U.S. population & growth rates, 1900-98

- High immigration & birth rates
- Baby boom
- Great Depression, low immigration
- 1918 flu epidemic

U.S. population (thousands)

Annual growth rate

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Total births & birth rates in U.S., 1910-95

- Baby boom
- Baby bust
- GI Generation
- War babies
- Depression Generation
- Echo boom

Total births & Birth rate per 1,000 people
Some generational labels

- GI Generation: 1910s & 1920s
- Depression Generation: 1930-39
- War babies: 1940-45
- Baby Boomers: 1946-1964 (78 million)
- Baby Busters (Gen X): 1965-1976 (45 million)
- Echo Boomers (Gen Y): 1977-1994 (70 million)
- Generation Z: 1995-
Malthusian theory

✓ Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) claimed that population increases geometrically (2, 4, 8, 16…), but food production increases arithmetically (2, 3, 4, 5…)
  • The result will be worldwide starvation

✓ Malthus’ predictions proved wrong
  ✓ Population growth rates don’t always increase
  ✓ Food production has kept pace with population increase
Demographic transition theory

- Demographic transition: stage of societal development in unindustrialized countries marked by growing life expectancy and high birthrates; concept used to explain why populations in less-developed countries grow faster than those in more developed countries (p. 474)

- Three stages
  - Stage 1 (preindustrial): slow growth because of very high birth and death rates
  - Stage 2 (early industrial): Rapid growth because death rate drops, but birth rate remains high
  - Stage 3 (later industrial): Slow growth because birth rate drops to approach death rate