

Privacy Protection of Public Figures in China—The Case of Yundi Li's Prostitution

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Abstract

Since the birth of the right to privacy, more and more attention has been paid to the protection of the right to privacy. In China, since the introduction of privacy rights from the West, the protection of privacy rights has been focused on civil law, while the protection of privacy rights in legislation and judicial practice in other branches of law has only been superficial but not in-depth. The effect of civil law on the protection of privacy rights is undeniable, especially after the introduction of the Civil Code, which provides more thorough and complete regulations on privacy rights in the field of civil law. However, with the development of society, relying on civil law alone to protect the right to privacy has become a challenge. The protection of the right to privacy of public figures is even more lacking. For example, the case of Li Yundi's prostitution, which was publicly reported by the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau on 21 October 2021, reveals the loopholes in the protection of privacy and the privacy of public figures in China. Firstly, civil law in China has been effective in protecting the right to privacy, but in this case, the right of public security to disclose Li Yundi's private life involves the infringement of citizens' privacy by public power. Secondly, in China, public figures are often involved in the public interest, and it is the consensus of the academia and society as a whole that anyone in conflict with the public interest should give way to the public interest. However, in judicial practice, the author believes that it is unfair to treat public figures and ordinary citizens differently in terms of privacy rights when the public interest is not seriously endangered.

Therefore, this article aims to analyse the current status and shortcomings of the legislation and judicial practice on the protection of the privacy of public figures in China on the basis of the right to privacy and the privacy of public figures, and to draw on the advanced experience of other countries in order to establish and improve the privacy protection mechanism of public figures in China.

Keywords: privacy, public figures, public interest

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The case of Li Yundi's prostitution, which was publicly reported by the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau on 21 October 2021, has

drawn the author's attention to the topic of "protection of privacy of public figures", which in fact involved the infringement of public figures' rights as early as 2002 when Fan Zhiyi sued the Oriental Sports Daily for violating his right to reputation. Privacy is generally

interpreted as “the right to be left alone without interference from the outside world”.¹ In the case of Yundi Li’s prostitution, Yundi was merely venting his desires without endangering others or the public interest. In the case of Yundi Li’s prostitution, the individual was merely venting his desire without endangering others or the public interest, but in judicial practice, prostitution is only subject to administrative penalties, as stipulated in Article 66 of the Public Security Management Punishment Law, which stipulates that prostitutes should be detained and fined, but not notified. Furthermore, according to Article 15 of the Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on the Disclosure of Government Information, “The executive authorities shall not disclose government information that involves commercial secrets or personal privacy and whose disclosure would cause damage to the legitimate rights and interests of third parties. However, if the third party agrees to the disclosure or if the administrative organ considers that non-disclosure would have a significant impact on the public interest, it shall be disclosed.”

²There are judicial interpretations that support the view that criminal records should fall within the scope of personal privacy, and that prostitution as a record of administrative penalties should also fall within the scope of personal privacy. In addition, under the Public Security Management Punishment Law, the use of prostitutes is classified as an act of obstruction of social administration. Under the timely control of the police, the use of prostitutes as a private act of privacy did not have a significant impact on the public interest. Therefore, in the case of Li Yundi’s prostitution, it was inappropriate for the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau to publicly announce the conduct of the prostitute when the person concerned had not consented to the release of his administrative record.

In this case, Yundi Li, as a public figure, was publicly disclosed as having visited a prostitute, and the damage he suffered was far greater than the punishment he should have received for the act of visiting a prostitute. Since the public disclosure of the prostitution case, Li Yundi has been disqualified from membership of the Chinese Musicians’ Association; his titles of “Standing Committee Member of the Chongqing CPPCC”, “Standing Committee Member of the All-China Youth Federation” and

“Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Youth Federation” have been withdrawn. The title was withdrawn; a number of brands cancelled their contracts and asked to replace their endorsements, and it was rumoured that the Sichuan Conservatory of Music had withdrawn its “Li Yundi Studio” from the Sichuan Conservatory. In the wake of these consequences, Li Yundi is now “dead in the water”, with no chance of a comeback, and will even be spurned if he enters society again. These losses have far exceeded the consequences that the act of prostitution itself should bear. As citizens, public figures should enjoy the right to privacy on an equal footing. However, when their right to privacy conflicts with the public interest, they have to give up part of their right to privacy, and their legal rights can easily be seriously infringed upon. Therefore, this article aims to analyze the current status and shortcomings of the legislation and judicial practice on the protection of the privacy rights of public figures in China, based on the privacy rights of public figures and the privacy rights of public figures, and to draw on the advanced experience of other countries in order to establish and improve the privacy protection mechanism of public figures in China.

