

Editor's Introduction

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Several rapidly evolving research areas are represented in this issue of *Population and Environment*, making this issue's contributions important reading for individuals engaged in these lines of inquiry!

First, fascinating work on family and land use transitions, making use of life cycle perspectives, continues to emerge—the study presented here by Leonard, Deane, and Gutmann included. In fact, these authors provide a particularly unique contribution through use of an historical demographic lens grounded in a unique longitudinal dataset in 25 environmentally diverse Kansas townships in the midst of Great Plains agricultural transition. Their findings offer important theoretical insight as related to intergenerational motivations for farm development and the drivers of farm structure.

Second, operating in a similar geography but engaging a “hot” contemporary policy topic, Kulcsár and Bolender empirically test the booster argument that biofuel plants hold transformational potential for rural regions in the central U.S. As these rural communities face population loss and related economic challenges, insight as to these associations are of critical policy importance.

Next, Owusu and Agyei-Mensah offer rare insight into the demographic characteristics of rapidly evolving urban areas in Ghana. Focusing on ethnic residential segregation, the authors contrast demographic patterns and processes with those better understood in settings such as the U.S. and Europe. They conclude with exploration of implications for urban and national development.

Offering advancement in other arenas, Smyth and colleagues expand well-being studies through use of a multi-item indicator and geographic focus on urban China. Again, little is known with regard to these patterns in the Chinese setting, and the authors inclusion of environmental factors is of particular novelty. Like those of Kulcsár and Bolender, their findings offer direct policy relevance through direct

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examination of environmental conditions such as air pollution and various measures of personal well-being.

Finally, environmental justice researchers take note! Grineski and McDonald offer a creative approach to measuring uninsurance—an important consideration when examining health implications of environmental exposure. They describe the process and then estimate uninsurance in Dallas, Texas as a sample case. They conclude with discussion of the importance of considering insurance status in health–environment studies.

Thank you to the above authors for their diligence in crafting these contributions. Thank you, as well, to the reviewers who provided extraordinary feedback resulting in enhanced contributions to these rapidly evolving topics of inquiry.

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