

Women Seen and Heard Virtual Film Festival

TIPS FOR A LIVELY DISCUSSION

About the Virtual Film Festival

The authors of the **Women Seen and Heard** books are hosting their very first Virtual Film Festival as a way for women to stay connected while sheltering in place. Every week in May, we will recommend provocative and timely films and provide you with a [relevant Discussion Guide](#). All you have to do is find a few film-loving friends and schedule a weekly meeting (feel free to bring a glass of your favorite libation) and be prepared for a lively exchange of thoughts and ideas. Most of these films are available on Amazon or Netflix, although additional fees may apply.

Before Your Virtual Meeting

Encourage everyone to watch the film a few days before your meeting and [download the free Discussion Guide](#). This will help get everyone's creative juices flowing. Use the questions as prompts to jump start the conversation. Structure the group in such a way that it keeps everyone engaged – either ask someone to be the facilitator or come up with a format that is sure to keep everyone engaged and allows the conversation to flow smoothly.

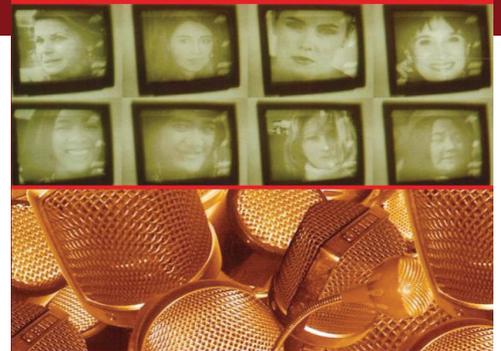
Tips for a Lively Film Fest Discussion

1. It's essential that everyone rent the film and watch it in advance of your meeting. The films should be available via Amazon.com or Netflix.
2. The Facilitator/Organizer establishes and emails the link for an online meeting.
3. Everyone should review the [Discussion Guide](#) produced for that week's film.
4. [The Discussion Guide](#) provided will keep things moving if someone facilitates the discussion. Without a single facilitator, the discussion guide acts as a structure to follow to keep things moving. Don't let anyone dominate!
5. Individuals might select a question that they like from the guide. After people weigh in with either general reactions, or specific aspects of the film they liked (or didn't), the discussion can be a "free for all." That's where you "follow the breadcrumbs!"
6. If you know one another's backgrounds well, the facilitator (or anyone) can ask a specific participant to address a particular question that is relevant to their experience in politics, business, professional life, government, etc.

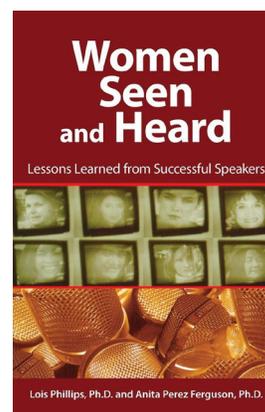
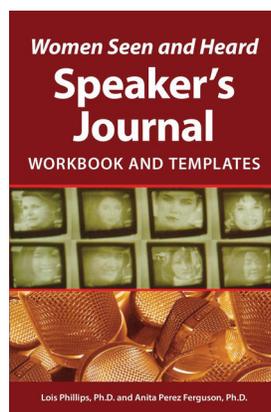
Please feel free to provide us with feedback and comments on how your group enjoyed the film on the [Women Seen and Heard Facebook Page](#) (and if you haven't already Liked our page, be sure to do so and invite others to do the same!)

Women Seen and Heard Speaker's Journal

WORKBOOK AND TEMPLATES



Lois Phillips, Ph.D. and Anita Perez Ferguson, Ph.D.



Click on the covers to
purchase the Women
Seen and Heard books
from Amazon.

Women Seen and Heard Virtual Film Festival

DISCUSSION GUIDE Miss Sloane

Available on Amazon Prime

Discussion Questions

These questions are merely suggestions, so don't limit yourself to them. Given the unique makeup of your group, encourage new topics to emerge. Be sure to ask, "What else are we missing here?"

