

Anatole Romaniuk



Dr. Anatole Romaniuk died on March 5, 2018, at the age of 94, at home in Ottawa after a brief bout of pneumonia. He was born on February 28, 1924, in Zarojany, Khotyn district, Chernivtsi oblast, Ukraine (what was formerly Bessarabia and part of Romania). On March 11, 2018, friends and family gathered together in Ottawa to share memories of his life. Anatole was the loving husband of Maria Romaniuc, proud father of Lara (Paul Saurette) and Alex (Rachel Creane), and ecstatic grandfather to Belmont.

Anatole's childhood was not an easy one. The region where he was born, Khotyn region of Ukraine, was a multinational area with a troubled history, shunted back and forth between the Ottoman and Russian empires (today divided between Moldova and Ukraine). As a child he experienced in 1929 the sorrow of losing his father. This early loss had a lasting impact on Anatole. In 2009, after years of meticulous research he completed (in Ukrainian) a biography of his father, Ivan Onufriyovych Romaniuc, describing the short but productive life of a young family man, who served valiantly in World War I, and after the war was elected to the Romanian Parliament to proudly represent the people of his region.

During the Second World War young Anatole was forced to flee across Europe to escape from the Soviet occupation of Romania and Ukraine. While he was running away, he was caught by the (precursor to the) KGB and the Gestapo, and narrowly escaped from death twice. Although he escaped, he was sadly separated from his dear mother and sister for 16 years and had to pursue a life by himself. All these experiences had profound impact on him. He loved life and made the best of his talents to achieve great heights professionally, held in high esteem by all who knew him.

Anatole lived a long, rewarding and distinguished life of passionate scholarly and administrative engagement within the field of demography. He was a prolific scholar, active until shortly before his death. His last article was published in the 2017 fall/winter issue of *Canadian Studies in Population* (vol. 44, no. 3–4). He was a cosmopolitan man, well acquainted with the world, always keenly interested in learning more about other cultures. He was fluent in six languages (French, English, Ukrainian, Romanian, German, and Russian).

Between 1945 and 1947, he attended the University of Erlangen in Germany, to study philosophy and history. Upon graduation he went on to University of Louvain in Belgium where in 1952 he completed Master's degrees in Political Science and Pure Economics. In 1958 he moved to Paris to pursue a year of intensive training at the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE). Later, in 1961, he was offered a position as a research associate at Princeton University's prestigious Office of Population Research, earning from that institution a Certificate in Demography. He eventually completed a Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Louvain, defending his dissertation in 1967.

After moving to Canada he held professorships at the University of Ottawa (1964–69) and at the University of Montreal (1969–72). In 1968, Dr. Romaniuk began working at Statistics Canada (then called the Dominion Bureau of Statistics); and over the next 25 years, with the assistance and support of colleagues he founded and directed the Demography Division at Statistics Canada, creating two specialized Sections in population estimates and projections. As Director, he expanded the Division's methodological capabilities to new heights, building on the work of his famous predecessors Nathan Keyfitz, Norman Ryder, and Karol Krotki. Dr. Romaniuk's team was also responsible for the demography component of the Canadian Census of Population.

Soon after his retirement from Statistics Canada in 1993, he was invited to serve as Adjunct Professor by the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta, continuing to publish important works in population studies. He retired from the academic world in 2014, after more than six decades of professional activity.

Beside holding memberships in the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, the Population Association of America, and Association des démographes du Québec, Anatole Romaniuk served as vice-president (1978–80) and president (1980–82) of the Canadian Population Society, and was president of the Federation of Canadian Demographers (1993–96).

He made significant contributions to demography in its various fields—substantive, methodological, and theoretical. In 2003, a special issue of *Canadian Studies in Population* (vol. 30, no. 1) was published in honour of his many contributions to international and Canadian demography. In 2008 he received a lifetime achievement award from the Canadian Population Society for his contributions to Canadian demography and the discipline of population studies.

One of Anatole Romaniuk's most important works that elevated him to national prominence was his monograph *Fertility in Canada: From Baby-Boom to Baby-Bust*, published in 1984 by Statistics Canada as part of a series on Current Demographic Analysis (issued in French as *La fécondité au Canada: croissance et déclin*). This book is rich in methodological and theoretical content and noteworthy for demonstrating that *sub-replacement fertility* in Canada was here to stay, having major implications with regard to population growth.¹

Other groundbreaking contributions were published at different points in Romaniuk's career, spanning diverse areas of demography and population studies—from the demography of Africa and Eastern Europe to the social demography of indigenous populations, to methodological and theoretical aspects of demography and population projections.

1. Throughout his career, both English (Romaniuk) and Romanian/French (Romaniuc) transliterated variants of his surname were used.

