

Women in the Lead: Four Films Showing Tips

Objectives for film guide

- Provide information on the films
- Provide information about women's lives in Nova Scotia
- Identify frequently asked questions before the showing
- Suggest questions for discussion after the films
- Provide sample logistics checklist

Audience for film guide

- Advisory Council members
- Women's centres
- Community members and leaders
- Staff

Background on film project

Women in the Lead was the theme for Status of Women Canada for Women's History Month, October 2008. It honoured girls and women in Canada, past and present, who have gone first, who opened doors for others to follow. This theme reflects the longtime efforts of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women through its Women in Leadership Program, to increase the numbers and diversity of women in public and political life, and to recognize contribution of women leaders in advancing fairness, dignity and equality of women.

In this film series, women directors focus the lens on pioneers of social justice and peace movements, on everyday heroines among historically excluded peoples, on grinding inequality, and early sexualization of girls. The directors and their films present insight into who we were, who we are, and who we could become.

Details about each film are in the pamphlet Women in the Lead: Four Films and also inside and/or on the DVD cases.

Women in Leadership Program

An equal voice in society, fair pay and pensions, freedom from violence, and good health and well-being -- how can Nova Scotia create this future for women and their families? The answer is by involving more women in public policy and leadership roles.

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women works

- to increase the numbers and diversity of women in public and political life,
- to recognize the contribution of women leaders in advancing fairness, dignity and equality of women, and
- to exercise leadership internationally, by sharing expertise and experiences.

Since the Council's inception in 1977, it has encouraged women to take on decision-making roles, to run in elections, join agencies, boards and commissions, to vote and contribute to public consultations, to work as public employees, or for political parties.

Throughout the years, Council has partnered with local, provincial and national organizations to increase women's political involvement through the Nova Scotia Campaign School for Women, the Women in Local Government Project, Equal Voice, the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, and many others.

Democracy 250 provided funding for Women in the Lead: Four Films, in recognition of the long road to democratic representation for women.

We all come from different places, different experiences, and, sometimes, differing points of view. Yet our missions merge on our Canadian belief in fair political representation, civil rights, and a just and equitable society. These four films convey the continuing battle for equality, fairness and dignity for women.



Nova Scotia
Advisory Council on
the Status of Women

Conseil consultatif sur la
condition féminine de la
Nouvelle-Écosse

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *What is the purpose of showing these films?*

The purpose is to raise awareness about women’s leadership roles through filmmaking and through the subjects’ lives and work.

2. *Why should I show these films?*

It’s an opportunity to raise awareness about women in film industry and in our communities.

3. *Should I have a guest speakers?*

You may wish to plan the screening with a few members of the club or community. If you are showing a film that might be relevant to someone, you may wish to ask them to attend, provide suggestions and respond to film content.

4. *What are my screening options?*

These films are suitable for building awareness and as educational tools. They may be of interest to communities including local libraries, community centres and to students and staff at schools and other organizations.

5. *How do I identify my audience?*

There are four films and the audiences may vary for each:

Film	Suggested Audiences
The Spirit of Annie Mae	Community members, students, women’s centres, educators, parents, teens, public health practitioners, community members.
Sexy Inc. Our Children Under Influence	Educators, parents, teens, public health practitioners, community members and activists, women’s centres, etc
Little Black School House	Community members, students, women’s centres, educators, parents, teens, public health practitioners, community members.
Muriel Duckworth Practicing Peace	Community members, students, women’s centres, educators, parents, teens, public health practitioners, community members.

6. *Are the films suitable for youth viewers?*

The subject matter is more suitable to viewers 16 years and older. However, younger audiences (14 to 16) could benefit from seeing the films; they should be accompanied by an adult.

7. *Where and how do I select a venue?*

Depending on the audience, here are some possibilities:

- women’s centres
- community centres
- community development organizations
- church halls, church clubs/councils
- service clubs

- local parent teacher associations
- community health boards
- teen health centres
- local and regional libraries
- seniors centres/clubs
- friendship centres
- schools -- classes, teacher associations, after school programs (where films are appropriate)
- some theatres offer free rentals of their venue during down times, for instance Sunday mornings

8. *When is a good time to show a film?*

This depends on your intended audience.

