

China has had a long-standing reputation as being a large, well-ordered, effective country with beautiful landscapes and artwork. China also has a rich, yet warring persona dating back to written history of the 13<sup>th</sup> century with a warring quest for money and power juxtaposed to a beautiful artistic life. Only 22 years ago in China the Tiananmen Square Massacre occurred. Students and citizens had gathered to protest the government for economic reform and liberty bringing international outrage and attention to the Chinese citizen's situation. This worked but at a horrific cost to the protestors however their lives and wounds were of little importance to the Chinese government. China has not change and has continued to defy the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and has accelerated their surveillance, arrests, exiles, beatings, and banning of travel for many citizens who utter words such as democracy and freedoms. The group being most publicized may not be truly reflective of how many people and which demographic is being targeted, if any are being detained without trial, sentenced to work camps, or under house arrest as China is careful to keep their business to themselves as often as possible. The people who are being noticed as 'missing' are people who are high profile individuals such as writers, human rights lawyers, artists, eco-scientists, food inspectors, college students, and bloggers. Directly linked to human rights issues are the debt owed to China many countries encompassing the USA and much of Europe. China's lack of human rights, lack of environmental responsibility, and censorship is of great concern for everyone worldwide not just for the Chinese. (Amnesty International, 2011), (United Nations, 2001)

While the United Nations (UN), The United States of American and the European governments have concerned themselves with the protection of human rights, they have been playing a high stakes poker game and taking the gamble with China by borrowing money to keep their countries from financial disaster. All the countries involved are walking a double-edged sword because if the countries stop working with China they there will be no more loans and continuing to have loans with China is supporting human rights atrocities. The countries in Europe are being broken apart by individual contracts with China made recently dividing their previous group bargaining power. China and completely legitimately owns 26% of U.S. government debt which is \$1.115 trillion dollars. The problem with those figures, as if they were not bad enough is that China has been using dealers at auctions to purchase the debt and then re-sell that debt to China and in some cases it is estimated China may have exceeded the legal 35% limit. (Flitter)

Wen Jiabao, Premier of the People's Republic of China recently has been cast in the satirical role of 'Santa Claus' to Europe by writer Verena Schaiter in her article, '[China Offers Lifeline to Hard-Hit Europe](#)'. Schaiter discusses how the [European Council on Foreign Relations \(ECFR\)](#) released a policy brief, which analyzed the issues that are part of the package when borrowing money from China's to help the European economies. China is not only acquiring government debt, they are also making investments in the countries, and making land purchases, much like that have been doing with America. (European Council, 2011) Different from America is that they do not have a system in place to monitor how much of a percentage of their debt is actually owned by China. (European Council, 2011) By acquiring European government debt, investments in European companies, and land purchase much like the 'help', which has been given to America. During this summer's visit several transactions occurred, after Hungary agreed to new investments of one billion dollars and bilateral trade volumes reaching 20 billion dollars by 2015; the UK agreeing to new deals estimated at 2.2 billion dollars and a doubling of trade with China to reach 100 billion dollars by 2015; Germany reaching a 15 billion dollar trade agreement and more countries on the agenda to be visited the article asks the question (is) 'A Continent for Sale'? China, the [ECFR](#) concluded is systematically buying Europe by 'bond diplomacy', direct investment in European countries, and public procurement. To make matters worse, China has a closed capital market for economic strategy so European companies are excluded from purchasing public procurement in China.' ([Schalter](#)) China's continued disregard for the UN and basic human rights has not gone unnoticed thanks primarily due to technology and the ability to stream information and not always have to smuggle it out of the country. (European Council, 2011)

International Amnesty wrote in the [Amnesty International Report 2011](#), "Reflecting its (China) growing international economic and political influence, China increasingly threatened economic and political retaliation against countries that criticized its human rights records (Amnesty International Report, 2011)." China's threat soon became a reality for Norway when they awarded the [2010 Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese Activist and writer Liu Xiaobo](#) and China responded to more than likely show their power boycotted Norway (Amnesty International Report, 2011). These types of political and global messages are in part meant to show the reach and show off the Chinese government and this is by no means by accident. His [Holiness the](#)

**Dalai Lama** was forced to run in exile from Tibet in 1959 and there is still a warrant for his arrest should he attempt to reenter the country. The Dalai Lama and Liu are only two of the many examples of bravery and inspiration. (“His holiness the”)