1. In general, did you like the film? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. As a film, what was most compelling about *Miss Sloane*, if anything? Was it the script, the characters, the production values, the acting, the relevance to our present-day issue of gun control legislation, or...?
3. In terms of the structure, compare the opening and closing scenes of *Equity* with the opening and closing scene of *Miss Sloane*.
4. Roger Ebert's critique read "...the character of Miss Sloane is given fascinating and bizarre depths (unexplained for the most part, a welcome change)." At one point, Schmidt—who poached her from her old firm—asks her point-blank: "Were you ever normal? What were you like as a child?" What do you imagine was Sloane's backstory? What made her such a ferocious lobbyist?
5. Miss Sloane, like Naomi Bishop in *Equity*, wants to win. She does not have any convictions outside of winning (a philosophy she verbalizes multiple times throughout, including in the direct-address opening scene). She will do anything—anything—to win. Does she have a moral center? How would we know?
6. There are many power-imbalances we see from the start. Discuss a few of the relationships, and how you felt about them. Include the corporate setting, the nonprofit setting, the congressional hearing, the intimate relationship, etc.
7. Regarding the above, have you ever experienced a power-imbalance in which you were the recipient of a smart but dictatorial person? How did you deal with it?
8. Other films in the Women Seen and Heard Virtual Film Festival presented tough women who were ambitious and principled (to one degree or another). They weren't necessarily "feminine" or likable, but they were smart. Talk about your reaction to smart women who are strategists and don't necessarily have much "emotional intelligence," empathy or compassion. What did the film say about women and power? Compare her to her old boss.
9. How would other people describe you in a leadership role (in business, government, professional life, advocacy, your industry, etc.)? Were you always seen as likable and/or approachable?
10. There are many shots of people turning to one another with expressions of, "Is this lady for real?" We get the point: she's outside-of-the-box, she's brilliant, she's scary, she's full of surprises in pursuing strategies that nobody else thought of. Were you turned off by her behavior?
11. Ebert writes that "Chastain is a pleasure to look at, in her dizzyingly high heels, ice-white skin and bright red lips." Her voice is emotionless and flat. Did the director's emphasis on Miss Sloane's face work well as a theatrical device?
12. Re timing, the film was released two weeks after what some say was the ugliest election in U.S. history. Given what we have seen in DC politics since then, does this film remain relevant?
13. Miss Sloane is a film that seems to say that the ends-justify-the-means and, in this way, is cynical. How else would she have "won"? Given the ending, did you want to cheer her on and applaud her for how clever she is, or...? How did you feel at the end?

Women Seen and Heard Speaker's Journal

WORKBOOK AND TEMPLATES



Lois Phillips, Ph.D. and Anita Perez Ferguson, Ph.D.

CALENDAR & SCHEDULE

The producers of these films are not in any way meant to be presented as endorsing the **Women Seen and Heard** books. The films are being suggested because they align with the message of our books, specifically women's challenges communicating with decision-makers in male dominated sectors.

May 8, The Contender

Navigating the endorsement process is tough and many believe it's torturous for a woman whose private life will be scrutinized with a magnifying glass. Ugh! Why not escape with a bit of a thriller about the endorsement process? The Contender, starring Jeff Bridges, Joan Allen, and Gary Oldman, holds up very well over time. People who are in their 20s and 30's likely never saw it, so do recommend it! Those over 40 will find it chilling in its relevance to current events. Watch the trailer and see what you think!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9bC0mg_nJY

[Click here for the Women Seen and Heard Discussion Guide for this film.](#)

May 15, Equity

Equity is a fictional corporate thriller in the vein of Margin Call. It follows Naomi Bishop, an ambitious and aggressive senior investment banker working on a series of Silicon Valley IPOs in hopes of becoming the head of her division. The Atlantic said it was long overdue as a film exploring the motivations, aspirations, and drawbacks of being female on Wall Street. Watch the trailer and see what you think!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xg2TSp5tJy4>

[Click here for the Women Seen and Heard Discussion Guide for this film.](#)

May 22, Ms Sloane

Ms Sloane is a 2016 political thriller about Elizabeth Sloane, the most sought after and formidable lobbyist in D.C. The film is set in the high-stakes world of political power-brokers. When asked to help oppose a bill that imposes regulations on firearms, she instead joins a scrappy boutique firm that represents the backers of the law. Her defiant stance and determination to win makes her the target of powerful enemies who threaten her career and the people she cares about. Watch the trailer and see what you think!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMUkfmUu44k>

[Click here for the Women Seen and Heard Discussion Guide for this film.](#)

May 29, Molly's Game

Molly's Game is an American biographical crime drama film written and directed by Aaron Sorkin (in his directorial debut), based on the memoir of the same name by Molly Bloom. The film follows Bloom (Jessica Chastain), who becomes the target of an FBI investigation regarding the underground poker empire she runs for Hollywood celebrities, athletes, business tycoons, and the Russian mob. Watch the trailer and see what you think!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vu4UPet8Nyc>

[Click here for the Women Seen and Heard Discussion Guide for this film.](#)

June 5, The Assistant

"The Assistant" is a brand-new film about power dynamics in the workplace. The film takes place over one very long day, when the young heroine comes to sense that something may be "off," not only with her boss, but also with the company he created. She starts her job in a culture that protects/ ignores/denies what is really going on in the office. It is a film that many align with the #METOO movement. Julia Garner's acting (seen recently on the TV series Ozark) is stellar as she tries to understand the nuances and minefields in her new workplace. Watch the trailer and see what you think!

<https://www.amazon.com/Assistant-Julia-Garner/dp/B0844J2MFZ>

[Click here for the Women Seen and Heard Discussion Guide for this film.](#)