Bridget Jones: A Feminist or a Typical Woman of Our Time?

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Završni rad

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CONTENTS

Abstract

Introduction

1. Feminism as a Movement

2. Background and Criticism of Feminism

3. Bridget Jones – a Typical Woman or Not?

    3.1. Emotional Component as an Important Factor of Bridget's Personality

    3.2. Bridget's Effect on Men

    3.3. Bridget's Feminism

4. Movie Adaptation of the Novel

Conclusion

Works Cited

Abstract

Bridget Jones's Diary is a 1996 novel by Helen Fielding. First it was a column in the *Independent* newspaper in the UK, and later it was transformed into a book and a movie. The novel is written in the form of a personal diary. Each chapter begins with Bridget's obsessive counting of how much alcohol, cigarettes and food she consumes. She is a thirty-something-year-old woman who is single and lives in London. She writes about her family, her job, her friends, her relationship problems, and her vices. A sequel, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* was published in 1999. Maybe this work is not considered a masterpiece but it gives us, like many other works written by women, an insight into women's consciousness and, moreover, it explains how feminism is not as easy in practice as it is in theory. Fielding shows that feminism is something we create and use when it seems convenient for us to do so. It is a belief, a kind of ideal; something that society creates and imposes. This paper will discuss how Bridget looks on feminism, and how all the factors surrounding her influenced the creation of her, still perplexed, identity.

KEYWORDS: feminism, Bridget Jones, identity, society, a typical woman

Introduction

Bridget Jones's Diary (1996) by Helen Fielding is a book written in a very simple language, but it can still confuse us and make us laugh. It is a timeless novel because it discusses everyday problems and themes such as weight, beauty, homosexuality, romance, family problems… Bridget Jones is a character that every modern woman can identify with, no matter whether she is a radical feminist or a typical woman, because each woman has, at one point in her life, faced problems, or at least one problem, that Bridget has. In the first chapter, I will discuss feminism as a movement, how it was created, how women in the past were inferior, how men look on feminist women and how modern women are presented in today's "chick lit" literature. The second chapter will briefly explain the background and criticism of feminism and what books influenced the novel. The last third chapter will analyze the character of Bridget Jones in relation to her friends, family, men, job: all those factors contributing to her feminist thoughts or just being a part of her everyday life as a typical woman living her complicated life.

1. Feminism as a Movement

Firstly, in order to understand the motives and actions of Helen Fielding's character, it is important to explain what feminism actually means and what feminist women represent. Feminism is a movement, an ideology, whose purpose is achieving personal, social, political, cultural and economic rights for women. Throughout history, women have been generally oppressed and repressed by the patriarchal society in which men are dominants. They were denied the right to enjoy the same kind of freedom as men and to get their share of education and career. Marriage was considered important for women to ensure their security, but once married they were forced to obey their patriarchal husbands without any objection. However, after a long struggle to gain their rights, women eventually succeeded to be treated as equal to men, especially in the Western world. They can now participate actively in various fields of life and enjoy their rights in the same way as men do. Yet, they are still considered less powerful than men in many aspects of life. It is very common nowadays for a woman to live single and to lead an independent life, but society puts her under a strong pressure (Beden 3). Feminists fight for their rights; they want to be equal to men. Their goal is not only becoming a mother and finding a husband. Yet, on the other hand, Wendy Kaminer in her article "Feminism's Identity Crisis" asserts that while feminism appeals to women with regard to social, political, and economic equity, women are extremely wary of the deeper questions feminism raises regarding the authenticity of gender. It is difficult, of course, to generalize about how millions of women imagine feminism and what role it plays in their lives. All one can say with certitude is that different women define and relate to feminism differently. Kaminer contends that women are uneasy with feminism because they sense that it threatens to make them appear unfeminine—and because it questions the very notion of a natural femininity (qtd. in Lyons 9). For these reasons, feminism became an important subject in modern female literature. One of the contemporary novels concerned with feminism is *Bridget Jones's Diary* by Helen Fielding, which portrays society's view of single women in contemporary western societies (Beden 3).

