

The Analysis of Transition in Woman Social Status—Comparing *Cinderella* with *Ugly Betty*

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Abstract—Cinderella, a perfect fairy tale girl has been widely known to the world. Its popularity reveals the universal Cinderella Complex hidden behind the woman status. My thesis focuses its attention on the transition in woman status. First, it looks into the Cinderella paradigm as well as its complex in reality. Second, it finds the transcendence in modern Cinderella. The last part pursues the development of women status' improvement. In current study, seldom people make comparisons between *Cinderella* and *Ugly Betty*. With its comparison and the exploration of feminism, it can be reached that woman status have been greatly improved under the influence of different factors like economic and political. And as a modern woman lives in the new century, she has to be independent in economy and optimistic in spirit.

Index Terms—Cinderella Complex, *Ugly Betty*, feminist movement, feminine consciousness, women status

I. INTRODUCTION

Cinderella, a beautiful fairy tale widely known around the world, has become a basic literary archetype in the world literature. Its popularity reveals the universal Cinderella Complex hidden behind the human's consciousness. With the development of feminine, women came to realize their inner power and the meaning of life. Over centuries, many scholars and feminists have made researches from different aspects that influence women status, like social, economic and political factors. People regard Betty and Cinderella as two totally different characters because of their different backgrounds. From their comparisons we can see how important the influences that social and economic factors exert in women' life, thus contributing to the improvement of women status. An analysis of such phenomenon will help us understand the process and enhancement in women status.

II. THE FORMATION AND REASONS OF CINDERELLA COMPLEX

Classic heroine, Cinderella is portrayed as a helpless, passive victim who needs protection. Indeed, Cinderella is the quintessential "perfect girl", always gentle, kind, and lovely (Shaw and Lee, 2001). Her weaknesses are contrasted with the awesome and awful power of the evil, mature women with whom she struggle. And she finally falls in love with the prince at the first sight and then easily marries and lives happily ever after; love relationships for the later heroines come at a cost.

A. *Cinderella Paradigm*

Nowadays, nearly every girl has been quite familiar with Cinderella since they were born. It is a well-known classic folk tale embodying a myth-element of unjust oppression finally obtains reward. Cinderella is a young woman living in unfortunate circumstances that suddenly changes to remarkable fortune. The word "Cinderella" has, by analogy, comes to mean one whose attributes are unrecognized, or one who unexpectedly achieves recognition or success after a period of obscurity and neglect (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, 2001). This fairy still influences the world, having an irresistible charm to the audiences.

Cinderella Complex was first introduced by Colette Dowling, who wrote a book on women's fear of independence, as an unconscious desire to be taken care of by others, based primarily on a fear of being independent. It is based on the idea of the female that as the story describes, a girl who is beautiful, graceful and polite but can't be strongly independent, and who must be rescued by an outside force, usually a man, like the prince. Any strong female characters that do have power are seen as wicked and evil, like the stepmother, who is manipulative and deceitful throughout the story.

B. *Cinderella Complex in Reality*

Throughout all Cinderella versions, no matter how it is changed in small details the story still sticks to the same plots and meanings. There is an evil stepmother and stepsisters who are envy and jealous of the beautiful girl in rags and a

magic, whether it be the animal helpers or a spirit that give aids to Cinderella to make her wish of attending the ball come true. No matter which version people are reading, most people will go into their own fantasy and dream along which caused the “Cinderella Complex” to become real. But today with reality we don’t believe this tale can really happen. Although many people are in confusion, thinking that their outer beauty will get them a solution to realistic problems even in modern times.

