



THE  
REPRESENTATION  
PROJECT



MIDDLE SCHOOL AND  
HIGH SCHOOL/POST-SECONDARY

# MISS REPRESENTATION

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**DEAR EDUCATORS,**

1) **DEVELOP** a more critical eye toward media and understand how gender representations influence the ways that we see each other and ourselves.

**2) CRITIQUE** media images as they begin to recognize the qualities that make for good leadership and uncover ways that they can act as allies for each other to support an end to stereotyping.

**3) CREATE** their own media images to respond to the dearth of positive representations of women and girls.

Additionally, we have incorporated a centering activity, which can be used to allow students to decompress after participation in the more difficult lessons.

Since American youth consume upwards of 11 hours of media per day (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010), it is important for even early elementary students to begin to think critically about media messages. We are asking you to partner with us to extend the conversation and to help make this curriculum a living document. Please encourage your students to upload their media to Instagram using **#MyMissRepMedia** and to get involved in our **#NotBuyingIt** campaign. Your students can use **#NotBuyingIt** to identify sexism in the media and in the larger culture and encourage positive change.

We are also asking you to provide us feedback. Please complete the online educator evaluation form so that we can learn from your experiences with ***Miss Representation***. Also, please let us know how you are supplementing the materials with your own. Feel free to use **#teachmissrep** to share supplementary lessons with educators from across the United States and the globe. Lastly, we have added supplementary materials to this curriculum. For more information on how to use the curriculum and/or to learn how others are using it, go to our website [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org)

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to helping young people reach their full potential. We are extremely grateful to you and are excited to work alongside you to help create learning experiences where young people's voices are empowered to create a healthier culture and world.

Wishing you all of the best,

*Dr. Aaminah Norris, Ph.D.*  
Director of Education

Jennifer Siebel Newsom  
Founder, CEO





# OVERVIEW

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Representation Project is a movement that uses film and media content to expose injustices created by gender stereotypes and to shift people's consciousness towards change. Interactive campaigns, strategic partnerships and education initiatives inspire individuals and communities to challenge the status quo and ultimately transform culture so everyone, regardless of gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation or circumstance can fulfill their potential. The Representation Project's work builds on the power of film through continued education.

## BACKGROUND

Today's media and American culture send dangerously deceptive messages to young people that directly impact both their mental and physical health, and their overall emotional well-being. The Representation Project uses film and media content to expose societal injustices created by stereotypes. The primary goals of the *Miss Representation* curriculum are to raise awareness of gender and other biases and to shift consciousness against social inequities, thus inspiring more healthy behavior. We build on

the power of *Miss Representation* as a teaching tool that we use to continue education around social injustice. The media literacy curriculum includes film excerpts and tailored content for K-2nd, 3-5th, 6-8th, high school, and post-secondary audiences.

The *Miss Representation* curriculum is divided into modules. Each module includes age appropriate content, including film clips, definitions of relevant concepts, reflection exercises, discussion questions, in-class activities, and homework suggestions. The modules are sequenced to build upon the outcomes of previous lessons. Educators also receive a copy of the full-length film, which is more appropriate to use in the post-secondary setting.

Educators can incorporate the curriculum into existing instruction, build upon it for a dedicated media literacy class, or incorporate the curriculum into a school-wide activity or student group.

American teens  
consume approximately  
11 hours of media  
per day.

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



## GREETINGS,

I was inspired to make *Miss Representation* when I came to realize that injustices towards women have worsened over time with the advent of the 24/7 news cycle, infotainment and reality television. Today's media send a dangerous message to young people — that a woman's value lies in her youth, beauty, and sexuality and not in her capacity as a leader.

Since the film premiered at Sundance in 2011, I have been continually approached by folks about *Miss Representation*, and how it helped them in recognizing their power as citizens and consumers to architect change. From the young woman who successfully started a national conversation around the damages of photoshopping and convinced editors of major youth magazines to reduce photo-shopping in their magazines, to the public school teacher who helped his students start a national social media campaign to call out sexist advertisers, all around the globe, people are transforming culture-- one individual and one community at a time. It's beyond inspiring!

Thanks to its viewers, *Miss Representation* has grown into a full-fledged social action campaign to empower women and girls, and boys and men, to challenge limiting stereotypes and transform our culture for the betterment of all. Through the campaign, now part of our non-profit The Representation Project, we are educating individuals to use their voice to champion positive media and

challenge the negative; encourage corporations to alter their practices; and urge politicians to pass laws that ensure equal opportunities for women and girls and promote women as leaders.

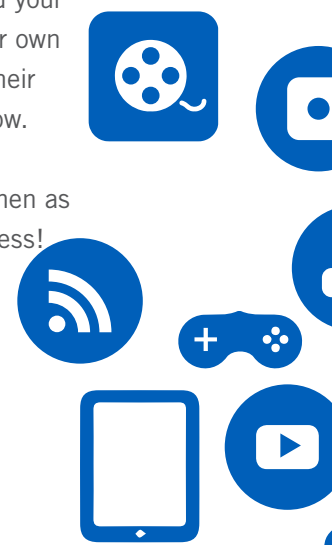
We need your help. Change begins with education, and that makes you — our educators — some of the greatest change-makers in our society. We are asking instructors, mentors, administrators, youth group leaders, and peer educators to become advocates for gender focused media literacy curriculums in their schools and universities. Join schools across the globe who have made *Miss Representation* a standard part of their curriculum in US History and Media courses.

You've taken the first step by ordering the *Miss Representation* curriculum. With these tools and your dedication, we will inspire youth to become their own advocates — seizing the opportunity to better their world for themselves and for generations to follow.

Together, we can help our youth re-envision women as leaders in our society. The possibilities are endless!

Warmest,

**Jennifer Siebel Newsom**  
Writer, Director, Producer  
*Miss Representation*



# LETTER TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

## DEAR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS,

Our class is beginning to explore the topic of media literacy in an upcoming unit. Media literacy teaches students how to interpret the messages they hear and see everyday in advertising, films, television, magazines, video games, music, and social media. Gender media literacy gives students the ability to analyze and evaluate gender stereotypes in the media. In addition, students will learn to respond to different forms of media representation, and explore creating alternative representations for themselves.

## WHY IS MEDIA LITERACY IMPORTANT?

American teenagers spend nearly 50% of their day consuming media, most of which is filled with harmful gender stereotypes. Studies show that watching TV lowers self-confidence in girls, particularly for girls of color.

## WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

- Only 29% of speaking characters in top Hollywood films are women.
- Less than a quarter of films feature a female protagonist.
- Only a third of lead characters on children's TV shows are girls.
- Women hold only 3% of clout positions in the mainstream media (telecommunications, entertainment, publishing and advertising).

## WHAT WILL YOUR CHILDREN BE LEARNING?

Using age appropriate clips from the critically acclaimed documentary film *Miss Representation*, students will learn about media literacy from positive, recognizable role models, such as Condoleezza Rice, Katie Couric, Nancy Pelosi, Rosario Dawson, Lisa Ling, and Cory Booker.

Discussion questions will teach students to think more critically about what they are watching and activities will help them recognize disparaging portrayals when they see them. A few key concepts we'll discuss include:

- Stereotypes and gender
- Leadership and democracy
- Diversity and perspective

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT MEDIA LITERACY IN YOUR HOME?

- Watch media with your children and talk to them about how media often encourages gender stereotypes.
- Work with teachers to encourage more opportunities for gender focused media literacy.
- Host a *Miss Representation* screening for other parents to share ideas. Find out more at [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org)  
Use resources provided by The Representation Project: [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org)

We look forward to partnering with you to raise awareness around media literacy. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Thank you.



# CARTA A PADRES Y TUTORES

## ESTIMADOS PADRES Y TUTORES:

Nuestra clase va a empezar a explorar el tema del conocimiento en medios de comunicación en una de las próximas unidades. El Conocimiento en medios de comunicación enseña a los estudiantes a cómo interpretar los mensajes que oyen y ven cada día a través de publicidad, películas, televisión, revistas, videojuegos, música y redes sociales. Los conocimientos de medios de comunicación con un enfoque en género proporcionan a los estudiantes la habilidad de analizar y evaluar los estereotipos de género en los medios de comunicación.

## ¿POR QUÉ SON IMPORTANTES LOS CONOCIMIENTOS EN MEDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN?

Los adolescentes estadounidenses pasan cerca del 50% del día consumiendo medios de comunicación, la mayoría de los cuales están llenos de maliciosos estereotipos de género. Los estudios muestran que ver la televisión disminuye la autoconfianza de las chicas, particularmente las de color.

## ¿CUÁLES SON LAS CIFRAS?

- Solo el 29% de los personajes parlantes en las películas más populares de Hollywood son mujeres.
- Menos de un cuarto de las películas tienen protagonistas femeninas.
- Solo un tercio de los personajes principales en películas infantiles son chicas.
- Las mujeres solamente ocupan el 3% de los puestos influyentes en medios principales (telecomunicaciones, entretenimiento, editorial y publicidad).

## ¿QUÉ VAN A APRENDER SUS HIJOS?

Mediante el uso de clips adecuados para cada edad del documental *Miss Representation*, muy aclamado por la crítica, los estudiantes obtendrán conocimientos sobre los medios de comunicación desde modelos reconocibles y positivos, como Condoleezza Rice, Katie Couric, Nancy Pelosi, Rosario Dawson, Lisa Ling y Cory Booker.

Los puntos de discusión enseñarán a los estudiantes a pensar de forma más crítica en lo que están viendo, y las actividades les ayudarán a reconocer qué retratos son peyorativos cuando los vean. Algunos conceptos clave que discutiremos incluyen:

- Estereotipos y género
- Liderazgo y democracia
- Diversidad y perspectiva

## ¿CÓMO PUEDEN APOYAR EL CONOCIMIENTO EN MEDIOS DE COMUNICACIÓN DESDE SUS CASAS?

- Veán los medios de comunicación con sus hijos y hablen con ellos sobre cómo éstos a menudo refuerzan los estereotipos de género.
- Trabajen con profesores para promover más oportunidades de obtener conocimientos en medios de comunicación con atención en asuntos de género.
- Organicen una proyección de la película *Miss Representation* con otros padres para compartir ideas. Descubra cómo en:

**[www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org)**

Hagan uso de los recursos proporcionados por The Representation Project:

**[www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org)**

Esperamos poder colaborar con ustedes en la concienciación sobre los conocimientos en medios de comunicación. No duden en ponerse en contacto con nosotros si tienen alguna pregunta.

Gracias.



# MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## OVERVIEW

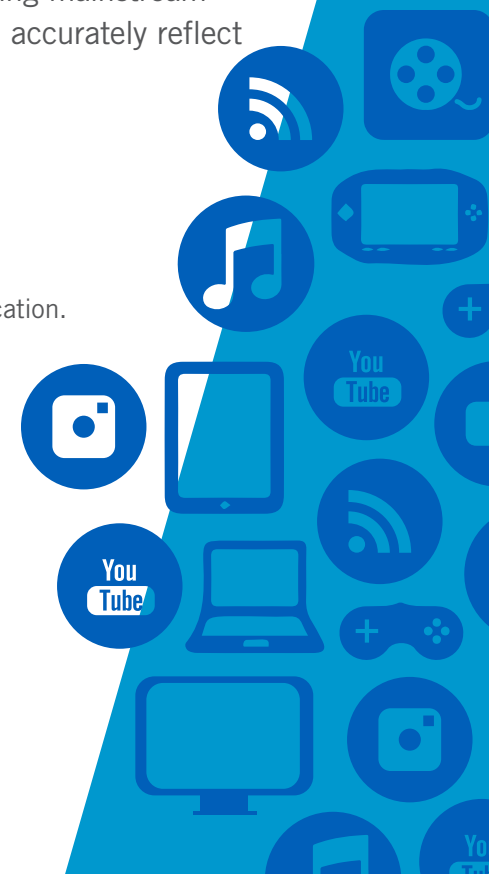
TIME MINIMUM: 65-70 MINUTES

The Media Literacy module includes instructional clips from *Miss Representation*. They explore common portrayals of women and men in mainstream television, film, music, radio, and advertising. Film discussions help students understand important concepts such as representation, stereotypes, social construction, and objectification as they relate to gender. Suggested activities encourage students to take these concepts home with them and think about how media messages affect their own beliefs about what it means to be a woman or man. Students are encouraged to adopt a more critical lens when watching mainstream media. They are tasked with seeking out alternative messages that more accurately reflect girls and women and encourage them to live up to their full potential.

## OBJECTIVES

- **LEARN** how media shapes individual beliefs and cultural norms.
- **PAY CONSCIOUS ATTENTION** to the amount of media students consume.
- **UNDERSTAND** concepts such as representation, social construction, and objectification.
- **RECOGNIZE** gender stereotypes and think about their effects on the larger culture.
- **UNDERSTAND** that when stereotypes are repeated over time they can become accepted as reality or normalized.
- **IDENTIFY** positive and empowering representations of women in the media.
- **THINK** about the ways stereotypes of femininity (the quality and nature of the female sex) or masculinity (the quality and nature of the male sex) limit females and males.
- **MAKE** positive and empowering representations of women and other underrepresented groups.

Only a third of lead characters on children's TV shows are girls





## MIDDLE SCHOOL MODULE 1:

# MEDIA LITERACY

TIME MINIMUM: 45-50 MINUTES



## OBJECTIVES

- **LEARN** how media shapes individual beliefs and cultural norms.
- **PAY CONSCIOUS ATTENTION** to the amount of media students consume.
- **UNDERSTAND** concepts such as representation, social construction, and objectification.
- **RECOGNIZE** gender stereotypes and think about their effects on the larger culture.
- **UNDERSTAND** that when stereotypes are repeated over time they can become accepted as reality or normalized.

## WHAT STUDENTS WILL NEED

- *Miss Representation Curriculum Clips*
- Media Literacy Instructional Clips ([Click Here](#))
- **PART 1:** How Does The Media Influence Our Culture? **0:11 - 2:41**
- **PART 2:** What Do We See In Mainstream Media? **2:42 - 7:45**
- **PART 3:** How Does What We See Shape Our Beliefs About Others And Ourselves? **7:46 - 11:03**
- **PART 4:** How Do We Overcome The Media's Negative Messages? **11:04 - 12:11**
- Social Construction Handout (**Appendix xviii**)
- Media Log Handout (**Appendix xix**)
- Student journals
- Popular magazines (**approx. 2 for every 5 students**)
- Large poster paper (**approx. 1 for every 3 students**)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers



# KEY VOCABULARY

**MEDIA** – instruments used to communicate information, including television, magazines, books, movies, music, and the Internet

**ADVERTISING** – a form of communication used to persuade an audience to consume products, ideas, or services

**GENDER IDENTITY** – a personal connection to one's gender. Gender roles are created by society for women/girls and men/boys. Some individuals do not personally identify with the gender roles associated with the biological sex

**REPRESENTATION** – an expression or designation by some term, character, symbol, image, text, or the like

**PROTAGONIST** – a leading character in a film, book, or other work

**SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION** – Social phenomena that are created, institutionalized, and made into tradition by humans. Over time, these constructs become accepted as reality

**OBJECT** – a thing, person, or matter to which thought or action is directed

**OBJECTIFICATION** – the process of symbolically turning a human into an object

**AGENCY** – the capacity of an individual to act alone and make choices

**STEREOTYPE** – a generalization, usually exaggerated or oversimplified and often offensive, that is used to describe or distinguish a group or an individual from that group

**IDEAL** – a standard that is considered perfect

**MISOGYNY** – contempt for, dislike of, or hatred towards women that can be manifested in numerous ways, including discrimination, violence, and objectification

**DEPRESSION** – a mental health condition characterized by a state of low mood, low energy, hopelessness and inadequacy, which is often felt over an extended period of time and can be debilitating

**SELF-INJURY** – the act of purposely harming oneself through cutting, burning, or other physical abuse



## BEFORE VIEWING

### JOURNALING ACTIVITY: DRAWING IDEALS (45 MIN)

1. Provide students with the list of key vocabulary terms. Ask students to circle the terms ideal, gender identity, objectification, and stereotype.
2. Ask students to list characteristics of the “ideal” woman in their notebooks and write adjectives that describe her.
3. Ask students to create a second list of what society or outside influences encourage as “ideal” for women. Who does she resemble — for example, a supermodel or Oprah Winfrey? How would she act or speak?
4. What does she care about?
5. Ask students to compare their lists. How are the students’ concepts of an ideal woman either different from or the same as society’s concepts?
6. Ask students to repeat the exercise to make two lists that compare characteristics of the “ideal” man in their notebooks (personally vs. society).
7. Ask students what the differences are between how they perceive an ideal woman and man and how society portrays the ideal woman or man.
8. Ask students to consider if any of the characteristics (either their own or society's) of an ideal man or woman are stereotypical. Do they objectify \_\_\_\_\_?
9. How does advertising and media influence students’ perceptions of the ideal man and woman?
10. Does media provide misconceptions of what it means to be ideal?
11. Ask students to write their responses in their journals.

## DURING VIEWING

As students view the film ask them to consider if they notice any stereotypes.

## AFTER VIEWING

### LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: DEFINING STEREOTYPES (25 MIN)

1. Ask students to raise their hands if they have seen at least one of the films referenced in the excerpts?
2. What new things did you learn from the film clips? What spoke to you?
3. What is a stereotype?
4. Where did you see stereotypes in the clips that were shown?
5. Have you seen other media recently that had stereotypes?
6. Academy award winning writer and producer, Paul Haggis, argues that in the thirties and forties women were allowed to play different types of roles. Ask students if they believe this was true for all women?
7. If students are unable to name any stereotypes, inform them of stereotypes such as women of color are angry, seductresses, or servants.
8. What is misogyny?
9. Have you witnessed misogyny in your everyday interactions?
10. How does misogyny impact women and girls? Does misogyny also harm men and boys? If so, how?
11. Ask students how they felt when the young women were describing depression and self-injury?
12. Did this make them feel uncomfortable?
13. How do students deal with pain and difficulty?
14. Share available resources with the students.

## LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY: CENTERING (10 MIN)

1. Organize classroom chairs into a circle.
  2. Dim the lights of the classroom.
  3. Ask students to close their eyes.
  4. Remind them that during this activity they are to be quiet and still.
  5. Ask students to sit up straight with their feet firmly planted on the floor in front of them.
  6. Ask students to rest their hands in their laps.
  7. Ask students to breathe in through their noses and out through their mouths.
  8. Tell students that as they breathe their focus should be on their breath and not on any other thing.
  9. Remind students that this is a time for them to become calm and centered.
  10. Repeat breathing for several repetitions.
  11. Tell students that they can open their eyes when they are ready.
  12. Turn the lights back on and have students return chairs to their normal positions.
3. Ask students to divide their paper into two sections or boxes: one for female stereotypes and one for male stereotypes.
  4. Ask students to cut out images of women and men from advertising and editorials and paste them into the corresponding sections.
  5. Have students write words around the images that describe the images they chose.
  6. When they are complete, display the posters around the room.
  7. Why did the students select the images they chose? What is stereotypical about them? Did students identify similar kinds of stereotypes? How do students feel stereotypes might be harmful? How can students avoid stereotyping? Being stereotyped?

## LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: BREAKING FREE (15 MIN)

1. How do students think seeing these images over and over again affects how they think about themselves?
2. How do students think that stereotypical images influence the way they think about others?
3. How do students' lists describing the "ideal" woman and man in their journals compare to the images they cut out?
4. What contradictions do students see between the real women around them and what they see in the media?
5. How can students change the way these images affect them or people around them?
6. What images would students like to see of women and men that they currently do not see?
7. What kinds of images would they like to make to increase positive representations of men and women?

## SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: BOXED IN (30 MIN)

1. Organize students into small groups of three to five depending on the class size (if you are teaching a co-ed class, make sure there are males and females in each group).
2. Give each group a piece of large paper, a few magazines, scissors, glue, and markers.



## BREAKING FREE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

8. Do students think that the images that exist represent them?

## INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY: SHE'S A SUPER HEROINE (60 MIN)

1. Ask students to write a story about a female super heroine for a television show, video game, or film.
2. What is her super power?
3. How did she obtain this power?
4. Does she have a family? Children? Parents? Is she the only one with a super power in her community?
5. In the story students should describe how this individual overcame a difficult experience that occurred in her life.
6. Who does the character go to when she experiences difficulties?
7. Does she solve the problem alone or with the help of others?
8. Have students share their characters. Are there commonalities in the ways these super heroines address difficulties? Do students respond to difficult situations in similar ways to their characters?



## MIDDLE SCHOOL MODULE 2:

## WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

TIME MINIMUM: 60-70 MINUTES

## OVERVIEW

The Women and Leadership lesson helps students connect the dots between the media's messages about women and the underrepresentation of real women in influential leadership positions. Instructional clips from *Miss Representation* feature prominent women sharing personal stories about the ways in which they are represented and treated differently than their male counterparts. Discussion questions and activities encourage students to re-envision women in their communities as leaders.

## OBJECTIVES

- **LEARN** the facts about how women are underrepresented in political and business sectors, and other positions of leadership.
- **IDENTIFY** ways in which women leaders are treated differently in media and therefore the larger culture.
- **UNDERSTAND** the ways negative treatment in the media can affect a woman's ability to see herself as a leader and to obtain leadership positions.
- **SHOWCASE** a diverse array of female leadership.

