

University, Yale University, and the University of Pennsylvania. Professor Wilcox's research on religion and the family has been featured in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Times*, *USA Today*, and numerous NPR stations. Dr. Wilcox is married and the father of three children.

Notes

1. Luke Timothy Johnson. 2001. "Abortion, Sexuality, and Catholicism's Public Presence." *Commonweal* Fall 2001 Colloquium. New York: Union Theological Seminary.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Andrew Greeley, *The Catholic Myth*. New York: Collier Books, 1990.
4. Andrew Greeley. *The Catholic Myth*. p. 99.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
6. Robert Michael, Talk at Emory University family conference in March 2003.
7. George Akerlof, Janet L. Yellen, and Michael L. Katz. 1996. "An Analysis of Out-of-Wedlock Childbearing in the United States." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* CXI: 277–317. George A. Akerlof. 1998. "Men Without Children." *The Economic Journal* 108: 287–309.
8. Akerlof *et al.*, p. 279.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 309.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 313.
11. Akerlof, p. 289.
12. See Linda Waite and Maggie Gallagher, p. 179. Margaret F. Brinig and R.H. Buckley. 1998. "No-Fault Laws and At-Fault People." *International Review of Law and Economics* 18: 325–40.
13. Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur. 1994. *Growing up with a Single Parent*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. p. 29.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
16. Cynthia C. Harper and Sara S. McLanahan. 1998. "Father Absence and Youth Incarceration." Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (San Francisco).
17. McLanahan and Sandefur, p. 71.

Chapter 20: The Global War against Baby Girls

An Update

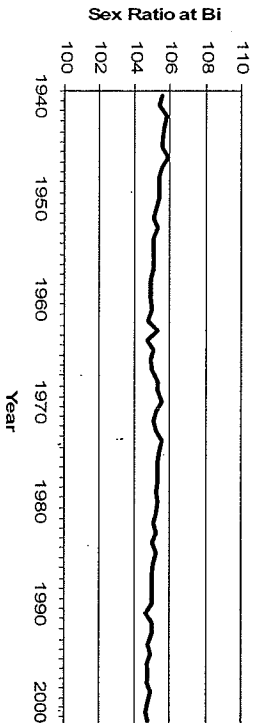
NICHOLAS EBERSTADT

Over the past three years the American public has received regular updates on what we have come to call "the global war on terror." A no-less significant global war – a war, indeed, against nature, civilization, and, in fact, humanity itself has also been underway in recent years. This latter war, however, has attracted much less attention and comment, despite its immense consequence. This world-wide struggle might be called "The Global War Against Baby Girls." It is a conflict of astonishing and ever more dismaying dimensions. Whatever one's personal estimate of our progress to date in the global war on terror, what remains beyond dispute is that humanity has been faring much more poorly in this other war. Herewith, my friends, an update on this global war's many different fronts.

For the entirety of human inquiry – and no doubt, since the beginning of time – there has been a clear and steadily observable biological regularity to the distribution of male and female offspring in those species that have just males and females. That regularity has been equally apparent for the human species. In fact, the earliest findings of demographers investigating the rhythms and regularities of human populations included the discovery of slight but constant and almost unvarying excess of baby boys over baby girls born in any population. This excess was so regular that it led early demographers like Johan Peter Sussmilch and others to believe that there was a natural intention in it. Regardless of intention, this slight surfeit of baby boys over baby girls is a proven biological and historical fact, so predictable and sure as to qualify as a rule of nature. What is called the "sex ratio at birth" by demographers – the number of baby boys born for every hundred baby girls – has been found in all settings and at all observed times to fall in a very narrow range: on the order of 103, 104, or 105 (and in rare cases, 106 or just a bit over).

The U.S. sex ratio at birth, which is tabulated fairly well, and is quite stable over time, offers an illustration of this regular disproportion.

Sex Ratios at Birth, All Races: United States, 1940-2002



Source: Derived from U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1978-2002 editions, Volume I.

These sex ratio differences can be observed in any ordinarily constituted population. For reasons not yet well understood, sex ratio variations on the basis of ethnicity can also be observed; even then they are fairly small and quite stable over time.

Sex Ratio at Birth by Ethnicity, United States: 1984

- Total: 105.0
- White: 105.4
- Black: 103.1
- American Indian: 101.4
- Chinese: 104.6
- Japanese 102.6

Source: Derived from U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1984 edition (1988), Volume I, Table 1-53.

Differences in sex ratio at birth also seem related to birth order and the age of parents. Again, these differences are small and fairly stable over time.

Sex Ratio at Birth, by Birth Order and Ethnicity, United States: 1984 Live Birth Order

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
All Races	105.4	105.0	104.8	104.6	103.8	100.6	101.2	100.9
White	105.8	105.3	105.2	104.8	105.3	102.3	101.5	101.4
Black	104.0	103.2	102.7	102.9	99.9	98.4	100.8	101.9

Source: Derived from U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1984 edition (1988), Volume I, Table 1-58.

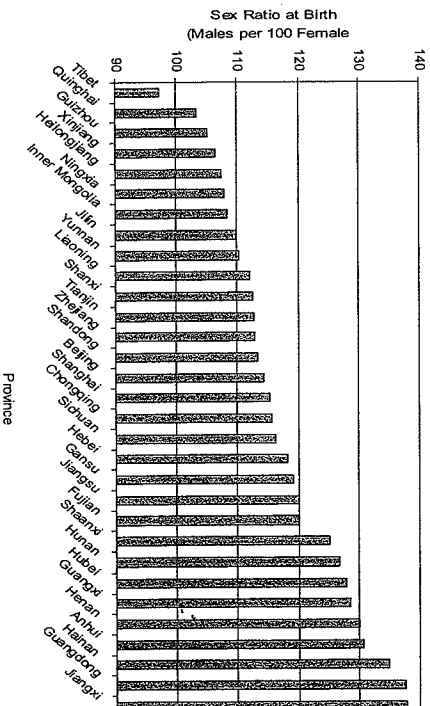
Sex Ratio at Birth, by Birth Order and Ethnicity, United States: 1993

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
All Races	105.4	104.9	104.8	103.7	103.4	105.4	104.3	103.0
White	105.7	105.4	105.3	104.2	103.7	106.1	105.3	104.4
Black	103.8	102.3	102.0	102.1	103.3	103.5	99.9	100.2

Source: Derived from U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1993 edition, Volume I.