1.2 Overview of the Literature

1.2.1 Current Status of Domestic Research

The concept of privacy was introduced into China from the West, and Chinese law has long been silent on the right to privacy. It was only in 2010 that the Law on Liability for Infringement introduced the right to privacy as a separate personality right, and the Civil Code has given the right to privacy a definite concept and more thorough and complete provisions in the field of civil law. However, these legislative achievements and scholarly research are focused on the civil law field, while the Constitution and other sectoral laws, which are the fundamental law, are not complete. There are no laws governing “public figures”, and the “privacy rights of public figures” are even more of a blank slate. From Fan Zhiyi’s lawsuit against Oriental Sports Daily in 2002, Yang Liping’s lawsuit against Southern Weekend in 2007 to Li Yundi’s prostitution case in 2021, these are all cases where the media and public authorities have monitored and publicly disclosed the private lives of public figures, causing damage to their right to privacy and reputation. However, in cases involving public interest and

public authority, it would be inadequate to use civil law to protect the privacy rights of public figures, as the news media and government agencies are all guilty of infringement. However, in China, when the right to know in the public interest, public power and the privacy rights of public figures come into conflict in the above cases, it is ruled that the public figure should surrender part of his or her right to privacy and bear the harm caused by the infringement of this right to privacy alone.

In summary, most of the research on the protection of the privacy of public figures in China is focused on the protection of privacy in the field of civil law, and there is still a lack of research on the privacy of public figures and public figures.

1.2.2 Current Status of Extraterritorial Research

Before privacy was enshrined in the Constitution, the protection of citizens' privacy rights was established in the United States through judicial precedent. U.S. law provides for the right to privacy of public figures in four areas: first, the name of the public figure or its analogues; second, the private sphere and private life of the public figure; third, private information; and fourth, personal privacy.³ The right to privacy has been a constitutional right in the United States since the passage of the 1965 constitutional amendment. In the United States, as in China, the right to information and freedom of speech are protected by law when the privacy of public figures conflicts with the public interest. In the UK, privacy is not yet protected as a separate right, and the protection of the right to privacy of public figures is constantly being adapted. Although only the news media industry is regulated, it is worthwhile for China to learn from the media industry's regulatory approach. To a certain extent, regulating the news media can effectively protect the privacy of public figures.

1.3 Research Methodology

The following three research methods are used in this paper:

- (1) Documentary analysis method: The electronic database was used to collect research literature on the protection of privacy of public figures.
- (2) Case Study Method: An analysis of the "Yundi Li Prostitution Case" and an analysis of the current state of privacy protection of public

figures in China.

2. Overview of Privacy and Public Figures

2.1 Privacy

Privacy has been around since people began covering their bodies with leaves and grass skirts thousands of years ago. It was only in the last century that the concept of privacy emerged as a legal concept. In 1889, Warren, dissatisfied with the public coverage of his daughter's wedding by the press, published an article in the Harvard Law Review with Brandeis entitled "The Right to Privacy", and the concept of privacy in the legal sense was born. Until 1905, however, privacy in the legal sense was not recognised in the law. It was not until Justice Reid declared privacy to be part of Georgia law in *Pavement v. English Life* that privacy was formally incorporated into the law. Since then there have been numerous statutes enacted to strengthen the position of privacy in the US legal system.

The concept of privacy has always been a matter of debate. Currently, there are five main types of privacy concepts: "the right to be alone, the secret relationship, the freedom of private life, the secrecy of information, and the general personality rights."⁴ The author believes that the right to privacy should be defined as the right of an individual to enjoy autonomy and control over his or her private sphere, private affairs and private information, which he or she does not want to be publicly disclosed or interfered with by others, and to be free from interference by others. This definition is a comprehensive consideration of all aspects of private life, such as private space, relationships, things and information, and can express the meaning of privacy more accurately and comprehensively.