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- *Miss Representation Curriculum Clips*
- Women and Leadership Instructional Clips ([Click Here](#))
- **Part 1:** How Does Media And Advertising Messaging Affect Women In Leadership? **12:26 - 13:34**
- **Part 2:** Why Is Women's Leadership Important In Our World? **13:35 - 17:10** **Part 3:** What Unique Challenges Do Female Leaders Experience? **17:11 - 21:14** **Part 4:** How do we get more women into leadership? **21:15 - 22:33**
- Student journals
- Pens
- Paper
- I Am poem template



## KEY VOCABULARY

**LEADER** – an individual that influences, organizes, and helps others

**POLITICAL EFFICACY** – the idea that one understands political affairs and that one's voice and opinion matter in bringing about change in politics

**PARITY** – equality in amount or status

**DEMOCRACY** – a form of government led by the people

**CITIZENSHIP** - a status that gives individuals civil, political, and social rights and obligations in society

**SEXISM** – prejudice or discrimination based upon one's sex or gender

**TITLE IX** – a Federal law stating that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The passage of Title IX provided significant opportunities for women's sports programs in schools and universities

**PAID FAMILY LEAVE** – financial compensation by an employer to cover individuals who take time off to care for a family member. The United States does not provide paid maternity leave

**LIVING WAGE** – term used to describe the minimum hourly wage necessary for an individual to meet basic needs, including housing, clothing, and nutrition. This figure will change depending on where an individual lives

**MICROENTERPRISE** – a type of small business

**ALLY** – to join with and provide support for another person, group, nation, or idea





## BEFORE VIEWING

### LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: CLAIM TO FAME (15 MIN)

Ask students to log their media consumption for one week.

Students can use the media log located in the appendix.

1. When complete, analyze the list with students to determine:
  - a. How many women portray what would be considered leadership roles in film or television?
  - b. What types of leadership roles do these women play?
  - c. How do men support these leaders?

## AFTER VIEWING

### JOURNALING ACTIVITY: LEADERS IN THE MAKING (45 MIN)

1. Ask students to journal about their definition of leadership.
2. Ask students to create an I Am poem (see the steps in Supplementary Materials).
3. Ask students to raise their hands if they used terms that describe themselves as leaders. What is leadership?
4. For students who did not raise their hands, ask what adjectives could they use to describe a great leader? Who are great leaders you know? What does it take to become a leader?
5. Ask students to share their ideas.
6. Have them shout out the names of leaders they wrote down.
7. How many of the leaders that came to mind are women?
8. How do the students' adjectives for the ideal man and woman in the previous lesson compare to the adjectives for leaders in this lesson?

## AFTER VIEWING

### LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: DISCERNING DISPARITY (20 MIN)

1. Review these statistics. What percentage of the U.S. population are women? (51% out of 100%) What percent of Congress are women? (18% out of 100%) How many women have served as governor? (36 women compared to 2319 men) How many women presidents have we had? (0 women compared to 43 men)
2. Do these statistics concern you? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think the numbers of women in leadership are so low?
4. How are women leaders treated differently than male leaders?
5. What is sexism? What is the difference between sexism and misogyny?
6. Help students understand that sexism has historically given men and boys certain advantages and women and girls certain disadvantages.

### SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: SPOTTING SEXISM (60 MIN)

1. Organize students into small groups of three to five depending on your class size. If you are in a co-educational setting, make sure there are males and females in each group. Try to make sure that the groups are diverse.
2. Provide students with the vocabulary list above.
3. Ask students to make a list of examples of small and large acts of sexism. What words, actions, gestures, etc. are used during these acts?
4. Ask students if they are aware of the living wage?
5. Have students seen or heard of acts of sexism?
6. Ask students to share an example of sexism with the class.
7. What does parity mean?
8. Ask students to share examples of parity on campus.
9. Have students describe their own experiences with parity such as being involved in sports teams, student government, clubs, or other organizations and groups on their campuses.

## SPOTTING SEXISM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

10. Have students discuss why parity is important.
11. Talk to students about Title IX.
12. Ask students to provide examples of disparity and how Title IX assists students.
13. How does disparity influence the ways that women and men live in the United States?
14. What are ways that students can develop political efficacy?
15. How might political efficacy help to address disparities in the living wage? Title IX?
16. Who are some public or historical allies for women? People of color? The LGBT Community?
17. Explain to students that allies are people who recognize privileges they receive from society's patterns of injustice, and who take responsibility for changing these patterns. Allies include men who work to end sexism, white people who work to end racism, straight people who work to end homophobia, etc.
18. Ask students to provide examples of allies in their personal lives.
19. How can students be allies for each other?
20. Review the examples of sexism. Brainstorm as a group how individuals could contribute to decreasing sexism.
21. Condoleezza Rice asks, "Can an American see a woman or an African American in that position?" What are the barriers that might stop an American from seeing women and minorities in leadership roles?
22. Do students see women and minorities in leadership positions presently? Name these individuals. What roles

do they play in society? How are they practicing leadership? How can we get other Americans to know about them?

23. Extend the conversation. Ask students to use Instagram **#MediaWeLike** with positive representations of women and minorities in leadership and **#NotBuyingIt** to call out sexism in the media and larger culture.
24. Celebrate allies who stand up for those who are less empowered by tweeting their names using **#BuyingIt**.

## HOMEWORK ACTIVITY: BE THE JOURNALIST (ONE WEEK)

1. Divide students into pairs.
2. Ask students to choose a leader in their community to interview.
3. Students should ask their interviewee the following four questions:
4. What makes you a leader?
5. How are you a leader in your family?
6. How are you a leader in your community?
7. How do you inspire others to become leaders?
8. Each pair should produce a newspaper article together. Use a photo of the community leader and write a two to three page article about the leader. The article should begin with a topic sentence and have supporting details.
9. Have students share their articles with the class.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL MODULE 3:

# BEHIND THE SCENES

TIME MINIMUM: 70 MINUTES

## OVERVIEW

The Behind the Scenes lesson introduces students to the idea of diversity. Instructional clips from the documentary film *Miss Representation* offer a glimpse into the lack of diversity behind the scenes of mainstream media. Discussion questions ask students to think about how media might look different if the writers and directors came from a wider variety of backgrounds and experiences. Activities ask students to be creative and use their own diverse experiences to create a piece of entertaining media.

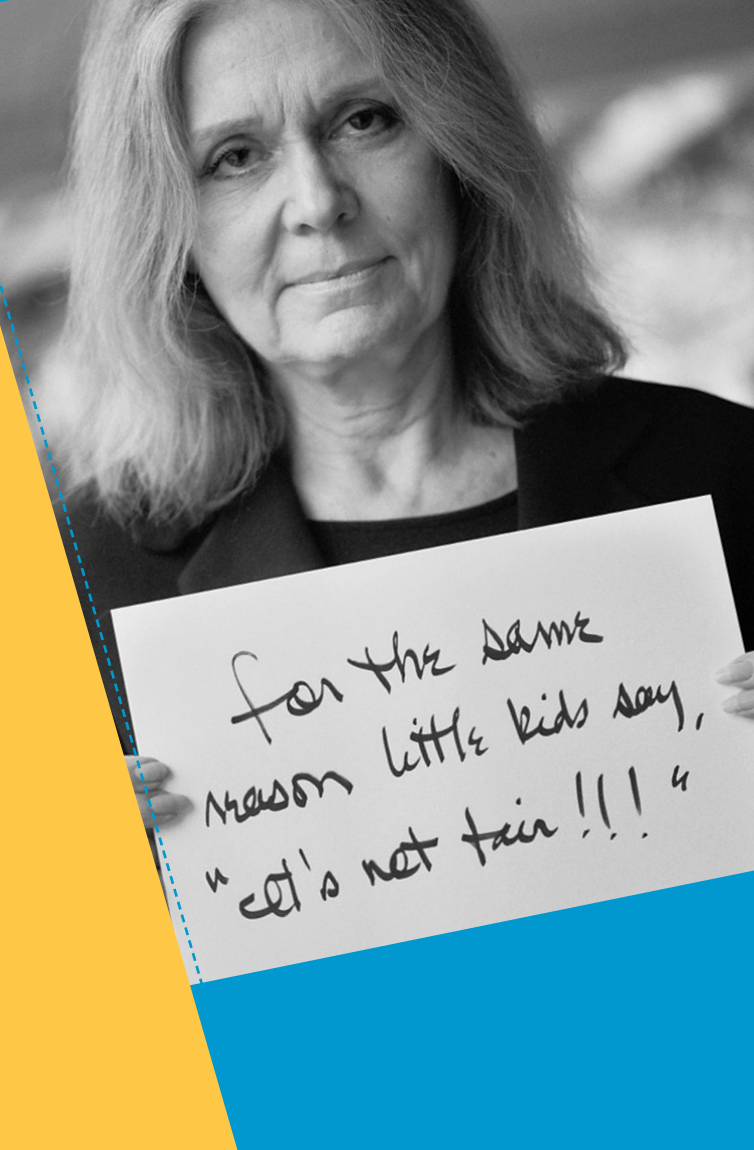
## OBJECTIVES

- **DEFINE** diversity.
- **RECOGNIZE** that there is a lack of diversity behind the scenes of mainstream media and advertising.
- **UNDERSTAND** how multiple perspectives can change a story.
- **PRACTICE** making entertaining media with a strong social message.

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- *Miss Representation Curriculum Clips*
- Behind the Scenes Instructional Clips ([Click Here](#))
- **Part 1:** Could more diversity behind the scenes of media change what we see? **22:48 - 28:09**
- **Part 2:** How can we change the culture? **28:10 - 30:03**
- Student journals
- Color markers
- Butcher paper
- Magazines
- Glue sticks
- Video cameras
- Computers or tablets
- The Representation Test Handout (**Appendix: VIII**)





## KEY VOCABULARY

**DIVERSITY** – a variety of characteristics, identities, beliefs, and experiences influenced by culture, history, religion, race, gender, sexuality, nationality, language, financial background, ability, etc.

**PERSPECTIVE** – an individual or community's view of a story or situation that is determined by one's experiences and understanding of the world

**STATUS QUO** – the existing state of affairs, especially regarding social or political issues

**MULTIDIMENSIONAL** – something that has many sides or views



## BEFORE VIEWING JOURNALING ACTIVITY:

### MULTIPLYING PERSPECTIVES (45 MIN)

1. Ask students to write a creative story from two perspectives. For example create a make believe story, "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish". First ask students to write a story in first person from the perspective of the fisherman. What is the fisherman thinking, doing, feeling? What is his motivation for catching a fish?
2. Next have students write the same story but from the perspective of the fish. What is the fish thinking, doing, feeling, etc.?
3. Ask students to reflect on how their stories changed when the perspective changed.

## DURING VIEWING

Ask students to consider whether or not diversity is important. How might it be useful in working on a team?

## AFTER VIEWING

### GROUP DISCUSSION: DEFINING DIVERSITY (45 MIN)

1. What new things did students learn from the film clips? What spoke to them?
2. What is diversity? Discuss diversity as seen in the film or the lack thereof.
3. How does diversity relate to the stories students wrote in their journals?
4. Why is it important to hear stories from multiple perspectives?
5. If we had more perspectives in the media, how would it change the news, films, television shows, magazines, and other media we see?
6. Is it important to have diverse perspectives in decision making? Why or why not?
7. Does it matter that the majority of voices behind the scenes are homogenous?
8. What responsibility do those in power have to right cultural injustices?
9. If students were in charge of a network would they hire people who were the same as or different from them? Why or why not?
10. How would students ensure that they reached out to diverse populations?

## SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: A DIVERSE TEAM (60 MIN)

1. Divide students into small groups of three to five. Make sure that these groups are mixed between males and females.
2. Ask each of the students to think about the individual special qualities they possess.
3. Give each student one colored marker. Each student should have a different color marker than the other students in their group.
4. Give each group of students a large piece of butcher paper.
5. Instruct each of the students in the group to write his or her special quality down on the piece of paper.
6. After a few minutes, ask them to hold up the paper and for each to describe their special quality.
7. Ask the students to think about how their individual qualities are important for developing a diverse team.
8. What does each student contribute to the team?
9. How is the team better off because the student brings his/her special quality to it?



## A DIVERSE TEAM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

10. Facilitate a discussion about what this exercise means about the value of diversity in a group.
11. How do the students' qualities represent difference?  
How did it feel to have to think of a contribution that each of the students makes to the group?
12. What are the benefits to working in a group with a diverse array of views, experiences, qualities, and talents?



## HOMework: MOVIE MAKING (3 WEEKS)

The moviemaking homework assignment is divided into three subsections each to take approximately one week. Educators can select to assign all or parts of the lesson to their students to assist them with gaining experience in working behind the scenes.

### PART 1: Storyboarding (Having students create a visual plot of the story)

1. Divide students into groups of five to develop a super heroine story into a multimedia presentation that positively represents women.
2. Ask students to create a storyboard with between ten and fifteen scenes that represent the beginning, middle, and end of their story. Storyboards should be illustrated using color. Students can also use power point or another software program to develop their storyboards.

### PART 2: Scriptwriting

1. Ask students to write a three-page script for a three to five-minute film about their super heroine.

### PART 3: Filmmaking

1. Tell students to work with others in their group to select actors, a director, a cameraperson, a costume designer, and an editor for the movie.
2. Have the students film and edit their movies.
3. Have students present their films in class.
4. Continue the conversation online and have students share their films by uploading them to Twitter using **#MyMissRepMedia**.



# ADDITIONAL SERVICE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVISM X 10

**10 SECONDS:** Tweet about the film using **#MissRep**. Write a Facebook status about the film. Tell one friend about *Miss Representation*.

**100 SECONDS:** Take the pledge at [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org) to receive our weekly actions and begin creating change in your local communities.

**10 MINUTES:** Organize consumer activism in response to a commercial, film, magazine, radio, or television show that objectifies and degrades women and get your friends to join in using **#NotBuyingIt** or the **#NotBuyingIt** app.

**10 HOURS:** Research and write an article for a magazine or blog. Contribute to an existing blog that addresses the issues in the film. Plan a movie night for your friends or family to watch *Miss Representation* and use the discussion guide and tools from [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org) to continue the conversation!

**10 DAYS:** Write your own stories and create your own films or web series about powerful women in non-traditional roles. Market and host a screening of *Miss Representation* in your community. Find out more at [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org).

**10 WEEKS:** Become a Rep or Ambassador. Create a club or organize a group in your community, school, or place of work to regularly discuss the messaging of *Miss Representation*.

#NOTBUYINGIT

Can  
Anyone  
Stop  
Hillary?

How to scare off  
your rivals without  
actually running (yet)  
BY SHARON WOOD BARNES



@imransiddiquee

7m

.@Time perpetuates stereotypes about women in power as 'scary,' man-stomping, pantsuits in heels  
**#NotBuyingIt**



Like (1)



Share

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be?"

—Marriane Williamson

# MISS REPRESENTATION

a documentary film by Jennifer Siebel Newsom



# HIGH SCHOOL AND POST-SECONDARY CURRICULUM

## OVERVIEW

The High School and Post-Secondary Curriculum introduces students to the ways media shapes our culture. Students are encouraged to explore how media is used to communicate ideas. Instructional clips from the film *Miss Representation* explain ways that media shapes ideas around what it means to be a woman or a man. Suggested discussions and activities are provided to compliment the film clips. The *Miss Representation* curriculum was updated in 2014. As a result, the data and statistics used throughout the curriculum may differ slightly from the information in the film's video modules.

- **MODULE 1: MEDIA LITERACY**
- **MODULE 2: WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP**
- **MODULE 3: BEHIND THE SCENES**
- **ADDITIONAL SERVICE LEARNING ACTIVITIES**



## HIGH SCHOOL AND POST-SECONDARY MODULE 1:

# MEDIA LITERACY

TIME MINIMUM: 65-70 MINUTES

## OVERVIEW

The Media Literacy lesson includes instructional clips from *Miss Representation*. They explore common portrayals of women and men in mainstream television, film, music, radio, and advertising. Film discussions help students understand important concepts such as representation, stereotypes, social construction, and objectification as they relate to gender. Suggested activities encourage students to take these concepts home with them and think about how media messages affect their own beliefs about what it means to be a woman or man. Students are encouraged to adopt a more critical lens when watching mainstream media. They are tasked with seeking out alternative messages that more accurately reflect girls and women and encourage them to live up to their full potential.

## OBJECTIVES

- **LEARN** how media shapes individual beliefs and cultural norms.
- **PAY CONSCIOUS ATTENTION** to the amount of media students consume.
- **UNDERSTAND** concepts such as representation, social construction, and objectification.
- **RECOGNIZE** gender stereotypes and think about their effects on the larger culture.
- **UNDERSTAND** that when stereotypes are repeated over time they can become accepted as reality or normalized.
- **IDENTIFY** positive and empowering representations of women in the media.
- **MAKE** positive and empowering representations of women and other underrepresented groups.

## WHAT STUDENTS WILL NEED

- *Miss Representation Curriculum Clips*
- Media Literacy Instructional Clips ([Click Here](#))
  - PART 1: How does the media influence our culture?** 0:11 - 2:41
  - PART 2: What do we see in mainstream media?** 2:42 - 7:45
  - PART 3: How does what we see shape our beliefs about ourselves and others?** 7:46 - 11:03
  - PART 4: How do we overcome the media's negative messaging?** 11:04 - 12:11
- Color markers
- Butcher paper
- Magazines
- Pens
- Paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Social Construction Handout ([Appendix I](#))
- Media Log Handout ([Appendix II](#))

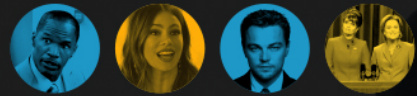


# KEY VOCABULARY

WHAT IS GENDERED MEDIA LITERACY?



THE ABILITY TO  
ANALYZE & EVALUATE  
GENDER STEREOTYPES  
IN THE MEDIA.



CHILDREN NEED TO BE TAUGHT MEDIA LITERACY  
WITH A GENDER LENS, TO HAVE THE SKILLS TO  
INTERPRET THE LIMITING IMAGES IN MEDIA.

**MEDIA** – instruments used to communicate information, including television, magazines, books, movies, music, and the Internet

**ADVERTISING** – a form of communication used to persuade an audience to consume products, ideas, or services

**GENDER IDENTITY** – a personal connection to one's gender. Gender roles are created by society for women/girls and men/boys. Some individuals do not personally identify with the gender roles associated with their biological sex

**REPRESENTATION** – an expression or designation by some term, character, symbol, image, text, or the like

**PROTAGONIST** – a leading character in a film, book, or other work

**SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION** – Social phenomena that are created, institutionalized, and made into tradition by humans. Over time, these constructs become accepted as reality

**OBJECT** – a thing, person, or matter to which thought or action is directed

**OBJECTIFICATION** – the process of symbolically turning a human into an object

**AGENCY** – the capacity of an individual to act alone and make choices

**STEREOTYPE** – a generalization, usually exaggerated or oversimplified and often offensive, that is used to describe or distinguish a group or an individual from that group

**IDEAL** – a standard that is considered perfect

**MISOGYNY** – contempt for, dislike of, or hatred towards women that can be manifested in numerous ways, including discrimination, violence, and objectification

**DEPRESSION** – a mental health condition characterized by a state of low mood, low energy, hopelessness and inadequacy, which is often felt over an extended period of time and can be debilitating

**SELF-INJURY** – the act of purposely harming oneself through cutting, burning, or other physical abuse

"WE NEED MEDIA  
LITERACY AS MUCH AS WE  
NEED TO LEARN TO READ"

JENNIFER PONZER  
Founder of Women In Media & News

## BEFORE VIEWING JOURNALING ACTIVITY:

### REPRESENTATION NATION (30 MIN)

1. Brainstorm different forms of representation (visual, written, and verbal).
2. Lisa Ling points out that she does not want to dress sexy because she does not want to distract from the stories she is telling. Do representations distract us? If so, how? If not, why not? How do representations alter the ways that we see people?
3. Ask students if they think how they represent themselves informs whether or not they feel heard or acknowledged by others? If so, how? and why? If not, why not?
4. Ask your students to think of examples of when representations are either inaccurate or inauthentic. For example, ask them to consider the use of photo filters on Instagram.
5. Ask students to think about the ways they represent themselves using social media, and whether or not these are complete representations of themselves.

## BEFORE VIEWING JOURNALING ACTIVITY: DRAWING IDEALS (45 MIN)

1. Provide students with the list of key vocabulary terms. Ask students to circle the terms ideal, gender identity, objectification, and stereotype.
2. Ask students to list characteristics of the “ideal” woman in their notebooks and write adjectives that describe her.

3. Ask students to create a second list of what society or outside influences encourage as “ideal” for women. Who does she resemble — for example, a supermodel or Oprah Winfrey? How would she act or speak? What does she care about?
4. Ask students to compare their lists. How are the students’ concepts of an ideal women either different from or the same as society’s concepts?
5. Ask students to repeat the exercise to make two lists that compare characteristics of the “ideal” man in their notebooks (personally vs. society).
6. Ask students what the differences are between how they perceive an ideal woman and man and how society portrays the ideal woman or man.
7. Ask students to consider if any of the characteristics (either their own or society's) of an ideal man or woman are stereotypical. Do they objectify?
8. How does advertising and media influence students’ perceptions of the ideal man and woman?
9. How does media influence gender misconceptions of what it means to be ideal?
10. Ask students to write their responses in their journals.

## AFTER VIEWING

### LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: REALITY REFLECTED (15 MIN)

1. What new things did students learn from what they watched? What stood out to them?
2. Before viewing the film did students think that girls and women were represented well by media?
3. What percentage of students thought girls/women were celebrated in the media before viewing? After viewing?
4. What contradictions do students see between real girls and women around them and the ways girls and women are represented in the media?

## REALITY REFLECTED CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

5. What contradictions do students see between real boys and men and the ways boys and men are represented in the media?
6. What effects do media representations have on people? How did media representations affect students when students were younger girls and boys? How does it affect students now?
7. Do students identify with any groups that students believe to be misrepresented by the media? If so, what groups and why? If not, why not?

## LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION:

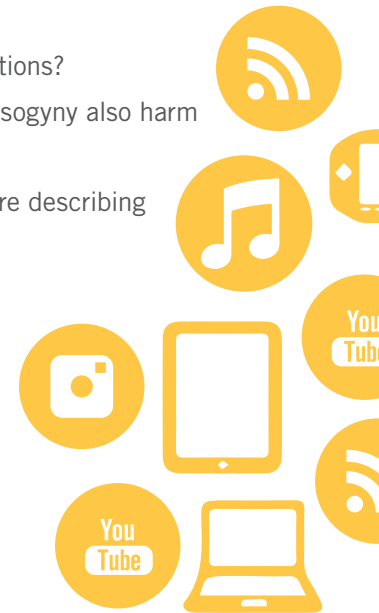
### DEFINING STEREOTYPES (15 MIN)

1. Ask students to raise their hands if they have seen at least one of the films referenced in the excerpts?
2. What new things did you learn from the film clips? What spoke to you?
3. What is a stereotype?
4. Where did you see stereotypes in the clips that were shown?
5. Have you seen other media recently that had stereotypes?
6. Academy award winning writer and producer, Paul Haggis, argues that in the thirties and forties women were allowed to play different types of roles. Ask students if they believe this was true for all women?
7. If students are unable to name any stereotypes, inform them of stereotypes such as women of color are angry, seductresses, or servants.

8. What is misogyny?
9. Have you witnessed misogyny in your everyday interactions?
10. How does misogyny impact women and girls? Does misogyny also harm men and boys? If so, how?
11. Ask students how they felt when the young women were describing depression and self-injury?
12. Did this make them feel uncomfortable?
13. How do students deal with pain and difficulty?
14. Share available resources with the students.

## LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY: CENTERING (10 MIN)

1. Organize classroom chairs into a circle.
2. Dim the lights of the classroom.
3. Ask students to close their eyes.
4. Remind them that during this activity they are to be quiet and still.
5. Ask students to sit up straight with their feet firmly planted on the floor in front of them.
6. Ask students to rest their hands in their laps.
7. Ask students to breathe in through their noses and out through their mouths.
8. Tell students that as they breathe their focus should be on their breath and not on any other thing.
9. Remind students that this is a time for them to become calm and centered.
10. Repeat breathing for several repetitions.
11. Tell students that they can open their eyes when they are ready.
12. Turn the lights back on and have students return chairs to their normal positions.





## SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY:

### SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS (15 MIN)

1. Review the definition of the term social construction.
2. Organize students into small groups and hand each group the attached Social Construction handout (if students are teaching in a co-ed school, make sure there are males and females in each group).
3. Ask each group to identify which statements are social constructions and which ones are natural.

## SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: BOXED IN (30 MIN)

1. Organize students into small groups of three to five depending on the class size (if you are teaching a co-ed class, make sure there are males and females in each group).
2. Give each group a piece of large paper, a few magazines, scissors, glue, and markers.
3. Ask students to divide their paper into two sections or boxes: one for female stereotypes and one for male stereotypes.
4. Ask students to cut out images of women and men from advertising and editorials and paste them into the corresponding sections.
5. Have students write words around the images that describe the images they chose.

6. When they are complete, display the posters around the room.
7. Why did the students select the images they chose? What is stereotypical about them? Did students identify similar kinds of stereotypes? How do students feel stereotypes might be harmful? How can students avoid stereotyping? Being stereotyped?

## LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: BREAKING FREE (15 MIN)

1. How does seeing these images over and over again affect how students think about themselves?
2. How do students think that stereotypical images influence the way they think about others?
3. How do students' lists describing the "ideal" woman and man in their journals compare to the images they cut out?
4. What contradictions do students see between the real women around them and what they see in the media?
5. How can students change the way these images affect them or people around them?
6. What images would students like to see of women and men that they currently do not see?
7. What kinds of images would they like to create to increase positive representations of men and women?
8. Do students think that the images that exist represent them?



## INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY:

### MEDIA BIOGRAPHY (ONE HOUR)

1. Ask students to write a media biography.
2. As students are writing their biographies ask them to consider questions like the following:
  - a. What was the first television show or movie the student remembers watching? The first video game that he or she played?
  - b. Does he or she listen to music or watch music videos at home?
  - c. What is his or her favorite song?
  - d. When did they first hear it?
  - e. How does the media influence the ways that the students interact with their friends? Families?
  - f. Do they watch movies or television together?
  - g. Who is their favorite actor and actress and why?
3. Ask students to think about the media that they described in their biography.
4. What roles do women play in their favorite movies and television shows?
5. How are women described in their favorite songs or raps?
6. How are women represented?
7. Are women empowered?
8. Do women have agency?
9. Are women objectified?
10. Can women both have agency and be objectified?

## INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY: SHE'S A SUPER HEROINE (60 MIN)

1. Ask students to write a story about a female super heroine for a television show, video game, or film.
2. What is her super power?
3. How did she obtain this power?
4. Does she have a family? Children? Parents? Is she the only one with a super power in her community?
5. In the story students should describe how this individual overcame a difficult experience that occurred in her life.
6. Who does the character go to when she experiences difficulties?
7. Does she solve the problem alone or with the help of others?
8. Have students share their characters. Are there commonalities in the ways these super heroines address difficulties? Do students respond to difficult situations in similar ways to their characters?
9. Do Hollywood blockbusters reflect the commonalities of these super heroines? Or do Hollywood blockbusters focus on the super heroes and aesthetics?

## HOMEWORK: MEDIA LOG (1 WEEK)

1. Hand each student the attached Media Log handout and ask them to log their media consumption for one week.
2. Have students bring in one or more examples of positive representations of girls/women that they found to share with the class.
3. Have them bring in one or more examples of positive representations of boys and men that contradict macho stereotypes.

## HIGH SCHOOL AND POST-SECONDARY MODULE 2:

# WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP

TIME MINIMUM: 65-70 MINUTES

## OVERVIEW

The Women and Leadership lesson helps students understand how the objectification of women in mainstream media contributes to the under-representation of women in influential leadership positions. Instructional clip *Miss Representation* features prominent U.S. women leaders sharing personal stories about the ways they are represented and treated differently than male leaders. Through discussion, students are encouraged to think about the implications of unequal representation. Activities will help students identify media bias and think about the ways in which mainstream media undermines women's leadership potential. Students are given the task to present on important events in women's history. Students will develop positive and empowering images of women leaders.

## OBJECTIVES

- **MAKE** the connection between media objectification and the low numbers of women in influential leadership positions.
- **RECOGNIZE** media bias and understand how it undermines women's leadership.
- **DEFINE** democracy and think about how disparities in women's leadership undermine U.S. democracy.
- **LEARN** about important events from the women's movement and practice teaching others about women's history.
- **CREATE** positive and empowering images of women in leadership positions.

## WHAT STUDENTS WILL NEED

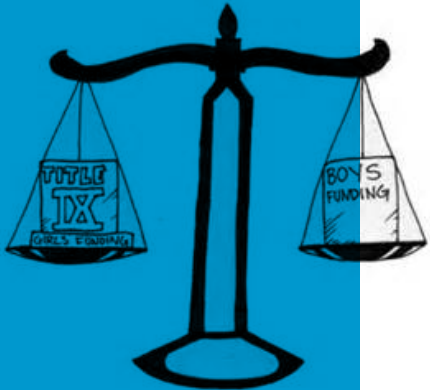
- *Miss Representation Curriculum Clips*
- Women and Leadership Instructional Clips ([Click Here](#))
  - PART 1:** How does media and advertising messaging affect women in leadership? 12:26 - 13:34
  - PART 2:** Why is women's leadership important in our world? 13:35 - 17:10
  - PART 3:** What unique challenges do female leaders experience? 17:11 - 21:14
  - PART 4:** How do we get more women into leadership? 21:15 - 22:33
- Magazines and newspapers (1 per student)
- Poster boards
- Pens
- Paper



## KEY VOCABULARY

"Look at me!  
Look at my arm!  
I have ploughed  
and planted, and  
gathered into  
barns, and no  
man could head  
me! And ain't I  
a woman?"

-Excerpt from  
Sojourner Truth's  
*Ain't I A Woman  
Speech*"



**LEADER** – an individual that influences, organizes, and helps others

**POLITICAL EFFICACY** – the idea that one understands political affairs and that one's voice and opinion matter in bringing about change in politics

**PARITY** – equality in amount or status

**DEMOCRACY** – a form of government led by the people

**CITIZENSHIP** - a status that gives individuals civil, political, and social rights and obligations in society

**SEXISM** – Prejudice or discrimination based upon one's sex or gender

**TITLE IX** – a Federal law stating that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The passage of Title IX provided significant opportunities for women's sports programs in schools and universities

**PAID FAMILY LEAVE** – financial compensation by an employer to cover individuals who take time off to care for a family member. The United States does not provide paid maternity leave

**LIVING WAGE** – term used to describe the minimum hourly wage necessary for an individual to meet basic needs, including housing, clothing, and nutrition. This figure will change depending on where an individual lives

**MICROENTERPRISE** – a type of small business

**ALLY** – To join with and provide support for another person, group, nation, or idea





## BEFORE VIEWING

### LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION:

#### CLAIM TO FAME (15 MIN)

1. Ask students to describe the positive representations of women and girls in the media that they had logged in their media consumption log during the week.
2. When complete, analyze the list with students to determine:
  - a. How many women portray what would be considered leadership roles in film or television?
  - b. What types of leadership roles do these women play?
  - c. How do men support these leaders?

## AFTER VIEWING

### LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION:

#### DEFINING DEMOCRACY (10 MIN)

Review these statistics:

- a. What percentage of the U.S. population are women? (51% out of 100%)
- b. What percent of Congress are women? (18% out of 100%)
- c. How many women have served as governor? (36 women compared to 2319 men)
- d. How many women presidents have we had? (0 women compared to 43 men)

### DEFINING DEMOCRACY CONTINUED

1. Ask students if they find these statistics concerning? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. Ask students to consider whether or not they agree with the experts who argue for more female leadership.
3. Do students think that there is a potential danger in not having parity in U.S. politics? If so, what is the danger of not having equal representation of men and women in politics? If not, why not?
4. What is the danger of not having racial diversity in politics?
5. Why do students think it might be important to have equal representation and diversity in a democracy?

### SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: SPOTTING MEDIA BIAS (30 MIN)

1. Bring in political newspapers, magazines, and online articles that represent diverse leaders and ask students if they can identify any media bias in the text or images.
2. If students identified bias, have them report on one example of media bias that they found.
3. Ask them to explain how each example of bias undermines the subject of the article.
4. How do these representations affect the reader?
5. Ask students how they might change the representation?

### SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: SPOTTING SEXISM (45 MIN)

1. Organize students into small groups of three to five depending on your class size. If you are in a co-educational setting, make sure there are males and females in each group. Try to make sure that the groups are diverse.

## SPOTTING SEXISM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

2. Provide students with the vocabulary list above.
3. Ask students to make a list of examples of small and large acts of sexism. What words, actions, gestures, etc. are used during these acts?
4. Ask students if they are aware of the living wage?
5. Have students seen or heard of acts of sexism?
6. Ask students to share examples of sexism with the class.
7. What does parity mean?
8. Ask students to share examples of parity on campus.
9. Have students describe their own experiences with parity such as being involved in sports teams, student government, clubs, or other organizations, and groups on their campuses.
10. Have students discuss why parity is important.
11. Talk to students about Title IX.
12. Ask students to provide examples of disparity and how Title IX assists students.
13. How does disparity influence the ways that women and men live in the United States?
14. What are ways that students can develop political efficacy?
15. How might political efficacy help to address disparities in the living wage? Title IX?
16. Who are some public or historical allies for women? People of color? The LGBT Community?
17. Explain to students that allies are people who

recognize privileges they receive from society's patterns of injustice, and who take responsibility for changing these patterns. Allies include men who work to end sexism, white people who work to end racism, straight people who work to end homophobia, etc.

