USE OF THESES

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Changing the world or reacting to a changed world?

The global politics of population after
the International Conference
on Population and Development

Deborah Foskey
March 2003

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University
Statement

This thesis is the result of my own work except where otherwise indicated

Deborah Foskey

March 2003
Acknowledgements

This thesis benefits from the support of many people. People from departments, schools, research centres and institutes across the Australian National University have contributed to its content, often unknowingly, since a cross-disciplinary topic like this one required me to gain a broad knowledge from many advisers. The community of demographers in the Coombs building saw me at many seminars; I thank them for their hospitality. My thanks go to all in the Department of Political Science and the School of Social Sciences at the ANU who provided support for my research and writing. The thesis benefited hugely from the help of Drs Lorraine Elliott, Jan Jindy Pettman and William Sutherland, my supervisors. In particular, Dr Sutherland provided invaluable guidance through the last months of the thesis. Dr Roderic Pitty read the thesis at a vital stage and provided valuable comments. The staff of the departmental office deserves special mention for their logistic support, especially Sharon Merten and Sylvia Ramsay.

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My daughters, Samara and Eleni, have sustained me and reminded me of why I undertook this immense project. Eleni, in particular, lived for many years with the thesis as a demanding member of our small family.

No-one has benefited from this thesis as much as I did. Its writing has expanded me in many unforeseen ways; one of the most difficult things I have ever done, it is also one of the most rewarding. In writing it, I remembered my mother, for whom such opportunities never arose, and my son, who died in 1986, meaning that his potential future will forever remain a mystery.

Deb Foskey, 2003
Abstract

This thesis explores the global politics of population and reproduction since 1994, when the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was held in Cairo. The thesis is presented within the disciplinary framework of International Relations in the understanding that debates about population and reproduction are intensely political. The central question is “Did the ICPD change the world, and if not, why not?” based upon the statement made by Nafis Sadik who, in 1994, was the Executive Director of UNFPA. Sadik’s statement reflected the views of many in the international women’s health movement, which played a major role in setting the agenda for the ICPD, as the thesis outlines.

The thesis is organised in six chapters, analysing the micro and macro aspects of ICPD’s Programme of Action (POA). It explores the transformative aspects of ICPD which are found in its micro agenda of women’s empowerment, reproductive rights and reproductive health. The key concepts are explored and debates about them within the broad and diverse feminist movement, as well as with the conservative opponents, are analysed in the thesis.

The macro context necessary for the achievement of the POA’s micro agenda was inadequately considered by the major players at ICPD and, hence, poorly covered in the POA. Development was given little attention, and the already weak concept of sustainable development was further compromised by its contextualisation within a framework of economic growth. Consequently, the thesis concludes, the transformative micro agenda was given no support by this part of the POA. The thesis tracks developments in global political economy which were occurring alongside the UN conferences of the 1990s. It focuses particularly on the World Bank, which is a major player in global population politics. Indonesia provides a case study of the impacts of global economic trends on reproductive health in a country with a population program which in 1994 was viewed as a model for other developing countries.

The macro context is also determined by approaches to population in environmental discourses since the framework of sustainable development in which population was placed in 1994 combined environmental and economic objectives. Neo-Malthusian views have provided the ‘common sense’ approach to population, particularly within Northern environmental organisations, and key documents are trawled to discern whether these views have been modified within some environmental and population organisations.

The thesis concludes by considering the contribution that the ICPD has made to population and broader debates and by assessing the contribution that topics related to population and reproduction can make to the discipline of International Relations. Throughout the thesis, the writings of Southern feminists are sought wherever possible, and the impacts of population and health policies on poor women are the main focus. As the people on the receiving end of population policies, the success of the conference is best measured by improvements in their health and their greater access to the conditions which enable them to exercise their reproductive and other human rights.
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<td>ARROW</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUSAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>AWID</td>
<td>Association for Women's Rights in Development</td>
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<td>BADEPAL</td>
<td>Indonesian Environmental Impact Management Agency</td>
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<td>BKKBN</td>
<td>Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional - National Family Planning Coordination Board (NFPCB) of Indonesia</td>
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<td>CCMC</td>
<td>Communications Consortium Media Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW Women</td>
<td>Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>CEDPA</td>
<td>Center for Development and Population Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cepia</td>
<td>A Brazilian feminist organisation which has adopted the name of a local flower, Cepia</td>
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<td>COPE</td>
<td>Campaign on Population and the Environment</td>
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<td>CPS</td>
<td>Contraceptive Prevalence Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Commission on Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>CWPE</td>
<td>Committee on Women, Population and the Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DALYs</td>
<td>Disability Adjusted Life Years</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAWN</td>
<td>Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Demographic and health surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTT</td>
<td>Demographic Transition Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Commission (of the UN)</td>
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<td>ESCAP</td>
<td>Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FINRRAGE</td>
<td>Feminist International Network for Reproductive Rights and Against Genetic Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIRE</td>
<td>Feminist International Radio Endeavour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G77</td>
<td>Group of seventy-seven countries</td>
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</table>
GA  General Assembly (see UNGA, below)
GAD  Gender and Development
GATS  General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT  General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP  Gross Domestic Product
GPE  Global Political Economy
HERA  Health, Empowerment, Rights and Accountability (a feminist NGO)
HIV/AIDS  Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICESCR  International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976)
IGTN  International Gender and Trade Network
IIASA  International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
IMF  International Monetary Fund
IPAC  Women’s International Policy Action Committee
IPE  International Political Economy
IPPF  International Planned Parenthood Federation
IR  International Relations (the discipline)
IRRRAAG  International Reproductive Rights Research Action Group
IUCN  International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IUD  Intra-uterine device
IUSSP  International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
IWHC  International Women’s Health Coalition
IWTC  International Women’s Tribune Center
KAP  Knowledge/ Attitude/ Practice (surveys)
MDG  Millennium Development Goals
NIEO  New International Economic Order
OBOS  Our Bodies, Ourselves (Boston Women’s Health Book Collective 1985)
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>POA</td>
<td>Programme of Action (of ICPD)</td>
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<td>PAI</td>
<td>Population Action International</td>
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<td>PKK</td>
<td>Applied Family Welfare Program (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>PPFA</td>
<td>Planned Parenthood Federation of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>REAL</td>
<td>Realistic, Equal, Active for Life (women)</td>
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<td>SEWA</td>
<td>Self Employed Women’s Association (Bangladesh)</td>
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<td>STD</td>
<td>Sexually transmitted disease</td>
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<td>SWApS</td>
<td>Sector Wide Approaches (to health planning)</td>
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<td>TRIMS</td>
<td>Trade-related investment measures</td>
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<td>TRIPS</td>
<td>Trade-related intellectual property rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>UBINIG</td>
<td>Policy Research of Development Alternative</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>UNGA</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly</td>
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<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>United Nations Development Fund for Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNPD</td>
<td>United Nations Population Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>WCP</td>
<td>World Conference on Population, held in Bucharest 1974</td>
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<td>WCED</td>
<td>World Commission on Environment and Development (reported 1987)</td>
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<td>WCW</td>
<td>Fourth World Conference on Women, held by the UN in Beijing in 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDO</td>
<td>Women's Environment and Development Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEN</td>
<td>Women and Environment Network</td>
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<td>WFS</td>
<td>World Fertility Survey</td>
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<td>WGNRR</td>
<td>Women’s Global Network for Reproductive Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>WICEJ</td>
<td>Women’s International Coalition for Economic Justice,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>WID</td>
<td>Women in Development</td>
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<td>WIDE</td>
<td>Network Women in Development Europe</td>
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<td>WPPA</td>
<td>World Population Plan of Action - outcome of WCP 1974</td>
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<td>WSF</td>
<td>World Social Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>WSSD</td>
<td>World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation</td>
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<td>WWF</td>
<td>World Wildlife Fund</td>
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Chronology of Events

1944 Bretton Woods Conference establishes World Bank, International Monetary Fund and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

1945 Adoption of UN Charter

1946 United Nations Population Commission established to provide accurate demographic statistics

1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted

1952 First explicitly anti-natal program adopted India


1965 United States established Office of Population within USAID

1966 Political and Economic Covenants adopted by United Nations

1967 World Leaders Declaration on Population

1968 International Conference on Human Rights adopts Proclamation of Tehran

Papal encyclical (Humanae Vitae) reaffirms Catholic Church’s opposition to artificial birth control

World Bank begins financing family planning programs

1969 United Nations Population Fund established


Club of Rome’s Limits to Growth published (Meadows & Meadows 1972)

1973 Roe v Wade: United States Supreme Court decision asserting the legality of abortion

1974 UN Conference on Population is held in Bucharest

1975 First World Conference on Women, Mexico City, beginning Decade for Women

1977 Amsterdam meeting of ‘radical/autonomous’ feminists

Paris meeting of left-aligned and socialist feminists

Term ‘reproductive rights’ introduced in USA by Campaign for Abortion Rights and against Sterilisation Abuse

1978 International Campaign for Abortion Rights launched in London

UNFPA publishes first annual State of World Population report

World Bank publishes first annual World Development Report
1979  The Women’s Convention - Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination
    Against Women - is adopted by the UN

    International Campaign for Abortion Rights becomes Women’s Global Network
    for Reproductive Rights