In the context of the above concept and connotation of privacy, in the case of Li Yundi's prostitution, the question to be discussed is whether the public disclosure of his prostitution by the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau violated Li Yundi's right to privacy. In the case of Li Yundi's prostitution, it is important to discuss whether the public disclosure of his prostitution violated Li Yundi's right to privacy and to consider the protection and limitations of privacy in China. Public figures have little contact with the public in reality and are mostly known online, so the infringement of their privacy generally occurs on the internet and in

the news media. In the Judicial Interpretation of the Supreme People's Court on Several Issues Concerning the Application of Law to the Judgment of Civil Dispute Cases Involving the Use of Information Networks to Infringe on the Rights and Interests of Persons (Law Interpretation [2014] No. 11)⁵, Article 12 stipulates that: network users or network service providers use the network to disclose personal privacy and other personal information such as the genetic information of natural persons ... criminal records and The People's Court shall support the request of the infringer to assume responsibility if the infringer uses the network to disclose personal privacy and other personal information such as criminal records, causing damage to others. The Judicial Interpretation makes it clear that criminal records can be used as personal privacy, so under the principle of "the weight of the name is lighter", records of administrative penalties for the illegal act of visiting prostitutes can also be used as privacy. Secondly, when there is a conflict between the right to privacy and the public interest in China, the right to privacy should give way to the public interest. Unlike the drug use case of Li Daimo and the drink driving case of Gao Xiaosong, Li Yundi's prostitution was an outlet for his desires. Drug use and drink driving are serious threats to public safety and are criminal offences. Although the use of prostitutes is detrimental to the management of society, it does not go so far as to harm the public interest. In addition, China's Civil Code stipulates that the privacy of others should not be disclosed, so the public security authorities should respect Li Yundi's right to privacy and not disclose his record of administrative punishment as a private individual without his consent, provided that he has not endangered the public interest. Li Yundi certainly did not want the private information about his prostitutes to be publicly disclosed during his golden years of fame and fortune. The fact that the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau disclosed to the media his conduct of visiting prostitutes and his record of administrative sanctions, and that the media publicised this conduct, is an infringement of privacy by the public authorities and the news media. Moreover, the Public Security Management Punishment Law, under which Li Yundi was detained by the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau, only provides for the detention or fining of prostitutes, and does not

provide for the authority to publicly disclose the prostitute's illegal behaviour or to publicly disclose the prostitute's behaviour as part of the punishment for his illegal behaviour. In conclusion, the authorities and the online media should not disclose the fact that a prostitute is an important personal privacy item without the consent of the person concerned.

2.2 Public Figures

The concept of "public figure" has not been explained in detail in Chinese law. In terms of legislation, in 2002, during the drafting of the draft law on personality rights in the Civil Code, it was defined in detail that public figures are leaders, artists, film and television stars, sports stars, social activists, and so on. Furthermore, Article 157 of the draft law stipulates that "the public disclosure of the privacy of public figures for the purpose of public information and public opinion supervision in the public interest shall not constitute press infringement." However, this provision was later deleted when it was submitted for deliberation, so the concept of public figures has not yet taken shape. ⁶In judicial practice, the 2002 verdict in the case of Fan Zhiyi against a newspaper for infringement of his right to reputation was the first time that the concept of "public figure" was introduced in the judicial term. The judgement also favoured the idea that public figures should bear more harm to their reputation and privacy rights than ordinary citizens. ⁷In China's legislation and judicial practice, there is no clear concept of "public figure" and no clear definition of its boundaries. Many scholars have put forward their own concepts of "public figures" in the academia. The author agrees with the viewpoint of Professor Wang Liming, who divides public figures into political public figures and social public figures. ⁸The restriction of privacy in the public interest is internationally recognised. In the author's view, when protecting the privacy rights of public figures, we should divide public figures into these two major categories to protect and restrict their privacy rights. Public figures of a political nature are generally government officials with political elements, and these public figures are more likely to touch on public interests than public figures in society. The powers of government agencies and staff are given to them by the people, and they are given to them by the people who have given up some of their rights. It is only right that public officials should be subject to the supervision of the

people. The privacy of their private space, private information and private property, if not handled properly, may affect the performance of their public duties and thus jeopardise the public interest of society. In order to be subject to the supervision of the people and to better perform the public duties entrusted to them, their personal privacy, such as their property, family, private life and information, must be disclosed. Public figures of a social nature, such as entertainment stars and athletes, are of wide interest to the public because of certain characteristics. Such public figures have less impact on the public interest and are therefore subject to fewer restrictions. The duties of political public figures are more closely related to the public interest, and therefore their privacy rights are less protected. In contrast, unless a serious crime has been committed, the actions of a social figure are not sufficient to endanger the public interest and therefore can be protected by the right to privacy in a wider scope. As a “pianist” and “entertainment star”, Yundi Li is a public figure of a social nature and faces administrative penalties for prostitution as an illegal act. Even for political figures, their personal privacy cannot be disclosed as long as their behaviour does not endanger the public interest.