18. Ask students to provide examples of allies in their personal lives.
19. How can students be allies for each other?
20. Review the examples of sexism. Brainstorm as a group how individuals could contribute to decreasing sexism.
21. Condoleezza Rice asks, "Can an American see a woman or an African American in that position?" What are the barriers that might stop an American from seeing women and minorities in leadership roles?
22. Do students see women and minorities in leadership positions presently? Name these individuals. What roles do they play in society? How are they practicing leadership? How can we get other Americans to know about them?
23. Extend the conversation. Ask students to Instagram **#MediaWeLike** with positive representations of women and minorities in leadership and **#NotBuyingIt** to call out sexism in the media and larger culture.
24. Celebrate allies who stand up for those who are less empowered by uploading to Instagram their names using **#BuyingIt**.

## HOMEWORK: (RE)PRESENTING WOMEN'S HISTORY (1 WEEK)

1. Ask students to select either one historic female figure or a contemporary female leader to research.
2. Inform students that they must be able to provide evidence as to why they selected this individual.





## (RE)PRESENTING WOMEN'S HISTORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

3. Ask each student to prepare a ten-minute poster board presentation for the class on the leader(s) of their choice. In the presentation students should consider the following questions:
  - a. What was this person's personal background?
  - b. What leadership role did/does she play?
  - c. What factors inspired her to become a leader?
  - d. What obstacles did/has she overcome to play a leadership role?
  - e. How and why is she a role model for future leaders?
4. Have students reflect on their poster boards. What did they learn about women in leadership roles?
5. How can female leaders inspire women and girls? Boys and men?
6. Next ask students to try to remember where they first learned about the women they chose to research.
7. What prompted them to want to learn more about this particular leader?
8. What is it about this particular leader that they find inspiring?
9. Ask students to journal about how they think women leaders influences others? What do they feel or think when they see a woman leader?
10. Do students see themselves as leaders or in leadership roles? If so, what roles do they see themselves playing? If not, why not?
11. Ask students to write a one-page news article, an Opinion Editorial (Op-ed) or create a three-minute video news segment about their female leader based on the information they gathered.
12. Continue the conversation online and have students share their videos, articles, or Op-ed pieces by uploading them to Twitter using **#MyMissRepMedia**.



## HIGH SCHOOL AND POST-SECONDARY MODULE 3: BEHIND THE SCENES

TIME MINIMUM: 60 MINUTES

### OVERVIEW

The Behind the Scenes lesson introduces students to the political economy of mainstream media. Instructional clips from the documentary film *Miss Representation* give students a glimpse into the political and business decisions that determine what we see. Students are encouraged to reflect on the implications of profit-driven media and deregulation by policy makers. Activities help students contemplate how to hold the media market accountable for harmful representations of women and imagine how media might look differently with more diversity and social responsibility behind the scenes. Students are encouraged to create their own positive and empowering representations of women.

### OBJECTIVES

- **DEFINE** diversity and think about the ways in which more diversity behind the scenes might change how women and girls are represented in media and advertising.
- **UNDERSTAND** that what we see in the media is influenced by political and economic decisions.
- **COMPREHEND** that changes in the media and advertising industry have given companies more power in determining what we see and hear.

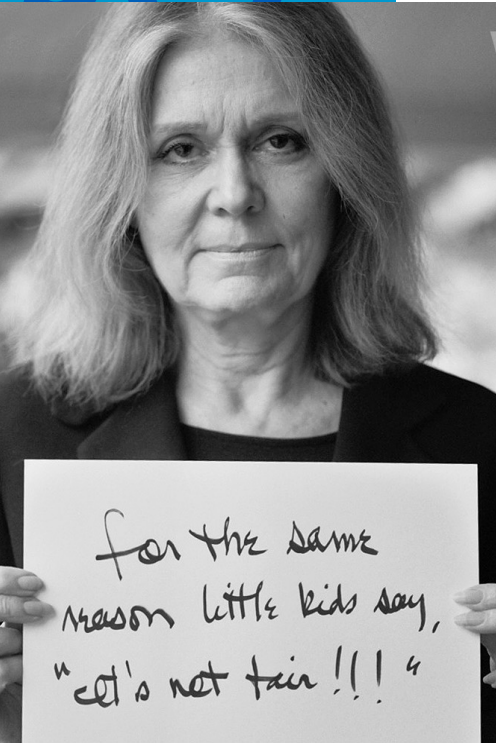
- **REFLECT** on the dangerous effects of harmful, profit-driven media and advertising industries, the impact they have on our culture, and the news/information we are given access to.
- **IDENTIFY** ways individuals can influence positive change in the media, news, and advertising industries.
- **CREATE** positive and empowering images of women in leadership positions.

### WHAT STUDENTS WILL NEED

- *Miss Representation Curriculum Clips*
- Behind the Scenes Instructional Clips ([Click Here](#))
  - PART 1: Could more diversity behind the scenes of media change what we see? 22:48 - 28:09**
  - PART 2: How do political and economic decisions affect media? 28:10 - 38:13**
- Magazines and/or Internet access
- Student journals
- Pens
- Paper
- Envelopes & postage (approx. 1 per every 3 students)
- Computers or tablets
- Video cameras



## KEY VOCABULARY



**DIVERSITY** – a variety of experiences influenced by culture, history, religion, race, gender, sexuality, nationality, language, financial background, ability, etc.

**PERSPECTIVE** – a way to view a story or situation

**STATUS QUO** – the existing condition or state of affairs (not changing)

**MULTIDIMENSIONAL** – something that has many sides

**MEDIA CONGLOMERATE** – A company that owns a large quantity of other mass media companies such as television, radio, publishing, film, and Internet companies

**SYMBOLIC ANNIHILATION** – the underrepresentation of some group of people in the media (often based on their race, sex, status, etc.)

**POLITICAL ECONOMY** – the interaction between a country's economic, legal, and political systems

**REGULATION** – government policy that imposes rules or limitations for the conduct of individuals, organizations, and businesses

**CONGLOMERATE** – a corporation that owns multiple other corporations

**BOTTOM-LINE** – profit or money made

**CENSORSHIP** – acts that silence or limit freedom of speech or press

**PUBLIC INTEREST** – policies and practices that take into account the concerns of citizens

**FIRST AMENDMENT** – a constitutional provision that protects individuals' right to free speech, among other freedoms

**HOMOGENOUS** – the same or similar in kind, nature, or type



## BEFORE VIEWING

### JOURNALING ACTIVITY: INSPIRING OTHERS (45 MIN)

1. Have students think about their favorite commercial. What does the commercial advertise?
2. Who is the perceived target audience?
3. What is the key slogan in the commercial? Did the commercial influence the student to purchase the merchandise advertised?
4. Next ask students to try to remember where they first saw the commercial. What is it about this particular commercial that they find entertaining?
5. Are there any women in this commercial? If so, how are they represented? If not, why not?
6. Does the student think the commercial could be enhanced with women playing roles in it?
7. Ask students to journal about how they think commercials influence them. What do they feel or think when they see commercials?
4. How different would media and advertising look if there were more diversity behind the scenes?
5. If we had more perspectives in the media, how would it change the news, films, television shows, magazines, and other media we see?
6. Who benefits/profits from the way women are represented in the media?
7. Ask students to consider the concept of a media conglomerate. Does it concern students that only a few companies own almost all of mainstream media? Why or why not?
8. Why do students think media corporations use stereotypes to sell their products?
9. Do students think the government should create more rules to regulate media companies? Why or why not?
10. Ask students if they think that negative representations of women and girls influence the ways that we see them in our everyday lives?
11. Does it matter that the majority of voices behind the scenes are homogenous?
12. What responsibility do those in power have to right cultural injustices?
13. If students were in charge of a network, would they hire people who were the same as or different from them? Why or why not?
14. How would students ensure that they reached out to diverse populations?
15. What role might students play in encouraging more positive representations of women and girls and people of color in the media? Are there ways that students can influence media? If so, how? If not, why not?

## AFTER VIEWING

### GROUP DISCUSSION:

#### THE RACE TO THE BOTTOM LINE (15-20 MIN)

1. What new things did students learn from the film clips? What spoke to them?
2. What is diversity? Discuss diversity as seen in the film or the lack thereof.
3. Why is it important to hear stories from multiple perspectives?

### SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: RE-CREATE A COMMERCIAL (3 DAYS)

1. Organize students into groups of three to five depending on the class size.
2. Ask students to search for an advertisement that objectifies women or promotes harmful stereotypes that they would like to change. Students may find a commercial or advertisement online or on TV.

## RE-CREATE A COMMERCIAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

3. Have students work together to write a three-page script for a two-minute new commercial that cleverly sells the product without using harmful stereotypes or disparaging representations of women, people of color, or lower socioeconomic status.
4. Have students work together to select actors, a director, a videographer, and an editor to film the commercial.
5. Have students share their commercials with the class.
6. Ask students to write a letter to the company responsible for the advertisement. Have them explain why they think the representation is irresponsible. Encourage them to include a link to their video with an explanation of why they think theirs is a better representation.
7. Ask students to download the **#NotBuyingIt** app and send a message to the company explaining why they think that the commercial objectifies women.
8. Ask students to share the commercials they re-created on Twitter using **#MyMissRepMedia**.

## HOMEWORK: OP-ED (2 DAYS)

1. Ask students to write an opinion editorial that spotlights their dissatisfaction with the way in which women, people of color, and/or of lower socioeconomic status are represented in one of the following: film, television, music videos, video games, or advertisement.
2. Ask students to include specific suggestions concerning how to more accurately represent women, people of color,

or of lower socioeconomic status to the creators of the chosen media or advertisement.

3. Have students vote on the top two editorials to submit to the school newspaper for publication.
4. Work with your school newspaper to publish both submissions.
5. Ask students to submit their editorials to their local community newspaper for extra credit.
6. As the teacher, create a blog featuring your students' work to share with others.
7. Have students share work with The Representation Project and others on Twitter using **#MyMissRepMedia**.

## HOMEWORK: MOVIE MAKING (3 WEEKS)

The moviemaking homework assignment is divided into three subsections each to take approximately one week. Educators can select to assign all or parts of the lesson to their students to assist them with gaining experience in working behind the scenes.

### PART 1: Storyboarding (Having students create a visual plot of the story)

1. Divide students into groups of five to develop a super heroine story into a multimedia presentation that positively represents women.
2. Ask students to create a storyboard with between ten and fifteen scenes that represent the beginning, middle, and end of their story. Storyboards should be illustrated using color. Students can also use power point or another software program to develop their storyboards.

### PART 2: Scriptwriting

1. Ask students to write a three-page script for a three to five-minute film about their super heroine.

### PART 3: Filmmaking

1. Tell students to work with others in their group to select actors, a cameraperson, a costume designer, and an editor for the movie.