C. *The Formation of Cinderella Complex*

From ancient times, women’s relative lack of power and their low status in the society may lead to the feelings of helplessness. This sense of helplessness puts women at greater risk for depression which contributes to the formation of “Cinderella Complex”. It is the largely repressed attitudes and fears that keep women from taking full advantage of their minds and creativity, forcing them to wait for something or someone to change their lives. Most modern adaptations, including original versions, place pessimistic gender expectations on women. The most common version of *Cinderella* provides an example of how the heroine must be delivered by a man of princely matter and helped by outward forces to achieve recognition and gain respect. Its story centers on the assumption that an ideal woman should be “beautiful, polite, graceful, industrious, obedient, and passive” (Shaw and Lee, 2001, p.257). Cinderella’s experience provides a perfect example, producing and nurturing a psychological dependence in women. And in modern society, these feelings may be exasperated by discrimination in the workplace resulting in underemployment or unemployment. Low socioeconomic status is a risk element for major depression.

Another contributory element is society’s great emphasis on youth, beauty, and slimness in women. Providing cultural and socio-historical information, fairy tales have stamped stereotypical virtues of the ideal woman upon the minds of people throughout different societies. Cinderella does not carry a grudge against her stepsisters and stepmother; she is civil and kindhearted. Hence a woman is told that the solution to overcome such oppression is to be patient and virtuous and waiting for the day when the reward to such endurance arrives in the form of a man. Thus, people are daily and hourly exercising an invisible influence on young women that they should be dependent. The qualities of feminine beauty and virtues are always interrelated to each other. For a woman to be virtuous, she must be beautiful, obedient, patient, sacrificial, and sexually innocent. When a woman lacks any of these feminine virtues, she should feel guilty.

Consequently, many women take it as a source of freedom from perceived hardship. Instead of becoming independent, women turn to men for protection, regard men as a source to prove their identity and seek for their love. Therefore, it is understandable that girls who grow up reading these fairytales become women who would spend their time passively waiting for their prince, who will take them away from predicament. At the same time, they groom themselves to reach their prince’s expectations. It is unquestionable that the prince prefers selecting a princess with beauty and virtue. Attractive appearance of a girl always plays a quite important role in a prince’s selecting a wife. With no exception, the prince looks for feminine virtues in his wife. Women, as a result, place much emphasis on beauty as an essential factor in pleasing a man. Cinderella Complex intensifies the interactions between men and women’s expectations in society. Attained from implications of vast *Cinderella* variations, Cinderella Complex condemns women who can not depend on themselves to give full play to their potential when no man exists in their life.

III. IRONY AND TRANSCENDENCE IN MODERN CINDERELLA

With the rapid development of society, more and more new versions of *Cinderella* have emerged. *Ugly Betty* is one of the best illustrations. However, Betty reverses the traditional Cinderella image and shed new light into it.

A. *Here She Comes—the Analysis of Ugly Betty*

Ugly Betty is an American television comedy series, starring America Ferreira in the title role. Betty Suarez comes from Queens, New York; she is a kind-hearted girl, courageous but sorely devoid of fashion sense and aesthetic polish. Betty is suddenly thrust into a world which is totally different from her normal life when she is hired as a personal assistant at Mode, a huge trendy fashion magazine based in Manhattan. The president hires Betty to look after his son, newly-installed Mode editor-in-chief Daniel Meade or perhaps just to keep Daniel out of trouble from womanizing. Actually, Betty was hired just because she is not as aesthetically pleasing like all of Daniel’s other assistants who continually get him into trouble. As time goes by, Betty and Daniel get to learn and trust each other, and ultimately they become friends and allies in a world sometimes beautiful and sometimes maddeningly chaotic.

Just like immigration demagogues, Betty’s co-workers resent her in the same way. They all regard her as an interloper. However she finally succeeds, and even wins over some of her Mode enemies—they have to admire her tireless work ethic and a different perspective to revitalize a tired institution. Unlike Cinderella, Betty with her unique spirit helps women to be seen in a new revolutionary way. Different characters, different stages. People may have totally opposite reactions when they have a first sight at Cinderella and Betty. However, they represent two typical women characters in their own time. Here are the comparisons in appearance and spirit.