    Latin American and Caribbean Women’s Health Network formed

    International Network of Women Living Under Muslim Laws formed

    China adopts One Child Policy

1980  Second World Conference on Women is held in Copenhagen

    Ronald Reagan elected as President of United States

1981  Women’s Convention enters into force

    International Women and Health meeting in Geneva

    United States Centre for Disease Control recognises AIDS

1984  Fourth International Women and Health Meeting, Amsterdam, with theme:
    Population Control - No. Women Decide; language of reproductive rights
    becomes international

    UN Conference on Population is held in Mexico City

    United States imposes Global gag rule (Mexico City policy)

1985  Third World Conference on Women is held in Nairobi

1986  Declaration on the Right to Development adopted by United Nations General
    Assembly

    Uruguay Round begins

1987  International Women’s Health Movement meeting in Costa Rica

1988  George Bush elected President of United States

1991  Creating Common Ground Meeting between women’s health advocates and
    scientists, Geneva

1991  Global Assembly of Women and the Environment (4 - 8 November) and the
    World Women’s Congress for a Healthy Planet (8 - 12 November) in Miami

1992  United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED,
    the Earth Summit, Rio Conference) is held at Rio de Janiero in June

    Bill Clinton is elected as President of United States

1993  World Conference on Human Rights is held in Vienna

    Publication of World Bank report, Investing in Health
Global gag rule withdrawn by President Clinton

1994 International Conference on Women’s Health is held at Rio de Janiero, January 24-28

International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD, the Cairo Conference) held in Cairo, September

1995 World Trade Organisation established in January

World Summit for Social Development (WSSD, Social Summit) is held in Copenhagen, March

Fourth World Conference on Women (Women’s Conference, Beijing Conference) is held in June in Beijing

1996 Clinton re-elected to Presidency of United States; Republicans dominate Senate

1999 The Hague NGO Forum for ICPD + 5, 8-12 February

UNGA meeting on ICPD + 5, June 30-July 2

November, Clinton capitulates to Republican demands for global gag rule legislation in return for back payment of $1 billion in UN dues

Clinton exercises Presidential ability to waive Global gag rule legislation

2000 Beijing + 5 review

Election of George W. Bush as President of United States

2001 President Bush reinstates Global Gag Rule

First World Social Forum held in Porto Alegro, Brazil, January

2002 Second World Social Forum held in Porto Alegro, Brazil, January

Special Session of UNGA on Children, May 8-10

Preparatory meeting for WSSD, Bali, May 27-June 7

Bush Administration withdraws funding for UNFPA, July

World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, September

Asia and Pacific Population Conference, Bangkok, December 11-17

United States election results in United States Congress dominated by Republicans

2003 Third World Social Forum held in Porto Alegro, Brazil, January

UNPD releases the 2002 revised population projections, February
Glossary of terms

Birth control practices employed by couples that permit sexual intercourse with reduced likelihood of conception and birth (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Birth rate the number of live births per 1000 population in a given year (Haupt and Kane 1998)

DALYs (Disability Adjusted Life Years) a time-based indicator of health outcome which measures of burden of disease in population by combining ‘Years of Life Lost’ (YLLs) and ‘Years Lived with Disability’ (YLDs) (Anderson 2002)

Death rate the number of deaths per 1000 population in a given year (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Demographic momentum see population momentum

Demographic transition the historical shift of birth and death rates from high to low levels in a population. The decline of mortality usually precedes the decline in fertility, thus resulting in rapid population growth during the transition period. (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Fertility the reproductive performance of an individual, couple, or population (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Fertility rate the number of live births per 1000 women in a given year (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Global Gag rule foreign family planning agencies may not receive U.S. assistance if they provide abortion services, including counseling or referrals on abortion, or lobby to make or keep abortion legal in their own country (Planned Parenthood Association of America undated)

Household one or more persons occupying a housing unit (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Malthusian belief that population growth is the primary cause of societal and human problems

Maternal mortality death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and the site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to
or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, but not from accidental or incidental causes.” (International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, World Health Organization, Geneva, 1992)

Maternal mortality ratio

the number of women who die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth complications per 100,000 live births in a given year (Haupt and Kane 1998, 59)

Mexico City policy

see Global Gag rule

Morbidity

the incidence and prevalence of disease and illness in a population (Arafat and Allen 1995, 366)

Neo-Malthusian

an advocate of restricting population growth through the use of birth control (Haupt and Kane 1998, 60)

Population

all the persons living in a specific geographic area at a specific point in time (Murdoch and Ellis 1991, 11)

Population control

addresses the relationship between fertility, mortality and migration, most commonly used to refer to efforts to slow population growth through actions to lower fertility (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Population growth rate

can be zero or negative; measured by adding the natural increase (excess of births over deaths) to net immigration (excess of those arriving over those departing) (Peterson & Peterson 1986, 695)

Population momentum

the tendency for population growth to continue beyond the time that replacement-level fertility has been reached because of a relatively high concentration of people in the child bearing ages (Arafat and Allen 1995, 367)

Population Policy

explicit or implicit measures instituted by a government to influence population size, growth, distribution or composition (Haupt and Kane 1998)

Population Projection

Computation of future changes in population numbers, given certain assumptions about future trends in the rates of fertility, mortality and migration (Arafat and Allen 1995, 367)

Proximate variable

secondary, as compared to primary or ‘ultimate’ cause of, an event or process

Quality of care

an approach to family planning service provision which reflects a reproductive health approach

Replacement level fertility

the level of fertility at which an individual or couple has only enough children to replace themselves in the
population (Haupt and Kane 1998, 62; Petersen and Petersen 1986, 772)

Revisionism

the assumption that the impact of demographic trends on the economy are ‘neutral’

Sex ratio

number of males per 100 females in a population (Haupt and Kane 1998, 62)

Unmet need

in its narrowest sense, the desire of married women currently not using contraception for access to family planning services (Demography); reproductive health feminists include all women of reproductive age group who wish to control their fertility (Dixon-Mueller & Germain 1992). Other feminists broaden the concept to include need for reproductive rights and health and the enabling conditions to achieve them (Abzug 1991).
# Changing the world or reacting to a changed world?
## The global politics of population and reproduction after the International Conference on Population and Development

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Chapter one Introduction: locating the reproductive body in international politics

Whether the negotiations succeed or fail, the Conference will be a success. (European delegate arriving in Cairo for ICPD; cited in Lassonde 1997, 14)

1.1 Overview
This thesis is about the international politics of population and reproduction since the 1994 International Conference on Population (ICPD). It focuses on the ICPD’s Programme of Action (POA), which was widely regarded as a ‘quantum leap’ in approaches to population. The processes surrounding the POA and its implementation bring into sharp focus the key tensions and struggles - theoretical, discursive and practical - around population and reproduction. It is with these processes and their outcomes that this thesis is centrally concerned.

Couched in diplomatic language, the POA was greeted by some as a solution to ‘population problems’ and a key instrument for improving women’s lives. This second, transformative, aspect is outlined in Chapter IV of the POA, which focuses on the achievement of women’s empowerment and autonomy and in Chapter VII, which focuses on reproductive rights and health. Together, they outline a new approach to population issues based on acknowledging women’s right to determine their sexual and reproductive lives.

This outcome, I argue, signaled the potential for a shift away from the dominant Malthusian and neo-Malthusian macro-politics of population to a new approach based on the micro-politics of reproduction. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations organisation which organised the ICPD, declared in her closing speech: “[t]his POA has the potential to change the world … in our field it represents a quantum leap to a higher state of energy” (UNFPA 1994a, 1). While it is unclear what Sadik meant by “a higher state of energy”, her statement indicates that she expected that the conference would result in broad international support for the POA.

Nearly a decade later, much of that potential remains unfulfilled. What has happened to that promise of greater empowerment and freedom for women? While there have been improvements in some developing countries, such as a broader definition and better
delivery of reproductive health services, the conditions for most women have slipped backwards. The high hopes of 1994 have not been realised and the ‘quantum leap’ has frozen in mid-air. Why?

I argue that the answer to this central question is to be found in three basic and related reasons. The first is that the radical agenda of women’s empowerment and reproductive rights was contested by powerful forces prior to, and with growing strength, since, the ICPD. Second, the POA’s radical elements are framed by a broader agenda that is not committed to the structural changes necessary to enable women to fully realise those rights. Third, developed countries have not honoured their commitment to provide the resources necessary to meet the POA’s objectives and many developing countries are either unwilling or unable to implement the program.

The global politics of reproduction are as important to this thesis as population because the ICPD deviated from the frameworks of earlier population conferences by foregrounding the reproductive processes which are the basis of any demographic change. Entering population discourses via reproduction reveals a different terrain to that offered by a macro approach to population issues. Different actors and struggles are highlighted and alternative viewpoints on old contests are aired. As Ginsburg and Rapp point out, “reproduction simultaneously encompasses the impact of the international community of development agencies and local metaphors of childbirth. … Clearly, questions of culture, politics, and biology are impossible to disentangle around the topic of reproduction, as they often involve transnational processes that link local and global interests” (Ginsburg and Rapp 1995, 2). Importantly for the purposes of this thesis, focusing on reproduction reveals women to be central to debates about population, which have previously measured their fertility, but given little attention to their agency.

