A negative annual secular trend was found for the period 1971–1980 ($r = -0.84, p = 0.002$), which was replaced by the positive trend during the period 1982–1993 ($r = 0.78, p = 0.004$). No difference in mean SRs for the entire period was found between urban (0.513) and rural (0.513) populations.

The decrease in male births in the last quarter equates to fewer male conceptions nine months previously—that is, in the first quarter. Climatic variations in western Siberia are extreme, with heavy snowfalls in winter. Thawing of snow requires considerable energy, therefore temperatures remain low in spring, and rise sharply from the second half of April. If the observed variation in SR is indeed temperature related, then it would seem that low temperatures either reduce male conceptions or, through unknown mechanism/s, reduce the survival of male conceptuses.

Industrialisation has been blamed for declining SRs in industrialised countries over the past half century. In Siberia, a different mechanism/s, reduce the survival of male conceptuses in the first quarter of the year. Seasonality of sex ratio in Siberia falls sharply in spring, and rise sharply from the second half of April. If the observed variation in SR is indeed temperature related, then it would seem that low temperatures either reduce male conceptions or, through unknown mechanism/s, reduce the survival of male conceptuses.

Industrialisation has been blamed for declining SRs in industrialised countries over the past half century. In Siberia, a different pattern is evident in that SR fell and then rose with a turning point in the early 1980s.

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**References**


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**BOOK REVIEWS**

### Trauma, war and violence. Public mental health in socio-cultural context


This is a valuable contribution to the scant literature on organising effective public mental health programmes for traumatised refugee or war-torn populations. The book focuses specifically on the public health mechanisms and processes involved in integrating complex humanitarian and political emergencies.

The editor opens the book with a long chapter on public mental health, emphasising culturally appropriate models. Especially valuable is the section on the objectives and selection of priorities for training and mental health interventions, with both excellent theoretical and practical aspects.

Nine chapters then follow, describing programmes that are supported by the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO), of which Joop de Jong is the director. Each chapter opens with a description of the history and culture of the country and the current problems, which often have received minimal attention by the media, Western populations, and others. The populations described have been chronically traumatised by war, torture, hunger, rape, displacement, and often, wholesale destruction of their society and culture.

The authors of each chapter describe their attempts to assess and improve the mental and medical health of refugee populations, with mixed or no support from local governments. How they use the local healers or other supports to build a network of interventions is a key element of each programme. Their frustrations and failures are also articulated.

The chapters vary in length and quantity. For example, “The Cambodian experience” is 64 pages long, and only the most dogged reader will persist to the end. Some of the chapters would have benefited by better editing and a more English speaker.

In summary, the opening chapter of the book is an important contribution to the literature on public health and on traumatic stress. The chapters that follow will be of special interest to those planning to set up similar programmes.

### International co-operation in health


International co-operation in health focuses on transboundary public health issues and examines the influence of global factors on human health. Historically, the earliest examples arose from changes in the natural environment such as climate changes during the last ice age. Other global events are less obvious but also had important implications (positive and negative) for health and health care. They include, such as the widespread migration of populations, the enormous effects of international trade, war and civil disorder, or even genetic modified food on human health.

Discussing these global influences, authors of several chapters describe the formal organisations and alliances that are developing to fill the gap between the globalised world and national governments. Suggestion thinking and collaboration predominantly focus on UN structures, for instance, the WHO’s efforts in tobacco control, multidisciplinary groups working on global changes coordinated through the UN Environmental Programme, and the work of the WTO. Other suggestions focus more on regional (EU) surveillance and prevention networks, responding to challenges posed by infectious diseases.

We may question where the analysis takes us? Discussing these global factors, it becomes clear that globalisation is an extremely complex phenomenon. Although the effects on people may be clear, we still face many challenges when trying to contain it. The concluding chapter revisits some of the threats that are posed to the public health by globalisation and explores some of the opportunities it offers, in particular, how health professionals can come together to promote global public health. It looks at what health professionals can do to tackle these threats, highlighting principles for action that encourage collective thinking, mitigating against isolationism and nationalism in confronting problems of society and environment. Finding an answer as to what health professionals can do, the editors advocate that health professionals need to be interested in the changes happening around them; need to look beyond their own national interest as public health problems and solutions have to be considered a global context.

More concrete, they propose several valuable suggestions to find common solutions including undertaking research, communicating the information to the public in a clear and comprehensible way, and, most importantly, using this information to lobby for change.

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