B. *Cinderella versus Betty*

1. External Factors

Cinderella is a quintessentially perfect girl in people's minds, always gentle, kind, and lovely. She is portrayed as a helpless and passive victim who needs protection.

Betty, however, sports thick-framed eyeglasses and a large and prominent set of dental braces. Her lack of luster physical appearance and awkward nature result in her immediately being singled out in the single-minded world of New York City fashion, and she is quickly saddled with the show's eponymous nickname.

2. Spirit

Cinderella is described as gentle, kind, beautiful and virginal in an oppressive social milieu. Her gentleness and goodness are defined by her lack of resistance to the abuse of her stepmother. She never disobeys an order, never defends her rights, and never challenges their authority. She rarely eats, seldom sleeps, and receives not even the simplest courtesies, except from her animal friends. Her father's fortune is squandered for the benefit of her stepsisters. She is powerless to control her own fate in her own home. Unable to control her own time, she is also unable to control her own destiny. Cinderella does not act; she only reacts to those around her, a sure sign of both external and internationalized oppression. In the face of all the abuse, she somehow remains gentle, kind and beautiful—the perfect girl.

Cinderella also has her own dream. The conventional Disney tale introduces her in the film's beginning through a song in which she expresses her dream. For example, viewers first meet Cinderella when she awakens from a dream and sings: "No matter how your heart is grieving, if you keep on believing, the dream that you wish will come true." Minutes later, viewers discover that her daily life is nothing but dreamy. Supported by an army of mice and barnyard animals who come to help her, Cinderella is continuously reminded by those in the household that she is unworthy of their refined company. Cinderella's stepmother and stepsisters control Cinderella, keeping her locked away from both society and opportunity. Cinderella is portrayed as powerless to act on her own behalf. Hence, she can only dream.

On ABC's popular TV play *Ugly Betty*, people can not square her appearance with her job—a fashion-magazine assistant. However, she finally succeeds through perseverance, optimism and hard work. Smart and kind-hearted, she proves those old sayings that people should value inner good over outer appearance.

Actually, in some sense, people may regard Betty as inferior to Cinderella. Because her appearance is not attractive at all, chunky sweaters, frizzy hair, bear-trap braces, which make many people look down on her at the first sight. However, crying for her sad fate all day is not Betty's style. All she knows is to fight back and to prove her ability. Ugly Betty's overarching story is metaphorically about the same battle. When stuck into a dilemma, she chooses to strike back. She is a young woman in possession of a strong, well-developed sense of herself. As long as she sets a goal, she will try all her best to accomplish it, no matter how hard it will be.

Betty has to encounter many difficulties, like her appearances, her competitors in the company, all that she has to do directly with her ethnicity and even her family—Betty's father is an illegal immigrant from Mexico. But she never gives up in such a mess; Betty has her own dream and her own principles. Though she encounters setbacks, she insists on pursuing her dream, because she knows she is the real master of her own fate.

IV. FROM CINDERELLA TO UGLY BETTY--THE TRANSFORMATION OF WOMAN STATUS

According to the edition, *Cinderella* is the original model of *Ugly Betty*. Ironically, Betty is almost the opposite version. However, Betty's success, both in love and career may never be achieved by Cinderella in her era, which poses a series of questions to people, like how could Betty make success without attractive appearance? Indeed, Betty is inferior to Cinderella because of her appearance, however, there is one point that should not be neglected, that is, Betty is a woman living in the new century. Therefore, women nowadays start a new life with a brand new status reflected not only in economy, politics but also in spirit.