3. The Current Status of Privacy Protection for Public Figures in China

3.1 Current Status of Legislation on the Protection of Privacy of Public Figures in China

It was only with the promulgation of the Civil Code in 2021 that the right to privacy was given specific legal stability and a detailed definition of privacy. However, it is only the Civil Code that has a clear and detailed definition of privacy, and the Constitution, as the fundamental law, is in a state of absence. In the case of Li Yundi's prostitute, there was a violation of his right to privacy by both the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau and the online media. As a public authority, Li Yundi's right to privacy in this case is somewhat overstretched if he uses civil law to defend himself. Articles 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40 of the Constitution provide for the inviolability of citizens' personal freedom, personal dignity, freedom of residence, freedom of communication and secrecy.⁹ These provisions protect the right to privacy in terms of the private sphere, private affairs and private information. These articles are constitutional provisions on the right to personality, but only

protect the right to privacy in the context of the right to personality, without explicitly regulating the right to privacy. The constitution is the foundation of all rights, and the absence of privacy rights in the constitution has left the right to privacy without the most basic and highest level of legal support. The absence of a constitutional right to privacy means that the right to privacy, which has lost its most fundamental and important legal protection, may be violated but not protected. Articles 245, 252 and 253 of the Criminal Code also provide protection for the privacy of the person, home and correspondence.¹⁰ However, the provisions of these articles only reflect the protection of the right to privacy, and there are no specific provisions on the right to privacy. With only the Civil Code providing for specific provisions on privacy, firstly, if the case goes beyond the civil context, such as infringement by public authorities, the Civil Code's provisions on privacy will be somewhat inadequate. Secondly, the absence of a constitutional law may lead to confusion if there is a conflict between its subordinate law and the absence of this superior law as a reference. All of these situations may result in the victims' right to privacy not being effectively protected.

As mentioned above, there are many loopholes in the privacy laws of China. In today's era of big data, the rapid development of information can easily and quickly lead to privacy leaks. In particular, the Chinese public has never been more concerned about public figures, and the private information of some public figures can become widely known overnight. In the information age, the privacy of public figures is even more vulnerable to infringement. The lack of legislation has resulted in a lack of comprehensive protection for the privacy of public figures. The lack of a comprehensive legal system to protect the privacy of public figures also makes them more vulnerable and unable to be protected directly and effectively.

3.2 Current Judicial Status of Protection of Privacy of Public Figures in China

In China's public figure privacy infringement cases, most of the parties involved are social figures. In judicial practice, some of the more well-known cases are Fan Zhiyi v. Oriental Sports Daily in 2003, Yang Lijuan v. Southern Weekend in 2008, Zhang Yishan v. China Entertainment Network in 2010, and Li Yundi's prostitution case in 2021. The first three of these

cases have been appealed and the court has already handed down a verdict, while the client in the case of Li Yundi's prostitution has not yet filed a lawsuit to protect his right to privacy. In all of the above cases, the media's extensive coverage of the private lives of public figures caused distress and even damage to the public figures' right to reputation. It is evident from these cases that in judicial practice in China, the courts are more inclined to the view that public figures should bear the damage to their right to privacy and reputation. The right to privacy in the public interest should be restricted. However, restricting the right to privacy is not the same as depriving the right to privacy, and the parties in the above cases did not endanger the public interest. Private life, private information and private photographs are all part of a public figure's personal privacy. The media's publication of these photos on the internet without the person's permission is a serious violation of the person's right to privacy. However, in China's judicial practice, the protection of the privacy rights of public figures is not systematic and is not based on sufficient evidence. Some court decisions have cited the views of US courts, but the recognition of the concept and facts cited is open to question. In summary, the courts in China have tended to protect the interests of the news media more than the privacy of public figures, and have overly restricted or even deprived public figures of their right to privacy.