A related aim of this thesis is to argue that the issues of population and reproduction are highly relevant to the discipline of International Relations. This is based on the understanding that human reproduction - where it happens, who does it, and the extent and means of control exercised by individuals, states and other institutions - involve “transnational” processes, as Ginsburg and Rapp point out. While population has long been a factor in issues of power and security, contests related to reproduction have moved from domestic and national arenas to international fora. The ICPD and the processes surrounding it brought these issues together and provided the language for
subsequent debates. While the event and its implications for global politics have been analysed in other disciplines, it has not yet been brought into International Relations. Where studies in International Relations have considered the ICPD, they have tended to use it as a case study in the politics of social movements (Clark et al 1998; Dodgson 1998). My project is to apply a critical feminist lens to the global politics of population and reproduction revealed by the processes of the ICPD and subsequent events to determine the answer to the central question of the thesis: why didn’t the ICPD change the world?

The text of the ICPD POA is marked by language - human rights, political transparency, partnership with civil society - which links it to the global political discourses of the 1990s (Lassonde 1997, 14). Since this thesis is a study of global politics and surveys the work of global actors, International Relations is likely to provide an appropriate methodology. In section 1.4, I assess the themes of International Relations’ major schools and conclude that a combination of the existing approaches of Liberal Institutionalism, critical feminist theory, International Political Economy provides a suitable framework for the thesis. To this framework, I have added an adaptation of the emerging approach of transversalism (Yuval-Davis 1997), which recognises that women, particularly poor women, are located at the intersection of multiple political, economic, social and environmental processes, making it particularly useful to this study.

Despite its primary location in the discipline of International Relations, this thesis draws on material from a wide range of disciplines. Many anthropologists, demographers, development theorists, ecologists and economists work on issues related to population and reproduction. Their contributions have assisted me in making crucial connections between the micro topic of reproduction and the macro topics of economic, development and the environment.

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2 Much has been written about ICPD in the discipline of Demography (Finkle & McIntosh 1996; Hodgson & Watkins 1997; Lassonde1997; Van de Kaa 1995; Westoff 1995), by activists and researchers in the international women’s health movement (Berer 2000a, 2000b; Petchesky1995a and 1995b and 1998) and by activists and researchers in the area of women and development (Harcourt 1997; Sen 1994b and 1995a).
This thesis draws on material available in the public domain. Using a critical feminist lens, and focusing on the politics surrounding their production, as well as the political implications of their content, I (re)examine relevant United Nations (UN) and World Bank documents, women’s statements and feminist analyses and reports produced by expert committees and governments. I also scrutinise the commentaries produced by participants and observers of ICPD and later events; these include supporters and opponents of reproductive rights and those who take a Malthusian or neo-Malthusian approach to population. This extensive exploration provides the tools for answering the question, Why didn’t Cairo change the world? It also indicates potential directions open to those working towards the transformations offered by the ICPD POA for women’s lives.

1.2 Thesis outline

This thesis is presented in six chapters. Following this outline, in the remainder of Chapter one I explore the ‘population problem’ and indicate the political nature of debates around the topic. This is followed by an examination of the ways that population and reproduction are considered in the major schools of International Relations. Finally, I draw together the most useful approaches that the discipline offers for this thesis.

Chapter two, Changing population paradigms, begins the analysis of the micro agenda of the ICPD. It examines the events and processes which led to the change in focus from population to reproductive rights. First, I review the population statistics provided by the UN in the early 1990s, since these provided the basis for interpretations of the ‘population problem’ at Cairo. I also consider current statistics and projections, which provide a vantage point from which the ICPD’s concerns can be re-examined. Second, I establish the way that the concepts of Malthusianism and neo-Malthusianism are used in this thesis, since they shaped the dominant approaches to population issues prior to the ICPD and remain influential in the global politics of population. Third, I locate the

3 In this thesis, I use the terms ‘populationists’ and ‘population establishment’ to refer to individuals and organisations which focus on reducing population growth. Their activities include lobbying governments and other institutions to introduce policies and programs to reduce fertility, organising such programs themselves, raising money for such activities and conducting research and public campaigns to reinforce their aims (Green 1999). Some organisations mentioned in this thesis are Population Action International, the Audubon Society and, in Australia, Sustainable Population Australia.
ICPD in the series of international UN conferences on population and establish the global political context of the ICPD. Fourth, I outline the processes initiated by feminist organisations after the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) to change the ICPD’s focus from a populationist to a reproductive rights and health focus. Fifth, I chart the evolution of reproductive rights in UN documents through earlier population and human rights conferences. Sixth, I examine the POA’s Chapter four, Gender Equality, Equity and Empowerment of Women, and Chapter seven, Reproductive Rights and Health, to determine the basis for Sadik’s claim that they hold the potential to ‘change the world’. Finally, I identify areas which were neglected by the POA, since the topic of ‘population’ is broader than the focus on fertility which dominated the conference.

Chapter three, Contesting the reproductive body, deepens the analysis of POA’s key micro-concepts of reproductive rights, reproductive health and women’s empowerment and considers the contests over them. I examine the debates between feminist activists and scholars to ascertain the fault-lines within and between them. I then track the progress of the ICPD’s key concepts, using the markers of the World Conference on Women (WCW) in 1995 and the five year reviews of ICPD and the WCW to determine whether the momentum of the POA was sustained. The growing strength of the moral right is examined here, using material prepared by ‘right-to-life’ organisations at the five year reviews of ICPD + 5 and Beijing + 5. Finally, I extrapolate from recent events to determine the micro politics of reproductive rights and health a decade after the ICPD.

Chapter four, The reproductive body in the global political economy, begins the exploration of the connections and contradictions between the micro aspirations of the feminist agenda for reproductive rights and health on the one hand and trends at the macro level of the global political economy on the other. First, I examine the relationship between population and economic policy. Second, I explain the macro,

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4 I use the term ‘moral right’ to describe the various groups and individuals who oppose progress in women’s rights, especially their reproductive rights, oppose the granting of sexual rights and actively campaign against homosexuality, forms of the family which deviate from the heterosexual, male headed legalised union and abortion. Other terms suggest religious connotations, and I wish to stress the political nature of these stances; in this thesis, I counterpose the impact of the moral right on women with the impact of the ‘economic right’ (neoliberal economists and their advocates).
meso and micro spheres of economic policy and their relevance to population and reproductive issues. Third, I track the major trends in global political economy since the 1990s. Fourth, I argue that the ‘rights-based approach to development’ (which incorporates the ‘right to development’) is a useful concept for feminist campaigns for women’s empowerment and the enabling conditions for reproductive rights and health. Fifth, I undertake a detailed analysis of the World Bank’s role in population programs, since the Bank plays a key role both in funding and shaping population programs and in bringing developing countries into the global political economy. Finally, I present Indonesia as a case study of the influence of macroeconomic trends on population and reproductive health programs, because it is frequently heralded for its success in lowering fertility.

Chapter five, The political ecology of population and reproduction, extends the analysis of the macro context of the ICPD micro agenda by examining the framing of relationships between population, reproduction and development in discourses of sustainable development and the environment. First, I examine four approaches to relationships between population, reproduction and the environment and consider the political implications of these views. Second, I critically examine the concept of sustainable development to determine the way that population and reproduction are conceptualised within it. I follow this with a critical examination of Chapter III of the POA, which considers environmental and population issues within the context of sustainable development. Third, to track the population establishment’s approach to population and the environment since ICPD, I analyse the UNFPA’s State of World Population reports since 1992. Fourth, I consider the Day of Six Billion campaign of 1999 since it provides a snapshot of the dilemmas faced by population organisations and reproductive health advocates at the time of the ICPD+5 review. I conclude by assessing the place of gender, population and reproductive issues at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 and consider what this means for future feminist organising on reproductive rights and health.

Chapter six, Closing the gaps: Reproduction and population in the new century, concludes the thesis. It brings together the key findings of the thesis in a succinct assessment of why ICPD’s agenda has not (yet) changed the world. I argue that the POA has changed the way that many organisations discuss population issues, although Malthusian and neoMalthusian views of population and environmental relationships
persist in some institutions and organisations and in the public mind. ICPD’s micro agenda of reproductive rights and health, no matter how transformative, is insufficient, by itself, to change the world, especially in the directions that feminist and progressive supporters are working to achieve. I suggest some ways forward identified by Southern and other feminists.

1.3 The ‘population problem’

In the debates and struggles around it, the term ‘population’ is rarely neutral. As Barbara Duden (1992, 146) points out, its meaning reflects ideological agendas.

In ordinary English the term ‘population’ evokes images of an explosion, mainly of uneducated Third World people, in countries that cannot repay the International Relations debts. Population also evokes the notion of pressure which pushes people beyond their borders. ... Population evokes anger at irresponsible procreation, insufficient funding for birth control programmes, and against the Catholic Church for opposing contraception and abortion. Feminists stress that population will remain a problem as long as its origin is not seen, namely the exclusion of women from the development process. As for ecologists, they connect population with the ‘carrying capacity’ of the planet. Generally, use of the term increasingly triggers alarm, symbolized in its most common composite, ‘over-population’. (Duden 1992, 146)

The way that ‘the problem’ is defined is of crucial importance, since each of these interpretations suggests the pursuit of very different policy directions.

Experts do battle with each other, not merely to establish the ‘truth’ - which in Foucault’s view cannot be discovered in any case - but over whose definition of the problem will prevail. A particular definition of a problem tends to privilege a set of solutions, and the choice of solutions in turn determines who will set social norms, and who will control the flow of resources that society commits to solving the problem. Since the battle for truth is in fact a battle for power, the victory of one expertise over another rarely alters the hierarchical relationship between the bureaucracy and its clients, though it will determine which set of experts gains or loses. (Jacquette and Staudt 1988, 222)

Two versions of the population problem dominate contemporary discussions on population, each derived from the same sets of figures. The first, articulated by Duden, asserts that the problem is too many people, excess fertility, especially in some developing countries. The second asserts that the problem is too few people, because fertility is falling below replacement levels, especially in most developed countries.

