

MVFF49

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL | 1-11 OCTOBER

The Representation Project and Abramorama present
A Jennifer Siebel Newsom film



MISS REPRESENTATION RISE UP

Featuring

Hillary Rodham Clinton Jameela Jamil Nancy Pelosi Frances Haugen
Safiya Noble Nina Jankowicz Jim Steyer Lisa Ling Gretchen Carlson



ABRAMORAMA and THE REPRESENTATION PROJECT present "MISS REPRESENTATION: RISE UP"
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MELINDA FRENCH GATES & PAMELA MELLOY & ADAM LEVIN & BETTY FOUNDATION & SUSAN TOMPKINS BUELL & HARRISON FOUNDATION
PRODUCED BY JACKIE ZEINER & MAUREEN PELLON & CHARLIE HARTWELL & PATRICIA ARQUETTE & HARRY MILLER & CAROL FORD & BRENDA ROBINSON & BARBARA BRIDGES
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER HANNAH CHATALAS WRITTEN BY LAURA KARPMAN & JENNIFER NEWSOM & HARRIS FURLOM & JESSICA CONSTON & JENNIFER STEINMAN-STERLIN
EDITED BY CAMILLE SHERMAN & JENNIFER NEWSOM & JESSICA CONSTON & JENNIFER STEINMAN-STERLIN
DIRECTED BY JENNIFER NEWSOM



riseupfilm.org



CURRICULUM GUIDE

GRADES: 10-12

Name: _____



LETTER TO EDUCATORS

Dear educators,

Thank you for attending the 49th Annual Mill Valley Film Festival's screening of the Family Feature *Miss Representation: Rise Up*. We are excited to welcome you to our 2026 fall season with a combination of both in-person screenings for local schools and online screenings for those of you joining us from afar.

We believe film is the literature of the 21st century: a universal language that helps students make sense of the world, and a powerful entry point into questions of ethics, identity, and active citizenship. This year's school screenings continue that focus and we think *Miss Representation: Rise Up* will be a rich, engaging film text for your classroom.

This guide gives you everything you need to bring the film into your curriculum, including:

- Discussion prompts for small-group or whole-class dialogue on the film industry and the film itself.
- Common Core-aligned writing options for evidence-based essay prompts or a film review format, depending on your students' experience level.
- Thinking routines for before, during, and after viewing with a focus on social-emotional learning.
- Extension activities exploring the film as both art and cultural or political statement.
- A festival-context handout to help frame the screening experience for your class.

Thank you for the work you do. Enjoy the film!

Sincerely,
The CAFILM Education Team

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1. Before you attend or screen the film: Hand out the Festival Context sheet so students know what a film festival is and why this screening matters.
2. Pick your discussion mode: Choose whole-class or small group prompts based on your time and class dynamic. Both formats work with the film industry angle, the specific film, or both and can be paired with the discussion notecatcher.
3. Choose a writing path: If students already write evidence-based essays, use the essay prompts. If not, try the film review format as a lower-lift alternative.
4. Layer in thinking routines: Assign the before, during, and after routines to deepen engagement. These double as social-emotional learning check-ins.
5. Extend if you have time: Use the extension activities for students who want to dig a little deeper into the film's social, cultural, or political dimensions further.

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ABOUT THE FILM

A hostile environment confronts girls online with every scroll, click, and swipe. In this digital landscape, relentless harassment, manipulated content, and deepfakes target their mental health, privacy, and self-esteem, while algorithms actively steer young men toward an aggressive online “manosphere” that normalizes anti-female hostility. Serving as a follow-up to Jennifer Siebel Newsom’s 2011 documentary *Miss Representation*, this film brings together emerging female voices with insights from leaders including Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Amy Klobuchar, and Gretchen Carlson. Together, they expose how technology, politics, and corporate decision-making fuel a digital culture where misogyny continues to thrive. Ultimately, the film amplifies the voices of women demanding accountability from governments and tech companies while safeguarding the future of the next generation of female leaders.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKER WILL ROPP

Jennifer Siebel Newsom is an award-winning filmmaker, influential thought leader on gender equality, and the First Partner of California. After graduating with honors from Stanford University and Stanford’s Graduate School of Business, she wrote, directed, and produced the 2011 award-winning documentary *Miss Representation*. As a result of its impact, she launched The Representation Project, a nonprofit organization that uses film and media as catalysts for cultural transformation. She went on to make *The Mask You Live In* (2015), *The Great American Lie* (2020), and *Fair Play* (2022).



