

foster social solidarity, from building community centers and athletic fields that immigrants and natives can enjoy together to making English-language training more accessible. Because the long-run benefits of immigration and diversity are national in scope, the federal government should help local governments bear the short-term direct costs of increased expenditures on education, health care, and other needs.

But Putnam's former Harvard colleague James Q. Wilson, the well-known conservative thinker, dismisses his long-term solutions as "wishful thinking." It's almost impossible to forge social cohesion among diverse groups, Wilson says. The few institutions that have succeeded, such as the U.S. military and some churches, possess two key ingredients that neighborhoods lack: authoritative leaders and discipline.

More important, Wilson argues, Putnam has a cramped understanding of solidarity. His ideas draw on rights-based notions about how we must learn to manage relations with others and respect differences. That's only half the battle, according to Wilson. People get a sense of belonging from the things they *share* with others, such as an ethnic heritage or moral beliefs. If your neighborhood is populated with people whose values and beliefs are close to your own, you're naturally more likely to join in community life.

Putnam thinks that diversity can help create community. Wilson counters that it's a competing value, albeit a worthy one. "As when it comes to other arrangements in a democracy, balance is all."

## SOCIETY

## The Religious Shall Multiply

**THE SOURCE:** "Falling Human Fertility and the Future of the Family" by Philip Longman, in *The Family in America*, July 2007.

THERE'S HEAVY COMPETITION for the biggest threat of the 21st century, what with terrorism, global warming, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. But all pale in comparison to the force that will most affect the future of society in the new millennium, according to Philip Longman, a fellow at the New America Foundation. That's the decline in birthrates.

Women are having fewer children in every hemisphere, in countries rich and poor, in families that are Catholic, Protestant, and Muslim, and under all forms of government. Even though the world's population is growing by about 76 million annually—that's the equivalent of pasting a new country the size of Egypt onto the globe every year—it's not because people are having more children. They're not. It's because everybody is living longer. "The absolute number of children aged 0 to 4 is actually six million lower today [worldwide] than it was in 1990," Longman says.

Over the long term, the average woman needs to bear 2.1 children for the population to remain constant. Mothers need to replace themselves and their partners, and provide an extra tenth of a child to make up for the individuals who never reproduce. But there are fewer and fewer places with fertility rates above the replace-

ment level. China, Iran, Turkey, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Kazakhstan? All below 2.1. And among the major industrialized countries, only the United States comes close to a population-sustaining birthrate. Even India, with an overall fertility rate of 2.5, is finding that births in its southern states have fallen below the rate necessary to maintain current population levels.

In developed countries the trend toward having only one child is driven by "sheer economics," Longman says. In many cases, fertility rates peak in the school-age years. The cost of raising a middle-class child has risen, according to U.S. government estimates, to more than \$200,000, not including college tuition. Urbanization also drives down fertility; and around the world more than 50 percent of married or cohabiting women are using modern contraception.

But there are larger cultural and religious issues at play, Longman writes. Scholars who have scrutinized polling data have found a strong correlation between "modern, individualistic, secular values" and low fertility rates. Do you distrust the army? If you do and you live in Europe, you are far less likely to marry and have children. Do you think the most important goal in education is to develop imagination and independence? There is little chance you'll have a large family.

Once the population is broken down in this fashion, it becomes clear that a relatively small segment of the nation is having a disproportionate share of the children. This segment is quite likely to be deeply religious, Longman says. Although religious

fundamentalists are themselves having fewer children than in the past, Mormons, Orthodox Jews, and Islamic and Christian fundamentalists and evangelicals have, on average, far larger families than others.

Fertility crashes have happened before, for instance, in Greece in the second century BC. But when “cultural and economic conditions discourage parenthood, not even a dictator—and many have tried—can force people to go forth and multiply,” Longman writes. Still, as the Greeks and Romans shirked their child-producing duties, Europe did not sink into a vegetative state. As the Roman empire slowly collapsed, the population didn’t die out, it just changed. Some sociologists believe that nearly all of the spread of Christianity in late antiquity was the result of the higher birthrates and lower death rates of Christians. Out of their fecundity, medieval Europe was born.

## SOCIETY

## East Egg Moves West

**THE SOURCE:** “The Right Side of the Tracks: Affluent Neighborhoods in the Metropolitan United States” by Barrett A. Lee and Matthew Marlay, in *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 88 (3), 2007.

SOCIAL SCIENTISTS HAVE chronicled nearly every possible aspect of poor and middle-class neighborhoods over the last century. Finally, sociologists are beginning to probe one of the remaining under-researched territories of America: the enclaves of the rich.



Metropolitan Washington, flush with the lucrative industries that service the federal government, contains 74 rich neighborhoods, more than anywhere else in the country. Most are in the suburbs.

The comfortable class is hardly confined to the hedge-fund manager haunts of New York and the stately formality of Boston, where previous students have usually looked, write Barrett A. Lee and Matthew Marlay, sociologists at Pennsylvania State University. The well-off have moved to the suburbs. And to the West. In the most recent census figures, 30 percent of affluent neighborhoods—the top two percent of census tracts (each populated by about 4,000 people), with median family incomes of about

\$110,000 and over—are located in the West, 27 percent in the South, 26 percent in the Northeast, and only 18 percent in the Midwest. Nearly eight of 10 rich neighborhoods aren’t in central cities at all.

The flush communities are populated by families with children, for the most part, and about 88 percent of their residents are white. Roughly two percent are African American and about the same percentage are of Hispanic descent. Asian Americans, however, are overrepresented. On Main Street in a hypothetical