Artist and activist **Ai Weiwei** has had several run ins with the police in China and has been in jail twice. **Ai** still bears a scar on his head from a brutal police beating where he had to have immediate surgery to repair a brain bleed, which would have killed him. **Ai** and many other artists worldwide help to create an experience to connect us through the emotions conveyed by the work of art and the meanings of the work, which are universal. **Ai** is considered one of the few global artists and China’s first global artists. **Ai** has begun the change in his country and other countries views on the citizens of China. At great personal risk to himself he created art, documented every aspect of his life via photographs, tweeting, and chat, and stands against the government corruption. **Ai**’s followers have begun calling him **Ai God**, which puts him on a double edged sword in that his ability to unite the people of China in a fight against the government but being called a **God** in a communist country gives them more reason above speaking against communism. (“Who’s afraid of,” 2011)

With China's sheer amount of debt we, the world owes to them China could just call in the loans plummeting all the economies; however they would be cutting off their nose to spite their face. What is more likely is that they are gaining a bit of a strangle hold on the USA to keep trade secure and they are splitting Europe to keep them from having collective bargaining and collective problem resolution. (European Council, 2011) What is already happening and has happened is that compromises were/are being made to keep China happy so the collective 'we' do not 'lose the shirts off our backs' and have to tread lightly when China decides to not show up to the UN for meetings or when they arrest, beat, or kill a 'dissident' within China for spreading anything other than Chinese propaganda. 'We' have become bedfellow with the very type of government ‘We’ disapprove of on ethical, moral and humanistic grounds. The world should care because China may be knocking on the door of their country for a favor over and above the loans and may be utilizing the public procurements to their advantage leaving the originating country without recourse. All that said, the people of China who want change, want freedoms, and who want democracy are severely impacted because they are relying on the few Chinese

people to work from within to change as very few outside of China can help due to this double edge sword. (European Council, 2011)

Choosing this topic for a project was natural as human rights issues are of the highest priority and when there is blatant disregard for any human life things must change. All the people who do not know if they will live or die the next day because they did a piece of art against the country, wrote a book on democracy, had an 'underground' blog that got turned in, was a professor teaching philosophies the government did not approve of or the food inspector stating baby formula is tainted then going to jail, be tortured, or be killed need people to stand up for them when they ask. It takes great courage to stand up, but what many artists do is to show what the Chinese government did and is doing. Ai Weiwei is the master of showing what he has done on a grand scale. What is known is that Ai is getting his message to many countries around the world including his own county, what is not known is if he realizes how much of an impact he has had by bringing attention via the media, his exhibits around the world, and his interviews? Ai's Sichuan earthquake student casualties investigation and subsequent artwork out of children's backpacks was a human rights act for his own people which landed Ai in a German hospital with a life threatening cerebral hemorrhage from a police beating in China. Many Americans may not have known Ai prior to this recent arrest, however coupled with the Dalai Lama's constant travels around the world in his exile from Tibet, and the Nobel Peace Prize Winner being jailed the media attention was amplified so it stands to reason that more Americans and Europeans have had more access to the real situations in China.

China, a super power in the world, is loaning money and buying up land and businesses at an alarming rate, which is placing every country borrowing in jeopardy. Although the situation is exceedingly complicated, the reality of the situation is that Wen Jiabao, quite recently purchased more of Europe with promises of further expansion of trade. As seen in the artwork 'Enter the Dragon, Save the Economies' Jiabao is portrayed as a traditional dragon clutching the Euro while the milk carton 'Missing' reflects all missing but specifically when Liu Xiaobo, Nobel Peace Prize 2010 winner was missing and now is jailed for 11 years for writing a book, the

bottom left is for the 300 Kirti monks who were recently marched to Delhi for 'reeducation camp' as they would not follow military rule, the Dalai Lama is in prisoner uniform as his is in exile from his own country, and the Chinese charters read bicycle and tank representing Tiananmen Square Massacre. Had this round up of so called '**dissidents**' happened even 30 years ago, by the time people were away that anything was happening it was most likely to late to stop the violence, human rights violations, and deaths. With Globalization and technology it takes only seconds to a few minutes to instantaneously know what is happening around the world. It also provides a means for people who are standing up against this type of activity in their own way whether an artist, poet, writer, scientist, professor, lawyer, or citizen in China or around the globe everyone can make a difference by standing up to and for Human Rights.

These are some of the things being done for the Chinese Citizens by Human Rights activists (groups and individuals)

- Publicize the issue - Spread information quickly and get petitions signed and back to person to China
- Human Rights Education
- Protests at Chinese Embassies such as the 1001 Chairs for Ai Weiwei which was organized partially on Facebook and held worldwide
- Disseminate news on Facebook, Twitter, E-mail, Myspace, and Google+ to share information quickly to get the information out and look for solutions
- Getting smuggled video, audio, and written information about Human Rights abuses out of the country

(Amnesty International Report, 2011)

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