

**In pursuit of a fair and equal society: Worldwide Variations in Human Growth 1964-1988.**

N Cameron. School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, United Kingdom

The two editions of Phyllis Eveleth's and Jim Tanner's *Worldwide Variations in Human Growth* include studies of human growth and development from the years 1964 to 1988. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition (1976), that included 340 studies of human growth and development from 42 countries, was a result of the International Biological Programme (1964-1974) which sought to understand "the biological basis of productivity and human welfare" against a background of rapid population growth and environmental awareness to effectively manage natural resources. Whilst the 1<sup>st</sup> edition acted as a broad but essentially descriptive resource, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1990) recognised the emerging evidence that child growth and later health were linked and that the promotion of better growth may well be related to more profound outcomes than simply fit and healthy young adults. Forewords in each volume by leading figures in the World Health Organisation emphasised the importance of the association between growth and health. Both emphasised the importance of global initiatives to promote healthy growth and thus national health and both finished with the same recommendation that this book "should...commend itself to those human biologists who have at heart the diversity of man and his potential for change." It is in pursuit of a fair and equal society that our potential for change, our developmental plasticity, and its sensitivity to environment change is shown as the driving force behind worldwide improvements in health and wellbeing across the lifespan.