However, in the last generation the sex ratio at birth in some parts of the world has become completely unhinged. The first evidentiary exhibit we may present for this unsettling new phenomenon comes from the People's Republic of China. Bearing in mind that the regular sex ratio at birth is in the order of 103, 104, 105, or a bit higher, let us explore China's November 2000 census, which reported sex ratios at birth by individual provinces. In the table below the red lines indicate the customary expectations of human populations.

CHINA: Sex Ratio at Birth, 2000, by Province



Source: *Tabulation on the 2000 Population Census of the People's Republic of China*, Vol. 13, Population Census Office under the State Council & Department of Population, Science, and Technology Statistics, National Bureau of Statistics of China (China Statistics Press: Hong Kong, 2001), Table 6-1.

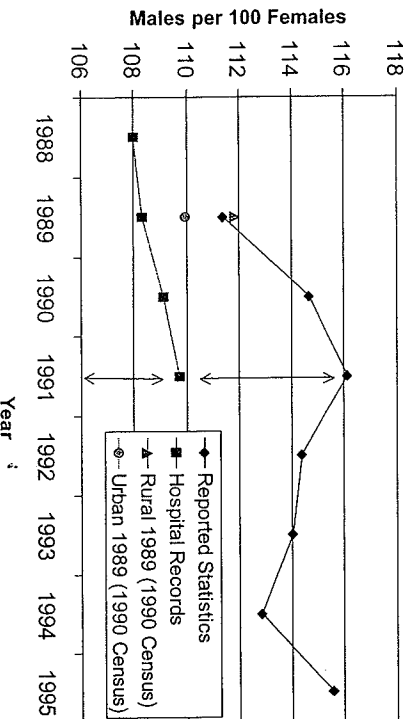
Clearly, there are only a few provinces in China that report a sex ratio at birth in the year 2000 under, or even as low as, 110. By contrast, in a number of provinces with populations of tens of millions of people,

the reported sex ratio at birth ranges from over 120 boys for every 100 girls to over 130 boys for every 100 girls.

A number of factors must be considered when accessing this type of data. For one, the calculations or tabulations could be wrong. As the Chinese government does not actually tabulate the vital statistics for its entire population on a year to year basis, playing "catch-up" with huge national population counts might possibly lead to some deviations in statistical data. Another reason for doubting these numbers could be China's longstanding program of population control, the notorious "one-child norm." If there is an existing preference for sons, as one might expect in a highly Confucian society where sons continue the family line, people might try to "game the system" by hiding baby girls to try for another "shot" at a son.

There are also some notable discrepancies in the Chinese demographic data. Daniel Goodkind of the Census Bureau, for example, has brought to light the fact that hospital birth numbers have regularly displayed a lower sex ratio at birth than the ones reported by the Census statistics. Even if we allow for the fact that hospital births tend to be more frequent in urban centers where the reported sex ratio disparity is smaller, the reported sex ratio disproportion in recent years is still highly anomalous.

**Sex Ratio at Birth Data in China:
Reported Statistics vs. Hospital Records, 1988-1995**

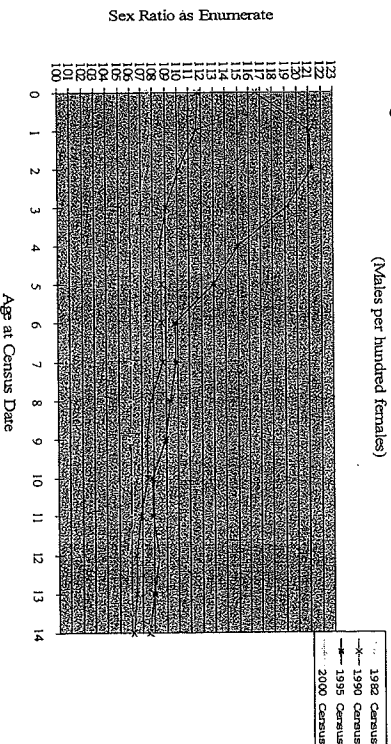


Sources: Zeng, et al., 1993; Population Census Office and State Statistical Bureau, Department of Population Statistics, 1993; National Bureau of Statistics, Department of Population and Employment Statistics, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995, and 1997; Gu and Roy, 1995.

Courtesy of Daniel Goodkind, U.S. Census Bureau, from his paper, *Recent Trends in the Sex Ratio at Birth in East Asia*, June 2002.

Moreover, Chinese Census statistics display a fairly high degree of internal consistency. For example, the 1990 census, which reported a ratio of almost 112 for babies under the age of one, corresponds with the 2000 census, which shows nearly the same ratio for 10-year-olds, ten years later. The consistency in data indicates that the statistics are not a mere artifact. Clearly, a highly unusual and utterly abnormal demographic process has been taking place in the world's largest population.

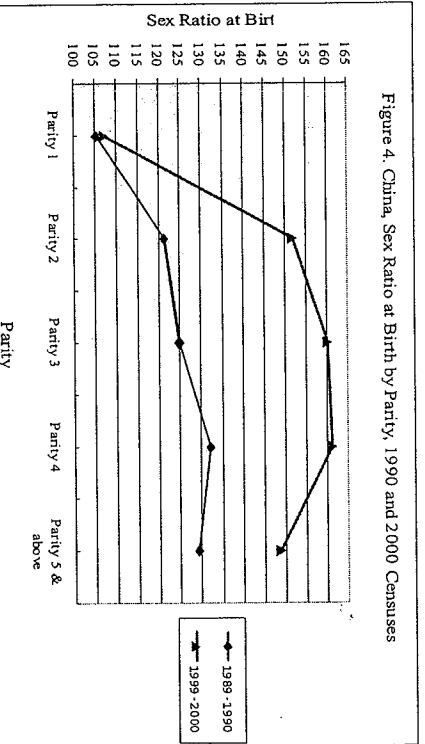
Figure 3. China, Sex Ratios of Children by Age, Censuses of 1982 - 2000
(Males per hundred females)



