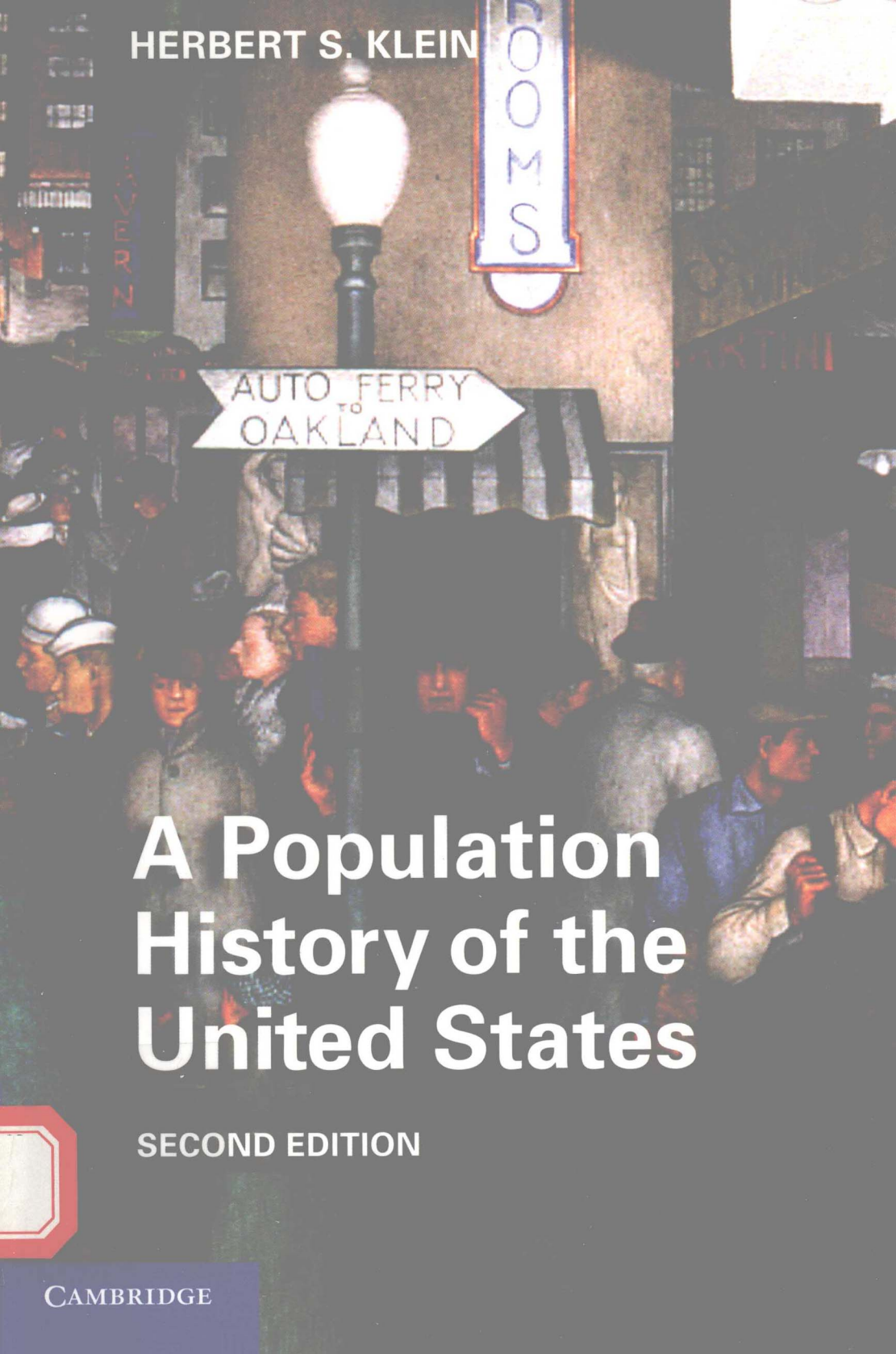
HERBERT S. KLEIN
AUTO FERRY TO OAKLAND
A Population History of the United States
SECOND EDITION
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A Population History of the United States

Second Edition

HERBERT S. KLEIN
Columbia University and Stanford University

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A Population History of the United States

Second Edition

This is the first full-scale, one-volume survey of the demographic history of the United States. From the arrival of humans in the Western Hemisphere to the current century, Herbert S. Klein analyzes the basic demographic trends in the growth of the preconquest, colonial, and national populations. He surveys the origin and distribution of the Native Americans, the postconquest free and servile European and African colonial populations, and the variation in regional patterns of fertility and mortality until 1800. He then explores trends in births, deaths, and international and internal migrations during the 19th century and compares them with contemporary European developments. The profound impact of historic declines in disease and mortality rates on the structure of the late-20th-century population is explained. The unusual patterns of recent urbanization and the rise of suburbia in the late 20th century are examined, along with the renewed impact of new massive international migrations on North American society. Finally, the late-20th-century changes in family structure, fertility, and mortality are evaluated for their influence on the evolution of the national population for the 21st century and compared with trends in other postdemographic-transition advanced industrial societies in Europe and Asia.

