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Sent 11/12/15 by Randi Hacker, CEAS Outreach Director

CHINA – The One-Child Policy Bites Back and Other Thoughts (Gr. 6-12)

The one child policy has its critics but in a nation where large families has long been the norm, it was a step that some might argue simply had to be taken. The Chinese population was nearing 1 billion at the time it was adopted and it did slow the growth though the means perhaps did not justify the end: The ancient Chinese preference for boys meant, at the very worst, illegal sex selection through abortion or infanticide and, at best, foreign adoption of non-boys, i.e. girls. Today there is a 117:100 ratio of boys to girls. The young bachelors are called *guanggun*, bare branches and, by 2020, they will be 30 million strong. Who they will marry is the issue. Though the official policy has now been repealed and families can decide on their own whether to have one or two, the question of how to control such a huge population remains: At 1.357 billion, China still has more people than other country on Earth with India (1.252 billion) not that far behind. The articles below include a timeline, a video of reactions from people on the street regarding the policy change and a solution to the *guanggun* problem as suggested by a college professor in Zhejiang province. Human population issues are critical and not just in China and India. They are global. And controversial. Here are a few questions you and your students might think about: What is overpopulation? Is the human population too large? If yes, should it be limited? How? To how many? If not, what about resources: Is human overpopulation linked to the degradation of the planet? How?

Timeline with associated articles:

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/29/world/asia/china-one-child-policy-timeline.html>

Video (notice that no one on the street mentions the overpopulation issue at all)

<http://www.nytimes.com/video/world/asia/100000004006943/chinese-react-to-end-of-one-child-policy.html>

A solution to the 30 million bachelors problem?

<http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/10/26/china-polyandry-gender-ratio-bachelors/>

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