Source: Judith Banister, "Shortage of Girls in China Today: Causes, Consequences, International Comparisons, and Solutions," 2003

To understand the process that is perverting modern-day China's secondary sex ratio, it is necessary to examine the sex ratio at birth in

Figure 4. China, Sex Ratio at Birth by Party, 1990 and 2000 Censuses



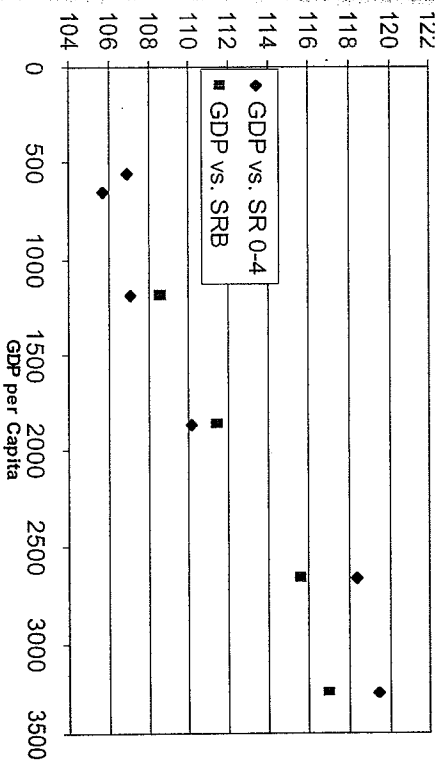
Source: Judith Banister, "Shortage of Girls in China Today: Causes, Consequences, International Comparisons, and Solutions," 2003

China according to the different parities and to birth order. A table prepared by Judith Banister, formerly of the Census Bureau, gives us significant insight into the developing demographic trends in China. For parity one, for first births, the sex ratio in China in 1990 and 2000 stood at just about 105 – an unexceptional ratio in any ordinary human population. The second, third, fourth and fifth order parities, however, display significant aberrations from the ordinary. For higher-order births, the most recent Chinese census displays sex ratios at birth of 150 boys and higher for every hundred baby girls – a phenomenon utterly without natural precedent in human history.

To emphasize the obvious, these anomalies are the reflection of the advent and rapid proliferation of inexpensive prenatal sex determination technology and the rampant use of abortion as a gender determination tool. At the very minimum, half of all second-order (or higher) female pregnancies in China are terminated on a gender-selective basis.

It would be heartening to think that the rapid modernization of the People's Republic of China would do away with the vestiges of "backward thinking" that are manifest in these dramatic demographic ratios. Unfortunately, the data currently available does not allow for any such optimism.

Sex Ratio at Birth vs. GDP per Capita: China, 1953–1999

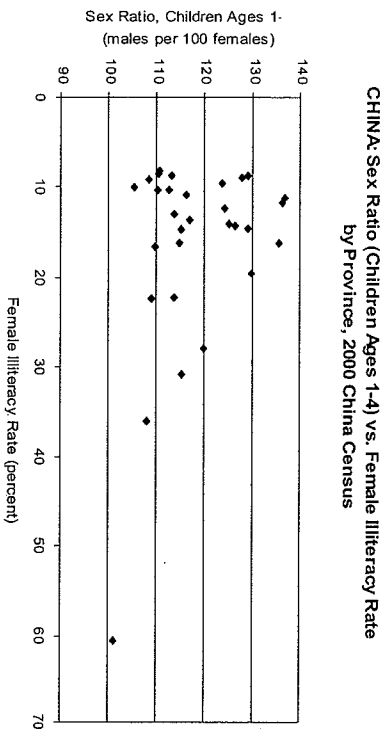


Sources: Lavelly, William. *First Impressions of the 2000 Census of China*. Available electronically at <http://csde.washington.edu/pubs/wps/01-13.pdf>, accessed 10/15/02. Maddison, Angus. *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*. OECD, 2003.

The correlation between income levels and sex ratios at birth by province does not offer reason for optimism, either. The steady increase in China's income level tracks directly with a steady rise in the disproportion between baby boys and baby girls at birth. Over the past two decades, recall, China's linkages with the outside world – through trade, investment, and communication – have also grown steadily. Evidently, "Globalization with Chinese characteristics" is not inconsistent with an extraordinary and still-increasing imbalance between baby boys and baby girls.

Although the People's Republic of China is notorious for its gruesome involuntary population control program, the data from other parts of East Asia do not afford us the happy presumption that China's aberrant demographic trends are the product of a single oppressive regime. Demographic reports from South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the Chinese ethnic groups in Singapore yield disturbingly similar results.

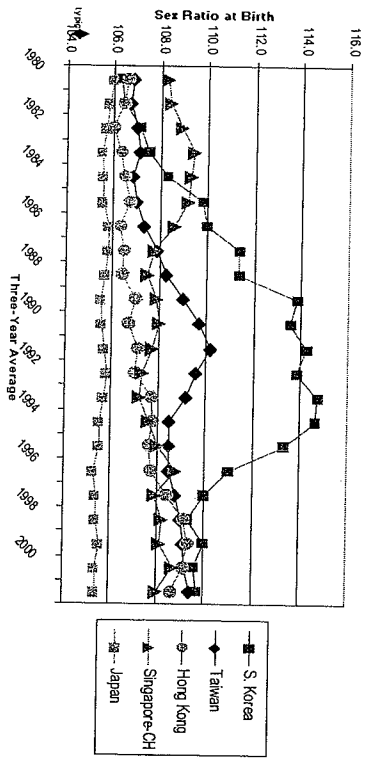
Although all four of East Asia's "little dragons" have implemented anti-national population programs at one time or another, none of them has been coercive. In addition, each of these places is significantly more educated and significantly more affluent than the population of the Chinese mainland, taken as a whole. Nevertheless, since the 1980s, all of these populations have exhibited biologically impossible sex ratios at birth.



Source: *Tabulation of the 2000 Population Census of the People's Republic of China*, Vols. 1 & II, Population Census Office under the State Council & Department of Population, Science and Technology Statistics, National Bureau of Statistics of China (China Statistics Press: Hong Kong, 2001), Tables 1.7 and 6.1.

