Notestein and Irene B. Taeuber. *Public Health and Demography in the Far East*. New York: Rockefeller Foundation, 1950.
- Briggs, Laura. *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002.
- Connelly, Matthew. *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- Connelly, Matthew. "Population Control in India: Prologue to the Emergency Period." *Population and Development Review* 32: 4 (December 2006), pp. 629-667.
- Connelly, Matthew. "Population Control is History: New Perspectives on the International Campaign to Limit Population Growth." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45: 1 (January 2003), pp. 122-147.
- Critchlow, Donald T. *Intended Consequences: Birth Control, Abortion, and the Federal Government in Modern America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Gordon, Linda. *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2007.
- Morgan, S. Philip, and Miles G. Taylor. "Low Fertility at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century." *Annual Review of Sociology* 32 (August 2006), pp. 375-399.
- Norgren, Tiana. *Abortion Before Birth Control: The Politics of Reproduction in Postwar Japan*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001.
- Oakley, Deborah. "American-Japanese Interaction in the Development of Population Policy in Japan, 1945-1952." *Population and Development Review* 4: 4 (December 1978), pp. 617-643.
- Population Council. *The Population Council, 1952-1964; a report*. New York, 1965.
- Reed, James. *The Birth Control Movement and American Society: From Private Vice to Public Virtue*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Robinson, Warren C. and John A. Ross, editors. *The Global Family Planning Revolution*. Washington, D. C.: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2007.
- Taeuber, Irene B. *The Population of Japan*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958.
- Tone, Andrea. *Devices and Desires: A History of Contraceptives in America*. New York: Hill and Wang, A Division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.
- Watkins, Elizabeth Siegel. *On the Pill: A Social History of Oral Contraceptives, 1950-1970*. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.