4. Analysis of the Reasons for the Current State of Privacy Protection of Public Figures in China

4.1 Conflict Between the Privacy of Public Figures and Public Interest in China

The conflict between privacy and public interest is the most fundamental reason why the right to privacy of public figures in China is overly restricted. In the second chapter of this article, the author cites Professor Wang Liming's viewpoint and divides public figures into two major categories: social public figures and political public figures. The functions of political public figures are closely related to the interests of the people, and their words, behaviour, property status and private life may affect the exercise of their political power and thus pose a threat to the public interest, so there is no excuse for monitoring political public figures in order to protect the public interest. Social public figures, such as sports and cultural stars and

entrepreneurs, become public figures because of certain characteristics that attract public attention. Social public figures have acquired a different social status and social influence from the general public, and their actions and behaviours also affect the social climate to a certain extent. It is reasonable for them to sacrifice some of their privacy in exchange for exposing themselves to the public eye in exchange for their wealth and social status. Public figures are equal to ordinary citizens before the law, and the same rules on privacy apply. But while political public figures are linked to the interests of the people in every aspect of their private lives, social public figures also expose themselves to the public eye and have the ability to influence social mores.

The public interest encompasses a wide range of issues, and it is often the public's right to know that conflicts with the privacy of public figures. The power of political figures is granted by the people, and their private lives and property status are linked to the interests of the people, so in order to protect the public interest, the people have the right to know to monitor them. Socially exposed public figures, on the other hand, are actively exposed to the public eye, gaining revenue and social status by gaining traffic through public attention. They are indirectly exchanging a portion of their privacy for material and spiritual income on a voluntary basis, and therefore the public has the right to know some of their private information. The public interest has always been a priority in China, and public figures of any kind can directly or indirectly jeopardise or affect the public interest. In summary, the judicial practice in China has overly restricted and even deprived public figures of their right to privacy in order to protect the public interest more fully.

4.2 Inadequate Regulation of the Relevant Industries

In cases where the privacy rights of public figures have been violated, most of the violators are the news media and the internet. In China, there are few laws and judicial interpretations that restrict the news media, and without legal restrictions, there are no direct restrictions on the rights of the news media. The only way to regulate the news media industry is to rely on industry regulations and industry self-awareness. Nowadays, the news media is becoming more commercialised and tends to report on high traffic events. In China, there is an unprecedented level of concern for the

private lives of public figures, and a small piece of negative news can be known overnight. In pursuit of commercial interests, the news media has gone crazy in digging up and following the private lives of public figures, to the extent of pathological voyeurism. It is reasonable to scrutinise the personal integrity of public figures. But there is a darker side to human beings that we do not want to be known, and the news media's frenzied stalking of this important private life can be far more damaging to public figures than the act itself. For example, in the case of Li Daimo's drug use and Gao Xiaosong's drink-driving case, the behaviour of these public figures has reached a level that has seriously jeopardised or is about to jeopardise the public interest, and their privacy needs to give way to the public interest at this point. In the case of Li Yundi's prostitution, the Chaoyang Public Security Bureau leaked information about Li Yundi's administrative punishment to the media, who then reported it with great fanfare. Prostitution itself is a nuisance to social administration, but not an act that would touch on the public interest. However, in the aftermath of the case, Li Yundi has suffered damages far beyond the punishment he should have received for visiting a prostitute. Therefore, the public security authorities and the news media should weigh up the disclosure of prostitution as an important private act and the administrative punishment as a private act before considering whether to report it publicly. Inadequate regulation of the news media industry, which arbitrarily reports on the privacy of public figures. Even if they are successful in defending their right to privacy, their careers, status and reputation will not return after a social death, and they will no longer be able to live a normal life in society. In summary, the news media industry satisfies the public's right to know, but it does incalculable harm to the person concerned by satisfying the public's right to know on the basis of violating their right to privacy.

5. Suggestions for Solutions

5.1 Improving China's Legislation on the Privacy of Public Figures

In this article's analysis of the protection of the privacy rights of public figures, there are two focal points of conflict. The first is the conflict of civil rights, which refers to the conflict between the right to privacy of public figures and the public's right to know; the second is the conflict