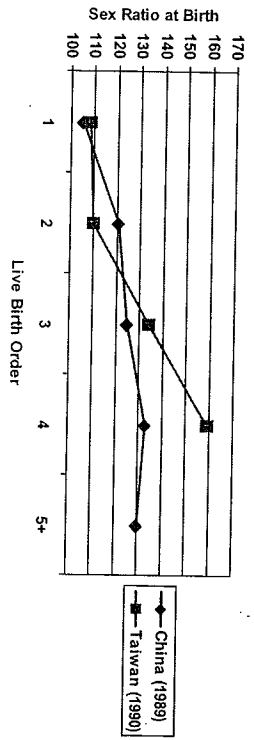
Not only is there no positive correlation between literacy rates and lower sex ratio at birth, but also in actuality there is negative correlation between the two. To the contrary: available data suggests that the higher the literacy rate in a given Chinese province, the higher the disproportion between baby boys and baby girls at birth that can be expected there.

Males per 100 Females, Three-Year Averages 1980-2001



Sources: National Statistical Office, 2002; Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, 1992 and 2000; Ministry of the Interior, 2001; Singapore Department of Statistics, 1990, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001a, 2001b; Census and Statistics Department, 1983 and 2000; National Institute Of Population and Social Security Research 2002.

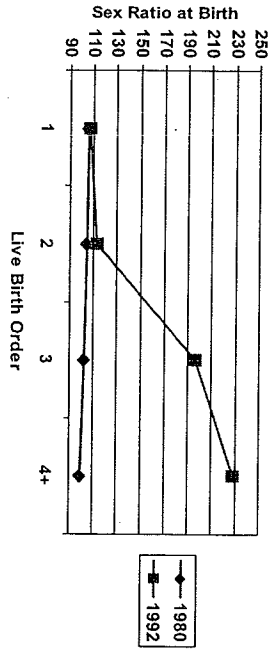
Taiwan shows sex ratio at birth according to parity or birth order very similar to those observed in China. In fact, for higher order births, the disproportion in Taiwan has been even more pronounced in certain recent periods.



Sex Ratio at Birth by Birth Order: China and Taiwan
 Source: Park and Cho, *Population and Development Review*, Volume 21, No 1 (March 1995).

As with China and Taiwan, South Korea's statistics from the 1990s reflect the advent and proliferation of prenatal gender-determination technology.

Sex Ratio at Birth by Birth Order, South Korea: 1980 vs. 1992



Source: Park and Cho, *Population and Development Review*, Volume 21, No 1 (March 1995).

The next figure shows similar parental decision-making dynamic at work in Hong Kong.

	Previous Birth		Total	
	Male	Female		
Sex Ratio Second Birth	105	116	110	
	Previous Births			
	Male-Male	Female-Female	Male-Female	Total
Sex Ratio Third Birth	94	137	92	109

The data from the East Asian Tigers warrant a revision of the hypothesis that the war on baby girls is limited to China – and is a consequence simply of and Beijing's coercive “one-child norm” population policy. Population control programs could surely be exacerbating gender imbalances, depending upon local norms – but just as clearly, they are not the driving force behind this phenomenon on the East Asian rim. Instead, it would seem to be due in these locales to a collision of three powerful factors: enormous and enduring son preference, the use of rapidly spreading prenatal sex determination technology for gender-based abortion, and the rapid drop in fertility in different populations, making the gender outcome in each birth all the more portentous for parents. However, there is much more to the global war on baby girls than is visible in East Asia alone.

Despite all the billions of dollars spent on population programs around the world, it is extremely hard to find population surveys indicating gender preference for a next child among potential parents. Fortunately in the case below, the Indian Government did ask its people: "What is your preference for the gender of your next child?" The following is the result of a recent survey from the late 1990s. It shows that for married women as a whole, the preference is over four to one for a boy.

Fertility and Child Gender Preference Among Married Women,

India: 1998-1999

Number of Living Children

	0	1	2	3	4+	Total
Desires an additional child	89.0	76.4	23.0	11.3	5.5	30.3

Preferred Sex of Addition Child

Boy	34.8	40.3	60.2	74.5	72.0	46.9
Girl	2.5	15.9	14.4	9.0	6.8	11.0
Number of respondents	7,620	13,631	20,836	18,359	23,202	83,649

Source: "National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2): 1998-99," (Bombay: Institute for Population Sciences, October 2000).

As the numbers for India are an arithmetic average, there are significant differences between its various states. The data from the state of Punjab, for example, a prosperous state up in the north, presents a startling extreme. For married women, in the year 1993, the reported Punjabi preference for boys as opposed to girls was over ten to one.

Fertility and Child Gender Preference Among Married Women,

Punjab, India: 1993

Number of Living Children

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+	Total
Desires an additional child	92.7	82.4	21.0	7.4	2.5	1.9	1.3	24.9

Preferred sex of additional child

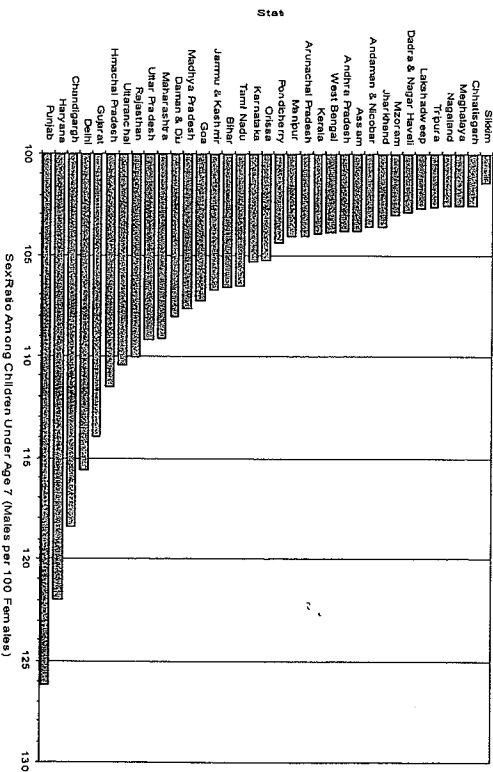
Boy	38.3	51.0	80.8	96.6	*	*	*
Girl	0.6	6.1	12.6	1.7	*	*	5.6

*: Percentage not shown, less than 25 respondents

Source: "National Family Health Survey (MCH and Family Planning): Punjab 1993," (Bombay: Institute for Population Sciences, September 1995).