The ICPD’s view of the ‘population problem’ as excess fertility and its solution of increasing women’s access to their reproductive rights set the terms for a ‘battle for power’ over the next decade over what constitutes ‘the truth’ and who controls it in
global population debates. This contest continues to dominate the international politics of population and reproduction. The consequences of these debates, and the global context in which they occur, provide the terrain which I explore in this thesis to answer its central question: why didn’t the ICPD PA change the world?

1.3.1 The ‘population problem’ in International Relations

The foregoing discussion indicates that global population debates are a fertile territory for students of international politics. For many years, United States leaders regarded world population growth as the second greatest threat after nuclear war (Donaldson 1990, ix). Yet the number of studies on population in mainstream International Relations is insignificant compared to those on the topic of nuclear and other kinds of war. Global population politics may be a difficult area for International Relations students because it involves players at the ‘high’ and ‘low’ levels of politics, and encompasses both ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ concerns. It also connects the ‘public’ and the ‘private’ which may make it difficult for International Relations scholars to see population and reproductive politics as any business of theirs.⁵

To bring sexuality and politics together is a radical move largely because of the degree to which the latter as constructed in the public sense veils the former by containing it within the private. To bring sexuality and international politics together is an even more radical step because of the extent to which international politics is framed as the highest form of politics. (Youngs 2000, 23, italics in original)

Including ‘reproduction’ in International Relations transgresses the discipline’s traditional boundaries by highlighting the private lives and messy sexual and reproductive bodies of women. These have generally been invisible to theorists with a militaristic view of ‘security’. Consequently, in the next sub-section of the thesis I outline the relevance of population and reproduction, first, in global politics and second, to the main schools of International Relations, and assess how scholars have dealt with them. Finally, a framework for analysis is adapted on the basis of this discussion.

⁵ Many critical and feminist writers in International Relations and IPE maintain that even traditional topics embraced by these disciplines bridge the private-public divide; see Youngs 2000 (and other authors within this volume) and feminist International Relations writers cited in this chapter.
1.3.2 The ‘population problem’ in global politics

Population has concerned governments since the 1648 Peace of Westphalia gave birth to the state system. While territory provides the geographic basis of a state, a ‘nation’ consists of people. Governing the nation-state requires an apparatus to count, manage and shape the citizenry. As Foucault points out, who is born and who gives birth are concerns of the public sphere, ‘biopolitics’ conducted at the national level. ‘Governments perceived that they were not dealing simply with subjects, or even with a ‘people,’ but with a ‘population,’ with its specific phenomena and its peculiar variables: birth and death rates, life expectancy, fertility, state of health, frequency of illnesses, patterns of diet and habitation’ (Foucault 1990, 25). The delineation of one ‘population’ from another is intrinsic to the nation-state system, wherein boundaries, symbolic and real, separate ‘us’ from ‘them’. Teitelbaum and Winter (1985, 17) point out that “perceptions of threats to nation, class, or race” are often “expressed in demographic terms”. Yuval-Davis (1997) adds the dimension of gender to these discussions by highlighting the role of women in reproducing the nation.6

Halliday (1994, 148) observes that concern about birth rates has brought the state into citizens’ private lives and many Northern states feel justified in entering the private lives of the citizens of Southern states. Due to its position as a ‘superpower’ in global politics after the Second World War, the United States was, able to set the terms for a crusade against ‘overpopulation’ in poor countries of the South. It set up an Office of Population in USAID in ** and, in 1969, supported the establishment of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), now known as the United Nations Population Fund. The United States National Security Study Memorandum, produced in the same year as the 1974 UN World Conference on Population, aimed “for the world to achieve a replacement level of fertility (a two-child family on the average) by the year 2000” (United States National Security Council 1974). Ten years later at the 1984 Mexico City Conference on Population, President Ronald Reagan was more amenable to the demands of the influential ‘Right to Life’ lobby which was gathering influence in his country. The United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID) funding to the largest international non-government family planning organisation, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), ceased because it

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6 See also Delaney 1995 and Jayawardena 1986 for further examples of the gendered nation.
was seen to support China’s one-child policy and to promote abortion. As the main source of finance for fertility reduction programs in developing countries, the withdrawal of United States funds had deep impacts on the global population establishment. In this, as in military and economic matters, the United States is a ‘hyperpower’. Its advocates for population control dominate the competing neo-Malthusian agenda, arguing for “a balanced and effective foreign assistance program aimed at moderating high fertility rates in the developing world” (Teitelbaum 1992, 63). Like their so-called ‘pro-life’ opponents, they assert their country’s right to intervene in the world’s bedrooms as well as its battlefields.

The striking and geopolitically significant contrasts between the youthful and growing populations of many countries in the South and the ageing, low-fertility societies of all Northern countries except the United States, inform much foreign policy and influence the direction of development assistance. UNPD’s 2002 Population Revision predicted continuing population decline in the North, unless vigorous immigration policies are adopted and suggested that it will be several decades before the population of many developing countries stabilises. UNPD (2000) pointed out that many countries with high fertility rates are beset by conflict, high levels of infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, and have difficulties providing the most basic services. UNPD expects eight countries to account for half of the world’s population in 2050; in descending order according to expected population increment, they are India, Pakistan, Nigeria, United States, China, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The United States is expected to contribute four per cent of world population growth, equal to Pakistan. According to the UNPD’s medium projection, in 2050 the ‘less developed’ regions will have 7.7 billion people compared with 1.22 billion people in ‘more developed’ regions (UNPD 2003a).

The population dominance of the South is seen by United States-based security analysts as a major threat; De Sherbenin suggests reasons for this concern. First, in countries with ‘stagnant’ economies, rapid growth of the labour force exacerbates

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7 See Schindlmayr 1999

8 The UNPD lists Afghanistan, Mali, Niger and Ethiopia among these.

9 The UNPD calculates three levels of projection, high, medium and low, based on different assumptions about fertility rates. See Chapter two.
unemployment, leading to increased migration from poor to richer countries. Second, rapid population growth leads to instability in poor countries without adequate social welfare. Third, this adversely affects communities through displacement of family members and increases in rural to urban migration. Finally, population growth in poor countries threatens the western values of human rights, democracy and free market economies and increases the distance between populations and their governments in South and North (De Sherbenin 1995, 26).

The security risks are of particular concern to the United States, where strategists have for several decades monitored population trends in other countries. The United States National Intelligence Council (2001) identifies ‘demographics’ as the first of seven major drivers and trends shaping the world of 2015. Their report predicted that population trends will cause productive workers of low income countries to seek entry to wealthy countries experiencing the impact of declining fertility rates on their workforce. Commenting on the report, Cincotta remarks that it is age structure, not population growth per se, which makes high fertility societies volatile. “For example, insurgency movements have been extremely successful in recruiting warriors in societies (such as those in the Middle East and in West Africa) that are awash in young, unemployed, and discontented males” (Cincotta 2001, 65). This accords with Mesquida & Wiener’s (2001) ‘male age composition hypothesis’ that a country’s potential for violent conflict is determined by the size of the young male age cohort.10

These concerns have led the United States security establishment to consistently push for the ‘stabilisation’ of population in the South.

Stabilizing population growth is vital to U.S. interests ... Not only will early stabilization of the world’s population promote environmentally sustainable economic development in other countries, but it will benefit the U.S. by improving trade opportunities and mitigating future global crises. (US Department of State’s Strategic Plan of 1997, cited in Lasher 1998).

The preoccupation of the world’s major power, the United States, with global population trends makes it a central topic for students of International Relations. Aside from the security concerns of United States strategists, many aspects of demography are of interest to International Relations scholars. Halliday asserts that “the issue of

10 Mesquida and Wiener find positive correlations in Rwanda, Kosovo, the 1968 Paris student uprisings, the 1972 Sri Lankan insurgency, World War I Germany, Napoleonic France and Northern Ireland.
demography is perhaps the most important single challenge facing the contemporary world ... As much as any other contemporary issue, it embodies concerns of state power, moral diversity and transnational consequence" (Halliday 1996, 322). The demographer, Geoffrey McNicoll, argues that “as the world’s demographic giants gain in economic strength and influence ... the demographic relativities of the future will differ from today’s in the certain further diminution of the West - and more generally, the North - giving still greater cause for a new world order” (McNicoll 1999, 435). While some schools of International Relations make explicit mention of population issues, they give little consideration to the processes which bring that population into existence, as discussed below.

1.3.3 The neglect of reproduction in International Relations

In this section, I consider the approaches of the dominant schools of International Relations to population and reproduction. It is argued that, while some International Relations theorists consider population to be an issue germane to their discipline, they give little attention to reproduction, for reasons cited below. I argue that viewing global issues through the prism of reproduction both requires and produces a radical change in the approaches of mainstream International Relations.

Governments have generally taken a pronatalist approach to domestic security concerns.

