



# Young Women's Lives: A Videography<sup>1</sup>

by **M. Nell Myhand and Paul Kivel**

---

**YOUNG PEOPLE ARE AVID CONSUMERS** of movies and videos. Most popular films present images of women in traditional and extremely limited roles. Some movies, however, portray women with more depth and complexity. These films can raise questions for young women about their own roles and the choices they face. You can use such films or videos to further discussion of the themes presented in *Young Women's Lives*.

*Amelia Earhart: The Final Flight* (1994). Investigates the mysterious disappearance of the pioneering aviatrix's 1937 flight to circumnavigate the globe.

*An Angel at my Table* (1989). A free-spirited young New Zealand girl, a writer/poet, is wrongly placed in a mental institution for eight years.

*Antonia and Jane* (1991). The story of a long-standing, heavily tested friendship between two women.

*Antonia's Line* (1995). Multi-generational story of a non-conformist Dutch woman's life in her village.

*Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* (1974). This film chronicles the life of a young Black girl in the south who lived from Emancipation through the Civil Rights Movement.

*Bastard Out of Carolina* (1997). Autobiography of a white girl with who struggles out of poverty and childhood abuse in the South.

*Bhaji on the Beach* (1994). A group of Indian women organize a bus outing from Birmingham to a seaside resort in England.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *Young Women's Lives: Building Self-Awareness for Life*.



*Born in Flames* (1983). Futuristic film of a women's army that intervenes when women are harassed on the street and challenges state control of the media.

*Boys on the Side* (1994). Three women head west and confront pregnancy, AIDS, and male violence.

*The Children's Hour* (1961). The teaching careers of two women are ruined when girls begin circulating vicious rumors.

*Citizen Ruth* (1997). Rare portrayal of a poor young pregnant white woman delivered by the criminal justice system into the hands of anti-abortion and pro-choice forces.

*Coal Miner's Daughter* (1980). Biographic story of Loretta Lynn's life from her roots in Appalachia to her success as a singer.

*The Color Purple* (1985). A poor black young woman fights for her self-esteem when she is separated from her sister and forced into a brutal marriage.

*The Crucible* (1957). A story about the Salem witch trials in 17<sup>th</sup> century New England.

*Dance Me Outside* (1995). Native Canadian teens, cut off from their more traditional parents, confront contemporary problems.

*Daughters of the Dust* (1991). Five African American women on an island off the coast of Georgia prepare for changes in family and community around the turn of the century.

*Eat Drink Man Woman* (1994). The lives of four young adult modern Taiwanese sisters and their culinary father.

*Family of Women* (undated). A documentary of three women's communities, including the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment and a lesbian "retirement" community.

*Fried Green Tomatoes* (1972). The story of two white women running a café during the Depression in the South confronting bigotry and family violence.

*Girlfriends* (1978). A young Jewish girl learns to make it on her own.

*Girls Town* (1995). Refreshing and painful look at the lives of three young women dealing with the impact of their friend's suicide after she was raped.



*Go Fish* (1994). Love story about two young women trying to find each other within a lesbian community.

*Heartland* (1981). Story of one woman's life in 1910 on the Wyoming frontier.

*Heat and Dust* (1982). A young bride joins her husband at his post in India and rebels against the caste system.

*How to Make An American Quilt* (1995). A grad student spends the summer with her grandmother and her friends who are making a wedding quilt while the young woman decides who to marry.

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1979). Maya Angelou's memories of growing up in the rural South during the 1930s.

*I Like it Like That* (1994). Strong-willed black/Latina single mother in the Bronx trying to make it.

*The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love* (1995). Story about a relationship between two young women, an African American and a white suburban high school student, and how their families attempt to accept their relationship.

*The Insect Woman* (1963). Chronicles 45 years in the life of a Japanese woman who must struggle to survive.

*Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1964). Docudrama of a young Native American woman stranded on an island and learning to survive.

*The Joy Luck Club* (1993). Mother daughter relationships among a group of Chinese and American-born Chinese women are explored through time and across cultures.

*Just Another Girl on the I.R.T.* (1993). Powerful young woman in New York has a vision for herself that gets challenged by an unplanned pregnancy.

*Klute* (1971). A small-town policeman comes to New York and gets involved with a prostitute.

*Ladybird, Ladybird* (1993). Docudrama about a single battered mother of four caught up in Britain's social services.

*Lady Sings the Blues* (1972). Billie Holiday's struggles against racism and drug addiction in her pursuit of fame and romance.



*A League of Their Own* (1992). Fictional account of the All American Girls' Professional Baseball League formed in the 1940s.

*A Litany for Survival* (1995). Biographical documentary examines the life and work of poet and lesbian activist Audre Lorde.

*Losing Isaiah* (1994). White social worker adopts black child and later the biological mom, now clean and sober, comes to claim him.

*Marie* (1985). Docudrama of a divorced and battered woman who works her way through school, heads the parole board in Tennessee and then blows the whistle on her bosses.

*Mi Vida Loca* (1994). Latina gang members from LA talk about their lives.

*Monkey Grip* (1982). Unmarried single mom copes with drug addicted boyfriend while working in Australia's music business.

