



THE THREE DEADLIEST WORDS IN THE WORLD...

it's a girl

SHADOWLINE FILMS PRESENTS "IT'S A GIRL" FEATURING RITA BANERJI, REGGIE LITTLEJOHN,  
SABU GEORGE, MITU KHURANA, RANJANA KUMARI, PUNEET BEDI AND AVRAHAM EBENSTEIN  
PRODUCED BY ANDREW BROWN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY W. ASHLEY MADDOX NARRATED BY ANNE-MARIE MEEKS  
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY CHARLES DAVID DENLER DIRECTED BY EVAN GRAE DAVIS

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## Press Coverage:

World Magazine  
Light Melbourne Radio  
BBC Radio Five  
Voices of America China  
Ms. Magazine  
PANI Magazine  
Slate Magazine  
The Atlantic  
NorthJersey.com  
Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney  
Women Talk Online  
Toronto Star  
Whole Life Magazine  
Emirates Woman  
Her.meneutics (Christianity Today blog)  
Whole Life Times Blog  
Indiewire: Thompson On Hollywood  
IMDb  
CBC Radio  
Movie Guide  
Arizona Public Media (NPR)  
Tucson Weekly  
New Internationalist  
FrontPage Magazine  
Take Part  
The Catholic World Report  
700 Club Interactive  
The Independent  
MB Herald  
Liv&Rätt (Sweeden)  
Moody Radio  
Voice of America

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*"The film has hit a nerve amongst those in India and China advocating dignity and equality for women." - Women Talk Online*

*"Davis' directorial debut pieces together what's happened to the 200 million girls the U.N. estimates are missing worldwide." - Stephanie Geske, Ms. Magazine*

*"The film contains interviews with victims, families, global experts and grass-roots activists about what is happening to pregnant women and girls in the two countries and why more isn't being done about it." - Kara Yorio, NorthJersey.com*

*"Misogyny, poverty and antiquated cultural practices combine to make gendercide a complex issue to tackle. Yet It's a Girl is an assured piece of filmmaking that resoundingly succeeds in its aim to inform. A tour de force and a useful campaigning tool." - New Internationalist*

*"The filmmakers behind the documentary 'It's a Girl!', which raises the unsettling issue of gendercide in India, Southeast Asia and China via startling statistics and emotional personal accounts (trailer below), are joining online activist platform Causes.com to leverage social media to raise awareness and instigate social change." - Indiewire: Thompson On Hollywood*

*"In a new documentary, It's A Girl, filmmakers expose the horrific truth behind gendercide, an ancient practice that still exists today in societies where pressure to have a son in order to continue the family name is more important than a girl's life." - Emirates Woman*

*"Now a powerful award winning feature length documentary by American activist, father and film maker, Evan Grae Davis and his team at Shadowline Films has exposed the full horrifying extent of 'gendercide'. 'It's a Girl' reveals what is happening to newborns, girls and women in rural communities across India and China." - Catholic Communications, Sydney Archdiocese*

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**Run Time: 63 minutes**

**About:**

In India, China and many other parts of the world today, girls are killed, aborted and abandoned simply because they are girls. The United Nations estimates as many as 200 million girls are missing in the world today because of this so-called "gendercide."

Girls who survive infancy are often subject to neglect, and many grow up to face extreme violence and even death at the hands of their own husbands or other family members.

The war against girls is rooted in centuries-old tradition and sustained by deeply ingrained cultural dynamics which, in combination with government policies, accelerate the elimination of girls.

Shot on location in India and China, *It's a Girl* reveals the issue. It asks why this is happening, and why so little is being done to save girls and women.

The film tells the stories of abandoned and trafficked girls, of women who suffer extreme dowry-related violence, of brave mothers fighting to save their daughters' lives, and of other mothers who would kill for a son. Global experts and grassroots activists put the stories in context and advocate different paths towards change, while collectively lamenting the lack of any truly effective action against this injustice.

**Director's Statement:**

A decade and a half of capturing stories of poverty and human tragedy had left me almost numb. Repeated exposure to overwhelming need around the world has that effect. However, my first trip to India to research and film stories of gendercide exposed me to a whole new kind of suffering. Nothing I had seen in my travels even remotely compared to the scale of routine injustice seen in the practice of gendercide.

The war against girls is particularly heartbreaking to me because it is so often waged within family and community where a girl should find the greatest level of protection and provision. But centuries-old traditions, sustained by deeply ingrained cultural mores that say women are worth less than men, have robbed millions of women of the safety and security they should find at home and in their community. The thought of my own wife and daughter suffering in such a hostile environment is unthinkable!

The completion of *It's a Girl* has left me with more questions than answers: How can husbands and mothers perpetrate such violence against their own daughters and wives? How can the government of China, responsible for protecting its citizens, justify the coercive and destructive One Child Policy? How can doctors in India, trained to save life, participate in the taking of life on such a massive scale? How can the elected officials and judges in India stand by and

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refuse to enforce the laws that are in place to protect girls from such widespread abuse and neglect?