How have India's strong preferences for sons translated into demographic results? The figure below provides some indication. These data, drawn from the latest Indian census are not for the sex ratio at birth, but rather for the ratio of boys and girls under the age of seven. Nevertheless, these numbers can be taken as a fairly serviceable proxy for sex ratio at birth since we have no great reason to think that they have been hugely affected either by sex-selective migration or by other post-birth, sex-selective mortality patterns. Clearly, in India that there are a number of states, which hit or exceed the biologically impossible sex ratio of 110 to 100. Note, by the way, that Punjab in the year 2001 counted 127 little boys for every 100 little girls.

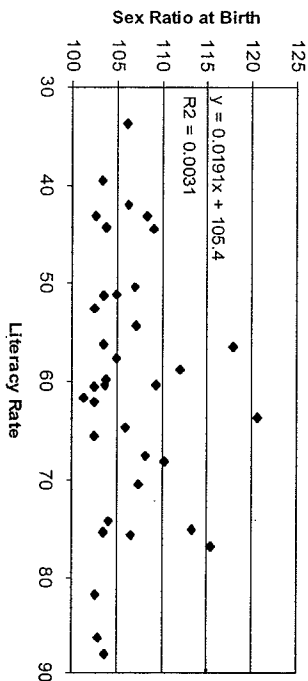
**INDIA: Sex Ratio Among Children Under Age 7
By State, 2001**



Source: Census of India, 2001, accessed 15 October 2002, available electronically at <http://www.censusindia.net/results/provincia2.html>

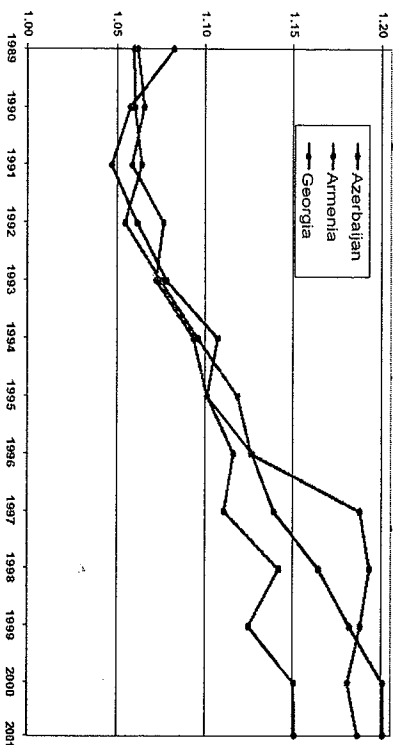
As with China and the other Asian Tigers, there is not much evidence from India's population census that education in India is vitiating the problem. The next graphic compares literacy rates for women and the disproportion between little boys and little girls in different states of India. Educational levels vary greatly among the states of India today. But to judge by this cross-section, literacy levels do not appear to have any immediate bearing on the reduction of gender disproportion.

Female Literacy Rate vs. Sex Ratio Ages 0-6: Indian Provinces, 2001



Sources: <http://www.censusindia.net/results/provindia2.html>, accessed 9/14/04; Census of India, 2001: Chapter 7, Statement 32, <http://www.censusindia.net/data/chapter7.pdf>, accessed 9/14/04.

Sex Ratio of the Population Under Age 1: Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, 1990-2001



Source: "Surprising Sex Ratios in the South Caucasus: Son Preferences in the Former Soviet States of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia," Dennis Donahue and Jennifer Fortado, International Programs Center, U.S. Census Bureau, May 2003.

China and India, of course, are the world's two most populous states, together accounting for nearly two fifths of the current human population. But our tour of battlefronts in the global war against baby girls is by no means yet concluded. I'm indebted to Dennis Donahue of the Census Bureau, who alerted me to the huge upsurge in the ratio of baby boys to baby girls in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia in the period since the end of the Soviet Union. Again, it is impossible to propose that natural biological processes would have caused such gender disproportions. Rather, the end of the Soviet regime ushered in an era of technological advance: including the advent of prenatal gender determination technology, which in turn made possible the practice of gender-selective abortions on a massive scale. In Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, these gender aberrations are approaching what one may call the "Chinese gold standard of gender disproportion."

Most of the population of Third World countries does not live in areas where governments track birth and death records on regular, comprehensive and reliable annual basis. There are preciously few countries in different parts of the world where annual vital registration data are accurately updated each year. Yet the limited data at hand reveal what are historically aberrant and, in any large national population, biologically impossible ratios in various countries around the world, including Europe and Latin America.

International Sex Ratios At Birth Over 107, Based On Vital Registration Data: Recent Years

Bulgaria	1997	108	Cuba	1998	109.4
Estonia	1997	107.8	"	1996	118.0
Greece	1998	107.2	El Salvador	1998	107.1
"	1995	108.0	Venezuela	1998	107.5
Luxembourg	1998	109.9	"	1996	107.5
Macedonia	1999	108.4			
"	1997	108.7			
"	1995	110.7			
Yugoslavia	1999	107.2			

Source: UN Demographic Yearbook, 1997 through 2000 editions.

Of the countries in Europe, Luxembourg is a possible statistical exception because of its extremely small annual number of births (under 6,000 a year in the late 1990s). Macedonia, however, cannot claim the same exemption from the laws of sampling error, and in Yugoslavia, it

becomes clear, *ethnic* cleansing is not the only national demographic sport.

Again, in East Asia, Macau follows the echoes of the Chinese mainland and nearby Hong Kong. In largely Muslim Malaysia, the Philippines, and in Singapore, too, the gender ratios are abnormally high. It is worth noting that Singapore's national ratio is higher than the Chinese ethnic ratio, which suggests that local Malaysian and Indian populations have even higher sex ratios at birth than the local Chinese population.