Pulp feminism is another essential concept that has developed within popular culture. Pulp feminism is a phenomenon of popular culture that has emerged in response to women's conflicted connection with feminism. Pulp feminism appears to agrant women liberation and rebellion by allowing them to lodge open complaints regarding restrictive patriarchal gender constructs (Lyons 11). Pulp feminism movement has manifested itself in what has deprecatingly come to be known as "chick lit"—a sort of literature most often written by women and aimed squarely at women. The mass-produced literary genre now widely known as "chick lit" contains

many of postfeminism's conventions as well as its problems: most notably, it is similarly concerned with defining the aims and aspirations of the modern young woman who has grown to maturity in a world inescapably influenced by second-wave feminism and who thus sees herself as facing dilemmas which lie outside the experience of previous generations of women. However, she can also be regarded as a lamentable kind of heroine for whom happiness depends upon the most limited and hackneyed of objectives: romantic fulfillment (Gamble 62). Having some of these traits and being labeled as one of the first "chick-lit" novels, *Bridget Jones's Diary* can rightly be observed as an example of pulp feminism as well.

When it comes to men and feminism, some of them have a distorted view of what feminism actually is. They believe that women hate them and want to disempower them but that is not true. Philips (2) claims that solidarity between women/female identified people and men/male identified people is mutually beneficial and necessary for the liberation of both. Men and male identified people can organize for their own liberation, through socialist feminism. Socialist feminism allows them to embrace cooperation over competition and gives them the opportunity to unlearn aggressiveness and overcome violence, and embrace femininity as just as important in one's life as masculinity.

2. Background and Criticism of Feminism

The first feminist literary criticism was characterized by a guarded reading of the established literature and literary criticism. One of the main ideas was that women should expose this literature and protect themselves from it. This idea is the corner stone of *Sexual Politics* (1969) by Kate Millet. Millett investigates what famous male authors write about women and their sexuality. She focuses on what is said as opposed to how it is said. Millett wants to expose what she believes to be false images of women and sexuality in the work of famous male authors who are canonized by literary critics and within the history of literature (Larsson 6). Another famous work within feminist literary criticism is *Thinking about Women* (1968) by Mary Ellman. Ellman lists some stereotypical female features used by male authors when writing about women. Some of the stereotypes mentioned are vagueness, passivity, instability, piety, irrationality and the tendency of women to be indulgent towards men and limited by them (Larsson 6).

These readings can be applied to many works of fiction including *Bridget Jones's Diary*. *Bridget Jones's Diary* was modeled upon Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Even though Bridget, Jane and Elizabeth live in different societies, they are women who stand up for themselves in the male environment. *Jane Eyre*, written by Charlotte Brontë over 150 years ago, is by some critics considered to be the earliest major feminist novel. The main characters of the both novels, Jane and Bridget, serve as good examples of strong and independent women who succeed to prove their ability to take care of themselves and decide what is best for them. Elizabeth is also a strong, beautiful and intelligent woman who has to cope and overcome lots of obstacles imposed to her by society and family. In front of the man she loves, she acts strong, independent and she even misjudges him but, in the end, she accepts the fact she was wrong and that he is worthy of her. The attitudes of the fictive societies towards these women and their actions are not as different as one may like to think in spite of the time difference of more than 100 years (Larsson 3).

3. Bridget Jones: A Typical Woman or Not?

When talking about Bridget Jones, it is highly difficult to depict her only as a feminist or as a typical woman of her time. She shows many characteristics that can place her in both roles. She is a typical thirty-year-old woman, living alone, and having too many career and relationship problems. She indulges in food, cigarettes and sex. She loves shopping and is obsessed with her looks, which she is constantly trying to improve: "I looked at her wistfully, her vast, bulbous bottom swathed in a tight red skirt with a bizarre three-quarter-length stripped waistcoat strapped across it. How many hours, months, and years have I spent worrying about weight while Perpetua has been happily looking for lamps with porcelain cats as bases around the Fulham Road?" (Fielding 18). The theme of finding a suitable, rich husband and the obsession with the money is constantly visible, like in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Even though in *Bridget Jones's Diary* that theme is not the main focus, her family and society in general are still trying to impose marriage on her: "I don't know why she didn't just come out with it and say, 'Darling, do shag Mark Darcy over the turkey curry, won't you? He's very rich'" (Fielding 12). Yet, even though Bridget is trying to find a husband and maybe in way comply with "traditional norms," she successfully breaks up with her boss Daniel and quits her job. Bridget stands up for herself and goes through with what she has in mind although that is the opposite of what is expected of her. She succeeds in breaking free from the norm and changes her situation in order to make it more beneficial for herself (Larsson 9). However, society is implacable in the necessity of having a husband. "How does a woman manage to get to your age without being married?" (Fielding 11). Yet, Bridget strongly opposes them as she has a rather different view of marriage. She wants to find a husband but she opposes to marrying a man against her will or because it is a "must" in her age. She just wants true love. She can act independently but society, and her mother, does not approve of it:

> 6 p.m. So glad decided to be festive Home Alone Singleton like Princess Diana. 6.05. p.m. Wonder where everybody is? I suppose they are all with their boyfriends or have gone home to their families. Anyway, chance to get things done… or they have families of own. Babies. Tiny fluffy children in pajamas with pink cheeks looking at the Christmas tree excitedly. Or maybe they are all at big party except me. Anyway. Lots to do. (Fielding 297)

I see the fact that Bridget does have a yearning for a family as an important difference between her and her mother. For Bridget, marriage is of huge importance although she does not

expressly want it. She constantly defines herself as a "singleton" and her biggest fear is to die as a spinster. However, Bridget accepts these limitations and refuses to live up to the myths (Larsson 12).

What is also stressed in the book is that women no longer need men in order to have financial support and Bridget underlines this principle of feminism (Sarghie 2). She says: "one must not live one's life through men but must be complete in oneself as a woman of substance" (Fielding 31). Nevertheless, she did depend on Mark when he saved her mother from Julio. She is also a little obsessed with the fact that as you age, the chances of finding a suitable husband are becoming smaller: "When you are partnerless in your thirties, the mild bore of not being in a relationship – no sex, not having anyone to hang out with on Sundays, going home from parties on your own all the time – gets infused with the paranoid notion that the reason you are not in a relationship is your age" (Fielding 143).

When it comes to her appearance and looks, each chapter begins with an entry of how much alcohol she drank, how much cigarettes she smoked and how many calories she ate. Except for that, she also describes herself while preparing for a date. She talks about her beauty routines in order to become feminine:

> Since leaving work I have nearly slipped a disc, wheezing through a step aerobics class, scratched my naked body for seven minutes with a stiff brush; cleaned the flat; filled the fridge, plucked my eyebrows, skimmed the papers and the Ultimate Sex Guide, put the washing in and waxed my own legs, since it was too late to book an appointment. Ended up kneeling on a towel trying to pull off a wax strip firmly stuck to the back of my calf while watching Newsnight in an effort to drum up some interesting opinions about things. My back hurts; my head aches and my legs are bright red and covered in lumps of wax. (Fielding 59)

Bridget's descriptions of the process of preparing for a date are highly entertaining due to her refusal to deviate from deadpan descriptions; instead of using beauty-magazine-speak to describe her routines, Bridget describes them without euphemism (Lyons 34). Even though Bridget despises that process of "becoming" a woman, she is aware that she cannot avoid it. She does not pretend or tries to sugarcoat the truth. She is not afraid to say it out loud how much women must endure in order to become feminine. That can also raise a question whether they are "suffering" so much because of themselves and their needs or because society dictates that every woman must be beautiful and perfect in every sense in order to find a boyfriend or a husband. This is

visible in the great difference of being a spinster or a bachelor. Dhrodia (75) thus claims the women are able to link their personal experience with the political in this instance by recognizing how spinsters are regarded negatively for being unmarried (often because they "give up" motherhood for career success), while bachelors are "traditionally seen as carefree, worldly wise and, most importantly, consciously choosing to be alone."

3.1. Emotional Component as an Important Factor of Bridget's Personality

The emotional component of Bridget's personality is another important subject to be discussed. Bridget expresses a range of different emotional responses to different situations. Some of them can be attributed to a typical feminist woman but most of them deviate from that ideal. Bridget Jones functions as the quintessential everywoman. She is perpetually seeking to improve herself (given that the diary opens with New Year's resolutions and ends with her evaluating her year), and perpetually failing (Lyons 38). At one point in the novel, Bridget has unprotected sexual intercourse with her boss. Later on, we can see that she is imagining becoming pregnant. Bridget consistently fantasizes about him in a manner that she both over-analyzes and exaggerates their relationship, participating in the newly emerging construction of femininity on the obsessive mode (Lyons 39). Other situation is when Mark helps her mother. We know that she said, many times, that she does not need a man in her life to depend on, but, once again she completely neglected that. She does not have much control in her life and she loves when a man steps in and solves her problems. She was very agitated when her mother was wanted by the police but when Mark offered to help she was thrilled. She said: "It was pretty damn sexy; I can tell you" (Fielding 274). She is very confused and emotionally exhausted. She is constantly thinking and thinking what she should do, whether she has done right, and even though she is aware in her head that she could function without a man in her life, her fantasies and desires lead her in another direction. In that sense she is a typical woman of our time.