In human history, demographic growth has for such a long time been considered as a means of acquiring territories and extending economic and political power, between as well as within populations, that many, and in particular those who want to acquire more power, or want to propagate their ideology, or feel themselves threatened by the demographic power of neighbours or rivals, are unable to think in terms of stationary demographic levels. (Clquette and Thienpont 1996, 149)

This approach is reflected in the realist school of International Relations, which focuses on the interaction between states as key actors within the international system. Such relationships are assumed to be, by nature, conflict-ridden, as each state seeks to maximise its power within an ‘anarchic’ international system. In this perspective, population growth strengthens the productive capacity and military strength of the state. According to realists, governments are entitled to call upon ‘the national interest’ as their authority to influence birth rates within, and beyond, their borders.
Neo-realist approaches to International Relations go further than realism by focusing on systems and structures (Keohane 1986). Because neo-realists understand ‘security’ as more than a military concept, they consider aspects of population other than size in their evaluations of national strength. Health and education are thus seen as policy tools to strengthen the state’s ability to compete economically as well as militarily.

Neo-realism’s broader view of security offers scope to address environmental problems. The neo-Malthusian views of some ecologists and others concerned about ‘over-population’ have been taken up by International Relations think-tanks and brought into International Relations debates. These institutions tend to focus on populations in developing countries. During the Cold War, the fear that poor people would succumb to the claims and promises of ‘communist’ leaders prompted the United States to advocate and fund fertility reduction programs.

Since 1989, there has been rising concern about connections between environmental problems and security. This is fuelled by alarm among non-government organisations (NGOs) and the wider public, particularly in the North, about such problems as climate change, the thinning ozone layer, loss of biological diversity, soil and water degradation and air and water pollution. Some neo-realist International Relations theorists connect environmental problems directly to population growth. Thomas Homer-Dixon (1995, 1997) blames much sub- and inter-state violence as well as displacement of people on population pressure squeezing local environments. Ecologist Norman Myers (1995, 1996) asserts that conflict and political instability are inevitable outcomes of the environmental pressures caused by population growth. These authors tend to suggest that population is the primary cause of environmental and social problems and isolate it from other key variables such as the distribution of wealth and power and levels and styles of development.

11 The Woodrow Wilson Center’s Environment and Security Project reports on research in this area (see WWICS 1996-98) and Toronto University auspiced a project titled Environment, Population and Security between 1994 and 1996, directed by Thomas Homer-Dixon (see Peace and Conflict Studies Program 1997).


13 See De Senarclens 1994, Mathews 1989, 1995; for a critique of this approach, see Deudney 1995.
Neo-Malthusian imagery highlights the security implications of the ‘population problem’. The editors of Atlantic Monthly promoted Robert Kaplan’s article The Coming Anarchy with the warning that “scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism and disease are rapidly spoiling the social fabric of our planet” (Kaplan 1994, 44). Eberstadt also used alarmist language in his claim that the decline of white populations in developed states and rapid population growth in the developing world will upset “the international political order and the balance of world power” (Eberstadt 1991, 116).

The population and economic-growth trends described could create an international environment even more menacing to the security prospects of the Western alliance than was the Cold War for the past generation. Even without the rise of new blocs or alignments, one can envisage a fractious, contentious and inhumane social order: liberal precepts could have steadily less impact on international action and belief in human rights could prove a progressively weaker restraint on the exercise of force. (Eberstadt 1991, 129)

Fearing that the values he attributes to the United States - respect for individual rights and private property, adherence to rule of law, affirmation of the propriety of limited government and a belief in the universal relevance of these principles - were not shared by the world’s most populous states, Eberstadt could “easily envision a world more unreceptive, and ultimately more threatening, to the interests of the United States and its allies” (Eberstadt 1991, 129). Kennedy similarly asks whether “Western values’ - a liberal social culture, human rights, religious tolerance, democracy, market forces - will maintain their prevailing position in a world overwhelmingly peopled by societies which did not experience the rational scientific and liberal assumptions of the Enlightenment”. He suggests that “the results are likely to be painful for the richest one-sixth of the earth’s population that now enjoys a disproportionate five-sixths of its wealth” (Kennedy 1993, 46). Huntington is more specific. He (1993, 1996a and 1996b) suggests that population size and cultural difference in countries which embrace the religions of Islam and Confucianism are an explosive mix which threatens world security. Like Mesquida and Wiener, he sees large numbers of unemployed Muslim males between fifteen and thirty as a source of instability and violence.

While realist United States security strategists worry about population growth in other states, they regard their own population - the United States is third in the UNPD’s list of the world’s most populous countries - as an asset (Nowak 1998). Eberstadt notes that, according to the UNPD’s medium projection, by 2050 the United States will have a larger population than the European Union, indicating that “[t]o the extent that population matters in international affairs, America’s demographic prospects would
seem to support – or even enhance – U.S. global influence in the years ahead” (Eberstadt 2001). Only in the United States, then, is population growth not a problem to the United States. Lasher’s 1998 article about United States population policy since the ICPD is misleading because it ignores domestic circumstances and is concerned only with the United States’ population policy for Southern states, where it is focused on the reduction of fertility.

Realists’ and neo-realists’ tendency to see ‘population’ in isolation from other factors and focus on its impact on security issues takes little account of levels of development and wealth, income distribution and access to political power. This macro approach excludes many players in population politics and ignores the micro level of reproductive politics altogether. The lack of attention to reproduction in mainstream International Relations reflects a more general gender-blindness. In neo-realist studies, women are invisible despite the important role that they play in ‘reproducing the nation-state’, as Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) has pointed out. Neo-realists treat the nation-state as though it was always-already there, overlooking the fact that it must be constantly reproduced, in actual and symbolic terms. Their lack of attention to reproduction, in both its narrow and broader senses, makes neo-realism too narrow a perspective to adopt as a framework for this thesis.

Liberal institutionalism has a much broader agenda. It builds on interdependence theory, which sees the increasing interconnectedness of states through trade and other processes of globalisation as leading to greater security in the medium to long term. Liberal institutionalism encompasses a broad range of global concerns including issues considered in this thesis: development, human rights and the environment. Population and reproductive issues transect all these areas.

Liberal Institutionalists focus on identifying the appropriate organisations and devising rules to address population issues. These include state-based family planning organisations and international financial institutions like the World Bank and UNFPA. Their focus on the growing importance of human rights as a site of international politics can embrace the reproductive rights discussed at the ICPD (IPPF 1996). Male

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14 See Crane 1994 for an essay on the adaptation of international population institutions to the changing world order.
scholars have tended to leave the area of women’s human rights to feminist scholars, particularly those working in International Law, who locate women’s rights firmly in international rights discourses (Charlesworth et al 1991; Charlesworth and Chinkin 2000; Cook 1995).

The UN has played an important role in global population politics since the 1950s, organising international meetings of states, scientists and interested organisations on the topic. These conferences provide liberal institutionalists with a snapshot for observing the politics of population and reproduction.

In the field of social policy UN conferences have become an institutionalized part of International Relations. As a means of policy formation, global conferences serve an important function in permitting the expression of views that might not otherwise be aired, and in widening the circle of decisionmakers. (McIntosh and Finkle 1995, 251)

The Liberal Institutionalist approach, with its focus on institutions, cannot encompass the increasing participation of non-government organisations (NGOs) in UN conferences. Many important actors are excluded on the assumption that if the institutions are right the problem will be solved. Getting the institutions ‘right’ relies upon correctly defining ‘the problem’ which is contested by many organisations with a stake in population politics. While the failure to implement the ICPD POA indicates that key institutions are unable or unwilling to embrace its micro-agenda, it also suggests that there are powerful actors operating outside institutional structures. These include social movements such as the moral right and the trans-national pharmaceutical companies which produce contraceptives. Also neglected in liberal institutionalism’s macro perspective are the women whose bodies are the tools of population policies.

Because, at one level, the ICPD was an instance of liberal institutionalism at work, liberal institutionalist approaches to population issues contribute to the methodology used in this thesis. But considering reproduction in the global politics of population requires a perspective able to incorporate non-state and non-institutional actors. Richard Falk (1997) has coined the term ‘globalisation-from-below’ to describe the processes by which a wide range of actors attempt to influence global governance. This perspective assists in explaining the alliances and contests between the international women’s movement for health and human rights, the environment movement and populationists and the ‘right-to-life’ movement at Cairo.
What has been impressive has been the creative tactics used by transnational participating groups, denied formal access because of their lack of statist credentials, yet exerting a considerable impact upon the agenda and substantive outcomes of inter-governmental activities, and at the same time, strengthening transnational links. Starting with the Rio Conference ... there has been a flow of gatherings that acknowledged to varying degrees the emergent role of globalisation-from-below. (Falk 1997, 23)

Falk suggests that these efforts to influence global politics through the international conferences of the 1990s are beginners’ attempts at ‘global democracy’. Non-governmental actors use flexible strategies in their efforts to influence the agendas of states and institutions. “Just as globalisation-from-above tends toward homogeneity and unity, so globalisation-from-below tends toward heterogeneity and diversity, even tension and contradiction” (Falk 1997, 24). These were characteristics of the Common Ground alliance formed in the lead-up to ICPD (Dodgson 1998; Hodgson and Watkins 1997).\textsuperscript{15}

‘Civil society’, a key notion in discourses of transnationalism, is highly contested.\textsuperscript{16} Cox describes ‘civil society’ as “the realm of autonomous group action distinct from both corporate power and the state”. He extends Falk’s ‘globalisation-from-below’ approach to distinguish a ‘bottom-up’ view of civil society. This is where “those who are disadvantaged by globalization of the world economy can mount their protests and seek alternatives” (Cox 1999, 10). By contrast, in the ‘top-down’ view, states and corporate interests use civil society as an “agency for stabilizing the social and political status quo” by co-opting non-government organisations (NGOs) with contracts, subsidies and access to high-level meetings. Cox emphasises that “the basic conflicts between rich and poor, the powerful and powerless, are reproduced within the sphere of voluntary organisations, whether trade unions or the new social movements” (Cox 1999, 11). This is an important insight for debates around population and reproduction, particularly when the subject is poor women, the most disadvantaged and least-heard group of stakeholders. Who says what about them, and why, is important and this applies to the diverse range of feminist and other activists who claim to speak on their behalf. As Morris-Suzuki put it:

\textsuperscript{15} See Chapter two.