A. *Housewives versus Career Women — the Improvement of Women's Economic Status*

In *Concerning Women*, a feminist primer of 1926, Suzanne LaFollette argued that sexual equality could be based only on economic independence. According to the dictionaries, the English word "economy" comes from two Greek words: "oikos", meaning "house", and "nemo", meaning "to manage". Thus, economy can be understood as managing the affairs of the household, and beyond the household, of a wider society. Therefore, whether having career and aspiration might be a strong explanation for the difference between Cinderella and Betty. The two characters both living in unfortunate circumstances, Cinderella lost her dear mother and maltreated by her stepmother and stepsisters. Betty just graduates from university and can not find a suitable job to support her poor immigrant family. However, things turn out to be different when Betty gets a chance to work in Mode Magazine. With her efforts and longing for success, Betty finally got what she wanted. On the contrary, Cinderella is not an independent woman from economic aspects. Before marriage, she has to rely on her family and could not make a living if she is forced out of home. Therefore, she chooses to tolerate her stepmother's ill-treating. Anyway, sitting in ciders is better than hunger to death. Even after she is rescued by her prince, she also has to rely on her husband. It turns out this happy marriage may be hard to survive without the support of money. However, we can not blame Cinderella for her dependence. After all, it has gone through a long way from housewives to professional ladies.

In the pre-industrial society, European women usually arrived in the new world with their families, as daughters and wives, under the auspices of fathers or husbands. The family was the primary economic unit, and family members were

dependent on one another for basic sustenance. Men performed the agricultural work, while women's work was done chiefly at home. Single women remained within the domestic sphere, living with relatives, often as "assistant homemakers." Just like Cinderella, she has to stay at home and asked to complete all the housework. For married women, the nature of their work depended on the economic circumstances of their husbands. And that's the base of Cinderella's happy marriage. Her husband is the prince of the nation and there is no need to work as before. At that time, in native America, as a general rule, men hunted and women engaged in agricultural work. The more important hunting to a community's survival is, the more extensive the male power within the community becomes; the greater the dependence on agriculture gets, the greater the power and independence of women becomes.

The transformation from an agrarian rural economy to an urban industrial society ushered in a new era in women's work. With the advent of industrialization, many of the products women made at home gradually came to be made instead in factories. The rise of factory production truly separated the home from the workplace. With the decline of the household unit as the center of industrial and economy activity, the importance of women's economic role also declined. World War I accelerated the entry of women into new fields of industry. The pressure of war production and the shortage of male industrial workers necessitated the hiring of women for what had been male-dominated occupations and enabled women higher wages than they had previously earned. World War II marked an important turning point in women's participation in the paid labor force. The social prohibition concerning married women working gave way under wartime pressure, and wartime women workers demonstrated that it was possible for women to maintain their households while also assuming the role of breadwinner with outside employment. More women than ever before learned to accommodate the simultaneous demands of family and work.

One of the most important occupational changes for women in the twentieth century has been the growth of clerical work. Women's clerk work grew from 320,000 in 1990 to over 2 million in 1930 and nearly 15 million in 1990 (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, 2001). Therefore, come many TV series like *Ugly Betty*, which reflects the daily work of a normal secretary. Besides that, managerial and professional jobs offer women the highest wages and status; hence economic security is fundamental to women's well-beings and the security of families and communities. On one hand, fewer women worked at the rock bottom of the vocational ladder, and more entered white-collar jobs. In addition, new vocations opened up in the business and professional worlds. The professional woman was a contradiction in terms, because professions had developed in order to exclude irregular practitioners, notably women. At the turn of the century, experts viewed women and professionalism as if at opposite poles. As psychologist G. Stanlet Hall explained in 1905, professionalism meant specialization, which was alien to the female brain (Renzatti and Curran, 1999). The man, said Hall, tends "by nature to expertise and specialization without which his individuality would be incomplete." In the late nineteenth century, the male bastions remained relatively secure, although women made gains in medicine. But women professionals surged into teaching, nursing, library work, and social work, and in relatively large numbers in academic life. These women's professions were either old vocations that already been feminized and were now uplifted to the status of professions, or new vocations shaped and staffed by educated women. Between 1870 and 1930, the proportion of women in professions was twice as high as that in the work force. In 1890, for instance, when women were only about 17 percent of the work force, 36 percent of professionals were women (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, 2001). By the turn of the century, women's professions filled an important new space in the nation's occupational hierarchy. But professional work was not the only new space to be filled by women. During the late nineteenth century, middle- and upper-class women also edged into public life in new, large women's associations that defined their own territory.

