to her argument, this accounts for the strong sense of betrayal felt by Western feminists when Chinese women, like women in the film, discovered and celebrated their femininity in the '80s and '90s).

Secondly and more controversially, Yang argues that the longer-term effects of state feminism in fact retarded women’s liberation. Because women had not developed an awareness of their oppression on their own, they were thus hampered in responding to changes in their situation like the commercialized culture of the recent reform era, which overtly links sexuality and the market. Yang decries the new phenomena of consumerism and the media and their obsession with the language of female sexuality, and she is very distressed at the alarming tendency of many sectors in Chinese society to hire only young, attractive women while retiring older women at 45 (or even 40 as in many state enterprises today).

Yet even in the midst of these changes, Yang finds some reasons for cautious optimism. She believes that the new situation allows more freedom for many women, like the female entrepreneurs she interviews, plus it will hopefully make women’s oppression clearer than the previous double messages of Maoist times. Her hope, then, is that the new era will result in a more unified, more cohesive women’s consciousness and a true women’s liberation, by women for women.

This film would be excellent for upper level classes studying modern Chinese history, women’s history, the new global economy and cultural studies. While it is China specific, it directly confronts issues relevant for all of us grappling today with new roles and in responding to the new conditions of the modern global age.

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