And, one of my greatest puzzles: how can the world community stand by and allow gendercide to continue? As members of that world community, we are obligated to act; to know is not enough. That is what we believe at Shadowline Films, and that is why we do what we do. As we release *It's a Girl*, I ask myself whether or not the world will respond to our call and rise up in defense of the innocent. My deep hope and desire is that the stories of *It's a Girl* will capture the hearts of audiences globally and compel us all to rise up and fuel a movement to end gender-based violence and killings, as well as resoundingly affirm the worth and dignity of girls and women in India, China and the rest of the world.

- Evan Grae Davis

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## Highlighting:



**Female Infanticide** – In southern India, village women share openly the methods they use to kill their newborn daughters.



**Dowry Death** - Maya and Raju's daughter Latika was strangled by her husband in what is known as a "dowry death."



**Female Feticide / Sex Selective Abortion** - When Dr. Mitu Khurana became pregnant, her in-laws bribed a doctor to perform an illegal ultrasound, which revealed she was carrying twin girls.



**Illegally Pregnant** – A Chinese couple is illegally pregnant with their second child. They already have a girl, and are hoping for a boy.



**Forced Abortion and Forced Sterilization** - Li and her family live in rural China where they are permitted two children under China's restrictive family planning policies. After giving birth to two girls, they decided to get pregnant again in the hopes of having a son.



**Child Trafficking** – Three year old Liu Ying was playing in front of her home one afternoon when she was kidnapped.



**Abandonment** - An elderly woman found an abandoned baby girl in a box alongside a river in southwestern China and brought her home to care for her.



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## Production:

- A scouting trip was taken to India in August 2010; the crew returned in February 2011 to film in New Delhi, Haryana, Calcutta and Salem. In China, the team filmed in five provinces during 2011.
- Dr. Ebenstein was interviewed in Washington, D.C. in August 2011. Reggie Littlejohn and Mark Shan were interviewed in Arizona in late 2011 and early 2012, respectively.
- *It's a Girl* was filmed on the Canon 5D Mark II and Canon 7D DSLR cameras.
- The majority of interviews and stories were filmed with natural light with an occasional small LED light to supplement.
- The film was edited by director Evan Grae Davis on Apple's Final Cut Pro software.
- More than 80 hours of footage was shot for the film, which runs 63 minutes.
- Hand illustrated, cutout-style animation, drawn by artist Michael Trujillo, helps to unpack the complexities of gendercide and lends a compelling and unique visual theme to the film. All animations were drawn by hand and then animated by Animal Volcano in collaboration with Garrett Moldrem.
- Emmy Award-winning composer Charles David Denler composed the score for the film in 2012. The primary theme for the film features Charles playing several types of hand-made Raku flutes to capture the indigenous styles of the regions featured in the film.

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## Biographies:

### **Evan Grae Davis - Director, *It's a Girl***

Husband, father, filmmaker, activist; Evan Grae Davis has traveled the world with camera in hand for nearly two decades advocating for social justice through writing and directing short documentaries and educational videos mobilizing support for non-profits and NGO's championing the cause of the poor and exploited. *It's a Girl* is Evan's first feature length documentary film. With nearly half a million people joining the cause to end gendercide so far as a result of his film, Evan is on a mission to mobilize a movement to restore dignity and value to the girls of India and China. Evan shares his journey and welcomes fellow travelers at [www.evangraedavis.com](http://www.evangraedavis.com)



### **Andrew Brown - Producer, *Shadowline Films***

Producer Andrew Brown has worked as a multimedia communications consultant for over a decade, coaching clients worldwide in both interactive and cross-cultural communications. Passionate about film and storytelling, Andrew joined the Shadowline Films team in 2009. Living in East Asia, Western Europe and North America gave Andrew unique empathy for the tremendous cultural tensions families in India and China face. Humanizing the characters in the film and telling their stories was his driving force as he led both research and production for the shoots throughout India and China. Today he spearheads the international marketing and distribution of *It's a Girl*.

### **Rita Banerji - Founder, *50 Million Missing Campaign***

Rita Banerji is an author, photographer, and gender activist. She is the founder of The 50 Million Missing Campaign ([50millionmissing.info](http://50millionmissing.info)) a global lobby that raises international awareness about the ongoing female genocide in India. Her book *Sex and Power: Defining History, Shaping Societies* (Penguin Books, 2008) is a historical study of the relationship between sex and power in India, and how it has led to the ongoing female genocide in India. [www.ritabanerji.com](http://www.ritabanerji.com)



### **Reggie Littlejohn - President, *Women's Rights Without Frontiers***

Reggie Littlejohn is President of Women's Rights Without Frontiers, a non-partisan, international coalition to oppose forced abortion, gendercide and human trafficking in China. As an internationally acclaimed expert on China's One Child Policy, she has testified five times at the U.S. Congress, twice at the European Parliament and once at the Irish and British Parliaments. She has briefed the White House, State Department and Vatican and has appeared on CNN, C-SPAN and BBC. She also led the international coalition to free blind Chinese activist Chen Guangcheng, who was jailed, tortured and denied medical treatment for exposing forced abortion and forced sterilization in China. He arrived in the United States on May 20, 2012.



