



MADE IN L.A.

Women's Empowerment Conversation Guide

Made in L.A. is a story about immigration, the power of unity and the courage it takes to find your voice. Made in L.A. follows the remarkable story of three Latina immigrants working in L.A. sweatshops and their struggle for self-empowerment as they embark on a three-year odyssey to win basic labor protections from a clothing retailer.

Starting the Conversation

This brief guide is intended to spark conversation, build awareness and motivate viewers of Made In L.A. to learn more and possibly get involved. We hope that participants using this guide try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively. Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. But by their nature, those same topics can also give rise to deep emotions and strongly held beliefs. We hope the questions below help guide you through an engaging and enlightening conversation.

To find out more about Made in L.A. and how to get involved, to view the Made in L.A. Event Planning Toolkit or to explore conversation guides on other issues, please visit www.MadeInLA.com.

Discussion Questions

Lupe, Maria, and Maura each had very different lives, but their struggles were intertwined. Describe each woman in the film and her individual struggles as a woman and as a worker.

How did each woman in the film grow over the course of her fight? What factors do you think contributed to their growth and what obstacles did they overcome?

Have you experienced similar growth in your life? If so, when and how did it change your perspective?

How did the women overcome their fears and concerns? What were the sources of their strength?

We see Maria and Maura go to extraordinary lengths to improve the lives of their children. Research from organizations like the UN Development Programme shows that women are increasingly carrying the burden of poverty. Why do you think this is the case both in the US and abroad?

Like Maria, many women in the U.S. are often tasked with both supporting their families financially and providing domestic care for their children. What circumstances in society might cause these burdens to be unevenly distributed within the family structure?

How do you see the women in the film as connected to women around the world? What would you celebrate on International Women's Day?

Women's Empowerment and Connections to Labor, Organizing and Immigration

In the U.S. garment industry, the majority of workers are women. These workers are often young and recent or undocumented immigrants. Do you think there is a reason why garment workers are predominantly women? Do you think there is connection between the extreme and prevalent mistreatment of garment workers and the fact that they are predominantly women? Why or why not?

In a question above, we addressed the multiple burdens that women sometimes carry in our society. How does the additional factor of being an immigrant impact the burdens on women like Maria, Maura and Lupe?

In the film, Maria says, "*I thought it would be different here ... to study, to have a career ... to be happy. I was full of dreams.*" How do you think Maria's dreams are different from or similar to those of immigrants from generations past? How are her dreams different from or similar to women who were born in the U.S.?

As *Made in L.A.* illustrates, women are often the strongest leaders in community organizing. Why do you think this is?

At the end of the film, we hear Lupe say, "*The more I learn, the lonelier I feel.*" What do you think she meant? Why?

Taking Action

Did the film inspire you to take action in your life? If so, what actions?

What are some issues women in your community encounter that you feel need support? How would you go about nurturing support for these issues?

Did the film remind you of women who have shaped your life? Do they know you appreciated their help? Are there ways you can thank them for this support? Are there ways that you use their lessons to shape others' lives?

Does the organization hosting this event have suggestions about how you can get involved with helping empower women in your community?



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