International Sex Ratios At Birth Over 107, Based On Vital Registration Data: Recent Years, Continued

Country	Year	Ratio	Country	Year	Ratio
Macau	2000	111.7	Cyprus	1998	107.1
Malaysia (Peninsular)	1998	107.1	Kyrgyzstan	1996	107.2
Philippines	1993	108.7	Pakistan	1997	107.7
Singapore	2000	109.2	"	1994	110.9
			"	1993	110.0
			Qatar	1992	107.2
			Cape Verde	1990	107.5
			Egypt	1995	108.7
			"	1990	109.3
			Libya	1996	108.5
			Tunisia	1995	107.3

Source: UN Demographic Yearbook, 1997 through 2000 editions.

Preferred Sex of Next Child: Pakistan, 1990-91

Category	Gender Preference			Number of Women
	Son	Daughter	No Preference/Other	
No children	31.7	0.2	67.6	512
One child	49.5	4.3	46.2	548
Two children	47.5	11.0	41.5	417
Three children	63.9	7.0	29.1	329
Four children	62.8	6.4	30.6	193
Five children	59.3	4.5	36.2	175
Total	49.1	5.2	45.6	2174

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25 to 49 unweighted women - less than 0.05 percent. Source: <http://www.measurewds.com/pubs/pdf/RR29/08Chapter8.pdf> accessed 9/15/04.

Moving toward the African continent Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia, that is to say, most of the countries of the Maghreb, display notable gender

irregularities. And in Western Asia, anomalous gender imbalances are reported in Qatar, Kyrgyzstan, Cyprus, Pakistan (which does not have comprehensive vital statistics registration, but records large numbers of births on a regular basis).

One may wonder: what are the prospects for the war against baby girls in the globe's vast Muslim expanse? As it happens, one of the few countries in the Third World that *does* ask about gender preference for the next birth is the government of Pakistan. Just as in many parts of India, a preference for boys over girls in the order of ten to one is evident.

Another rare survey on parental gender preference for a next child exists for the country of Yemen. The graph below clearly shows the preference of parents for boys over girls to be many fold.

Preferred Sex of Next Child: Yemen, 1997

Category	Gender Preference				Number of Women
	Son	Daughter	No preference	God's will	
No children	28.3	13.1	44.2	14.2	770
One child	56.6	3.2	28.6	10.7	367
No sons	8.0	51.2	29.1	11.7	386
Two children	72.4	1.4	13.3	12.8	146
No sons	28.1	9.5	41.1	20.5	271
Two sons	5.4	66.9	20.5	7.2	156
Three children	76.4	0.0	7.0	16.6	65
No sons	47.3	1.9	36.1	13.9	134
Two sons	14.7	35.3	36.9	12.7	181
Three sons	(0.0)	(83.4)	(11.3)	(5.3)	66
Four children	82.6	2.9	12.7	1.8	38
No sons	61.2	5.4	21.2	12.0	89
Two sons	28.4	6.3	41.0	24.3	99
Three sons	15.7	46.8	25.0	11.6	83
Four sons	12.4	64.1	11.4	12.1	19
Five children+	86.4	0.0	10.6	3.0	25
No sons	73.0	0.7	11.8	14.6	65
Two sons	39.2	2.2	40.4	18.3	110
Three sons	29.2	19.4	33.6	17.9	139
Four sons	20.3	26.4	43.7	8.5	104
Five sons or more	16.1	53.2	22.6	7.1	76
Family composition	28.3	13.1	44.2	14.2	770
No living children	6.4	60.0	24.0	9.6	622
All boys	64.9	2.4	21.3	11.0	641
All girls	27.9	8.5	42.1	21.0	430
Boys = Girls	16.1	38.1	33.0	12.0	460
Boys > Girls	51.9	3.1	30.1	14.6	447
Boys < Girls	32.6	21.2	32.4	13.3	3,369

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25 to 49 unweighted women - less than 0.05 percent. Source: <http://www.measurewds.com/pubs/pdf/RR94/06Chapter06.pdf> accessed 9/15/04.

The Palestinian Authority also collects survey information on gender preference. For women in the West Bank in Palestine, the preference for a boy over a girl as next birth is almost three to one. For men it is over five to one. This even more exaggerated preference for boys on the part of prospective fathers should be kept in mind. After all the role of men in determining family outcomes in a traditional Islamic setting is not exactly incidental.

Sex Preference for Next Child Among Palestinian Women and Husbands Who Want More Children: West Bank, 2001

	Women (n=424)			Husbands (n=513)		
	Boy	Girl	Up to God	Boy	Girl	Up to God
Total	27.5	10.6	61.9	35.7	6.9	57.3
Sex composition of living children						
No boys	35.8	6.7	57.5	36.2	8.6	55.2
No girls	16.3	20.5	63.2	22.9	14.6	62.4
Boys > girls	7.0	26.1	67.0	27.9	10.4	61.7
Boys = girls	21.3	8.5	70.1	22.7	9.4	68.0
Boys < girls	49.7	0.7	49.7	55.1	1.7	43.3

Source: client exit interview

Source: http://www.hdip.org/reports/php_baseline.htm#tab7, Table 7, accessed 9/15/04.

Taken together the data assembled above presents compelling evidence that the war against baby girls is, indeed, a war of truly global proportions. It encompasses East and West Asia, the Indian subcontinent, North Africa, parts of Europe and the western hemisphere.

- Are There Any Leading Indicators for Future SRB Imbalances?
- Possibly, death rates for ages 1-4.
- Male rates are normally always higher
- If death rates for little girls are higher, this may be evidence of existing deadly discrimination practices
- We can determine child mortality rates from national "life tables" published by WHO and UNPD

Data on parental preferences for next birth would be most useful in predicting the development of the global war on baby girls. A second best indicator would be information on death rates for little girls and little boys. Just as there is a biological regularity to the number of baby boys and baby girls born in any normal population, there is also a biological regularity to mortality schedules. At any given age, in a normal population, the death rate for males is a little higher than that for females. This can be seen over time, in different settings, different eth-

nicities, and different countries. It is an occurrence so regular, that it again may be taken as a rule.

Nevertheless, there are places in the world where the death rates for little girls, on an episodic or on a regular basis, are higher than those for little boys. If we take those abnormal and highly unusual distortions as a sign of extreme son preference, we should examine how the imbalance between sex ratios at birth corresponds with those peculiar patterns where death rates for little girls are higher than those for little boys. It is worth investigating what countries remain in these regions where, so to speak, the sex-ratio-at-birth "shoe" had not yet been dropped.

