

Cinderella the
tightrope between
society competing
expectations.



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Cinderella Syndrome I think the time has come for someone to write “
Cinderella: The Sequel.

“ How did we get here? In 1697, French writer Charles Perrault updated an age-old fairy tale about a young woman named Cinderella to appeal to his contemporaries, French nobility and bourgeoisie. So many of the early versions of the tale boasted a very resourceful young woman who played an active role in her destiny. Perrault, however wrote his Cinderella as a well-mannered, docile, selfless women who would fit seamlessly with the ideal 17th century upper-class society. Historically, fairy tales have reflected the values of society in which they were written or revised mirroring its preoccupations, obsessions, ambitions, and shortcomings. What do these updates say about our culture’s view of women and marriage? It was this version that Walt Disney made famous in the 1950’s and to which feminists strongly reacted to in the 1960’s and 1970’s and ultimately co-opting the story to their own needs.

What do these updates say about our culture’s view of women and marriage? In her famous poem, “ Cinderella, Ann Sexton mocks the happily ever after. “ Cinderella and the prince lived, they say, happily ever after, like two dolls in a museum case that was never bothered by diapers or dust.” Today’s teenage girls have been brought up by women who read Sexton and her peers and who have taught their daughters that they can want it all, marriage, career, family. But can they have it all? I feel that this demonstrates, women still walk the tightrope between society competing expectations.

Can a woman maintain her own identity while falling for her prince? As I imagine it, we'd joined by Cinderella and the Handsome Prince shortly after they returned from their honeymoon. We would see them discover how different their tastes and priorities were when they go shopping to furnish the palace. We would see them run up bills and debts by trying to do much too fast, and they'd fight about whose fault their extravagances had been. Common sense and love would prevail.

They'd get on a budget and the storm would pass. A couple of years into the marriage, the Handsome Prince would get involved with a merger and acquisitions of the neighboring county, and he'd be gone a lot on business trips. The stress and loneliness of long separations would lead to disagreements, but again love would prevail. Then a child would be born to Cinderella and the Prince meaning more stress.

The child would be diagnosed with a learning disability and Cinderella and the Prince would each wonder whether the cause might have been the other's having parties too hard in their younger days. Their feelings of guilt and blame would generate into quarrels. A second child would be born. More changes and more stress. Cinderella's mother-in-law would sometimes interfere and criticize their parenting. Bickering would continue and get worse. Then Cinderella and the Handsome Prince would go to a marriage counselor. They tried to learn to appreciate each other's different points of view.

They also, tried to learn how to cope with change and stress. The moral of the story would be that in order to live happily ever after, Cinderella and the

Prince made drastic mistake to view romance and love being interchangeable words. My first and most shocking discovery was that romance deals in fantasy rather than reality. Romance depends on the “setting” the weather, your moods and expectations, it depends on _____except commitment. Love, on the other hand depends on nothing but commitment! When you _____ the fact that we live in a world that is always changing, it is easy to see how romance cannot meet the demands of real life. Romance is a weak substitute for love.

You can see this by the countless number of broken and bitter hearts, not to mention the soaring divorce rate. Likewise, the women of Sex and the City were celebrated for being smart, accomplished, and independent, yet they still longed to be swept away by their Prince. But neither of these women quite figures out to navigate the conflict, making them apt reflection of our society’s own bewilderment. But we’ll get there eventually. Twenty years from now, there will surely be a new