Therefore, lacking of jobs, low wages, low educational attainment, having children, and divorce all work against women's economic security and keep many women in poverty, dependent on men, or both. Cinderella might be the best illustration: she has to tolerate all her stepmother's ill-treating because she has no income and can not make a living. Even when she finally marries to the prince, her happy life is based on the prince's great wealth and she has to rely on her husband all her life. From economic prospect, she is not an independent woman, without career and aspiration but an accessory of her husband. However, this phenomenon does not exist any more. New generations like Betty can better control her life because of high and independent economic status.

B. *Awareness of Feminine Consciousness*

From psychological aspect, consciousness is often defined as: "A sense of one's personal or collective identity, including the attitudes, beliefs, and sensitivities held by or considered characteristic of an individual or group." Therefore female consciousness is often used to describe the way women relating to themselves and what it means to be female, like gender roles. It's much controversy, especially in feminist studies. In gender studies or gender communication, in particular this aspect has a far-reaching impact on the way a woman interacts with others and the way in which she perceives herself as an individual.

1. Powerless Girl versus Independent Woman

In the story, Cinderella works like a servant after her father's death. She obeys whatever her evil stepmother orders. The chores run her ragged: washing, ironing, scrubbing, dusting, and cooking. In addition, her worth was based on her decorative value, a character, and her temperament. In all versions of the *Cinderella* story, the fancy dress plays a critical part. Her mother was born in the purple and the dress is an essential link to that noble status. When she is in the clothes that designate a well-born person, no one would doubt whether she is a true princess. And she finally comes to the ball, wearing the stunning evening dress prepared by her God mother. As always, Cinderella has her helpers. In

stories, the most magical kind of help is from some kind of sage. All these plots illustrate that the concept of a woman was that of a fragile, idle, pure creature, submissive and subservient to her husband and to domestic needs (Shaw and Lee, 2001).

As for Betty, however, unlike Cinderella, attractive appearance never belongs to her. And as a little girl born in poverty, she has no strong backup. All her dependence is herself. The only things she can follow are the values like perseverance, optimism and hard work. However, she is such an optimistic girl that she never loses hopes, which also reflects modern women's inner world: strong and independent.

2. The Development of Feminism

Rome was not built in a day. From a powerless girl to a strong and independent woman, woman has gone through a hard time. Then how does all these happen? Feminist theories primarily seek to understand and explain women's experience. After feminist activities, women come to realize and discover their inner power and voice. Feminism is like a sharp sword that plunges into the masks covering the old common customs that women are inferior to men. And learning from its development, we can see the raising of women consciousness.

Feminist theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical field. It encompasses work done in a broad variety of disciplines, prominently including the approaches to women's roles and lives and feminist politics in anthropology and sociology, psychoanalysis, economics, women's and gender studies, feminist literary criticism, and philosophy especially Continental philosophy. Feminist theory aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. While generally providing a critique of social relations, most of the feminist theories also focus on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women's rights, interests, and so on. Themes explored in feminism include art history and contemporary art, aesthetics, discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy.

The suffrage movement (also known as the Women's Movement or Women's Liberation) is a series of campaigns on issues such as reproductive rights (sometimes including abortion), domestic violence, maternity leave, equal pay, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. The aims of the movement differ from country to country, like the opposition to female genital cutting in Sudan, or to the glass ceiling in Western countries.

The feminist movement had impacts in Western society, including women's suffrage, like the right to initiate divorce proceedings and the right of women to make individual decisions regarding pregnancy (including access to contraceptives and abortion); and the right to own property.