- Key To Following Charts**
- Boldface:** history of deadly discrimination plus existing SRB imbalance
 - No boldface: history of deadly discrimination against little girls but not SRB imbalance yet detected
 - Asterisk*: population over 25% Muslim

The chart below identifies five places in East Asia where historically there have been higher death rates for little girls than for little boys, and where today we see impossible sex ratios at birth. It should be noted, however, that there are as yet many other places in East Asia where there have been reports of higher death rates for little girls than for little boys - but where the sex ratio at birth has not yet risen to biologically impossible levels.

The Shape of Things To Come? East Asia & Pacific	
China	Democratic People's
Hong Kong	Republic of Korea
Peninsular Malaysia*	Mongolia
Republic of Korea	Myanmar
Taiwan	Nauru
Brunei*	Sabah*
Burma	Sarawak*
Cambodia	Thailand

Note: Italicized countries rely on data from the UN Population Division life tables; Regular font indicates data from World Health Organization life tables.

Sources: World Health Organization Life Tables, available online at http://www3.who.int/whosis/life_tables/life_tables.cfm?path=evidence/life_tables&language=english accessed 9/15/04; United Nations Population Division Life Tables.

South Asia has a history of prejudicial death rates for little girls. Thus far, the sex ratios at birth in India and Pakistan have felt the effect of this prejudicial treatment. There is a reason to wonder whether the

"fertile ground" in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka will be plowed in the same manner in the years ahead.

The Shape of Things To Come? South Asia

India Maldives*
Pakistan* Nepal
Bangladesh* Sri Lanka
 Bhutan

Note: Italicized countries rely on data from the UN Population Division life tables. Regular font indicates data from World Health Organization life tables.

Sources: World Health Organization Life Tables, available online at http://www3.who.int/whosis/life_tables/life_tables.cfm?path=evidence,life_tables&language=english accessed 9/15/04; United Nations Population Division Life Tables.

Three large countries in Europe (Greece, Macedonia, and Yugoslavia) betray some hints of prejudicial death rates for little girls in the post-war period. These differentials, should be emphasized, are not enormous – to the contrary, they are very small – but are nonetheless curious and unusual. Three other European countries (Italy, Luxembourg, and Norway) have seen strange and noteworthy increases of imbalances in sex ratio at birth, but have not yet reached biologically impossible levels.

The Shape of Things To Come? Europe

Greece Italy
Macedonia* Luxembourg
Yugoslavia Norway

Note: Italicized countries rely on data from the UN Population Division life tables. Regular font indicates data from World Health Organization life tables.

Sources: World Health Organization Life Tables, available online at http://www3.who.int/whosis/life_tables/life_tables.cfm?path=evidence,life_tables&language=english accessed 9/15/04; United Nations Population Division Life Tables.

The Shape of Things To Come? Latin America/Caribbean

El Salvador Dominican Republic
Venezuela Guatemala
 Antigua and Barbuda Haiti
Bahamas Honduras
Barbados Mexico
 Bolivia Nicaragua
Chile Peru
Columbia Puerto Rico
Costa Rica Uruguay

Note: Italicized countries rely on data from the UN Population Division life tables. Regular font indicates data from World Health Organization life tables.

Sources: World Health Organization Life Tables, available online at http://www3.who.int/whosis/life_tables/life_tables.cfm?path=evidence,life_tables&language=english accessed 9/15/04; United Nations Population Division Life Tables.

In the western hemisphere, Venezuela and El Salvador both have unnatural death rates for little girls and now also display unnatural sex ratios at birth. The rest of the countries in the list warrant careful observation in the future.

With the exception of Armenia, there are significant Muslim populations in all of the other countries in the table below. Four of those countries (Cyprus, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia) have already reported both adverse death rates for little girls and abnormal gender imbalances in sex ratio at birth. The rest of the countries listed may demarcate a field of concern for the future. Note, incidentally, that the Palestinian population in the West Bank – whose preference for sons is so strongly ratified in health and demographic survey data – happens to be one of those showing abnormal death ratio for little girls.

The Shape of Things To Come? Middle East/North Africa/West Asia

Armenia Iraq*
Cyprus* *Israel (non-Jewish pop)**
Egypt* Jordan*
Libya* *Kuwait**
Tunisia* Lebanon*
 Afghanistan* Oman
Algeria* Syria*
Bahrain* Tajikistan*
Djibouti* Yemen*
 Iran*

Note: Italicized countries rely on data from the UN Population Division life tables. Regular font indicates data from World Health Organization life tables.

Sources: World Health Organization Life Tables, available online at http://www3.who.int/whosis/life_tables/life_tables.cfm?path=evidence,life_tables&language=english accessed 9/15/04; United Nations Population Division Life Tables.

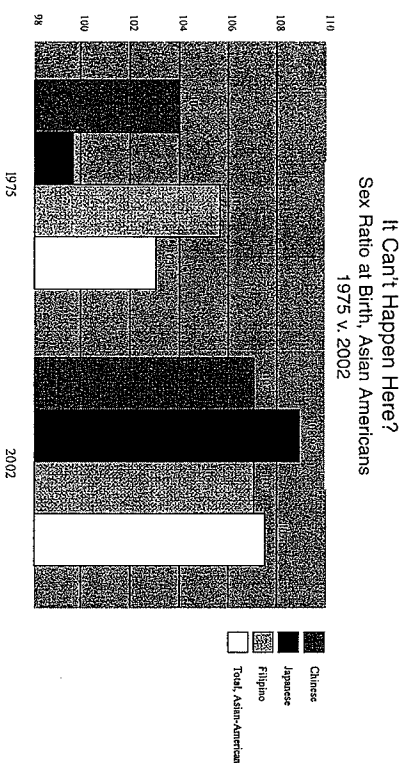
In sub-Saharan Africa there apparently as yet no indications of abnormal gender imbalances at birth. But estimated life tables for almost every country in the sub-Saharan are imprinted with discriminatory discrepancies between death rates of little girls and little boys. The absence of any indications as yet of unnatural sex ratios at birth in the sub-Saharan may have to do with wise parental decisions. On the other hand, it might simply speak to the lack of prenatal sex determination technology in those areas of the world – so far.

