



Real Women Have Curves
(USA, 86 minutes)
Director: Patricia Cardoso
Study Guide

Synopsis

Real Women Have Curves is the story of Ana, a first generation Mexican-American teenager on the verge of becoming a woman, who's torn between her mainstream ambitions and her cultural heritage. The film features a group rarely portrayed in mass media: complex, deeply human, hard-working Latina women. Ana has just graduated from high school. Because she is a talented writer, a caring teacher urges her to apply to college. Ana secretly is excited about the possibility, but her overhearing and hypercritical mother, Carmen, insists that it is time for her to help provide for the family by working in her sister's sewing factory. When a crisis arises at the factory, it seems as if Ana's fate is unhappily sealed, but her indomitable will to reach beyond a sweatshop life eventually leads her to burst, defiant and resplendent, through every restriction on her life. *Real Women Have Curves* gives a fresh new voice to the yearnings of Chicana women struggling against insecurities to love themselves and find respect in the world. (In English and Spanish with English subtitles).

Study Questions

- What role does body image play in adolescence?
- How do commercial images, advertisements, fashion affect the way women feel about themselves?
- What are some of the issues that face second-generation immigrants?

After the Film

- Why does Carmen care so much about her daughters' appearance?
- If Carmen had sons, do you think she would care as much about how they look? Why or why not?
- What are the causes of the tension between Ana and her mother?
- Why doesn't Carmen want her daughter to go to college?
- In what ways does the experience in the sewing factory affect Ana?