Unlike contemporary masculinity, which is exhibiting very small steps into the realms of the feminine, femininity has boldly moved into areas that were traditionally off-limits. Today's ideal woman is definitely more androgynous than the ideal woman of the past. The contemporary ideal woman might be someone who is smart, competent and domestically and emotionally healthy. Note how this image has integrated characteristics of masculinity with traditional feminine qualities, at the same time has retained much of the feminine social script. The contemporary ideal woman is strong, assertive, active, and independent. The assumption is that she is out in the public world rather than confined to the home. She has not completely shed her domestic, nurturing, and caring dimension, or her intuitive, emotional, and sensitive aspects. These attributes are important in her success as a loving and capable partner of a man, as indeed are her physical attributes concerning looks and size.

To be a modern woman today is to be able to do everything: the superwoman. It is important to ask who is benefiting from this new social script. Women work in the public world and yet still expect to do the domestic and emotional work of home and family as well as stay beautiful. In many ways contemporary femininity tends to serve both the capitalist economic system and individual men better than the traditional, dependent, domestic model.

In this TV series, Betty is a courageous, good-hearted, and slightly naive girl from Queens, New York who is sorely lacking in fashion sense. She is abruptly thrust into a different world when she lands a job at *Mode*, a trendy high fashion magazine. Life at *Mode* is difficult for Betty. She has to deal with many professional works in quite a short time. In addition, her coworkers continually mock and humiliate Betty for her lackluster physical appearance, awkward nature, and initial lack of taste in fashion. However, she insists on pursuing her dreams. When confronted with disappointment, unlike Cinderella, she chooses to face it straight and fight back. She enjoys the pleasure of meeting challenges and that is what Cinderella's life doesn't have.

C. *Changing of Values*

An interesting phenomenon in the era of Cinderella is that women regarded families as their whole career; hence, marriage turned out to be their primary concern. Many women hunted in their lives for marrying someone who is wealthy and handsome. As a result, Cinderella cheered women up from generation to generation: marry a good husband, and you will live happily ever after. However, Betty may not be that lucky if she lives in that era. Fortunately, the values have changed along with the time. Attractive appearance is not the only focus of women's life. 21st century women have realized deeply that female emancipation is to aim to searching for freedom, independency and happiness, nor to being inferior to male as "second sex" (Shaw and Lee, 2001). Therefore, many new women regard Betty as a model of success. Then what is real success? Marry a good husband or have one's own career?

Cinderella is a tale found in diverse cultures all around the globe. In English-speaking lands, there are few indeed who would not recognize this classic tale. Girls have all grown up with the wicked stepmother, the cheerless hearth and the slipper of glass, and these images have become an indelible part of childhood for them all. Many girls want to have

good fortune to become such a lucky girl. Maybe they will be in dilemma for some time, but who cares? They do not need to do anything; a wealthy prince will rescue them in the end. And they could live happily ever after. What makes *Cinderella* so attractive? To an audience weaned on Disney films, it is a poor but beautiful girl growing up to marry a wealthy prince. Yet people will never know whether the knight on-the-white-charger exists who swoops into those girls' lives and relieves them of the need to determine their own fate, not of traditional folktales. What has the prostitute heroine of *Cinderella* done to win her prince or transform her life? Precisely nothing—except to be beautiful, and in the right place at the right time.

Then why do women regard a wealthy marriage as an equal to success? Several factors contributed to women's marriage during the past. Many of these results were the result of lack of choices. First of all, women were left uneducated in many areas and had no control over their education and were taught about domestic duties only. When they were young they were taught that a woman should get married and have children (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, 2001). They were born, raised and educated to become wives and nothing else. They often spent their time with time consuming devices to hide the fact that they had a lot of free time on their hands. A woman was not expected to work unless she was in the lower class and had no choice, therefore often had plenty of time to look pretty. Women who were not in the work force were therefore seen as a superior class to those working class women.