Contributions to African demography

When still at Princeton, Romaniuk collaborated with a team of scholars headed by William Brass that included Ansley Coale, Paul Demeny, Don Heisel, Frank Lorimer, and Etienne Van De Valle to produce a classic work that is foundational reading in demographic analysis: *The Demography of Tropical Africa* (Princeton University Press, 1968). The book was the culmination of many years of fieldwork in Africa by this team of eminent demographers. Anatole's chapter is titled "Demography of the Democratic Republic of the Congo," about a country he knew and understood very well, as early in his career he organized the first population census of the Congo. This challenging endeavour took seven years to complete, from the start of data collection in 1954 to the publication of results in 1961—one year after the Congo became independent from Belgium. In informal conversations with colleagues Anatole would often recount some of the spellbinding events he experienced during this period in his life. After arriving in the Congo, there were setbacks with the colonial administration. Nevertheless, he successfully mobilized a team of local Congolese to help him criss-cross the Congo from one village to the next, asking permission from tribal chiefs to count inhabitants.

Anatole also authored *La fécondité des populations congolaises* (Mouton, 1968) and *La démographie congolaise au milieu du XXe siècle* (Louvain University Press, 2006). In these works, using techniques for demographic analysis based on inadequate data, Romaniuk produced reliable measurements of the level of fertility, its regional and ethnic variations, and explored the underlying cultural and epidemiological factors. His studies, based on anthropological and medical data on sterility and infertility among certain tribes in Africa, earned him wide recognition. In particular, he placed the problem of infertility in the framework of reproductive health behaviours. More recently, in 2011 he published an article titled "Persistence of high fertility in Tropical Africa: The case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo" (*Population and Development Review* 37(1):1–28).

Contributions to Indigenous Peoples' demography

Since his move to Canada in 1964, Dr. Romaniuk was attracted by the demography of Indigenous Peoples. He felt that his experience with African demography, in terms of subject matter and methodology, could be applied to study Canada's Indigenous populations. His work in this area partly, based on his early survey of the James Bay Area of Canada, gave rise to a series of articles and conference papers which shed new light on the demographic history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. He posed the thesis that the particularities of this demographic itinerary, with distinct waves of demographic collapse and recovery, and the tardiness of demographic transition, need to be understood in the context of the Indigenous Peoples' encounter with European civilization (see "Aboriginal Population of Canada: Growth dynamics under conditions of encounter of civilizations," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 20(1), 2000). This theme was further expanded in his chapter "Canada's Aboriginal Population: From encounter of civilization to revival and growth," which appeared in a book co-edited with Frank Trovato, *Aboriginal Populations: Social Demographic and Epidemiological Perspectives* (University of Alberta Press, 2014).

Contributions to population projections

In the field of *population projections*, Anatole Romaniuk's contributions were methodological, epistemological, and administrative. As of the 1971 Census, he re-established Statistics Canada as the agency of the federal government responsible for population projections. His article "Population projection as prediction, simulation, and prospective analysis" was published in the United Nations Population Division's *Population Bulletin* (1990). This, along with other subsequent articles, established his reputation in the area of population projections. In addition to introducing innovative techniques, he contributed to the reappraisal of the way forecasting and projections are perceived. In a nutshell, his emphasis in projections is on *prospective analysis* rather than *prediction*; *analytical credibility* rather than *predictability*; *impact* rather than *accuracy* as projection validation criteria; and projection as a tool of *creating* rather than *discovering* the future ("Population Forecasting: Epistemological considerations" was presented to the British Population Society in 2006).-

In a review of Romaniuk's work, the Canadian demographer Thomas K. Burch encapsulated the nature of Anatole's contribution to forecasting: "Romaniuk transcends the restrictive methodological view of most demographers to highlight the multifaceted character of population projections, including its role as substantive model of population dynamics, that is, as theory" (see "The Cohort Component Projection Algorithm: Technique, model, and theory," *Canadian Studies in Population* 30(1):30, 2003).

Methodological contributions

Anatole Romaniuk's creative spirit manifested itself in three particular methodological areas.

First, he undertook innovative application of non-conventional demographic techniques, such as those based on the Coale-Demeny stable population models and Brass techniques of estimating fertility and mortality from data on children-ever-born, to estimate fertility and mortality of populations with imperfect data. He was thus able to significantly improve the estimates of basic demographic parameters for the Congo and the Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Second, he made important contributions to the methodology of forecasting fertility. This includes two articles co-authored with S. Mitra: "Pearsonian Type I Curve and its Fertility Projection Potentials" (*Demography* 10(3), 1973) and "Three Parameter Model for Birth Projection" (*Population Studies* 27(3), 1973). The virtue of this model is that it minimizes the inputs needed while maximizing the output and also enhancing the analytical capabilities of the associated parameters.

Third, as director of the Demography Division, jointly with his colleagues, considerable methodological enhancements were made in order to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the post-censal estimates of population and households (see *Population Estimation Methods*, Statistics Canada, 1987).