## MOVIE MAKING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

2. Have the students film and edit their movies.
3. Have students present their films in class.
4. Continue the conversation online and have students share their films by uploading them to Twitter using **#MyMissRepMedia**.





# ADDITIONAL SERVICE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVISM X 10

**10 SECONDS:** Tweet about the film using **#MissRep**. Write a Facebook status about the film. Tell one friend about *Miss Representation*.

**100 SECONDS:** Take the pledge at [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org) to receive our weekly actions and begin creating change in your local communities.

**10 MINUTES:** Organize consumer activism in response to a commercial, film, magazine, radio, or television show that objectifies and degrades women and get your friends to join in using **#NotBuyingIt** or the **#NotBuyingIt** app.

**10 HOURS:** Research and write an article for a magazine or blog. Contribute to an existing blog that addresses the issues in the film. Plan a movie night for your friends or family to watch *Miss Representation* and use the discussion guide and tools from [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org) to continue the conversation!

**10 DAYS:** Write your own stories and create your own films or web series about powerful women in non-traditional roles. Market and host a screening of *Miss Representation* in your community. Find out more at [www.therepresentationproject.org](http://www.therepresentationproject.org).

**10 WEEKS:** Become a Rep or Ambassador. Create a club or organize a group in your community, school, or place of work to regularly discuss the messaging of *Miss Representation*.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be?"

—Marriane Williamson

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# MISS REPRESENTATION RELATED READING LIST

## ARTICLES

*Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action*,  
by R. Hobbs

*Gender Disparity On Screen and Behind the Camera in Family Films*,; The Executive Report,  
Stacy L. Smith, Ph.D. & Marc Choueiti,  
University of Southern California, Annenberg  
School for Communication & Journalism

*Gender Stereotypes: An Analysis of Popular Films and TV*; Dr. Stacy L. Smith (Annenberg School for Communication) and Crystal Allene Cook (The Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media)

*The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women in the Top 250 Films of 2011* by Martha M. Lauzen, Ph.D.

*The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything*; Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress

*Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices (Culture, Media, and Identities series)* by Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans, and Sean Nixon

*The Self and Symbolic Consumption* by Dr. Kritsadarat Wattanasuman, Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge

*From magic bullets to shooting blanks: Reality, criticism, and Beverly Hills, 90210* by Naomi R. Rockier

*Television Viewing and Rape Myth Acceptance among College Women* by LeeAnn Kahlor, Dan Morrison

*Standpoint Theory* by Sandra Harding and Julia T. Wood

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."  
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

# MISS REPRESENTATION RELATED READING LIST

## BOOKS

*The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* Author: Naomi Wolf

*The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* Author: Joan Jacobs Brumberg

*Boys Will Be Men: Raising Our Sons for Courage, Caring and Community* Author: Paul Kivel

*Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel* Author: Jean Kilbourne

*Closing the Leadership Gap: Add Women, Change Everything* Author: Marie C. Wilson

*Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture* Author: Ariel Levy

*Getting Real: Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls* Author: Melinda Tankard Reist and Noni Hazlehurst

*Girl Wide Web: Girls, the Internet, and the Negotiation of Identity* Editor: Sharon Mazzarella Title: *Globalizing Feminisms, 1789-1956* Editor: Karen Offen

*Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* Author: Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

*The Lolita Effect: The Media Sexualization of Young Girls and What We Can Do About It* Author: M. Gigi Durham, PhD

*Losing It: America's Obsession with Weight and the Industry that Feeds on It* Author: Laura Fraser

*Men's Work: How to Stop the Violence That Tears Our Lives Apart* Author: Paul Kivel

*The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help* Author: Jackson Katz

*Notes from the Cracked Ceiling: Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and What It Will Take for a Woman to Win* Author: Anne E. Kornblut

*Reality Bites Back: The Troubling Truth About Guilty Pleasure TV* Author: Jennifer L. Pozner, Women in Media and News

*Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem, and the Confidence Gap* Author: Peggy Orenstein

*Sexism in America: Alive, Well, and Ruining Our Future* Author: Barbara J. Berg, PhD.

*Women Afraid to Eat: Breaking Free in Today's Weight-Obsessed World* Author: F. Berg Brumberg and Joan Jacobs

*Women World Leaders* Author: Laura A. Liswood

*Young Women's Lives: Building Self-Awareness for Life* Author: M. Nell Myhand & Paul Kivel *Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action*, by R. Hobbs

*Gender Disparity On Screen and Behind the Camera in Family Films*; The Executive Report, Stacy L. Smith, Ph.D. & Marc Choueiti, University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism

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*Standpoint Theory* by Sandra Harding and Julia T. Wood



## APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS, TOOLS, AND HANDOUTS

- I. Social Constructions Handout
- II. Media Log Handout
- III. Discussing Miss Representation with Boys and Men
- IV. #NotBuyingIt: Sexism Won't Sell
- V. Using #NotBuyingIt in the Classroom
- VI. Analyze Diversity in Film Using The Representation Test
- VII. The Representation Test
- VIII. Infographic: Media Literacy with a Gender Lens
- IX. Infographic: Genderbread Person
- X. I Am Poem



# SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS HANDOUT

## SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Circle the statements that represent a social construction.

1. Women give birth to babies and men do not.
2. Little girls are gentle and timid; boys are tough and adventurous.
3. In many countries, women earn 70% of what men earn.
4. Women can breastfeed babies; men need a bottle for feeding babies.
5. Women are in charge of raising children.
6. Men are decision makers.
7. The majority of police in most countries are men.
8. Men are the primary breadwinners in families.
9. Boys' voices break at puberty and girls' do not.
10. There are fewer women Presidents, Governors, members of Congress and managers than men.

WRITE A DEFINITION FOR 'SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION' IN YOUR OWN WORDS:

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## TRACK HOW MANY HOURS PER DAY YOU SPEND ENGAGING WITH THE VARIOUS TYPES OF MEDIA BELOW:

|                            | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY | AVERAGE |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|---------|
| TELEVISION/MOVIES**        |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |
| MAGAZINES/BOOKS            |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |
| VIDEO GAMES                |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |
| MUSIC/MUSIC VIDEOS         |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |
| WEBSITES/BLOGS/ONLINE NEWS |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |
| SOCIAL MEDIA               |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |
| OTHER:                     |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |         |

YOU SPEND ABOUT **35 HOURS** PER WEEK AT SCHOOL,  
ABOUT **56 HOURS** PER WEEK SLEEPING, AND  
ABOUT **8 HOURS** A WEEK EATING AND DRINKING.  
HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO YOUR WEEKLY CONSUMPTION?

\*\* In the TV & Movies you watch,  
tally protagonists you see in the  
chart below

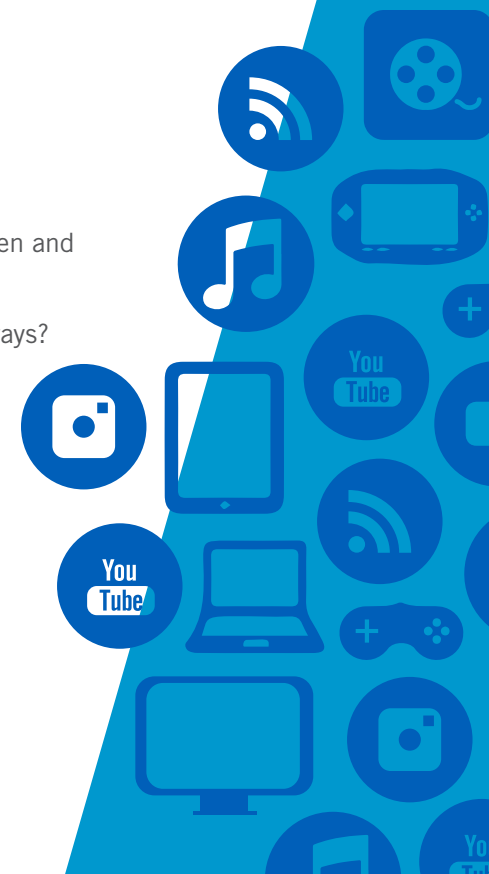
(Reminder: a protagonist is a  
leading character)

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| MALE         |  |
| FEMALE       |  |
| OTHER        |  |
| UNIDENTIFIED |  |

## DISCUSSING *MISS REPRESENTATION* WITH BOYS AND MEN

**FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING WITH ALL MALE GROUPS- BELOW IS A LIST OF SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE THEMES OF *MISS REPRESENTATION*.**

- What does the media tell you about what it means to be a man?
- What have you learned from your parents, older siblings, or within your community about what it means to be a man?
- How are the messages that you receive from the media different than those that you receive from your parents, older siblings, or within your community? How are they similar?
- Are there values that you feel are important to masculinity that are different than what you have learned from the media?
- Are there values that you feel are important to masculinity that are different than what you have learned from your parents, older siblings, or your community?
- What has the media taught you about qualities that make up an 'ideal' woman?
- What has your family or community taught you about qualities that make up an "ideal" woman?
- How do you think these messages affect females your age as they grow up?
- How do you think these messages impact your perceptions of women and girls and your interactions with them?
- What qualities do you think are important in women and girls that you don't often see in the media? Think about the women and girls in your families and communities.
- How do you think the world would be different if the media portrayed boys and men, women and girls, in more accurate ways?
- Do you feel it is important for men to show emotion? What is at stake if they do? How can we encourage a world where it is okay for men and boys to fully express their emotions?
- Do you believe that sexism is a learned behavior? Do you find yourself repeating sexist behaviors you've learned from the media?





## #NOTBUYINGIT: SEXISM WON'T SELL

The Representation Project's **#NotBuyingIt** campaign activates consumers and sparks a dialogue across social media around sexism and the misrepresentation of gender in the media. People around the world use the hashtag on Twitter and have downloaded the iPhone app to spotlight how companies are selling products via images of hyper-sexuality and hyper-masculinity.

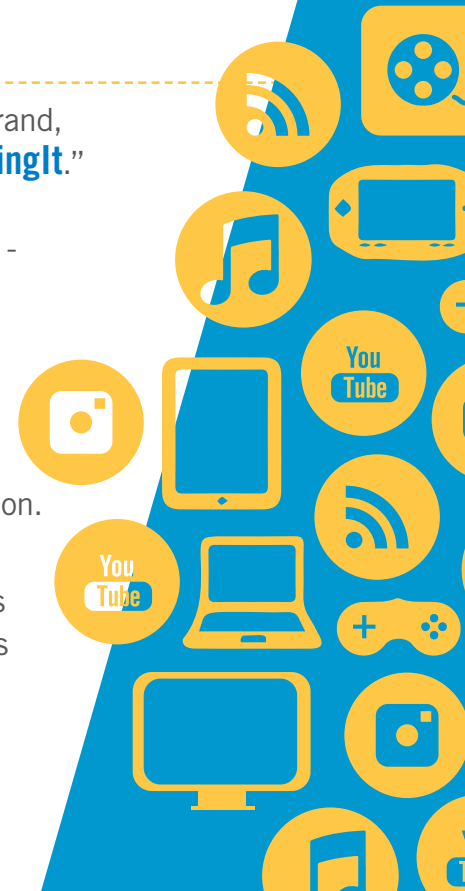
The **#NotBuyingIt** campaign started during the 2011 holiday season and eventually became a trending topic during two different Super Bowls – transforming advertising during the most-watched entertainment event of the year.

## HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Whenever you see sexism in the media, use the hashtag on Instagram or through the app to send the brand, company or individual behind it a message. Ex. “Hey @Brand, sexism won't sell, because I'm **#NotBuyingIt**.”

- Make sure you tag the actual Twitter handle of the brand in your post and include the hashtag - to make sure they hear you!
- Encourage your friends to join the campaign! Companies respond to **#NotBuyingIt** campaigns regularly, and sometimes after just a few dozen tweets.
- Check the official website or your app to see the **#NotBuyingIt** campaigns with the most traction.

Most importantly, use **#NotBuyingIt** to educate others about the media, asking questions like: Who was that ad directed at? What was the message it sent about gender? Does it reflect the real life experiences of women and men?

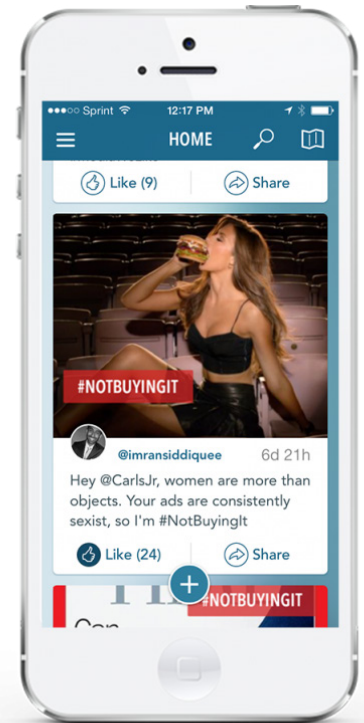


# INSPIRED TEACHERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY HAVE CREATED CLASSROOM EXERCISES AROUND OUR #NOTBUYINGIT CAMPAIGN.

These activities motivate students to respond to sexist advertising using social media, and teach students to use their voices to transform culture.

## CREATE CONSTRUCTIVE CLASSROOM COMPETITION USING #NOTBUYING IT!

- Review the **#NotBuyingIt** Sexism Won't Sell handout with your class and explain how the **#NotBuyingIt** hashtag can be used to call out sexism in media, advertising, and products.
- Assign each of your class periods a unique hashtag. (For example Mr. Clark's third period US History class could be #ClarkHist3)
- Explain to students that for the next two weeks whenever they see sexism in the media, they should use the **#NotBuyingIt** hashtag to send the brand, company or individual behind it a message. Students should also use the hashtag specific to their class period in their uploads to Twitter.
- Then, each day in class facilitate a discussion about that class period's tweets. Keep track of which tweets were most successful and explore with students how they can improve their uploads to Twitter to increase their impact.
- At the end of the two-week period announce which class period had the most successful impact, the most reach, or the most thoughtful posts.



**FOR MORE WAYS TO USE #NOTBUYINGIT  
WITH YOUR STUDENTS VISIT**

**[HTTP://THEREPRESENTATIONPROJECT.ORG/TAKE-ACTION/NOT-BUYING-IT/](http://therepresentationproject.org/take-action/not-buying-it/)**

# ANALYZE DIVERSITY IN FILM USING THE REPRESENTATION TEST

## ABOUT THE REPRESENTATION TEST

The Representation Test is a tool for examining the various ways in which films marginalize and underrepresent people both on screen and behind the scenes. From the lack of women given starring roles to the general invisibility of people with disabilities, the test gives us a way to start a conversation about diversity at the movie theatre – and with the film studios themselves.

While using The Representation Test you will see that it is open to some interpretation. But, the intent of this tool is to spark learning and conversation about representation in film and to encourage more overall diversity in Hollywood.

It's important to note that characters in a film, like real people, can inhabit multiple categories of description. For instance, if a protagonist is a woman of color, then you would check two boxes – one for a protagonist who is a woman, and one for a protagonist who is a woman of color (if the depiction avoids stereotypes) – and the film would then receive points for both.

## USING THE REPRESENTATION TEST IN THE CLASSROOM:

**\*\*This exercise is recommended for middle school, high school, and university level classrooms\*\***

1. Pick a movie! Have students choose a popular Hollywood movie to watch for this exercise. (Middle school teachers, you may choose to watch a film together with the entire class in order to streamline your class discussion.)
2. Distribute ***The Representation Test*** to the class. Before watching the selected film, take a moment to go over The Representation Test with students and point out what they should be looking for as they watch.
3. After viewing, have students complete ***The Representation Test*** for the film they selected. If your class watched a film together, have the students fill the test out in small groups, or with the class as a whole. (Information about the film's cast and production team can be found on [www.IMDB.com](http://www.IMDB.com))
4. After students complete the test to the best of their ability, open a discussion about the results of the tests. Continue the dialogue to explore the importance of diversity in film both on and off the screen.

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***For more information about diversity in film, check out  
The Representation Project's infographic 'Media Literacy with a  
Gender Lens'***

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# THE REPRESENTATION TEST



## THE REPRESENTATION TEST

A media literacy tool meant to spark learning and conversation around representation in film, and to encourage more overall diversity on screen and behind-the-scenes in Hollywood.

### Women

- ☐ Is the protagonist a woman? (2 points)
- ☐ Is the protagonist a woman of color?
- ☐ Does the film include one or more women of color, in speaking roles, who are NOT reduced to racial stereotypes?
- ☐ Does the film represent women as more than "objects for the male gaze"?
- ☐ Does the film include women in speaking roles with diverse body types?
- ☐ Is the protagonist a woman over the age of 45?
- ☐ Does the film pass the Bechdel Test? (Feature two or more named characters who are women, who talk to each other about something other than a man?)

### Men

- ☐ Does the film avoid glorifying violent men?
- ☐ Does the film avoid perpetuating an extreme and unhealthy body ideal for men?
- ☐ Does the film include one or more men of color, in speaking roles, who are NOT reduced to racial stereotypes?
- ☐ Does the film include men in non-stereotypical roles? (i.e. caregiver, competent involved parent, etc.)

### Race, Ethnicity & Culture

- ☐ Does the film avoid celebrating offensive racial, ethnic, and cultural stereotypes?

Film: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

### LGBT People

- ☐ Is the protagonist lesbian, gay, bisexual or a transgender person? (2 points)
- ☐ Does the film include one or more LGBT characters who are NOT reduced to stereotypes?

### People with Disabilities

- ☐ Is the protagonist a person with disabilities? (2 points)
- ☐ Does the film include one or more characters with disabilities whose story lines are NOT limited to their disability?

### Bonus Points

Is the film written or directed by:

- ☐ ☐ A woman
- ☐ ☐ A person of color
- ☐ ☐ A lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender person
- ☐ ☐ A person with disabilities

A = 11+ points  
B = 7 to 10 points  
C = 4 to 6 points  
D = 1 to 3 points  
F = 0 points

Everything is worth 1 point, unless otherwise noted.

There are a total of 27 possible points.

NOTE: An "A" does not guarantee that a film addresses every structural issue of inequality, but simply that it represents a diverse array of people and experiences.



## MEDIA CONSUMPTION

How do youth consume media?

**50%**

AMERICAN TEENAGERS  
SPEND NEARLY 50% OF THEIR  
DAY CONSUMING MEDIA,  
MOST OF WHICH IS FILLED  
WITH HARMFUL  
GENDER STEREOTYPES.

STUDIES SHOW  
WATCHING TV LOWERS  
SELF-CONFIDENCE IN GIRLS,  
PARTICULARLY FOR GIRLS  
OF COLOR.

## HOLLYWOOD GENDER BIAS

Some facts about gender bias in Hollywood.



**<1/4**

LESS THAN A QUARTER OF  
FILMS FEATURE A FEMALE  
PROTAGONIST & EVEN LESS  
FEATURE LEADS THAT ARE  
WOMEN OF COLOR.

**29%**

ONLY 29% OF  
SPENDING CHARACTERS  
IN TOP GROSSING  
FILMS ARE WOMEN.

**4X**

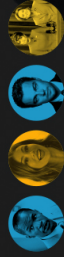
THOSE THAT DO APPEAR  
ARE 4X MORE LIKELY TO BE  
SEXUALIZED OR WEARING  
REVEALING CLOTHING.



## WHAT IS GENDERED MEDIA LITERACY?



THE ABILITY TO  
ANALYZE & EVALUATE  
GENDER STEREOTYPES  
IN THE MEDIA.



CHILDREN NEED TO BE TAUGHT MEDIA LITERACY  
WITH A GENDER LENS, TO HAVE THE SKILLS TO  
INTERPRET THE LIMITING IMAGES IN MEDIA.

**MEDIA LITERACY  
WITH A GENDER LENS CAN  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

**ABOUT US:**  
The Representation Project is a movement  
that uses film & media content to expose in-  
terlocking systems of gender stereotypes, and  
to educate youth on the ways in which these  
stereotypes can be challenged. Through  
interactive campaigns, strategic partnerships

**SOURCES:**  
Research Film, Kaiser Family Foundation,  
USC Annenberg School for  
Communication & Journalism,  
National Library

## MISS REPRESENTATION

**70%**

OVER 70% OF COLLEGE STUDENTS SAY  
MISS REPRESENTATION HELPED THEM REALIZE  
HOW THE MEDIA DENIGNS, DISRESPECTS  
& DISPARAGES WOMEN & GIRLS.

**60%**

OVER 60% OF COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO  
WATCH MISS REPRESENTATION REPORT SPEAKING  
UP WHEN SEEING OR HEARING SOMETHING  
DISRESPECTFUL TOWARD WOMEN.

THOUSANDS OF  
SCHOOLS ARE NOW  
USING MISS  
REPRESENTATION  
IN THEIR CLASS.

A U.S. HISTORY CLASS IN  
MASSACHUSETTS HAS  
REPRESENTATION AS A CORE PART  
OF ITS CURRICULUM.

A CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL  
TEACHER HELPED HIS STUDENTS JOIN  
OUR #NOTJUSTWAG77 SOCIAL  
MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO CALL OUT  
SEXIST ADVERTISERS.

## THE EXPOSURE OF MISS REPRESENTATION



**50**

THE FILM HAS  
BEEN SCREENED  
IN ALL 50 STATES.



**72**

AND HAS BEEN  
SCREENED IN OVER  
72 COUNTRIES.

## YOUR NAME

I **am a** (two special characteristics you have)

I **wonder** (something you are curious about)

I **hear** (an imaginary sound)

I **see** (an imaginary sight)

I **want** (an actual desire)

I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)

I **pretend** (something you pretend to do)

I **feel** (a feeling about something imaginary)

I **touch** (an imaginary touch)

I **worry** (something that really bothers you)

I **cry** (something that makes you very sad)

I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)

I **understand** (something you know is true)

I **say** (something you believe)

I **dream** (something you dream about)

I **try** (something you make an effort about)

I **hope** (something you hope for)

I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)