On the other hand, she shows an ability to stand up for herself from time to time. She does not want to be treated as a toy. She deserves respect and her value should be recognized: "That is just such crap,' I slurred. 'How dare you be so fraudulently flirtatious, cowardly and dysfunctional? I am not interested in emotional fuckwittage. Goodbye!" (Fielding 33). Even though she is in love with Daniel she has guts to reject him until he decides what he wants. That Bridget has the strength to stand up for her beliefs seems to surprise not only Daniel but even herself (Larsson 13). Another time when he is trying to talk her into sleeping with him serves as a good example of this: "No,' I said with a firmness that rather surprised me" (Fielding 104). According to French feminists, language systematically forces women to choose. Either they can imagine and represent themselves as men do or they can choose "silence" and in that become the "the invisible and unheard sex." Bridget does not choose to be the silent sex. She adopts a behavior that may be seen as typically male (Larsson 14).

3.2. Bridget's Effect on Men

When talking about the effect she has on men, Bridget seems to know what she is doing. She is aware of the fact that the more indifferently she behaves the more interested they remain. She knows that this is a good way to attract their attention: "I have hardly been noticing Daniel at all: with the miraculous result that he has been all over me" (Fielding 257). It seems that she inherited that from her mother: "She has power over Julio, and the tax man, and everyone is sensing her power and wanting a bit of it, which makes her even more irresistible" (Fielding 66-67). Her mother is also a story for itself. She felt her entire life like she achieved nothing. Despite such a feeling, she is also an independent woman who stands up for her rights, but marriage was something that burdened her. She did not want to be a mother and housewife her whole life:" I feel like a grasshopper who sang all summer…And now it's winter of my life and I haven't stored up anything of my own" (Fielding 71). The irony is that now she pushes Bridget into marriage and Bridget gets more and more confused. Bridget's mother makes Bridget feel guilty by overwhelming her with a sense of her own unexplored possibilities, opining "you've simply got too much choice." Mrs. Jones exemplifies the exercising of choice. She leaves her husband for a Portuguese tour guide, deciding that she deserves more sexual fulfillment. She expects Bridget to explore her choices similarly; however, Mrs. Jones ends up quite happily back at home, finding that she likes her old self as well as or better than the other selves she has tried on and Bridget does the same (Marsh 7).

3.3. Bridget's Feminism

Maybe *Bridget Jones's Diary* is not a typical, authentic feminist novel but it puts a great deal of emphasis on feminism (especially throughout Bridget's friend Shazzer) and Bridget often mentions the idea of feminism in her diary. She is aware of the ideas of feminism and her friend Shazzer is a great support:

> Ten years ago people who cared about the environment were laughed at (….). 'In years ahead the same will come to pass with feminism. There won't be any men leaving their families and post-menopausal wives for young mistresses, or trying to chat women up by showing off in a patronizing way about all the other women throwing themselves at them, or trying to have sex with women without any niceness or commitment, because the young mistresses and women will just turn round and tell them to sod off and men won't

> get any sex or any women unless they learn how to behave properly instead of cluttering up the sea-bed or women with their SHITTY, SMUG, SELF-INDULGENT, BEHAVIOUR! (Fielding 126-127).

The only character in the novel identified as feminist is Bridget's friend Shazzer, liable to explode into "full and splendid auto-rant" after a few too many glasses of wine. Yet, Shazzer's contribution to feminist philosophy, the theory of "emotional fuckwittage," remains tied into the book's central preoccupation with getting a man: as women glide from their twenties to thirties, Shazzer argues, the balance of power subtly shifts (Gamble 5). Sharon's ideas have a strong influence on Bridget as well as on her other friends. Bridget is strengthened by these thoughts and the support from Sharon means a lot to her when she confronts Daniel or stands up for herself. All her friends are single. They call themselves "singletons" and they support each other, they fight against society with their own positive and negative opinions and terms. They lift each other's moral and share problems. "We women are only vulnerable because we are a pioneer generation daring to refuse to compromise in love and relying on our own economic power. In twenty years' time men won't even dare start with fuckwittage because we will just laugh in their faces" (Fielding 21). As much influenced she may be by feminism and Sharon's thoughts, Bridget sometimes finds it hard to live by them. She often mentions feminism but from time to time she struggles with other ideas. Even though Bridget is not always consequent in her actions, it is important to note that she is aware of feminism and the unbalanced situation between the sexes (Larsson 17-18). When Daniel does not keep in touch after their first night together, Bridget reflects over the matter: "How can it be that the situation between the sexes after a first night remains so agonizingly imbalanced? Feel as if I have just sat an exam and must wait for my results" (Fielding 60). While Bridget may lure the reader in with open dialogue that seems to smack of rebellion against the silence imposed by patriarchy, the overall structure of the novel suggests that an adherence to femininity will be rewarded (Lyons 40). Although Bridget is a narrator who gives clear and distinctive views of certain subjects, her actions seem confusing. Yet, as you read the novel, you become more and more aware of what she is trying to achieve. She talks about Valentine's Day as something stupid and commercial, but when she sees an unaddressed card in her building, she wishes it was for her. She acts as a feminist when it is convenient for her. At one point, she even says:" After all "there is nothing as unattractive to a man as strident feminism" (Fielding 20). Bridget now and then states feminist ideas and some of them radical, among them her descriptions of men. Often her "feminism" is not based on equality; on the contrary, it is rather role-reversal. She wants the women to have all the power

