

Analysing Representations of 'Leftover' Women in Chinese Media: Taking the Film 'The Last Woman Standing' and 'I Do' as Examples

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Abstract : 'Leftover woman' or '3S' woman is the term used to describe a well-educated, high income, independent woman who is single and never married around 30 years in Chinese society. With the naming of this demographic of 'leftover women', their family, dating culture, mate selection and marriage attract public concern. Massive media representations of 'leftover women' occur daily; the research aims to present several media representations of women's anxiety about their singlehood and related marital issues around thirty. The research triangulates two areas of media representation of 'leftover women': films and audience reviews on 'Douban Movie' website. Drawing on traditional media studies, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis combined with multimodal techniques is applied to the research to analyze the representations of 'leftover women' and their implications for marital culture in China, in conjunction with a feminist perspective. The conference paper will discuss two case studies: the film 'The last woman standing' and 'I Do'. Paying attention to different aspects of 'leftover women', the research aims to re-examine the representations of 'leftover women' in selected scenes, such as their age anxiety, family, marriage, dating process, careers, etc. The paper also includes public beliefs about 'leftover women' from online audience reviews. In conclusion, the emergence of 'leftover women' is a reflection of Chinese tradition's impact on people's lives and new changes in Chinese families and their attitude to marriage.

Keywords : leftover women, marriage, family, media culture, China

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