between the public power of the government and the right to privacy as a right to privacy, which in the case of Li Yundi involved the conflict between the public power of the Beijing Chaoyang Public Security Bureau and Li Yundi's right to privacy. At present, the only law in China that explicitly provides for the right to privacy is the Civil Code. The Constitution and other departmental laws only include the right to privacy for indirect protection. In the absence of a constitutional law on privacy, civil law is not sufficient to protect the right to privacy in the event of a conflict between public power and private rights. In addition, the absence of a higher law, the constitution, will cause confusion when there is a conflict of civil rights. Therefore, the right to privacy should be incorporated into the constitution as soon as possible to provide the most basic and important protection for the right to privacy. In this way, when the right to privacy and the right to information conflict, the two rights can be protected in accordance with the constitution, and when faced with a conflict between public power and the right to privacy, the constitution can protect the right to privacy more effectively than the civil law. 2021 will see the introduction of the Civil Code, which makes specific provisions on the right to privacy, a milestone for the protection of privacy. However, in the author's opinion, although the Civil Code provides detailed provisions on the right to privacy and clarifies the responsibility, it does not provide for remedies for the right to privacy. In particular, when a public figure's privacy is infringed upon, his or her reputation will suffer the most, and it is important to consider how to minimise the loss of the public figure's reputation and provide him or her with remedies. The constitution and other sectoral laws should be made to incorporate privacy rights into the law and to set a uniform standard, so as to avoid confusion in the event of privacy disputes or the lack of a higher law to refer to when applying the law. In addition to the above-mentioned legislation to protect the privacy of public figures, China does not have a "Press Law" to regulate the press industry. The author believes that a press law should be introduced as soon as possible, so that the press industry can be regulated by law, instead of relying solely on industry regulations and industry self-awareness.

5.2 Regulation of Judicial Practice

In judicial practice, the author believes that the

different contents of privacy rights and different types of privacy rights should be treated differently. The fundamental criterion for distinguishing the different contents of privacy rights is whether they are related to public interest. The court should support the non-exposure of privacy rights that are not related to public interest, while privacy rights that are related to public interest should be weighed before making a decision. Public figures, by their very nature, are subject to a certain degree of restriction on their right to privacy, but the degree of restriction should be differentiated for different public figures. Political figures have a greater connection to the public interest than social figures, and their work should be subject to public scrutiny. Therefore, in cases where the privacy rights of politically exposed persons are infringed, the courts should also impose more restrictions on their privacy rights in order to protect the public interest. Social figures can rarely endanger the public interest, and the courts should not treat them in the same way as political figures, and should support their privacy from being exposed when it is not related to the public interest. Furthermore, as times progress, human rights should be given greater weight. The public interest is also a collection of individual interests, and it may be counterproductive to sacrifice individual interests to protect the public interest. In summary, judicial practitioners should keep up with the times, constantly improve their professionalism, combine theory and practice when dealing with public figure privacy cases, and take into account the rights and obligations of all parties before making a decision.

5.3 Increasing the Regulation of the Relevant Industries

In today's information society, information travels fast and the media and networks want to get first-hand information and report it as soon as possible in order to turn it into the most profitable information. As a result, many media and networks release information as soon as they receive it without strict scrutiny, which can directly cause irreversible harm to public figures. The author believes that the first step in regulating the news and internet industry should be to start from within the industry by formulating and introducing a "Press Law" to clarify the rights and obligations of the news media and the remedies for infringement of

rights. A legal regulation of the news industry, with strict censorship procedures and penalties, can effectively prevent some media from exposing public information without censorship. Secondly, the government should play a role in regulating and supervising the news and internet industry in accordance with the relevant laws, and guiding those who work in the industry to consciously manage the private information they receive.

6. Concluding Remarks

With the rapid development of online information, the right to privacy has become more vulnerable to infringement. The protection of the privacy of public figures has become more difficult in the context of both the entertainment industry and the rapid development of the internet. The conflict between public power and privacy, and the conflict between privacy and the right to know, is becoming more and more acute, and it has become a trend for privacy to be incorporated into the constitution and directly legislated in other departmental laws. This article takes the case of Yundi Li's prostitute as an example, leading to the author's thoughts on the protection of public figures' privacy. After analyzing the cases of public figures such as Fan Zhiyi and Yang Liping who sued for infringement of their rights, the author concluded that the courts are more inclined to let public figures bear the harm caused by the infringement of their privacy rights, and the courts are more inclined to protect the rights of the news media and the public's right to know. Therefore, in this article, the author analyzes the concept and characteristics of privacy and public figures, and then combines the legislation and judicial system on the protection of public figures' privacy with the current situation of the relevant industries to analyze the reasons for the lack of protection of public figures' privacy. The author also concludes with his views on the protection of the privacy rights of public figures, hoping that public figures can enjoy the same privacy rights as ordinary citizens to the greatest extent possible and that their privacy rights will be protected from infringement.

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