\textsuperscript{16} Civil society organisations encompass more than NGOs, and include Chambers of Commerce and other business and professional organisations, according to the Commission on Global Governance (1995, 32).
The fact that social movements are ‘non-governmental’ or that they operate multiversally does not guarantee that they will work in favour of the marginalized and disadvantaged. Their motive can equally well be to guard established preserves of power and privilege from those who demand to share them; their energies may be mobilized by governments or state agencies ... to prop up existing structures of power. (Morris-Suzuki 2000, 84)

Clark et al (1998) use the term ‘transnationalism’ to describe the ‘globalisation-from-below’ processes of international social movements, making the point that this interaction involves geographically diverse non-state actors. Global population and reproductive issues offer a wide field of study for scholars with a transnationalist perspective, since the social movements which work in this area include neo-Malthusians, advocates for women’s reproductive health and rights and their morally conservative opponents. There have been a number of feminist studies of the conferences of the 1990s from a transnationalist perspective.17

The transnational perspective is useful in developing a framework for this thesis, because it gives voice to the broad social movements excluded by mainstream International Relations schools. In so doing, it allows the micro-politics of reproduction to illuminate the macro-politics of population. While it offers important insights, its focus on social movements makes it an insufficient framework for the study of the politics of population and reproduction since it fails to offer a critique of the broader framework in which they operate. This requires analysis, in order to locate patterns which lead to poverty for some while others prosper. Studies in International Political Economy (IPE), which highlight the intersection of politics and economics at state and international levels, offer an understanding of the broad trends which enrich some states while others remain poor. There are a number of approaches to IPE, from the liberal to the Marxist (Gilpin 1984), but they cannot, individually or collectively, adequately explain why the neoliberal Washington consensus of the 1980s and 1990s has not solved the political, social and economic problems which constrain poor women’s reproductive decision-making. This is because most IPE approaches, like other International Relations schools, are blind to informal economic transactions and to social reproduction, particularly their gendered nature.

This gender-blindness has been pointed out by Whitworth (1994a), Krause (1996), Sassen (1996, 1998, 2000), Steans (1999) and Waylen (1998) who are involved in the

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project of rewriting IPE to make women and gender relations visible. This thesis takes
a broad approach to the transactions which make up the global economy, and uses the
broader term Global Political Economy (GPE) to include the broad range of
transactions involved in the production of life, the maintenance of families and
communities and personal relationships. GPE can incorporate the micro-politics of
reproduction as well as the macro-politics of population in its analyses, since it is open
to a broad range of issues relating to population and reproduction.\textsuperscript{18} The global political
economy impacts upon women’s reproductive bodies and lives directly through the
services and products they use, and indirectly, through the agency of international
institutions, private foundations and corporations which fund those services and
through the responses of states to economic and political pressures originating from
outside their borders. Economic globalisation has deep impacts on the lives of poor
women of the South, through the involvement of the World Bank, International
Monetary Fund (IMF) and other global institutions in national economies and through
the erosion of states’ capacity and commitment provide publicly-funded services to the
poor. Furthermore, the contraceptive and other industries which service women and
men’s sexual and reproductive bodies are highly profitable areas and the subject of
global debates. The politics of pharmaceutical treatments for HIV/AIDS are contested
in the World Trade Organisation while Viagra is included among subsidised medicines
in some states.\textsuperscript{19} There is a growing trade in babies, generally from the South to the
North, and the trafficking of girls and women for prostitution and entertainment is now
the third largest illicit trade after arms and drugs. Thus, there is a global political
economy of reproduction and a global political economy of population.

Its ability to include a gender perspective makes GPE useful for investigating the global
polities of population, because it shares with critical theory several key characteristics
which Zalewski identifies. First, there is the recognition that there is more to “the
construction of international politics than what appears to be on the surface”. Second,
critical theory incorporates the understanding that there are more participants in
international politics than politicians, International Relations theorists and foreign

\textsuperscript{18} Whitworth (1994b) has studied the International Planned Parenthood Federation from a GPE
perspective.

\textsuperscript{19} See Silverstein 1999.
policy specialists. Third, it allows consideration of a wider range of issues than are covered in mainstream International Relations. It recognises that “the choice of substantive issues to study in international politics is not the result of ‘natural selection’ or ‘neutral judgement’ but is a reflection of specific interests” (Zalewski 1996, 348-350). Cox identifies the need for a broadening and deepening of International Relations because of the changing nature and growing complexity of international politics.

[...] hanging practice has ... generated confusion as to the nature of the actors involved ... extended the range of stakes ... introduced a greater diversity of goals pursued, and produced a greater complexity in the modes of interaction and the institutions within which action takes place. (Cox 1986, 204-5)

All analyses of national or international politics study flows of power. Limiting the topics and players studied leads to shallow analyses. Greater inclusiveness, especially by bringing in issues hitherto ignored or relegated to the margins, sheds new light on old topics and extends the range of participants: “[t]his effort is likely to reveal that there is much more power and many more forms of power in operation in International Relations than is conventionally assumed” (Enloe 1996, 2000).

A feminist GPE approach is adopted in this thesis because it reveals the micro-politics of reproduction which underlie debates about population. A study of international population politics is incomplete without the voices of women who are the objects of population policy. The transformative aspects of the ICPD’s POA came about through the agency of a broader range of actors than participated in earlier international population conferences. The efforts of these players, who were primarily women, brought into relief the micro-politics of reproduction which had remained hidden at earlier UN population conferences.20

1.4 Bringing reproduction into International Relations

Reproduction remains an unexplored area of study within the discipline of International Relations. A preoccupation with state and institutional power and military security has led to a limited focus on population size rather than on the reproductive processes by which people are produced. In studies of population, however, the micro is as important

20 DAWN has observed that, unless women are involved in any political fora, gender issues are unlikely to be raised (see Sen and Correa 1999). This is explored in Chapter two of this thesis.
as the macro: who is born (or not), and who gives birth (or does not), and their ability
to do so in safe environments, matters as much as population numbers.

While the Penguin Dictionary of International Relations has a section on population,
reproduction doesn’t get a mention (Evans & Newnham 1998). I argue that omitting
reproduction leads to the failure to account for many of the most important human
activities, which involve political interactions at levels from the personal to the global.
Bringing reproduction into discourses of International Relations makes the living
bodies of women and children visible; when the focus is on population, they disappear.
Feminist critics have pointed out that the absence of bodies impoverishes International
Relations discourses and restricts the story told (Pettman 1996). In macro discourses,
men are hyper-visible, since they dominate this domain.21 It is crucial to bring the
micro and macro arenas together, since treating them as separate spheres not only
makes women invisible, it also exacerbates their struggles, as they must negotiate both
spheres.

There has to emerge a holistic perspective which would try to grapple with the
macro-reality without negating the effects of the micro-reality. This has been at
the crux of women’s struggle - trying to link the individual’s micro-reality with
the wider reality of society without ignoring, negating or demeaning either of
them. (Manorama & Shah 1996, 38)

Francisco highlights the failings of “single-focused analyses, such as those giving
primacy to economics or to the public realm, [which] have traditionally invisibilised
the reproductive sphere where much of women’s work and concerns are found” (1999).
The sexual and reproductive lives of women are shaped by the political, social and
economic context in which they live. Reproduction is a political act, a reflection of the
degree of the empowerment of women. Further, giving birth has political and economic
ramifications. For instance, in some countries, only mothers and their infant children
have access to health services. In some societies, females are aborted, or allowed to die
in infancy because whether the foetus or infant is male or female has long term
consequences for the child and its family (Sen 1990). Some births result from rape in
war and civil conflict, with long-reaching ramifications for the lives of women and
children, their communities and for the state/s involved. Asylum seekers and illegal

21 Only some men are represented at these levels of course, and poor men of particular ethnicities, ages
and other factors deemed undesirable in the particular cultural milieu are as absent as poor women.
workers cannot claim the citizen’s right of state-sponsored health, education or other services. Finally, in some societies, motherhood is the only means by which women can gain citizen status and the right to be a political player in their communities.

The task for this thesis then is to establish a framework capable of encompassing global population and reproductive politics. Each of the International Relations schools described above provides a specific frame for issues pertinent to debates on population and reproduction, highlighting certain aspects, backgrounding others or excluding them altogether. For this thesis, I require a framework capable of sustaining a gendered analysis and revealing actors usually absent from the grand narratives of International Relations. Although no single approach offers such a framework, together, Liberal institutionalism, global political economy and transnationalism reveal many of the complex factors which shape the international politics of population and reproduction. They are not sufficient, however, to construct the ‘holistic perspective’ required for this thesis.