FILMMAKER'S STATEMENT INSPIRATION & IMPACT

As a filmmaker and storyteller, my work is driven by how we create culture, who shapes it, and how social inequities become normalized and accepted as truth because ‘it’s just the way things are.’ There is no doubt that technology is the newest cultural communicator of our time. It has been weaponized to harm women’s mental health, safety, and power - and silence their voices. Unlike technology of the past, girls can’t just turn social media off: it’s an integral part of their social networks and connection to the public world. Not only are they constantly physically evaluated on social media, filtering themselves to what they have been taught to believe is perfection, but bullying now lives entirely on screens when girls go to sleep and wake up. I am most interested in attitudinal and behavioral shifts around limiting gender norms so that all of us can realize our human potential.

THE CALLBACK

ECHOES OF AN EPIGRAPH

"The choice to be heard is the most political act of all. One act of defiance can spark a movement."

FIRST ECHO | BEFORE VIEWING

- Choose a line from the movie.
- What do you think it means?
- What pictures pop into your mind?

SECOND ECHO | DURING VIEWING

- Keep your ears open for when this line shows up.
- Who says it?
- What is happening when it's said?

THIRD ECHO | AFTER VIEWING

- Think back to the line.
- Does it mean something new now?
- Why is it important to the story?

RIPPLES | STRETCH THE IDEA

- Let the line ripple out into your world.
- How does this line connect to you, your life, or other stories?

BEFORE VIEWING

HISTORY BRIDGE | THEN & NOW

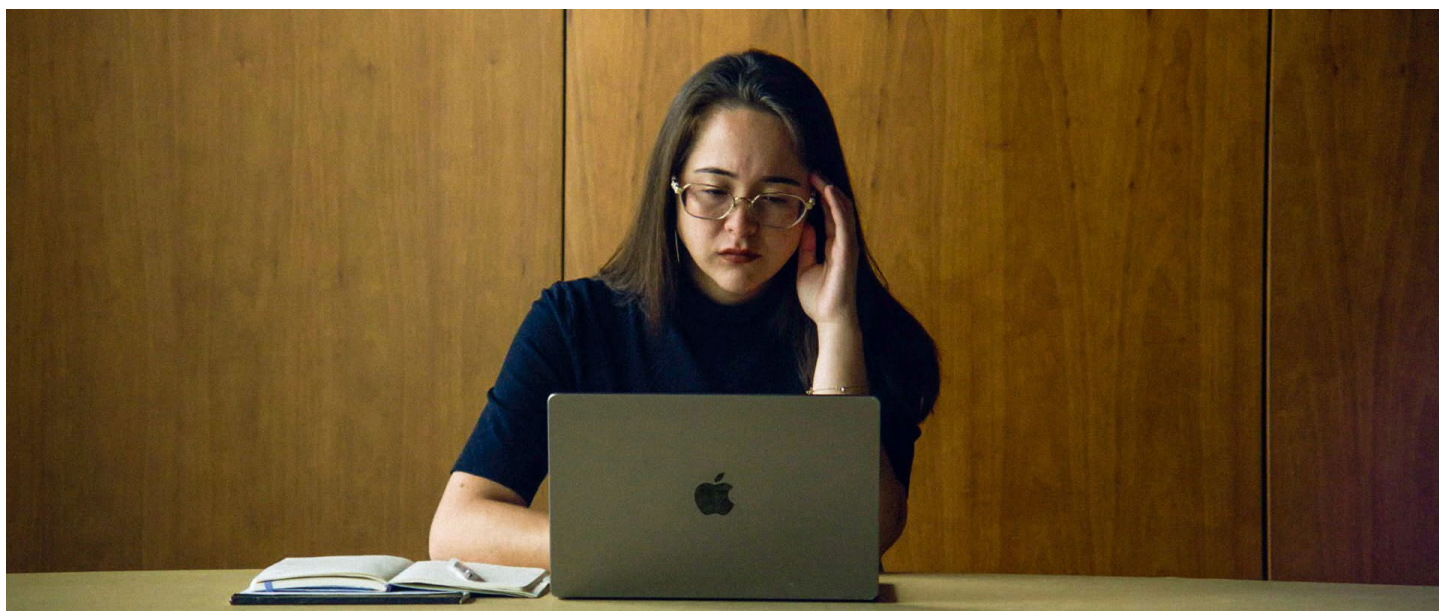
Introduction:

Miss Representation (2011) explores how mainstream media and culture contribute to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power by relying on limiting gender stereotypes. *Miss Representation: Rise Up* (2026) is a follow-up that examines how the dangerous new digital era where AI, deepfakes, and social media algorithms fuel a severe backlash against the progress, safety, and mental health of women and girls.

How to use this Pre-Viewing Activity:

Before watching, review how the original *Miss Representation* framed the problem, and predict what might be different fifteen years later.

	Miss Representation (2011)	Miss Representation: Rise Up (2026) Prediction
Focus	Mainstream media and advertising limiting women's paths to power.	How do social media platforms, algorithms, and AI (deepfakes and bots) target women's safety and voice?
Primary Harm	Underrepresentation - women rarely seen as leaders on screen.	How does overexposure to targeted harassment punish women for being seen at all?
Who's Speaking	Politicians, journalists, entertainers, and scholars.	Who is the new generation of young women alongside political and media leaders?
The Ask	Change what stories get told.	What do we need to change about what technology is allowed to do?



DURING VIEWING

ADMISSION TICKET | ANTICIPATION GUIDE

How to use this Pre-Viewing Activity:

Each of the following statements is related to one of the film's themes. Read each statement carefully. Mark whether you agree or disagree. Then, write a short explanation that defends your position. If there is time after watching the film, revisit these ideas to see how your perspectives may have changed.

Agree	Statement	Disagree
	Society frequently tolerates a double standard of criticism for women in public life. They face tougher scrutiny than men, even though it is fundamentally unjust.	
	Online harassment is fundamentally different from other harassment because of its scale, speed, and anonymity.	
	New technology (AI, deepfakes, algorithms) has made it harder - not easier - for women to gain and hold power.	
	Stronger laws and platform accountability would protect women online more than individual resilience or coping skills would.	
	A person's identity (age, race, class, sexuality) changes how much support or belief they receive when they report online abuse.	
	Progress toward equal representation happens naturally over time, without organized effort.	
	An ordinary teenager has as much power to shift culture online as a celebrity or politician does.	
	Speaking out publicly is worth the personal cost it can bring.	

DURING VIEWING

VOICES TRACKER

Introduction:

It's important to listen to the raw, honest voices of today's youth. But a single perspective only tells part of the story. By layering the teenage experiences in this film with the insights of local leaders and politicians with lived experiences, we can build a complete picture of how personal struggles can transform into public policy. This film suggests the issues keeping teenagers awake at night are the exact same issues driving the agendas of our female leaders - past, present, and future.

How to use this Pre-Viewing Activity:

Every time someone speaks in the film - whether it's a teenager telling her own story, or someone who holds a perspective as someone in political office - add a row. You don't need to fill in every column for every person - capture what stands out as the voices provide a throughline for the film. be different fifteen years later.