and the men to be completely inferior. She is aware that her ideas are feminist. Bridget may not be seen as an ideal feminist because she only chooses to be one when it serves her (Larsson 20).

Feminism is also something that should be marked with struggle, fighting, yelling… That kind of "ranting" in the novel is mentioned when Bridget is talking to her friends and discussing their relationship problems. The feminist rant often becomes a broad tirade against the way men treat the women with whom they are involved. Rarely do these harangues locate and discuss actual sites of female oppression such as violence against women and poor and unequal employment. Feminist ranting is also almost always paired with excessive drinking: Bridget calls one particular meeting with the girls "a delicious night of drunken feminist ranting" (Dhrodia 23). This ranting allows them to express their opinion, anger and everything that they hold within themselves. It is their fight against society and their narrow-mindedness. Yet, when Bridget is left alone, she turns to moping and despondency and fantasizing about men. Nevertheless, these moments of female bonding allow Bridget and her friends to challenge the impossible standards that have been set for women within patriarchal society. Now, we can say that this book is not distinctly feminist. The book encourages readers to believe that feminism is something that forces women to choose between their own personal happiness and what society will say and think. It is easy to believe in the ideal of feminism and to have a desire for something bigger, but the reality is that every woman has dreams of her own and is happy in her own way. Dhrodia (22) believes that Fielding advocates the belief that feminism is merely an identity one may don whenever required rather than a political commitment to ending the oppression of women. It is the stuff of make-believe, of play, of idealism, of unfulfillable fantasy. In this novel, the word "feminist" is described in many different ways. It is presented as a genre of music, a behavior that will lure men, a behavior that will scare men, or an ideal that will force women to choose public over personal. Bridget is most concerned what effect it will have on men, which she emphasizes at the mere beginning of the story. "I WIIL NOT sulk about having no boyfriend, but develop inner poise and authority and sense of self as a woman of substance, complete without boyfriend, as best way to obtain boyfriend" (Fielding 2). Female autonomy, then, is a snare, a trick – a powerful tool to attract men who do not want to be attached to women who are too needy or "co-independent" (Dhrodia 23).

In the context of this theme it is important to mention that this novel also shows how men are not always powerful and strong as they consider themselves. Even though we live in a society where men and women have their "traditional roles," masculinity should not be superior to femininity. That is perfectly depicted in Bridget's father and her homosexual friend Tom.

Bridget's father felt powerful when he was married. He had a wife, a child and he provided for his family, but when Bridget's mother left him, he completely broke down: "As he sat down on the sofa, his face crumpled and tears began to splosh down his cheek" (Fielding 48). In order to gain her back, and his power, he would do anything. Frosh claims that Lacan uses the phallus in determining power that is more related to masculinity but can also be related to femininity. Lacan claims that there is a great difference between acquiring and desiring the phallus. Both men and women can acquire the phallus that is represented in power and not related only to masculinity. For example, Bridget's father acquired the phallus during his marriage, but this disappeared with his failed marriage, which made him lose the phallus or, in other words, lose his power (qtd. in Beden 15). This proves that men and even women can own or lose the phallus, which is not related to masculinity or femininity rather than to how powerful a person can be seen in his or her society. On the other hand, when Bridget's father collapses through his crisis, his feminine norms rise, which makes him lose his power (Beden 15). When Bridget's mother left, she lost her feminine norms while her masculine norms increased. On the other hand, her husband's powers were lost and his feminine norms increased. We know that society would never be propitious towards that. Yet, they both share the blame. Even though he made her feel inferior her entire life, she should have fought for herself from the beginning. Beden (17) claims that as a woman in the twentieth century, she should have cared about her education and started building up a career to be treated equally as her husband. Women in the twentieth century can enjoy their freedom and participate actively in society, which gives them more value in society. Bridget was certainly aware of their situation and therefore she always puts great emphasis on her career and does not want to be dominated by men.

