



India Lets Its Daughters Die

Feminists such as Betty Friedan, a radical agitator for much of her life, ignored the misogyny of the Soviet Union, which had a uniformly male Politburo, while condemning America and its foundations of faith. This bigotry against Christianity and Judaism would not be as noxious if the record of people outside the Judeo-Christian value system had not been so conspicuously worse toward women.

Islam, for example, not only allows polygamy (for men only, of course), child marriage, “temporary” wives, rapine in conquest, and the other more familiar horrors, but presumes that women are congenitally immoral. Mohammed declared that most of the souls in Hell were women, and that what awaits women after death is not a bevy of handsome male virgins.

The foul treatment of women in Shinto, as it was practiced in Imperial Japan, was noted by every Westerner who visited the country. Nothing anywhere in Christendom remotely compared to the almost sadistic treatment of women in pre-war Japan. Only when Judeo-Christian values were imposed from above by MacArthur did Japanese women achieve anything like equality before the law or within their society.

China also practiced foot-binding, the deliberate crippling of women for aesthetic purposes, and the odious treatment of women by Mao has become better known since honest biographies of this monstrous tyrant's life have been published. Forced abortion in China has been another method for discriminating against women. There are only 885 girls born in China for every 1,000 boys. Because little happens in China without the sanction of the state, it is a logical supposition that the communist rulers of that nation have no problem with gender-specific abortions.

India, however, may be the [worst place](#) on earth to be a female. Hinduism historically considered an unmarried woman to be without a soul. Marriage, however, was not much better. Widows were often cremated alive on their husband's funeral pyre in the practice of suttee, and other widows could not remarry. Girls, before puberty, were married as brides against their will, sometimes to men of advanced age, and a significant percentage of child births in India were once by these child brides. Gandhi's wife gave birth to their first child when she was only 15. (The saintly Indian also beat his wife early in their marriage.)

What ended the worst of these practices was British rule and unwelcome publicity by Western writers in the 1930s and 1940s. Some things, however, never changed: Indians want boys, not girls, and this preference seems to be strengthening. Ten years ago, there were only 927 girls under age six in India for every 1,000 boys the same age. The most recent data show that over the last decade the number of





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Indian girls under age six has dropped to 914 compared to 1,000 boys.

The grim reality of gender selection by death was seen in a hospital in Morena, India. Female infants there were dying of malnutrition and outright starvation. The state has prohibited the medical staff from telling the prospective parents the gender of their unborn children in order to prevent the selective murder of female fetuses; however, the gender selection seems to be going on after birth as well as before.

Morena is a prime example of this practice. Ten years ago there were only 829 girls age six or younger for every 1,000 boys under age six or young in Morena. Today that ratio has actually sharpened. There are only 825 girls under age six for every 1,000 boys the same age. Sanju, a woman in a Morena hospital ward, sat with her severely malnourished nine-month-old daughter. She explained the different treatment for baby sons and baby daughters: "My mother-in-law says a boy is necessary." Another woman in the same hospital, whose daughter is obviously starving to death, simply shrugged when asked what is wrong with her daughter.

Lalitha Gujar, a nurse in the hospital, reports: "Women cry when they have girls." Sudha Misra, a social worker in the region, notes the different treatment of women who bear sons and women who bear daughters: "If a woman has a boy, for a month she will be looked after. If she has a girl, she'll be back in the field in three days." R.C. Bandil, head of the district hospital, explains why so many young girls die in India and the way food is served in the home: "A malnourished child will get sick and the chances of death are very high. First the husband is seated and fed, then the brothers and then whatever is left over is fed to the girls. If there are two mangos in the house, first the boy will get to eat."

Gopal Krishna Pillai, Home Secretary of India, acknowledges the seriousness of the problem, in light of the latest data: "Whatever measures ... have been taken in the last forty years have not had any impact." Ravinder Kaur, professor of sociology at the Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi, notes that the problem is not inadequate laws but rather "a society that values boys over girls.... Laws are good because they may act as a deterrent but people find more devious ways [to gender select their children]."

If so much of the world treats females like debris, then where did the world get the idea that women and girls deserve the same love and dignity as males? The [Tanach](#) provides some clues. In the Jewish Bible, one finds the "Book of Ruth" and the "Book of Esther" and one reads of the Hebrew people being delivered by women such as Deborah and Judith. The interaction of men and women as substantial personalities with moral values is a salient feature of Judaism.

Christianity, which grew out of this Jewish faith, believes that Jesus, God the Son, was born on earth of one of these Jewish women. Jesus actively engaged women during His years on earth, leaving no serious Christian with the option of treating women as contemptible. Historically the acceptance of women as the spiritual equal of men was one of the principal reasons, in purely sociological terms, why this new faith appealed to the Roman universe in a way that no other religion could.

But one need not hold his breath waiting for feminists to extol the unique virtues for women of the Jewish and Christian traditions and theology. These feminists are not concerned, really, with the welfare of women at all. They live to gain power, and they display a venomous hatred for men.



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