Herbert S. Klein is the Gouverneur Morris Emeritus Professor of History, Columbia University, and Research Fellow and Curator at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. He is the author of numerous books, including *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge University Press, 1999) and *A Concise History of Bolivia*, second edition (Cambridge University Press, 2011). He is also coauthor of *Brazil since 1980* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); *Mexico since 1980* (Cambridge University Press, 2008); *Slavery in Brazil* (Cambridge University Press, 2009); and *Hispanics in the United States, 1980–2005* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

To
Stanley M. Elkins,
who first taught me to think critically about the history of the United States

Graphs, Maps, and Tables

Graphs

Maps

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Introduction to the Second Edition

Given the seven years that have passed since the last revision of this text, my own thinking has changed about the chronology applied to the demographic history of the 20th century. It is now evident that the decade of the 1960s for the United States, as well as for most of the world, was a profound marker of change. The sudden decline in fertility that occurred in the decade of the 1960s was considered at the time to be a temporary phenomenon. But it is now evident from all the advanced industrial societies that this new low-low fertility, as the demographers are calling this change, is a permanent part of the posttransitional model of demographic change for all advanced industrial societies. All the major industrial states are now at or below replacement fertility, and most of the developed world is quickly following their lead. The second factor marking the decade of the 1960s as important was the change in immigration laws in the United States, which again opened up the country to a new era of international migration in the following decades, which in turn led to Hispanics emerging as the largest minority in the country. Thus, I have confined the postwar chapter to the period 1945–1970 and have used the 1970 census as a terminal point, with some suggestions of how changes which began in the late 1960s saw their full development in the 1970s.

In dealing with these contemporary census and demographic materials, I have decided to use the Bureau of the Census terminology of race and ethnicity to indicate when populations are broken down by color and origin – which means that I have adopted the post-1980 usage of Non-Hispanic whites, blacks, Asians, American Indians, and Hispanics of any color as the major categories in breaking down the national population.

This is the usage also given in all the relevant tables by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics (CDC/NCHS). Given the as yet small percentage of the population who list more than one race or ethnicity, I have confined my statistics on this subject to those who listed only one such identity. Although I have used the census of 2010 as my end date in this work, many of the data – especially those relating to vital statistics – are from a few years before this latest census because of the usual delay in publishing some of this basic information. Where other data have as yet been analyzed for the census, I have relied instead on the latest American Community Surveys and Current Population Reports which now includes data from 2011.

Finally, there has been an outpouring of studies on the antebellum paradox of declining nutrition of Americans in the 19th century and I have revised the relevant sections to include this new material. Nothing like this work has occurred in colonial demographic history – once a very promising and important field – and relatively little research has been devoted to other crucial areas of post-1800 demographic history. Unfortunately, the historical profession in the United States has largely abandoned this field to economists and demographers in its new concentration on cultural history, which is a shame, given the enormous amount of work that still needs to be done in this field.

In revising this text, I have come to rely on the wisdom and experience of Campbell Gibson, who has aided me in profound ways in understanding U.S. demographic history. Equally, Stanley Engerman, as usual, has provided important support for my ongoing work in this area. Finally, I owe a special thanks to Jan Sweeney, who revised the design of all my graphs and tables for this second edition.

Introduction to the First Edition

When my editor, Frank Smith, first suggested the need for this volume, I was rather surprised. Were there not a dozen books on the demographic history of the United States, I asked? No, he replied, not a one, and after a systematic checking I found, to my astonishment, that he was quite right. Most countries in Europe have several such volumes dedicated to their population histories, and even many developing countries have such histories. There were, of course, several important but partial general studies that had been produced in the 20th century from Rossiter's simple statistical compilation (1909), to the full-scale surveys of Thompson and Whelpton (1933) and Taeuber and Taeuber (1971). There were also numerous long-term historical studies on aspects of demographic change, especially related to fertility, but there was no one-volume synthesis that covered the entire history of the United States. Despite the extraordinary amount of research produced by individual scholars and even a recent collection of essays on the subject edited by Haines and Steckel (2000), no one had provided the general reader with a survey.

I myself had worked previously on some aspects of U.S. demographic history, most specifically on slavery, the Atlantic slave trade, and Italian immigration, but most of my research and writing has been involved with the demographic history of Latin America. Given this rather unusual background, I thought that I might be able to provide a viewpoint that was somewhat different from the usual approach, and I felt that I had the skills to interpret the more technical work done by demographers, economists, and sociologists for a broader audience. My aim in this book is twofold: to report on the best of the current research and to summarize the mass of quantitative materials that private persons and public

agencies have produced for understanding our society. Although few historians have ventured into this area, except for the colonial and early republican period, this is not an unworked field of research. Demographers, economists, and sociologists have devoted a great deal of time and research to understanding the evolution of the national population in the 19th and 20th centuries and have generated a great many new insights as well as new demographic materials. Even government demographers have written about historical demography as they begin to work through issues that are of contemporary concerns. There is thus a vast body of readily available research and materials that can be used to understand this history.