Most International Relations scholars who broach the topic of reproduction are feminists who, due to their choice of subject, remain at the margins of the discipline despite some male theorists’ understanding that the discipline is enriched by feminist critiques (Halliday 1994, 1996; George 1994). A number of feminists are engaged in critical theory which has roots in Marxist and post-modern thought (Linklater 1996). Critical theory broadens the range of issues deemed relevant to International Relations and gives entry to the politics of everyday, making audible the voices of people generally excluded from the International Relations community and recognising the importance of acts which are currently invisible, such as reproduction.

[W]e must locate the people of international politics in their places of action, which are apt to be far less heroic and insufficiently abstract to qualify for usual attention in the field. Such places are lower than ‘low’ politics, being households, factories, farms, remote rural areas, and international immigration posts in lesser as well as great power settings. To suggest bringing such people into International Relations is earthshaking for a field that admits only official decision-makers, soldiers, statesmen, terrorists, kings, and the occasional ‘crazed’ religious group to the fold. (Sylvester 1996, 264)

Critical International Relations theorists reveal actors who would otherwise be left out of global politics (Enloe 1996; Pettman 1992; Zalewski & Enloe 1995) while feminist International Relations theorists describe a different reality from that uncovered by patriarchal theorists (Peterson and True 1998, 23). Stancich suggests three ways feminists have engendered International Relations. First, they have made women
visible as actors and victims (Pettman 1996; Enloe 1989, 1993); second, by deconstructing International Relations theory, they have revealed the gender bias of the discipline (Tickner 1992); and, third, they are developing a feminist theory of International Relations (Sylvester 1994; Zalewski 1996) (Stancich 1998, 128-9). All are major projects requiring a multi-disciplinary approach extending beyond the traditional concerns of International Relations: security and state power. Sylvester (1994, 213) characterises the feminist International Relations scholar as “ontologically homeless”, required to understand and utilise the epistemologies of a wide range of disciplines and able to produce feminist knowledge without tying herself down to preconceived ideas of what/who women are. This describes the ‘eclectic’ feminist approach I bring to this thesis.

A critical feminist approach assists in re-appraising the mass of material produced before, during and since ICPD. Post-modern scepticism about ‘grand theories’ of population and development and the environment allows the articulation of different explanations of ‘the problem’ and reveals the micro-politics of reproduction. The Marxist-inspired critical approach provides a frame through which to view the macro-politics of the global political economy of population and reproduction, revealing the crucial contribution of reproductive work.

I bring to bear one more feminist perspective on the subject matter of this thesis. The adoption of a ‘transversal’ approach recognises that engendering global population and reproductive politics is only part of the story. Transversalism is ‘cross-cutting’. Yuval-Davis (1997) adopted the term to describe a theoretical framework which recognises that women are differentially affected by policies which govern the biological and cultural reproduction of the nation. This perspective avoids the dangers of reducing women to their reproductive bodies and assuming more commonality on that basis than is warranted, since women, like all people, are located according to class, race and other factors. Transversalism provides, for this thesis, the understanding that feminist interests require the achievement of objectives shared by other movements. It also points to the power of women working together on issues they share through the ownership of reproductive bodies despite differences in their “identities as members of national, ethnic and racial collectivities as well as specific class, sexuality and life cycle positionings” (Yuval-Davis 1997, 38).
Women are not just individuals, nor are they just agents of their collectivities. 'Reproductive rights' campaigns should take account of the multiplexity and multi-dimensionality of identities within contemporary society, without losing sight of the differential power dimension of different collectivities and groupings within it. (Yuval-Davis 1997, 38)

Transversalism acknowledges diverse political actions, from silent resistance within personal relationships to community advocacy and includes, as political actors, women who are unable or uninterested in attending UN conferences. Transversal approaches recognise diverse ways that women and other movements organise. Many organisations operate outside the public purview, because its members are confined to their homes or political activism is dangerous. Electronic communication technologies allow many of these women to organise politically. Women Living Under Muslim Laws relies upon networking as a major organising strategy, as Shaheed describes.

[N]etworks ... provide a vehicle for individuals and organizations to share information, analyses and strategies without trying either to homogenize the diversity of those they link or to control their autonomy in matters of political or personal choices. (Shaheed 1995, 305)

I use all these approaches - liberal institutionalism, transnationalism, global political economy, critical feminism and transversalism - in this thesis. The feminist political ecology approach I outline in Chapter five is complementary to these approaches, and is particularly useful in deciphering the political implications of attitudes to population-environment relationships. I wish, here, to insert two caveats on this work. First, while its subject matter concerns poor Southern women, I am myself a 'Northern' scholar living in a comfortable city in a country which makes it possible for social welfare 'mums' like myself to work and study. 22 Many of my sources are also Northern scholars and activists. To provide balance, I have sought the perspectives of Southern participants and analysts wherever they are available. Finally, I warn the reader that men’s reproductive bodies are largely absent from this study of the politics of population and reproduction. I do not deny the significant role that men play in reproductive processes but writing them into debates and discourses on population and reproduction is not the project of this thesis, which is to locate the reproductive bodies of women in the contemporary global politics of population and reproduction.

22 'Northern' because Australia is actually in the geographical south.
Chapter two  The micro agenda I: Changing population paradigms

We should not … consider Cairo as a brief meeting that took place in Egypt in September 1994; rather, it should be regarded as a process that began at some unidentifiable date prior to the conference when various actors began thinking and discussing how the conference could benefit their interests or, in other cases, how to prevent the conference from damaging their interests. … [T]he conference process does not end with the adjournment of the meeting but continues for years thereafter as groups and governments struggle to accommodate - or at times ignore - Cairo’s POA. The impetus for much of the political, bureaucratic and diplomatic manoeuvering (sic) post Cairo is the formidable challenge of influencing signatories to the document to comply with its recommendations. (Finkle 2002, 1)

2.1 Overview

This chapter explores how language with the potential to ‘change the world’ came to be central to the ICPD’s POA. Changes in approaches to population issues from the dominant paradigm, or approach, do not occur without contest and conflict, and this process was no exception. Kuhn, in his seminal work on paradigm change in science, described paradigms as constellations of views shared by a group of people, constituted as a community by the sharing of those views. They not only “provide scientists with a map but also some of the direction essential for map-making. … Therefore, when paradigms change, there are usually significant shifts in the criteria determining the legitimacy both of problems and of proposed solutions” (Kuhn 1970, 108). Consequently, the first task of Chapter two is to investigate the established orthodoxy of macro-politics of population and micro-politics of reproduction prior to the early 1990s, to investigate the nature and extent of the ‘paradigm change’ offered by the POA. This requires, first, an examination of the UNPD’s 1992 projections which provided the data for the ICPD process, and the UNPD’s most recent revisions of those projections, which enable us to evaluate the ICPD’s interpretation of the 1992 projections with the benefit of hindsight. As noted in Chapter one, statistics are interpreted according to the ideology of the analyst, so a detailed analysis of the Malthusian and neo-Malthusian views that predominated amongst governments, international institutions, the population establishment and many Northern NGOs prior to 1994 follows. A review of the 1974 and 1984 UN conferences on population provide a historical understanding of the way that ‘population’ and ‘reproduction’ have been viewed in the international community over recent decades.
Chapter two then surveys the global political context of ICPD since this was influential on the conference’s outcomes. The NGO campaign, which successfully influenced the conference’s outcomes is investigated in some detail. Although the title of the ICPD suggests that the conference was about the broad issues related to population and development, it focused primarily on one aspect of population, fertility, and its treatment of development issues was cursory. Consequently, the demographic issues given less attention are identified and some reasons for this neglect by the POA’s drafters and the Common Ground alliance, and the obstacles faced at the Conference to the reproductive rights agenda, are examined.

2.2 Population statistics

Debates about population generally rely upon statistics and projections about future population size. The United Nations Population Division (UNPD) produces the statistics which provide the basis for UNFPA reports, and which demographers interpret and organisations use in public campaigns. The ICPD was informed by the UNPD’s 1992 data which anticipated a high projection of 12.5 billion people globally by 2050, a medium projection of 9.8 billion and a low projection of 7.8 billion (UN 1994). Each projection is based upon different assumptions about fertility. By 2002, these projections have been significantly modified to 10.6, 8.9 and 7.4 billion respectively.\textsuperscript{23}

Most demographers consider the most probable scenario to be UNPD’s medium level projection of an increase to around nine billion in 2050, with most of this occurring within low income countries (Bongaarts and Bulatao 2000). On present trends, world population will stabilise at this peak and then begin to decline. Increases in mortality from unforeseen events such as epidemics and natural and human-induced disasters are likely to result in a lower peak reached at an earlier date.

The UNPD figures indicate that the number of children borne by women worldwide has decreased from an average of around six in the 1950s to below three today. In all Western countries except the United States, birth rates have fallen below the replacement level of 2.1, with little likelihood of a reversal in this pattern. From alarm

\textsuperscript{23} While arrived at somewhat differently, these figures concur with the median figures forecasted by IIASA (Lutz 2003).
at the high rate of population growth, the UNPD is now concerned that population ageing is occurring at unprecedented levels “with major consequences and implications for all facets of human life” (UNPD 2000, XXVIII).

