

Editor's Introduction

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Published online: 7 August 2009
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Migration represents the central demographic theme of this latest issue of *Population and Environment*. True to the journal's aim, however, the three papers presented here centrally integrate *environmental* concerns into their examinations of migration as a demographic process.

Taken together, these three pieces of research demonstrate the ways in which our understanding of migration processes and implications may be incomplete without consideration of environmental factors. As an example, environmental dimensions have thus far not been included in research on the “immigrant health paradox.” Yabiku and colleagues add such nuance here. Their article, entitled, “Migration, Health, and Environment in the Desert Southwest,” makes use of the Phoenix Area Social Survey to link environmental context, migration history, and several health outcomes. In the end, they conclude that studies of place and health should consider migration and residential history as factors shaping health outcomes (Yabiku et al. 2009, this issue).

Reciprocally, our understanding of environmental change may be incomplete without consideration of the social processes yielding such change. As an example, important shifts in the rural Ecuadorian landscape are resultant of agricultural land use decisions impacted by migrant remittances (Gray 2009, this issue). Gray's results shed light on the ways in which remittances are associated with household decisions regarding agricultural inputs, maize production, and agrobiodiversity—he adds nuance to the analyses by also considering migration gender and destination. Piecing together this complex story, Gray suggests that the results highlight the resilience of smallholder agriculture in the face of dramatic demographic change.

In addition, the landscape transformations under way in the Brazilian Amazon are, in part, being shaped by migration and the emergence of regional urban

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networks (Guedes et al. 2009, this issue). Guedes and colleagues provide an important addition to the extant population-environment work in the Amazon that tends to be rural-focused, although urbanization is a critically important social process shaping regional land use. Guedes and colleagues use a combination of nationally representative data and community-based surveys applied to a multivariate cluster methodology (Grade of Membership). They identify sub-regional urban networks that are important shaping forces in the region's social and environmental future. Their research approach and findings have clear application as they bring insight into the Amazon's socio-environmental system—insight that should be useful in informing the region's environmental policy.

Thank you to the authors for their excellent work, and thank you to the reviewers who provided important feedback as these contributions were developed.

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