The Shape of Things To Come? Sub-Saharan Africa		
Angola	Ethiopia*	Mozambique
Benin	Gabon	Namibia
Botswana	Gambia*	Niger*
<i>Burkina Faso*</i>	Ghana	Nigeria*
Burundi	Guinea-Bissau*	Reunion
Cameroon	Kenya	Rwanda
Central African Republic	Lesotho	Sao Tome
Chad*	Liberia	Senegal*
Comoros	Madagascar	Sierra Leone*
Congo	Malawi	Somalia*
Cote d'Ivoire	Mali	Sudan*
Dem. Republic of the Congo	Mauritania*	Swaziland
Equatorial New Guinea	Mauritius	Tanzania*
Eritrea*		Togo
		Uganda
		Zambia
		Zimbabwe

Note: Italicized countries rely on data from the UN Population Division life tables. Regular font indicates data from World Health Organization life tables.

Sources: World Health Organization Life Tables, available online at http://www3.who.int/whosis/life_tables/life_tables.cfm?path=evidence/life_tables&language=english accessed 9/15/04; United Nations Population Division Life Tables.

Perhaps this portrait of a war that is apparently unfolding on practically every continent outside North America around the world should make us happy we live in the United States. Unfortunately, the situation



Note: Total 1975 births for each population are as follows: Chinese, 8413; Japanese, 7442; Filipino, 11233. Total 2002 births for each population are as follows: Chinese, 33673; Japanese, 9264; Filipino, 33016.

Source: Derived from U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1975 and 2002 editions, Volume 1.

is not necessarily rosy in "the land of the free." Some of the changes in reported sex ratios at birth in the United States over the past generation are deeply disturbing. There has been a notable and substantial increase, for example, in sex ratios at birth for the Chinese-American population, the Japanese-American population, and the Filipino-American population, as well as for the Asian-American population as a whole. All of these American ethnicities now exhibit sex ratios at birth that could be considered biologically impossible.

By the same logic that led us to remove Luxembourg from immediate suspicion in a previous graphic — i.e., low sample size — we may wish similarly to exempt our Asian-American populations. An argument could be made that these statistical data cannot be accorded too much confidence, because there are relatively few Asian-Americans in our midst, because Asian-Americans have relatively low fertility levels, and because we are looking at relatively small numbers of total births in any given year.

Such arguments, unfortunately, do not withstand scrutiny, under ordinary application of the techniques of statistical inference. In 1975 Asian-American births totaled roughly 130,000 to 140,000. In 2002 their numbers exceeded 200,000. These are not small "sample sizes". Under a "normal distribution" we can calculate just how likely would be the Asian-American 1975 and 2002 birth rates presented in the graph were chance discrepancies: those odds work out to about 1.5 in a billion. To make the odds even smaller, we could "pool" data: adding together the figures on births and sex ratios at birth for recent years, and then comparing those results to the corresponding figures from the early 1970s. Viewed from this perspective, the odds against seeing the recently SRBs reported by Asian-American communities as an artifact of pure chance would rise into the tens of billions.

"It can't happen here"? Think again: quantitative data and applied statistical reasoning provide us with unavoidable evidence beyond any reasonable doubt that *it is happening here*.

How will the global war against baby girls unfold in the years immediately ahead? At the dawn of the 21st century, sex preference for boys is prevalent in many parts of the world. Prenatal gender determination technologies are becoming increasingly accessible and inexpensive. And as my colleague Ben Wattenberg points out in his book *Fewer: How the New Demography of Depopulation Will Shape Our Future*, fertility trends all around the world are dropping rapidly, and lower than ever before: at this juncture, approximately half the world's population lives in countries where sub-replacements levels of fertility currently prevail.

If my hypothesis above is correct — that is to say, if the freakish SRBs we are now beginning to witness around the world are the consequence of a by the fateful collision between overweening son preference, the use of rapidly spreading prenatal sex determination technology for gender-based abortion, and the low or dramatically declining fertility levels — then it may well be, as the late President Ronald Reagan said in a very different context, that “You ain’t seen nothing yet!”

Nicholas Eberstadt holds the Henry Wendt Chair in Political Economy at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., and is senior adviser to the National Bureau of Asian Research in Seattle, Washington. For over twenty years Mr. Eberstadt served as a member of Harvard University’s Center for Population and Development Studies, and he continues to serve as a member of the Visiting Committee for the Harvard School of Public Health. Mr. Eberstadt regularly consults for governmental and international organizations and is often invited to offer expert testimony before Congress. Mr. Eberstadt has published over three hundred studies in scholarly and popular journals and has authored over a dozen books and monographs. Mr. Eberstadt lives in Washington, D.C., with his wife, Mary, and their four children. (He offers thanks to Ms. Assia Dosseva and Ms. Courtney Richard for research assistance with the present paper.)

Session VI: Theological Developments Regarding the Family since Vatican II: As Nuptial Body and As Domestic Church

Chapter 21: John Paul II and the “Nuptial Attribute” of the Body The Family and the Future of Humanity

DAVID L. SCHINDLER, PH.D.

This session of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Convention on “The International Year of the Family” is assigned the task of reflecting on theological developments regarding the family since Vatican II, treating in particular the topics of the “nuptial body” and the “domestic Church.” Our division of labor gives Professor Atkinson the main burden of developing the latter notion. My own focus is on what Pope John Paul II, in his Wednesday audiences on *The Theology of the Body*, terms the “nuptial attribute” of the body. This notion, to which the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s recent — and wonderful — letter on the collaboration of men and women,¹ goes to the heart of the ecclesial and cultural achievements of the papacy of John Paul II. It is perhaps the true key to understanding the contrast between what the pope terms the “culture of life” on the one hand and the “culture of death” on the other. He states in his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* that “the future of humanity passes by way of the family.”² My proposal, in the name of the Holy Father, is that the nuptial attribute of the body is fundamental for understanding the relationships proper to the family, and that recovery of an understanding of the body as nuptial is therefore indispensable if the humanity that passes through the family is to have a viable future.

This centrality of the notion of the nuptial body and, further, of the nuptial relations proper to the family, implies that the most crucial problems of our time bear on the sexual difference and the nature of marital-