**Discussion questions for the film *Who’s Counting*, an example of radical critique**

**Definitions**

**Hegemony** is the ability of the dominant class to project its own way of seeing the world so that those who are subordinated by it accept it as ‘common sense’ and ‘natural’. Common sense, suggests social scientist Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, is “the way a subordinate class lives its subordination.”

**Radical Critique** (Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu) is probably the only means that people have of confronting hegemony. Radical critique involves taking apart or questioning common sense or the things that people take for granted and believe are ‘natural’

According to economist Marilyn Waring, what gets counted in our formal international economic system and what is left out of the calculations? Why does it matter?

Who decided what gets counted and what has priority? How did this system get imposed on the entire world? Who benefits most from this way of calculating economic priorities? Who benefits least?

If the international economic system is based on a booklet titled “How to pay for the war”, and if the biggest players in the system are also the biggest arms exporters, then what is the role of war in economic prosperity?

What did Marilyn Waring point out about Gross Domestic Product (GDP) numbers and their measurement of the welfare or life quality of people?

Waring asks whether or not it is possible within a statistical framework to formally recognize and value the labor of childbearing, the work of child raising, the work of people who produce their own foods and trade with others but do not use money in their transactions, and the value of the planet itself. What do you think?

What kinds of economic solutions become less of an option within a system that counts only money or tries to calculate the value of everything mathematically?

What might be the gender considerations in this system that was created and set up without the input or consultation of women? Might the system be unbalanced in that it devalues the work of some while over valuing the work of others? Does the system give priority to the biological imperative of males who are in competition with other males? Does it take into proper consideration the female biological imperative of providing enough resources to children and family?

What are some other issues you would like to discuss about the film as a radical critique?

What do you see as possible solutions, if indeed the economic system calculates in a way that disempowers whole segments of the Earth’s population and the health of the planet itself?