Homosexuality is another subject that needs to be discussed in the context of this chapter. Tom is the only character in the novel that is homosexual and he is pretty much aware of how society looks at him. He is the only character with whom Bridget can identify. She and Tom present everything that society rejects. "Tom has a theory that homosexuals and single women in their thirties have natural bounding; both being accustomed to disappointing their parents and being treated as freaks by society" (Fielding 27). He knows that his status as a homosexual is sometimes seen as queer and is not really accepted by society, even though homosexuality has become acceptable in modern societies. Women and homosexuals both own strong feminine norms that make them seem powerless and assaulted and, as a result, they fall under the power of the hierarchical masculinity. In other words, it is the patriarchal society that encourages and strengthens masculinity's power over feminist aspects of identity (Beden 17). However, Bridget

is very aware of how society treats homosexual, and even though her friend is gay, when she writes in her diary about how much she loves her colleague Perpetua, she always mentions that it's not in a "lesbian way." So, this shows how thin is the line between homosexuality and feminism watched through the eyes of society.

4. Movie Adaptation of the Novel

In this last chapter, I will briefly comment on the film adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*. The movie was directed by Sharon Maguire and it was premiered on April 4, 2001 in the UK. The leading actors were Renée Zellweger, Hugh Grant and Colin Firth. Before I read this novel, I watched the movie. Even though my opinion is that the novel cannot be considered entirely feminist, the movie somehow left out particular feminist elements from the novel. My experience of the movie was that it was a typical romantic comedy about a woman trying to find the perfect guy. The film was brilliant, humorous, exciting and, I suppose, it would not be so successful in any other way. As I have mentioned before, Bridget thinks in the "feminist" way only when she is talking to her friends and when they are drunk or when she is angry because of some guy. In her reader's guide to Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary*, Imelda Whelehan points out that the women do "rightly identify that, even in the twentieth century, there is a great stigma attached to being female and single after a certain age: spinsters have always been cast in a less attractive light than bachelors" (qtd. in Dhrodia 75). Bridget does not practice feminist language because she believes that men would not be allured by it, but she still thinks about the idea of feminism and from time to time struggles with it. In the movie, that struggle is missing. Dhrodia (76) says that the film presents Bridget accepting the degrading, sexist treatment she experiences without ever really challenging it. This alternative Bridget seems utterly unaware of the advent of feminism. On the other hand, characters such as Pam and Sharon are also changed in the movie. They are not anymore strong feminists but rather typical women who end it pretty much the same as any woman who does not succeed in finding the right guy. As far as Bridget's romantic relationships are concerned, there are also some differences. In the novel, Bridget is not involved with Mark and Daniel at the same time; she begins the relationship with Mark months after she broke up with Daniel. Yet, in the movie she is connected with them simultaneously; they even fight over her. Bridget thus found herself in a situation she thought she would never be. The movie, in that way, gives us the opportunity to see how Bridget will react to that. Typically for Bridget, she remains confused and slightly happy. Whelehan points out that *Bridget Jones's Diary* became a bestseller because women recognized within its irony their own experience of popular culture, and especially the tensions between the lure of feminist politics and fear of losing one's femininity. This perception of the incompatibility of feminism with having a meaningful heterosexual relationship has unfortunately been perpetuated beyond reason to its current status as self-evident truth (qtd. in Dhrodia 76).

Conclusion

After analyzing everything surrounding Bridget, her thoughts, her, most of the time, complex and confusing identity, we can say that Bridget is not a radical feminist and a typical representative of strong female power. She is insecure about her feelings and she does not really know what she wants, she basically needs to be told what to do (most of the time). On the other hand, she is aware of her possibilities¸ she is aware of what feminism should be and she is interested in the improvement of her career. She is maybe trying to oppose her family and society, but, in the end, she is just a girl who needs and wants to be loved and protected by a man.

We can conclude that Helen Fielding tried, with this book, to show that it is not so bad if some women are more focused on their love life than career life. It is their choice and our expectations about those powerful, independent women should just stay expectations. After all, she just described a typical girl hiding in all of us.

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