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## **Jing Zhang - Executive Director, Women's Rights in China**

Jing Zhang had been a long time women's rights and pro-democracy activist in China. She was jailed for five years for her involvement in the Democratic Movement. In 2007 she founded Women's Rights in China to popularize the concept of women's rights and advocate for the weak and underprivileged in China. Jing directs projects aimed at the prevention of female infanticide, the education of abandoned female orphans, the reuniting of trafficked children with their families, and the advocacy on behalf of forced abortion victims. Her work with WRIC has raised public awareness about the harmful effects of the One Child Policy on girls such as severe gender imbalance and the widespread trafficking of child brides. Jing and Women's Rights in China were an integral part in discovering several stories featured in *It's a Girl*.



## **Shreeya Sinha - Award-Winning Journalist**

Shreeya Sinha is an award-winning journalist and multimedia editor currently at The New York Times as a foreign news producer. Shreeya is the winner of Alfred I. duPont - Columbia University Awards, Pictures of the Year International and was nominated for an Emmy and Webby for "Undesired," a multimedia project about violence against women in India featuring photojournalist Walter Astrada's work. Shreeya grew up in India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and the foothills of the Indian Himalayas. She also field directed and filmed some of the segments from India featured in *It's a Girl*.

## **Dr. Ranjana Kumari - Director, Centre for Social Research, Delhi**

Dr. Ranjana Kumari is a prominent activist and a leading force in the women's movement in India. Dr. Ranjana Kumari is Director of the Centre for Social Research (CSR) and President of Women Power Connect (WPC) India's only lobbying organization focused on gender issues. She is the author of 9 books, including *Brides Are Not For Burning* and *Women in Decision Making*.

## **Dr. Sabu George - Public Health Activist and Fellow, Intercultural Resources, Delhi**

Dr. Sabu George is a consultant on female foeticide, a public health activist and one of the leading influencers behind India's landmark Prenatal Diagnostics Techniques Act (enacted in 1994 and brought into operation in 1996), banning sex selection.

## **Dr. Avraham Ebenstein - Economist and Demographer, Hebrew University of Jerusalem**

Dr. Avraham Ebenstein is a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a researcher on the impact of fertility control policy in China on the sex ratio. He has investigated policies that might address the "missing girls" phenomenon in Asia.

## **Dr. Puneet Bedi - Obstetrician, Gynecologist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi**

Dr Puneet Bedi is an obstetrician, gynecologist and fetal medicine specialist at the Indraprastha Apollo hospital in New Delhi. Encountering the systematic pursuit for male children among India's elite led him to become a gender rights activist calling for accountability; in particular within India's medical community.

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## Cast:

RITA BANERJI	RANJANA KUMARI
PUNEET BEDI	LI FANG
GLORY DASS	THE LI FAMILY
AVRAHAM EBENSTEIN	REGGIE LITTLEJOHN
SABU GEORGE	LIU YING
JI YISITIE	LIU JUN MING
JI KAITE	MANASI MISRA
JI SHALA	BIJAYALAXMI NANDA
MITU KHURANA	RUO HAN
ARNAND KUMAR	MARK SHAN
AMITABH KUMAR	

## Crew:

Director.....	EVAN GRAE DAVIS
Producer.....	ANDREW BROWN
Director of Photography.....	W. ASHLEY MADDOX
Original Music.....	CHARLES DAVID DENLER
Artist.....	MICHAEL JOSEPH TRUJILLO
Narrator.....	ANNE-MARIE MEEKS
Story Consultant.....	JEFF DAVENPORT
Editor.....	EVAN GRAE DAVIS
Camera.....	MICHAEL DOHRMAN EVAN GRAE DAVIS

### China First Unit

Field Director.....	VERONIKA CHEN
Camera .....	PAT MIYAGI

### India Second Unit

Field Director / Camera.....	SHREEYA SINHA
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Additional Photography.....	CHRIS LECLERC ROMAN JAQUEZ GARY ROBERTS
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Motion Animation.....	ANIMAL VOLCANO GARRETT MOLDREM
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Post-Production Coordinator .....	KELLY SOUTHERLAND SUMMERS
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Assistant Editor.....	GARY ROBERTS
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Production Assistants .....	RICHARD STEELE KATRINA BIANCO
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PR Coordinator..... KATRINA BIANCO  
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Legal Counsel..... LAW OFFICES OF ELSA RAMO

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Women's Rights Without Frontiers  
Women's Rights in China  
China Life Alliance

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