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## Equity

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## Equity

### Abstract

This is a film review of *Equity* (2016), directed by Meera Manon.

### Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).



Sarah Megan Thomas



Alysia Reiner

Courtesy of Monica Blizek  
Park City, UT January 2016

*Equity*  
(2016)

Directed by Meera Menon

I've been thinking a lot lately about how we give our lives meaning: what makes life worth living? In America, one of the popular options is the accumulation of wealth (this may include the

accumulation of power), the stockpiling of consumer goods, living a life of luxury, and so on. Is this the American dream? It's at least one version of it.

*Equity* is a film about three women who are seeking equity – an equal opportunity at giving their lives meaning by playing the Wall Street game. Each, in her own way, and each coming from a different background, gives her life meaning through financial success. At the beginning of the movie one of the women says: "Don't let money be a dirty word." And, at the end of the movie, another one of the women says: "Money doesn't have to be a dirty word." This theme continues throughout the movie and, what makes this movie different is that it's women, rather than men, seeking the wealth.

The game, however, is just as ugly for women as it is for men. What it takes from the soul is always the same. The phrase, "Beware of what you wish for," might be as applicable to the women of this film as it is to the men of Wall Street. While the movie is about women seeking equity, it also raises the question of whether or not such a goal is worth the sacrifice.

I did not see all of the movies at Sundance this year, but I think I perceived at least one theme running through the Film Festival. And, that theme is to ask viewers to consider their priorities. Whether it's acting in ways that promote climate change, or it's preventing the success of the peace process, or it's the accumulation of wealth: is this what we think is important in the face of our own mortality, or even the mortality of the human species? There's nothing like a good story to challenge how we understand our place in the universe.