Name/Role Who are they and what do they do?	Identity Who are they really - beneath the title or role?	Experience Shared What moment or story did they share that is impactful?	Sphere of Influence Who or what can they affect because of who they are or the position they hold?	Impact/Cost What did it cost them - or what changed - because of what they did or tried to do?	Moment that Stuck Quote or image I want to remember

AFTER VIEWING

ROLL CREDITS | EXIT TICKET

How to Use this Post-Viewing Activity:

Before any discussion begins, give students a quiet minute. Ask students to write silently without sharing out yet. Let this sit before moving into analysis. In the exit ticket, write:

- One word for how you feel right now.
- One image from the film you can't shake.
- One line - spoken by anyone in the film - that resonated with you and you want to remember.

ADMIT ONE

ADMIT ONE



AFTER VIEWING

MY REHEARSAL & MY REALITY

How to use this Post-Viewing Activity:

Throughout the film you tracked whose voice got heard, whose didn't, and what it cost or changed. Now turn the microphone on yourself. Fill in one moment from your own life for each side.

Voice Heard	Voice Held Back
A time you spoke up - in your family, your friend group, team, club, class, or online - and it actually landed. Something moved because you said it.	A time you didn't speak up, or spoke and it cost you - got dismissed, mocked, ignored, or was just scary enough to swallow.
Who was in your "sphere" and how far did it reach?	What was the cost of silence, or the cost of speaking?

Sphere Check | One Sentence

Rate the reach of your "Voice Heard" Moment.

Just me – My circle – My school or community – Beyond.

What would it take to push it one sphere further next time?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

HEADINGS & HIGHLIGHTS

Pick your discussion mode:

Choose whole-class or small group prompts based on your time and class dynamic. Both formats work and can be paired with the discussion notecatcher that follows.

Movie Moments that Moved Me

- Describe a moment or a scene in the film that you found particularly surprising, disturbing, moving, conflicting, or confusing.
- What made this moment so powerful or compelling for you? Was it the story, the acting, the dialogue, the visuals, the soundtrack, or something else?
- How did this moment change the way you saw a character, situation, issue, or theme in the movie?
- How does the moment connect to bigger ideas?
- If you were explaining this moment to someone who hasn't seen the film, how would you describe why it matters?

Identity

- How did each woman's age, race, class, or public role shape the kind of harassment she faced - or the support she had to face it?
- Did the film treat every woman's experience as equally visible? Whose story got the most screen time, and whose might have been harder to tell?

Experience

- Which personal story affected you the most, and why do you think the filmmaker chose to include it?
- The film mixes teenagers' stories with those of senators and CEOs. What does this pairing suggest about who this problem touches?

Influence & Power

- Does having influence - as a politician, journalist, or public figure - protect a woman from online harassment, or does it just change its shape?
- Who in the film has the power to change the systems being described - platforms, lawmakers, parents, peers? Who is missing from this group?

Impact

- The film connects online harassment to mental health, self-esteem, and physical safety. Which of these connections surprised you most?
- What does the film suggest happens to public conversation itself when women are pushed out of it?

History & Change Over Time

- Think back to the "Then & Now" Pre-Viewing Activity. What's genuinely new about this moment, and what is simply an old problem with a new tool?
- Fifteen years have passed between Miss Representation and Rise Up. What would you want the next film, fifteen years from now, to be able to say?

Finding Your Voice & Joining the Movement

- The film ends with a call to "rise up." What would that look like in your own school, social media feed, or friend group?
- What is one thing you currently stay silent about online because of how you fear you'd be treated? What would make it safer to speak?

DISCUSSION NOTECATCHER

How to use this Thinking Routine:

Discuss the questions in small groups and record the ideas that come up in conversation. Be prepared to share what you take away with the whole class.

IDEAS I HEARD DURING DISCUSSION

MIND-POP IDEAS

Ideas that came to my mind during discussion.

ONE IMPORTANT THING I LEARNED DURING DISCUSSION

ESSAY OPTIONS

STANDARDS-ALIGNED WRITING PROMPTS

Write a thesis-driven essay that argues a claim about the film. Choose from one of the following angles and clearly address the prompt.

- Use a formal, academic voice.
- Use textual evidence from the film to support your argument.
- Connect the film's message to bigger ideas we discussed in class, or to real-world issues.
- Show that you've thought about the film by explaining why the topic is important or how different people might see it in different ways.