Despite declining fertility rates, total world population will continue to rise for at least twenty-five years, due to the ‘demographic momentum’ of people born in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The billion young people (mostly in the South) currently reaching child-bearing age form the largest ever cohort of potential parents; even if each woman were to have only one child, it will take a couple of generations for population to stabilise and then decline. Consequently, any attempt to prevent further population increases would require population control policies more draconian than China’s contentious one-child policy which even the Chinese government acknowledges, transgresses human rights.24

The estimation of future population figures is not an exact science. Assumptions made about future birth and mortality rates can be invalidated by unforeseen events. There are, however, a number of assumptions built into the UNPD’s predictions which militate against the accuracy of its projections. Mortality rates, for instance, were expected to follow the patterns of earlier years. The 2002 projections were a major departure from this practice, breaking “new ground in terms of the assumptions made on future human fertility and the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic”.

With respect to HIV/AIDS, the 2002 Revision anticipates a more serious and prolonged impact of the epidemic in the most affected countries than in previous revisions. The impact of the disease is explicitly modeled for 53 countries, up from the 45 considered in the 2000 Revision. The dynamics of the epidemic, as estimated by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), are assumed to remain unchanged until 2010. Thereafter, prevalence levels are assumed to decline in a manner consistent with modifications of behaviour that reduce the rates of recruitment into the high risk groups as well as the chances of infection among those engaging in high risk behaviour. The resulting HIV prevalence levels remain relatively high until 2010 and then decline, but are still substantial by mid-century. (UNPD 2003b)

Lutz (2003) suggested that, prior to the release of these figures, the UN projections under-estimate the impact of HIV/AIDS in Africa. Even the UNPD’s assumptions in

24 Although acknowledging that the one-child policy transgresses individual human rights, the Chinese government claims that this is over-ridden by future Chinese generations’ right to a future better life.
the 2002 projections may be over-optimistic, since they do not take into account the spread of HIV/AIDS into new countries and the inability or unwillingness of governments and the international community to provide the resources and information required to treat and stem the spread of the disease.

The second significant aspect of the 2002 projections is the confirmation that “future fertility levels in the majority of developing countries are likely to fall below 2.1 children per woman, the level needed to ensure the long-term replacement of the population at some point in the twenty-first century” (UNPD 2003a, v). Elsewhere, it predicts that fertility in the less developed regions will reach replacement level of 2.1 children per woman by 2030-2035 (UNPD 2003a, viii). Life expectancy everywhere is expected to keep rising until 2050, from a current average of sixty-three years to seventy-three years in low income countries, from seventy-five to eighty-two in high income countries, and in the forty-eight poorest countries it is expected to rise from fifty to sixty-seven years.25 The UN, however, may under-estimate the impact of migration flows in its population projections for regions. Finally, in devising projections, the UN assumes that all countries within given regions are following the same trajectory (Lutz 2003).

Despite these problems, the UNPD’s statistics and trends provide the data used by most commentators, although they interpret them differently according to their location and perspective. Some, anticipating the period when global population begins to decline, fear a ‘birth dearth’ (Eberstadt 1998, 2001; Wattenberg 1999, 1999). They see reduced fertility, not population growth, as the ‘population problem’, adopting the UNPD’s low projections as a more accurate description of population trends.26 Commentators taking this view predict that the resulting structural effects on national and global populations, especially in developed countries, will have deleterious economic impacts.

Most neo-Malthusian organisations accept that world population will stabilise by mid-century. They emphasise, however, the growth which will occur in total world population until that point, claiming that the seventy-seven million people born

25 All information in this section is taken from the World Population Prospects, the 2002 Revision (UNPD 2003a)

26 Wattenberg and Eberstadt are fellows at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, which eschews evidence on climate change and promotes the Washington consensus.
annually place unsustainable pressure on natural resources and national economies. They focus on the least developed countries where fertility rates will remain high for some time to come. Although many organisations adopted the language of reproductive rights both before and after the ICPD (Hodgson & Watkins 1997), some organisations still emphasise carrying capacity and catastrophe.27 This alarmism hints at underlying ideologies and political agendas, directed to gaining funding and other support for population control advocacy and intervention.

2.3 Malthusianism and neo-Malthusianism

The ‘common-sense’ approach to population issues has Malthusian roots.28 Malthusian and neo-Malthusian views are often used interchangeably in authoritative texts by scientists and ecologists, in the media and in the conversations of ‘non-expert’ people. Consequently, it is essential that the terms, used frequently in this thesis, are unpacked because, while they share the same roots, they signify different approaches to women’s reproductive lives, and consequently, are relevant to this exploration of why the ICPD failed to ‘change the world’.

Malthusianism arose from debates at the end of the eighteenth century between early socialists and conservatives. Social reformers William Godwin and the Marquis de Condorcet argued that governments should seek to reduce human misery by reforming institutions and abolishing private property, measures which, they believed, would ensure the infinite progression of human beings. To contest their arguments, Thomas Malthus published a series of essays between 1798 and the 1820s in which he developed his ‘principle of population’.

The power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man.

Population, when unchecked, increases in a geometrical ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio. …

27 See, for instance, Population Action International 1998

28 I use the term ‘common sense’ to describe the prevailing public consensus on population, rather than to describe expert opinion. It correlates with Kuhn’s term, ‘normal’ in relation to the consensus of opinion on a topic, but extends it beyond the scientific.
This natural inequality of the two powers of population, and of production in
the earth, and that great law of our nature which must constantly keep their
effects equal, form the great difficulty that to me appears insurmountable in the
way to the perfectibility of society. All other arguments are of slight and
subordinate consideration in comparison of this. I see no way by which man
can escape from the weight of this law which pervades all animated nature. No
fancied equality, no agrarian regulations in their utmost extent, could remove
the pressure of it even for a single century. And it appears, therefore, to be
decisive against the possible existence of a society, all the members of which,
should live in ease, happiness, and comparative leisure; and feel no anxiety
about providing the means of subsistence for themselves and families.
(Malthus 1798, 9-10)

Malthusian approaches to population are based on the assumption that population
growth will always outstrip the earth’s ability to provide. Malthus used ‘population
growth’ to argue against social reforms intended to improve the lives of the poor
(Furedí 1997; Ross 1998). Welfare programs, he argued, harm the propertied classes
and intensify impoverishment, since they encourage the poor to breed. In their poverty,
he saw the solution to the problem posed by their numbers, as the following passage
demonstrates.

Notwithstanding then, the institution of the poor laws in England, I think it will
be allowed, that considering the state of the lower classes altogether, both in
the towns and in the country, the distresses which they suffer from the want of
proper and sufficient food, from hard labour and from unwholesome
habitations, must operate as a constant check to incipient population.

To these great checks to population in all long occupied countries, which I
have called the preventive and the positive checks, may be added, vicious
customs with respect to women, great cities, unwholesome manufactures,
luxury, pestilence, and war.

All these checks may be fairly resolved into misery and vice. (Malthus 1798,
38)

Malthus, who held office in the Church of England, maintained that “divine authority”
ordained that “the poor should never cease from among them”.²⁹

It has appeared that a society constituted according to Mr Godwin’s system
must, from the inevitable laws of our nature, degenerate into a class of
proprietors, and a class of labourers; and that the substitution of benevolence
for self-love, as the moving principle of society, instead of producing the
happy effects that might be expected from so fair a name, would cause the
same pressure of want to be felt by the whole of society, which is now felt by
only a part. ...

It has appeared that from the principle of population, more will always be in
want than can be adequately supplied. The surplus of the rich man might be

²⁹ Malthus is quoting from Deuteronomy Chapter XV, verse two.
sufficient for three, but four will be desirous to obtain it. He cannot make this selection of three out of the four, without conferring a great favour on those that are the object of his choice. These persons must consider themselves as under a great obligation to him, and as dependent upon him for his support. (Malthus 1798, 101-103)

Malthus was no advocate of universal human rights, asserting that “a right which in the nature of things cannot be adequately gratified, may terminate in disappointment, irritation, and aggravated poverty” (Malthus 1806, 9). He asserted that welfare policies would perpetuate a vicious cycle of poverty by increasing fertility, leading to surplus labour, resulting in reduced wages and unemployment. His arguments were influential in the framing of the Poor Laws of 1834, which forced poor people into workhouses or low-paid factory jobs (Gordon 1990, 75).

As noted earlier, ‘Malthusian’ and ‘neo-Malthusian’ are often used interchangeably in the popular and some academic literature on population (see, for instance, Bandarage 1997, Furedi 1997). In this thesis ‘Malthusianism’ refers to approaches which assume that poverty is the natural outcome of the fertility of the poor and that any efforts to improve their situation will exacerbate their hardship as they will react by having more children. Malthusians argue that welfare should be available only in the most extreme cases, and “[t]he fare should be hard, and those that were able obliged to work” (Malthus 1798, 37). Where provided, it should not be at the cost of the wealthy classes. This approach endorses the principles basic to capitalism and neoliberal economic approaches (Furedi 1997; Ross 1998). In Malthus’ times, women were not recognised as political, social or economic actors; accordingly, the Malthusian framework includes no gender analysis.

Neo-Malthusianism differs from Malthusianism, primarily because, unlike Malthus who opposed any contraceptive method apart from sexual abstinence, neo-Malthusians agree that over-population causes poverty but believe that population control through long term contraceptive methods and sterilisation provides an effective solution. 30 Marxists were suspicious that zealous campaigning for family planning by nineteenth

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30 Ross (1998, 64) traces the use of the term ‘neo-Malthusian’ back to the mid nineteenth century when a vice-president of the European Malthusian League first used the term, but since the society’s aim was to spread the word on Malthus’ ‘Law of Population’ without modification, I don’t believe that, from the vantage point of 2002, it can be classified as ‘neo-Malthusian’ as the term is now understood. The distinction is worth preserving.