Theoretical contributions

Anatole Romaniuk's significant theoretical contributions are in two particular areas—demographic transition theory and demographic history of Indigenous Peoples. In the first case, he was able to conceptualize and empirically demonstrate the upward pattern

of natural fertility in the earlier stages of modernization. The underlying idea is that modernization removes or weakens some of the traditional fertility-inhibiting factors, such as prolonged postnatal abstinence and breastfeeding, by shortening their duration, before birth control comes into practice. Two of his articles are significant in this regard: “Increase in natural fertility during earlier stages of modernization: Evidence from African Case Study, Zaire” (*Population Studies* 34(2), 1980); and “Increase in Natural Fertility during Earlier Stages of Modernization: Canadian Indians Case Study” (*Demography* 11(4), 1981).

With regard to Indigenous Peoples’ demography, his *History-based Explanatory Framework* is a significant milestone in understanding their fertility over the historical span, since the first contacts with Europeans. The two fundamental pillars of the paradigm are ethnocentrism and dependency status. His chapter in *Aboriginal Populations* revisits Anatole’s theoretical ideas on the long term demographic effects of culture contact on Canada’s Indigenous Peoples.

Over recent years Anatole developed an interest in exploring theoretical ideas concerning the future of demographically mature societies that have long since completed the demographic transition. He felt the concept of the *stationary state* proposed by the British philosopher John Stuart Mill could be fruitfully reformulated and applied as a policy framework to address critical economic, environmental, and social demographic challenges faced by today’s aging populations. This idea was presented in a number of conferences and in an electronic publication, “Stationary population as policy vision” (*Optimum Online: Journal of Public Sector Management* 42(1), March 2012). Anatole extended his work in this area in his last publication, “Stationary population, immigration, social cohesion, and national identity: What are the links and the policy implications? With special attention to Canada, a demographer’s point of view” (*Canadian Studies in Population* 44(3–4), 2017).

Data collection and management

Throughout his long and productive career, Anatole Romaniuk also involved himself in large-scale statistical operations of data collection and management. The national census of population in the Democratic Republic of Congo, based on a probabilistic sample, was an outstanding achievement for a young demographer under the difficult conditions of an underdeveloped country at that time (1950s). It was a resounding success, recognized by an “Etoile de service” from the Demographic Republic of Congo. At Statistics Canada, he was involved in the 1971 to 1996 censuses, at the level of content determination and analytical studies. He also acted as a Canadian government advisor in the preparation and execution of the 2001 Census of Population in Ukraine, and earned that country’s President’s Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution.

Anatole as Manager at Statistics Canada, colleague and friend

As founder and director of the Demography Division and of the prior Population Estimates and Projections Division, Anatole Romaniuk was the architect and the main driving force for the Bureau’s core demography program for over 20 years. Under his able leadership, initiative, and direction, the program evolved over the years into a well-integrated and well-balanced set of activities. These included population and its demographic

characteristics and components (*viz.* age, sex, nuptiality, fertility, mortality, and migration), current and inter-censal population estimates, population projections, and demographic analysis.

Anatole was one of those rare types of managers in a government environment who succeeded in directing a highly technical program and carrying out his own technical and substantive research in demography. Most of the aforesaid research and publications were carried out while he was at Statistics Canada, charged with heavy managerial and administrative responsibilities.

Dr. Romaniuk's managerial style was quite informal. Except for special meetings, a prior appointment was not required to see him on any matter. Often he used to go to see the staff in their offices rather than calling them to his office. His quiet managerial style, his ability to maintain a research-focused atmosphere, his hard-working nature and dedication to the profession, and his broad outlook and appreciation for good quality work, helped not only to build a highly credible demography program but also to attract and retain highly qualified professional demographers. During his time the Demography Division's staff comprised the largest single group of professional demographers in the country. He deserves special credit for building up the bilingual character and atmosphere of the Demography Division and the ethnic diversity of the staff, which had no parallel elsewhere at Statistics Canada. He also managed to attract eminent demographers like Professors Nathan Keyfitz, Norman Ryder, and Roland Pressat to work on special projects. Other well-known demographers also visited the Bureau to give public lectures and seminars.

Dr. Romaniuk was a softly spoken man, yet he had a flair for reconciling diverging and competing interests. This was particularly demonstrated by the way he was able to defuse heated discussions in his capacity as Chairman of Statistics Canada's Federal-Provincial Committee on Demography. From the Committee's inception it benefitted from his quiet diplomatic way of ironing out differences and coming to reasonable compromises.

All who knew him had great respect for Anatole. He was a wise, warm, elegant, and compassionate man, possessing a sharp intellect. He was never too busy to help and mentor those around him, offering wise counsel to friends and colleagues who sought his advice.

We as well as all his friends and colleagues will always remember and cherish our fond memories of Anatole and the many wonderful experiences we shared in our interactions and collaborations with him. He was a source of inspiration to all and a positive role model. We will miss him.

Frank Trovato

Sociology Department, University of Alberta

M.V. George

Former Senior Advisor, Demography Division, Statistics Canada

Adjunct Professor, Emory University

Rod Beaujot

Sociology Department, Western University

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