

# book club questions

## THE WOMEN

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**Warning:** There are major plot spoilers in the discussion questions below.

Why is this book called The Women?

Why do you think Kristin Hannah chose the character name "Frankie"?

Compare and contrast The Women with any other of the best Kristin Hannah books you've read.

Did you learn anything new about the Vietnam War by reading The Women?

Compare and contrast The Women with other content you've consumed about the Vietnam War.

Describe Frankie's personality, both strengths and weaknesses.

Describe Frankie's views on heroism.

What compelled Frankie to go to Vietnam?

How did Frankie's family change after the loss of Finley?

How did Frankie's family honor Finley?

Kristin Hannah is known for rich descriptions of places. What stands out about how she described Vietnam?

Did the details of Frankie's job duties in the Vietnam War surprise you?

How did the depictions of the horrors and atrocities of war make you feel?

Did the casualties of war surprise you?

What characteristics do you attribute collectively to Frankie and "The Women"?

What compelled Frankie to stay in Vietnam?

How did Americans view the Vietnam War versus veterans?

Compare and contrast Frankie's experiences in Vietnam versus America.

Compare and contrast Frankie's parents' perspectives on her service and life experiences.

Compare and contrast the treatment of female versus male veterans of the Vietnam War as portrayed in The Women.

Why do you think female veterans of the Vietnam were often treated differently?

How did Frankie feel as a female veteran in America at the time?

How did public perception of the war differ from reality, especially over time?

Discuss war protests as part of the plot.

Discuss the controversial nature of Frankie's sexual health and pregnancy as a single woman at the time.

Why do you think Kristin Hannah chose to focus so much of the story on Frankie's sexual health?

Do you think Frankie's miscarriage was the result of her service?

Compare and contrast Frankie's love interests.

Did the plot twists involving Rye surprise you?

Why did Frankie agree to marry Henry?

How did the Vietnam War change Frankie's worldview?

How did Frankie's experiences in the Vietnam War impact her decisions?

How did Frankie's romantic relationships change her?

What role did friendships (i.e., Barb and Ethel) have in Frankie's life?

Why did Kristin Hannah incorporate prisoners of war (POWs) and missing in action (MIA) into the novel?

Discuss addiction as a theme in The Women.

Discuss post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a theme in The Women.

Discuss grief as a theme in The Women.

Did "the system" fail Frankie as a female veteran?

Discuss the physical and psychological effects of war as presented in the novel.

Do you think veterans are treated better today?

The "music of Vietnam" is referenced. What does it represent?

What role does art play as a symbol in The Women?

Were you happy with the open way the story ended with regard to Frankie's romantic life?

How did Frankie's parents change over the course of the story?

How did Frankie's experience visiting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. make you feel?

What is Frankie's legacy?

Discuss the meaning of the final, declarative sentence of the novel.

Did you find anything interesting about the author's note and acknowledgments at the end of The Women?

What will you take away from your reading experience of The Women?