

Family and Demographic Change: Problems and Progress

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Family scholars and population scientists have much to say to each other. Family is a central concept in demography, and demographic events occur in the context of families. The bi-directional association between family and demographic changes provides opportunities to address new research questions. I draw on family and demographic research in both Singapore and the United States to show that family obligations extend beyond household boundaries and across individuals' lives. To understand how families affect individuals' well-being requires that researchers distinguish between who is in a family and who lives together. I illustrate how the interplay between family responsibilities and demography shed light on socioeconomic inequality between Blacks and Whites in the United States. Although the particular questions about the links between family and demography may differ between Singapore and the United States, the research challenges are general, and are ones on which scholars of family and population continue to make progress.