As time goes by, the role of women in marriage has evolved. Most families nowadays no longer arrange a daughter's marriage. However, marriage and motherhood are often thought to be an essential part of a woman's life, the status to strive for. Even if she chooses to keep her own name or rarely uses the converted title Mrs. People may not refer to unmarried women as "old maids" or "on the shelf" as much as in the past, but there is often still a stigma attached to being single in many cultural groups. However, under the excitement and romance of the wedding and despite the fact that many partnerships are thriving, marriage as an institution is taking a buffeting, mainly because of changes in the economy and changing ideas of women's roles in society.

In the skin-deep world of high fashion, image is everything. Styles are capricious, and the only things remaining are the super slender-beauties who wear them. How can an ordinary girl, a slightly plump plain-Jane from Queens fit into such a circle? Actually, Betty Suarez is a sweet, intelligent and hard-working girl. But few people notice that, because in the world of high fashion, Betty is the oversized peg in the petite round hole. Though her boss is reluctant to accept her at first, Betty's indomitable spirit and bright ideas eventually win him over. Betty Suarez has always had one goal in life: to make it into the publishing business. Despite being smart, hard-working, and productive, her dream has always been shadowed by the fact that she isn't the best looking young woman. However, she is now determined to do whatever it takes to fulfill that ultimate dream. Nothing can stop Betty: "You're an attractive, intelligent and confident business woman!" Betty always reminds herself when she mired in difficulties. Audiences from four corners of the world are cheering for this modern warrior Betty, who has the spirit of persistence to make her dream come true. She may not be a fashion pioneer, but in the superficial world of high fashion, she's the fairest of them all. Designed to resemble fictional fashion bible *Mode* magazine, *Ugly Betty* is just like the book, offering insider interviews with the cast and creative team as well as a comprehensive episode guide, representing the new status and image of the 21st century women. They are no longer bound to their husband and family. They have their own career and aspiration, pursuing life's true happiness courageously.

V. CONCLUSION

More and more people have come to know the phenomenon of Cinderella Complex. We can find the paradigm especially in many young girls. Its existence reveals the unfair treatment of women over the centuries. Because of the historical factors, women were kept away from outer circumstances. They can't work or pursue their dreams, thus not being the master but the slave of their fates. However, with the development of society, like the development of feminine, women began to defend their legal rights. Betty is a typical example and many women regard her as their model. More and more "Bettys" have entered the fields of economy, society and even politics because of their competent performances. In a word, only be independent, competent and have dreams to pursue can make modern women performance better in the 21st century, and be their own fates' masters.

With the foundation of International Women's Day (March 8), it's time to reflect the progress of women and celebrate their acts of courage and determination. As women enter into the 21st century, more and more challenges are waiting for them. However, many women are quite confident that they will have a better life than before.

Without doubt, women in 21st century will become more and more independent and begin to gain initiative in marriage. Popular show *You are the One* (also named *Fei Cheng Wu Rao*) is a great example to show women adopting active attitudes in intimacy relationships. Although women view it ideal to have a husband as a life-partner, they won't regard marriage as the indispensable component; single life can also be a perfect life style. In western, more than 80 percent women think they can afford to raise children alone. They are healthier, happier and younger than women in the last century. Most of them are very young in spirit because of their positive attitudes towards life.

However, also from *Fei Cheng Wu Rao*, there are many controversial phenomena. If we regard Betty as the model of a successful woman, then many girls who standing on the stage could also be considered as a success from some aspects: attractive appearance, high educational background and some of them hold important posts in the workforce. They are independent from economic prospect, then why some girls insist on finding a man who is wealthy enough to have both

a car and a house? The harsh reality is: many men were rejected not because of their characteristics but just because they can not afford a car or a house. Why does such phenomenon exist? Is this because women still not strong enough in their inner heart or just because high economic status and educational background give women critical eyes? And such phenomenon will be explored in my future studies.

Because of the limits of academic ability and material, there are some limitations in this thesis. Though it analyzes the development from social, economic and political aspects, it mainly uses case study to develop the main theme and the study is somewhat general. So it also needs to be further discussed from other aspects.

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