The demographic history of any country shares many characteristics with other populations and their evolution. I have thus tried to show both the commonality of patterns and changes that the population of the United States shared with other nations, especially those of the North Atlantic world, and also to examine those features that were unique to its evolution. Although all modern industrial societies arrive at roughly the same basic structures in the 21st century, they often took slightly different routes to get there. In the case of the United States, the decline of fertility before the fall of mortality, the existence from the beginning of a multiracial society, and the ongoing impact of foreign immigration have been among the special factors that have helped define some of the unique features of the population history. In the following analysis I have tried to show how these unique features modified the broad demographic changes that all populations of the advanced industrializing countries were experiencing in the past three centuries.

It also might be useful to define some of the terms and indices that I use throughout the book. Demographic change is traditionally determined by three major factors: the births, deaths, and in- and out-migration experienced by a given population. To measure these changes, demographers have established a series of indices that are expressed in ratios – usually to the resident population – and thus comparable across different size populations. In dealing with births, there are a host of measures that are used, such as the total births in a given year as a ratio of the total population in that same year. This is the so-called crude birth rate and is expressed as births per 1,000 resident population. Given the constraints on human fertility, a crude birth rate of 55 births per thousand resident midyear population would be considered a very high rate. Today, the crude birth rate in the United States is on the order of 14 per thousand resident population. But this crude rate is just one of many rates used to measure the

births in a population. There are a series of more refined rates that try to take into account the fact that fertile women are the basic unit of analysis and compare total births to women in, say, the ages of 15 to 49 years or even the rate of infant girls born to these women in their fertile years. Further refining estimates are created using the birth order, the age of the mother at first and subsequent births, the spacing between children, and so on. The more refined the ratio, the more carefully it reflects the actual number of women who survive to produce female children and the better it predicts the fertility changes that will occur in the current and future generations. Given the poor quality of vital statistical registration in the United States until the 20th century, most scholars use the very simple crude rates generated from the census, the child–woman ratio, which is the ratio of children listed in the census under 5 years of age to all women in their fertile years of roughly 15 to 49 years of age (taken from the census rather than from birth registrations), which they then use to estimate the "total fertility rates." These total fertility rates are usually calculated directly as the sum of the ratios of the children born to women at each fertile age (or group of ages) in a given period. This TFR is considered to be the average number of births a hypothetical group of 1,000 women would have had they experienced the rates observed for all women in a given year. A second less common TFR can be calculated for a cohort of women who have completed their fertility years.[1] In the third world today that total fertility rate could be as high as 6 or 7 children per women in a given period of time while in most contemporary advanced industrial societies that rate has currently fallen below the replacement level of 2.1 children.

Next in importance are the death rates, again with the crude death rate being the most used until well into the 20th century. The "crude death rate" is defined as the total number of people who died in a given year as a ratio of the resident population in that year. Demographers also have created a series of very refined death rates related to age, type of disease, and other factors, all of which are more useful to determine general movements in mortality than the crude death rate. One rate that is a rather sensitive indicator of well-being and change is the "infant mortality rate," which calculates the number of infants dying before age 1 as a ratio of all children born in that year. In many regions and districts of

1 All the total fertility numbers cited in this work are of the more common period type rates.

the United States, this infant mortality rate has been calculated for populations before the 20th century, and these numbers are often presented here. In turn, the "child mortality ratio" is also a good indication of the well-being of a population and is calculated from the number of children dying before 5 years of age to the number born in a given year. More recently, the infant mortality rates have included fetal deaths as well as deaths by days and months after birth.

Once death rates have been established by sex for all ages, then a life table can be constructed. From a life table, the probability of dying (or surviving) between two specified ages, given the age-sex specific death rates of a specified year, can then be calculated, which essentially predicts the ratio of a given population at birth dying at each subsequent advancing age. Normally when demographers say that life expectancy of a given population is 45 years of age, it means that on average an individual is expected to live to be 45 years of age if the mortality rates in the original year remain constant. Such rates, of course, have not been constant over the course of time, which will thus change the life expectancy of the given individual to above or below the original estimated 45 years depending on the direction of change. Like the infant mortality rate, this measure of average life expectancy is much used today to compare world populations in terms of health and well being. This number is often confused by many people as meaning that few in a society with such a low life expectancy reached old age. But it should be remembered that prior to the second and third decades of the 20th century, the death rates among infants and children were extremely high. This means that those who survived to 5 years of age in any premodern society had an expectation of life that would go well beyond the average life expectancy at birth. Thus, for example, the white male life expectancy at birth in the United States in 1900 was 46 years of age; this at a time when infant and child mortality was still high, with some 23% of the males dying before 5 years of age. For those who survived to 5 years of age, their life expectancy increased to 54 years of age. Those men who survived to 46 years of age in 1946 still had, on average, more than 20 years of life left.[2] Thus a low average life expectancy at birth in the pre-modern era did not mean that there was not a significant number of persons in the population reaching advanced ages.

2 Data taken from the 1900 U.S. life table found at the University of California, Berkeley, and Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. *Human Mortality Database*. Accessed at http://www.demog.berkeley.edu/wilmoth/mortality/.