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KEYFITZ LECTURE IN MATHEMATICS AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Noreen Goldman

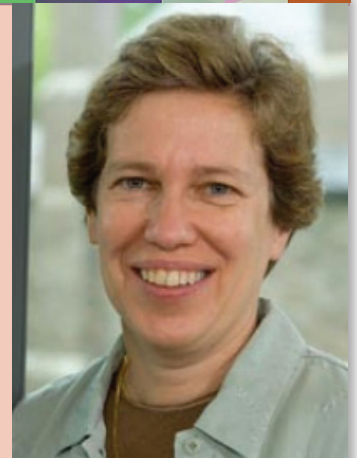
Princeton University

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INSIGHTS INTO HUMAN SURVIVAL

Nathan Keyfitz was renowned for his use of simple yet elegant mathematical models to address important societal problems. Inspired by his teachings and writings, I have applied basic mathematical and statistical tools to obtain a better understanding of social inequalities in survival, some of which I will describe in this talk. For example, why do never-married persons typically die earlier than their married counterparts? Why do Latinos in the US live longer than non-Latino whites despite their having lower education, lower income and poorer access to healthcare? And, why have middle-aged and older American women been experiencing progressively poorer survival prospects than women in other wealthy countries? Based on a large interdisciplinary data collection effort, I have attempted to identify the social and biological factors that matter most for survival across high life expectancy populations, an undertaking which has yielded surprising findings.

Noreen Goldman is the Hughes-Rogers Professor of Demography and Public Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and Faculty Associate of the Office of Population Research at Princeton University. A specialist in demography and epidemiology, Goldman's research examines the impact of social and economic factors on adult physical and mental well-being and the physiological pathways through which these factors operate. She has designed several large-scale household surveys, most recently a longitudinal data collection effort focused on the linkages among the social environment, stress, physiological function, and health among older adults. She has also been conducting research on health disparities among Latinos, examining how immigration patterns are related to the health of immigrants and long-term prospects for the health of Mexican Americans. She has participated in various committees of the National Academy of Sciences and serves on several editorial boards. She is the author or co-author of more than 200 articles in population, epidemiology, sociology and statistics journals as well as various book chapters and monographs.



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222 College Street, Second Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 3J1 • www.fields.utoronto.ca • 416-348-9710