

ONE CHILD

The Story of China's
Most Radical Experiment

Mei Fong

大陸資訊及研究中心



0056751



INTERNATIONAL EDITION

An intimate investigation of the world's largest experiment
in social engineering, revealing how its effects will shape China for
decades to come and what that means for the rest of the world

When Communist Party leaders adopted the one-child policy in 1980, they hoped curbing birthrates would help lift China's poorest and increase the country's global stature. But at what cost? Now, as China closes the book on the policy after more than three decades, it faces a population grown too old and too male, with a vastly diminished supply of young workers.

Mei Fong has spent years documenting the policy's repercussions on every sector of Chinese society. In *One Child*, she explores its true human impact, traveling across China to meet the people who live with its consequences. Their stories reveal a dystopian reality: unauthorized second children ignored by the state, only children supporting aging parents and grandparents on their own, villages teeming with ineligible bachelors, and an ungoverned adoption market stretching across the globe. Weaving in Fong's own reflections on striving to become a mother herself, *One Child* offers a nuanced and candid report from the extremes of family planning.

"Mei Fong's brilliant exploration of China's one-child policy must change the way we talk about China's rise. *One Child* is lucid, humane, and unflinching; it is vital reading for anyone focused on the future of China's economy, its environment, or its politics. It not only clarifies facts and retires myths, but also confronts the deepest questions about the meaning of parenthood."

—EVAN OSNOS,

National Book Award-winning author of *Age of Ambition*



MEI FONG is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist with more than a decade of reporting in Asia, most recently as China correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal*. Her work has also won awards from Amnesty International, New York's Society of Professional Journalists, and the Society of Publishers in Asia.

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\$17.00 HIGHER IN CANADA CHINA

ISBN 978-0-544-81558-2



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0116 / 1642293

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