*My Brilliant Career* (1979). Young Australian woman at turn-of-the-century fights to broaden her intellect and preserve her independence.

*The Nasty Girl* (1990). Docudrama about a bright young German model who uncovers the Nazi collaboration of her fellow townspeople and faces their wrath.

*Nine to Five* (1980). Three office secretaries kidnap the boss and start running things on their own.

*Norma Rae* (1979). A poor, uneducated textile worker joins forces with a New York labor organizer to unionize the reluctant workers at a Southern mill.

*NOW's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* (1986). Celebration documenting the women's movement and twenty years of women's rights activism.

*Once Were Warriors* (1994). Story of a Maori family in New Zealand dealing with the effects of patriarchy, colonialism and urban living.

*Period Piece* (undated). Documentary film of women talking about their first menstrual cycles.

*Personal Best* (1982). Lesbian lovers compete while training for the 1990 Olympics.



*Places in the Heart* (1984). A young widow determines to make the best of a bad situation on a small farm in Depression-era Texas.

*Portrait of Teresa* (1979). Cuban housewife has to balance motherhood, textile job and cultural group activities without the cooperation of her husband. (Spanish with subtitles.)

*The Presence of the Goddess* (undated). Traces the history and development of the Goddess from the time of woman-centered spirituality through the transition to Christianity. Narrated by Isabel Allende.

*Prison Stories: Women on the Inside* (1991). Three short stories convey life of women in prison.

*Pumping Iron II—The Women* (1985). An in-depth look at the world of female bodybuilding.

*Quarterback Princess* (1985). Docudrama about a girl who goes out for football and becomes homecoming queen.

*Question of Silence* (1983). Three women, strangers, stand trial for murdering a man. (Dutch with subtitles.)

*A Raisin in the Sun* (1961) or (1989). A black family trying to make a better life for themselves in an all-white neighborhood in Chicago.

*Rodeo Girl* (1980). Docudrama about a housewife who joins the rodeo.

*Romeo + Juliet* (1996). Shakespeare classic revisited in a contemporary urban setting.

*Rosa Luxemburg* (1986). The story of Jewish activist Rosa Luxemburg who was imprisoned and later murdered for her political work in Germany.

*Silent Victory: The Kitty O'Neil Story* (1979). Docudrama about a deaf woman who became a stop stunt woman in Hollywood and holder of the land speed record for women.

*Silkwood* (1983). Story of a nuclear plant worker and activist who was killed while investigating shoddy practices at the plant.

*Spices* (1986). Poor woman revolts against the sexist mores of rural colonial India in the 1940s. (Hindi with subtitles.)



*Sorceress* (1988). A woman healer in the 13<sup>th</sup> century encounters a friar sent by the pope to seek out heretics.

*Souder* (1972). Struggles of a family of black sharecroppers in rural Louisiana during the Depression.

*Steel Magnolias* (1989). A young woman stricken with severe diabetes chooses to live her life to the fullest with the support of several adult women.

*Strangers in Good Company* (1991). A busload of older women lost in the Canadian wilderness share stories and secrets. As they await rescue, they reflect on their lives through a mostly ad-libbed script.

*Thelma and Louise* (1991). A housewife and a waitress rebel against the constraints of their lives and hit the road.

*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (1945). Young Irish woman growing up in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn tries to rise above her tenement existence.

*The Turning Point* (1977). A woman who gave up ballet for motherhood must come to terms as her daughter launches a ballet career.

*An Unmarried Woman* (1978). Suddenly divorced after 17 years a woman deals with change.

*Waiting to Exhale* (1995). Four African American women looking to settle down with the right man.

*What's Love Got to Do With It?* (1993). Tina Turner's life and her path to success after enduring a relationship with a battering husband.

*Wildrose* (1985). A woman must assert herself among her all-male co-workers at a Minnesota strip mine.

*Wing Chun* (1994). Chinese woman fights horse stealing bandits and develops her strength and independence. (Chinese with subtitles)

*A Woman Called Golda* (1982). Political drama following the life and career of Golda Meir, former prime minister of Israel.



*A Woman Called Moses* (1978). Recounts the story of Harriet Tubman, who bought her freedom and started the Underground Railroad and freed hundreds of slaves.

*Woman and Her Symbols Parts I-III* (undated). Traces the suppressed history of woman-centered culture and spirituality, which preceded patriarchy.

*A Woman Rebels* (1936). A young woman challenges Victorian society by fighting for women's rights.

*Women and Spirituality* (undated).

- Part I Goddess Remembered—documentary of early matriarchal societies.
- Part II The Burning Times—Documentary about the burning of witches in Medieval Europe.
- Part III Full Circle—Documentary about present-day manifestations of the women's spirituality movement.

*Women of Brewster Place* (1989). Seven African American women in a tenement support each other in building safe and meaningful lives.

*Women Speak Up* (1996). Documentary about the 1995 United Nations International Women's Forum in China.

Please send comments, feedback, resources, and suggestions for distribution to [paul@paulkivel.com](mailto:paul@paulkivel.com). Further resources are available at [www.paulkivel.com](http://www.paulkivel.com).