9. *How long are the films?*

Each film is under an hour.

10. *How do I introduce the film?*

Greet and welcome your audience/participants and thank them for coming. Tell them how long the film will be and invite them to stay for a discussion afterwards. You may wish to ask audience members to introduce themselves and to state one reason they came to the film.

11. *How do I help generate discussion? What is my role?*

Help stimulate the discussion by sharing your reflections, asking others to do the same, and by posing questions. You are not expected to be an expert on the subject matter or a facilitator.

12. *Are copies of the film available?*

The Advisory Council on the Status of Women library holds a copy of these films. Some community libraries may also have copies.

13. *How do I thank participants for attending?*

At the end of the discussion, thank all participants for coming and invite them to sign up for Newsbytes.

Sample Discussion Questions

General Questions

- What is your first reaction to this film?
- How are women's stories in these films also part of women's stories in your community?
- Like the film producers of these films, how are women serving as leaders in your organizations, communities and families?
- What do women need to become more involved in running for public and political positions?
- What can we do to help encourage more women to become involved?

Specific Questions

See below.

Film	Suggested Questions
The Spirit of Annie Mae	<p>What factors influenced the discrimination and injustice experienced by Annie Mae? Are they still relevant today?</p> <p>Would this tragedy happen today? What's different?</p> <p>How was Annie Mae both an ordinary and extraordinary woman? Are there women in your community who are also both ordinary and extraordinary?</p>
Sexy Inc.	<p>Is the early sexualization of girls new?</p> <p>To what extent has our public space become sexualized?</p> <p>From the film: "We have replaced religion and spirituality by the Gods of consumption". Comments?</p> <p>What impact do stereotypes of girls and women have on boys and men?</p> <p>Have we lost childhood to sex? Is sexualization in our media blurring the lines between childhood and adulthood</p> <p>What might be the consequences of this on the psychosocial development of children and teenagers?</p>
Little Black School House	<p>Do you remember your early school days? How have they effected your life?</p> <p>Do you think much has changed?</p> <p>Why did the filmmakers take the movie participants on the school bus?</p> <p>With the recent election of Barak Obama, how do you think this will/could change Nova Scotia communities and our education system?</p> <p>According to the movie, what were the disadvantages that the black community faced.</p>
Muriel Duckworth Practicing Peace	<p>How are women practicing peace in your community/organization?</p> <p>How do we reconcile Canada's international responsibilities to fight for equality, fairness and dignity and to protect those who cannot protect themselves with anti-war beliefs?</p> <p>Women have always worked. Do we feel it was easier in the past for women practice peace and be activists? What has changed?</p>

Logistics Checklist

- Do some research: preview the video, read cover, and the pamphlet.
- Gather a planning group and hold a couple of meetings or telephone calls.
- Set the event date and time.
- Secure a meeting space.
- Identify your audience(s): consider inviting participants from multiple sectors and diverse groups.
- Invite a co-host or guest speaker, such as a public health nurse if you're showing *Sexy Inc.*, etc.
- Define your goals and objectives. What do you want to achieve through this event?
- Prepare discussion questions, and opening and closing remarks.
- Make arrangements for audio-visual equipment. Sound is as important as the video, so pre-test all equipment.
- Prepare promotional materials and publicize your event. The Advisory Council has downloadable posters and brochures on its website. Go to www.women.gov.ns.ca .
- Arrive early. Arrange seating for discussion, for instance chairs around a table or in a semi circle.
- Welcome everyone and introduce the film. Ask if anyone would like to introduce themselves and why they are attending the showing.
- Invite the audience to stay after the film for a discussion.
- Thank the audience/participants. Ask them to complete a feedback form.
- Invite them to sign up for our electronic newsletter *Newsbytes*.