



19 rue Jacob
75006 PARIS
Tél. : 01 78 94 98 70
christophe.guilmoto@ceped.org

Paris, 27 September 2011

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

PUBLICAFFAIRS

250 West 57th Street, Suite 1321 New York, NY 10107

Fax: 212.397.4277

Sir,

I have read with interest the book written by Ms Hvistendahl and recently published by PublicAffairs (*Unnatural Selection*). This is a valiant effort to tackle an issue crucial to the social and demographic future of Asia.

I am, of course, familiar with the author since I have tried to extend all my help to her research on prenatal sex selection over the last two years. We met on several occasions (even in my apartment as the book depicts), talked often over the phone and exchanged numerous emails. In all these occasions, I tried to share as much knowledge as possible on this topic and I gave her the addresses of numerous friends and colleagues who were subsequently interviewed and mentioned in the book.

Unsurprisingly, I find my name mentioned in the book. You may easily notice that I am made the subject of the first chapter (“the demographer”) and if we are to believe the index, I am by far the most quoted individual in this book. I was not able to make it to the four-page acknowledgments, but I did receive a free copy of the book from the author as a tribute to my modest contribution.

What I have found most embarrassing is that in spite of all this, Mara Hvistendahl did not find it appropriate to submit my quotes in advance, including citations presumably drawn from personal discussions over mobile phones. In fact, the ms happened to be sent in advance to a friend of mine (MXXX KXXXXX). When I referred that to the author, she wrote to me (21/03/11): “The review copies are out now but I would prefer that you see the finished product, as that reflects changes made by a fact checker.” In other words, she actively (and successfully) did discourage me from looking at the book before its publication, which in retrospect I understand very well why.

As a result, many quotes attributed to me are either wrong, or simply used out of context. This has created an unpleasant academic and professional situation in which I

have to justify myself for misrepresented views and analyses attributed to me by Mara Hvistendahl and reproduced in the press.

I have no doubt that the author's attitude has been highly unprofessional. I let her know about it as soon as I had the opportunity to examine the contents of the book, at which point she immediately said that no change was possible. I know as well that she did take the trouble to run the quotes by some of my colleagues (even when they end with one line in the final book). I have received no excuse from her, but was told that this is the way journalists operate (really?).

My request to you is therefore modest.

I would like to get your assurance that any further edition of the book would be submitted to me so that I could review the quotes attributes to me and change the most grotesque of them. I have no desire to impede the discussion of the important issue of prenatal sex selection in Asia generated by this book (even if I am not personally impressed by the author's ethnocentric interpretations) nor do I want to punish the author for her sloppy, unprofessional behavior towards me (all journalists are not like her). But it does not take a genius to see that my work in this field and my views are misrepresented, that this jeopardizes my efforts over the last couple of years to advance the issue with international organizations and national governments. It is clear now to keep a safe distance from an author who appears to quote me when she listens to her own voices.

Let me know at the earliest if mine sounds like a reasonable request or whether I should pursue other options.

With regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CZ Guilmoto', written in a cursive style.

CZ Guilmoto

Directeur de recherche en démographie