

Foreword

This stimulating, carefully-researched book on *The Late Life Legacy of Very Early Life* by Dr. Gabriele Doblhammer is the second volume of a new series of Demographic Research Monographs published by Springer Verlag. The topic of the book is fascinating. Is a person's lifespan influenced by health and nutrition *in-utero* and shortly after birth? If so, why? The answers uncovered by the diligence, demographic and statistical expertise, and probing intelligence of the author are surprising but convincing.

To pry open the mystery of the lingering impact of very early life, Dr. Doblhammer focuses on month of birth. It turns out that people born in some months live substantially longer on average than people born in other months, not because of astrological forces but for reasons of health and nutrition. Dr. Doblhammer was educated in statistics and demography and earlier this year was the first person ever to receive the "Habilitation" degree, the recognition given in the German-speaking world to proven scholars who are qualified to become professors, in Demography. This book, which is evidence that she fully deserves this award, will not only provide important new findings about the legacy of early life but will also serve as a comprehensive foundation of knowledge on which future scholars can build.

The series of Demographic Research Monographs is under the editorial supervision of the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. Prof. James W. Vaupel, Founding Director of the Institute, is Editor-in-Chief. He is advised by an Editorial Board that currently consists of Prof. Jan M. Hoem, a Director of the Max Planck Institute; Dr. Jutta Gampe, Head of the Office of Statistical and Information Sciences at the Institute; Dr. Anders Vikat, Deputy to the Director of the Research Program on Fertility and Family Dynamics at the Institute; Prof. Bernard Jeune, Head of the Department of Public Health at the University of Southern Denmark, and Dr. Elisabetta Barbi, a Senior Research Scientist at the Max Planck Institute. Additional members of the Editorial Board will be appointed as needed to review manuscripts submitted for possible publication. The current manuscript was reviewed and accepted by James Vaupel, Jutta Gampe and Bernard Jeune.

The Demographic Research Monographs series can be considered the successor to the series called Odense Monographs on Population Aging, edited by Bernard Jeune and James Vaupel. The volumes in this now-terminated series were first published as hardcover books by an academic publisher, the Odense University Press, and subsequently made available online at www.demogr.mpg.de/books/odense. The nine Odense Monographs on Population Aging include two collections of research articles that focus on specific subjects on the frontier of demographic research, three volumes by senior researchers that present path-breaking findings, a review of research on a topic of emerging interest, a presentation of a new method for analysis of demographic data, an out-standing doctoral dissertation, and a unique collection of important demographic data on non-human species.

The new series of Demographic Research Monographs will continue this mix, with books that are often under 200 pages in length, that have a clear focus, and that significantly advance demographic knowledge. Research related to population aging will continue to be a prime focus on the new series, but not the only one. The new series will embrace all of demography, broadly defined. As indicated by the first volume, an important subject will be historical demography. We also plan to highlight research on fertility and family dynamics, especially in Europe. Mathematical demography is the core of the population sciences and we will strive to foster monographs that use mathematics and statistics to further develop the theories and methods of demography. Biodemography is a small but rapidly growing and particularly innovative branch of demography: we will seize opportunities to publish monographs at the intersection of biology and demography, pertaining both to human and to other species, and including demographic research with ties to such fields as epidemiology, genetics, evolutionary biology, life-history biology, experimental demography, and paleodemography.

Each volume in the Demographic Research Monograph series will have a substantial link to the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. This volume *The Late Life Legacy of Very Early Life*, is written by Dr. Gabriele Doblhammer, who is a senior research scientist at the Institute. The third volume, *Supercentenarians*, is the outgrowth of four research workshops organized by the Max Planck Institute. And the fourth volume, tentatively entitled *To Long Life!?*, by Prof. Bernard Jeune, is a revised and updated version of a book that was originally published in Danish: the Max Planck Institute is supporting the additional work for this book.

As well as being published as hardcover books by Springer-Verlag, this and the following volumes of the Max Planck series of Demographic Research Monographs will subsequently be available at www.demogr.

mpg.de/books/drm. The online version may include color graphs, supplemental analyses, databases and other ancillary or enhanced material. Parallel publication online and in print is a significant innovation that will make the monograph series particularly useful to scholars and students around the world.

James W. Vaupel
Editor-in-Chief

