



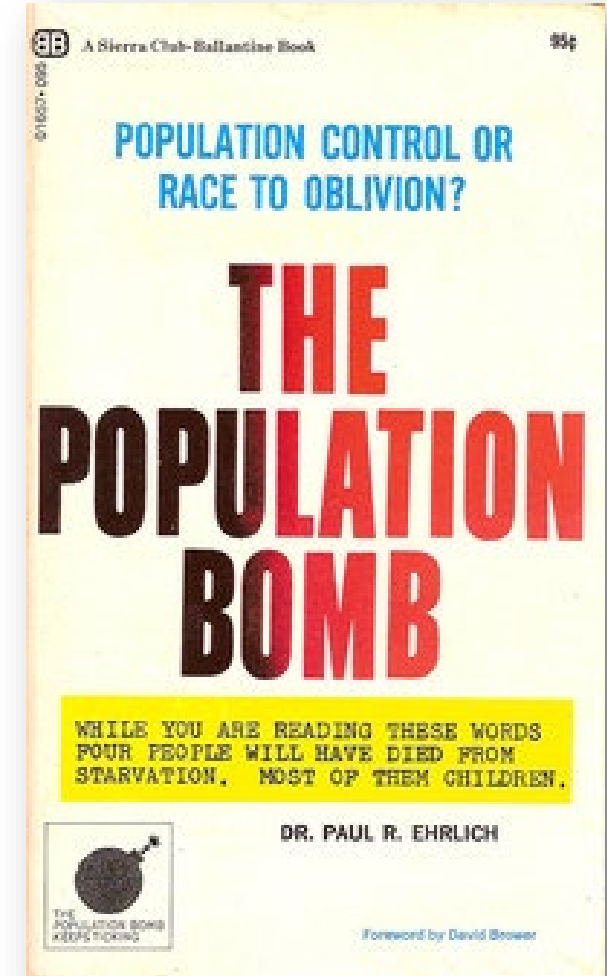
TEACHING HUMAN DIGNITY

Moral Considerations of China's One-Child Policy

Exploring China's One-Child Policy

Historical Context of China's One-Child Policy

- *The Population Bomb* by Paul Ehrlich published in 1968
- Predicated famines, food shortages, mass starvation and destruction within a decade (~1979)
- Target: zero-population growth
- Encouraged people to have fewer and “better” children
- Assumed the need for compulsory public policies to ensure zero-population growth.

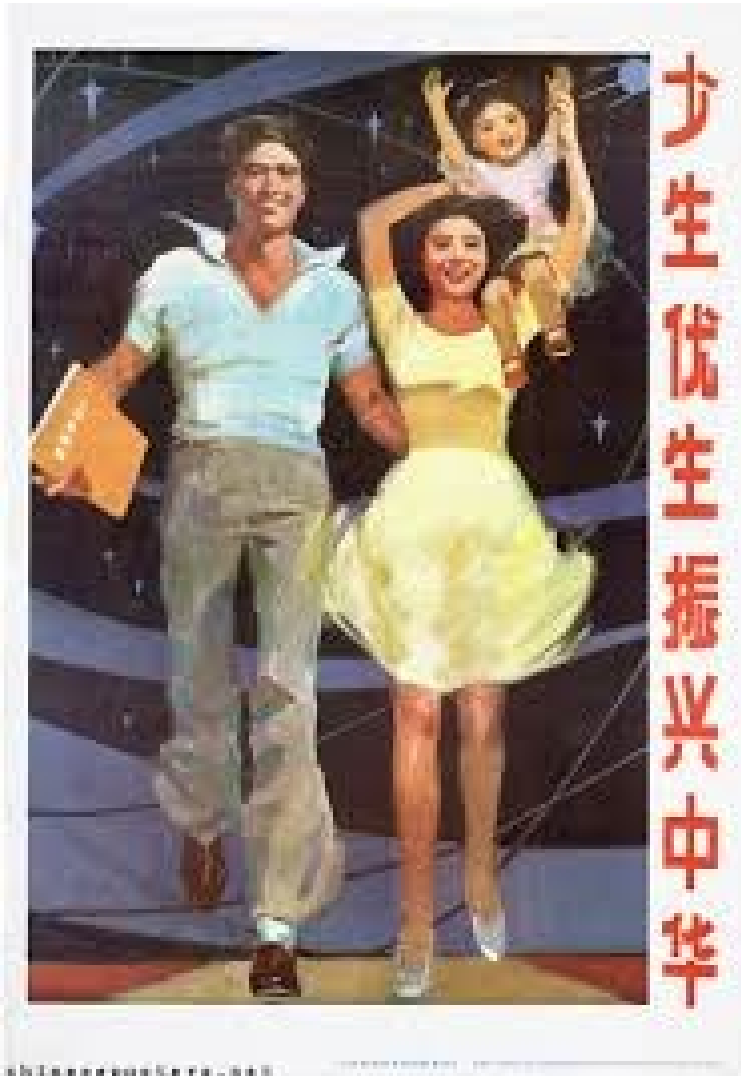


Historical Context of China's One-Child Policy: The Great Famine

- 1959-1961
- Considered one of the greatest human-caused disasters in history
- 15-55 million people die



Propaganda for China's One-Child Policy





What might be some objections about China's one-child policy?



Catholic Teaching on Population Control

- Role of the government
- Dignity of the human person



Open to Page 12 of your Packet!

Role of the Government

“In the Catholic tradition, government has a positive role because of its responsibility to serve the common good, provide a safety net for the vulnerable, and help overcome discrimination and ensure equal opportunity for all. Government has inescapable responsibilities toward those who are poor and vulnerable, to ensure their rights and defend their dignity. Government action is necessary to help overcome structures of injustice and misuse of power and to address problems beyond the reach of individual and community efforts. Government must act when these other institutions fall short in defending the weak and protecting human life and human rights.”

- **How does this quote describe the role of the government?**
- **What are some key words the bishops use to describe the role of the government?**
- **Based on this quote, can you brainstorm some concrete examples of things a government might be expected to do or not to do?**

Role of the Government

- Serve the common good (the flourishing of all people!)
- Care for the poor and vulnerable
- Overcome structures of injustice
- Ensure equal opportunity for human flourishing
- Protect human life and defend human dignity of all

Human Dignity

“Man [all human beings] alone is called to share, by knowledge and love, in God’s own life . . . This is the fundamental reason for his dignity. Being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone...He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. Further, he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead.”

- What words or phrases catch your attention?
- How does this quote describe human beings?
- What does it mean to be a *someone* rather than a *something*?
- With whom are we called to be in relationship? What does this quote imply about what our relationships should look like?

Human Dignity

“If we really believe that we are temples of the Holy Spirit, that we are vessels of the Divine, and icons of the Trinity, that, when God the Father looks at us, he sees the face of his Son, Jesus, can you imagine how differently we would treat ourselves and other people? That is morality, is it not?”

- How does this quote describe human beings?
- How would we treat people if we really believed this?

Consequences of Human Dignity

“Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia or wilful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are supreme dishonor to the Creator.”

Unintended Consequences of the One-Child Policy

- Aging population
- Gender imbalances, esp. in countries where there is a preference for male children
- Undocumented children



THE GHOST CHILDREN OF CHINA

In 1980, China introduced the one-child policy. In the process, it created a lost generation – second and third children who went unregistered, couldn't go to school, and who continue to live in the shadows. **Nathan VanderKlippe** explores the human and economic costs of one of the biggest social experiments in history