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technology has advanced and identification of the sex of an unborn child has become more reliable, parents have increasingly used feticide as a way to alter the gender balance of their families. In a tragic sign that patriarchy is alive and well around the world, it is overwhelmingly girl fetuses that are aborted. Two contemporary examples come to mind. In China, the cultural devaluation of females, combined with a family planning policy that for many years limited family size (commonly referred to as the **one-child policy**), resulted in widespread sex-selective abortions. The demographic data are impossible to deny. Because the one-child policy typically allowed for a second child if the first child was a female, most of these selective abortions occurred in second births. In a massive study of almost 5 million Chinese, Zhu, Lu, and Hesketh (2009) reported ratios that were slightly unbalanced for first order births (108 males for every 100 females). For second order births, however, the imbalance increased to 143:100. In rural areas, the imbalance was especially dramatic and alarming, often more than 160:100.

Whether the unbalanced ratios can be primarily blamed on culture or government policies was a matter of some debate through the early 2000s. Regardless, it is a problem the Chinese government has openly acknowledged (Yardley, 2005). In 2013, China eased some of the restrictions of the one-child policy, allowing a second child for families where one of the spouses was a single child. In 2015, the policy was further modified, when the government announced that all married couples would be allowed to have two children. China remains a patriarchal society, so it is doubtful that this policy shift will fully balance the ratios. The Chinese government hopes, however, that the ratio gaps shrink in the coming years (Buckley, 2015).