Analytical - Using your Voices Tracker, compare two women from the film. How did their identity or public role shape the harassment they experienced, and the resources or support available to them in response?

Argumentative - *Rise Up* argues that technology is the “newest backlash” against women’s progress. Take a position: is technology today mainly a tool of backlash, a tool of resistance, or genuinely both?

Personal/Reflective - Describe a moment - your own or one you witnessed - where someone’s identity shaped how they were treated online. How does it connect to what you saw in the film?

Comparative/Research - Choose one issue raised in the original *Miss Representation*. Research what has changed about it since. Has it gotten better, worse, or is it just different?

Creative/Speculative - It’s fifteen years from now, and a filmmaker is making the next chapter of this story. Write the opening monologue - in the voice of a young woman living in that future - for the film that comes after *Rise Up*.



FILM REVIEW OPTION

WRITING ALTERNATIVE TO STANDARDS-ALIGNED ESSAY

Evaluate the film for a reader deciding whether to watch it.

- Use a public-facing, engaging voice, like a critic's column.
- Use textual evidence from the film to support your evaluation.
- Tell the reader what the film does and how well it does it.
- Avoid plot summary. Remember this is an evaluation, not a recap.

Suggested Structure

1. The Hook (1-2 sentences)

Open up with something that captures the film's tone, stakes, or striking moment.

2. The Setup (2-3 sentences)

Give a brief, non-spoiler context. This could include the genre, premise, who's involved, and where or when it's set. Offer just enough for a reader to know what kind of film this is - not a scene-by-scene summary.

3. The Evaluation - The Core of the Review (3-5 short paragraphs)

Each paragraph makes a specific claim about one element of the craft, backed by a concrete detail from the film.

- Story/Structure - pacing, plot choices, whether the narrative earns its ending.
- Character/Performance - acting choices, character development.
- Direction/Visual Style - cinematography, editing, use of color or sound.
- Themes - what the film seems to be about beneath the plot.

Craft Choices - anything unique or distinctive like music, special effects, dialogue, or structure.

4. The Verdict (2-3 sentences)

A clear direct judgment about who should see this film and why or why not. This is the payoff the reader came for.

5. Optional - Rating or Recommendation Line

A star rating, letter grade, or one-line recommendation that synthesizes the judgment into a single, punchy statement that resonates with the reader.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

THE RISE UP ACTION LAB

Introduction:

"The choice to be heard is the most political act of all. One act of defiance can spark a movement." The film's closing argument is a call to use your voice. This activity is not an assignment about the movement, but a small, real contribution to it.

Directions:

Choose from one of the options below to use your voice to continue the conversation or spark a movement. Consider the optional add-on to trace your story back through history.

1. Public Service Announcement

Write and storyboard a 30-second PSA script responding to one story from your viewing tracker. Who is it for, and what is one action it asks of the viewer?

2. Letter That Moves Something

Write a real letter - to a platform's trust and safety team, a legislator, or a school administrator - naming a specific problem from the film and a specific, achievable ask.

3. Spoken Word | Zine Page

Create a spoken-word piece or a single illustrated zine page built from a line, image, or moment in your tracker that you can't shake. Perform or display it for the class.

4. Research Throughline

Pick one thread connecting *Miss Representation* (2011) to today *Rise Up* (2026) - a law, a platform policy, a statistic - and build a short illustrated timeline showing how it has - or hasn't changed.

5. Optional Add-On

Trace your chosen story back through history. Who faced a version of this before social media existed and what happened to her?



STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2

Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3

Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

ABOUT CAFILM

The nonprofit California Film Institute celebrates and promotes film as art and education through year-round programming at the independent Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, presentation of the acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival, as well as cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CAFILM Education programs.

Follow the California Film Institute on social media



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ABOUT FILM FESTIVALS

What is a film festival?

A film festival is an event in which multiple movies are presented over the course of one or several days. Depending on the size of the festival, all of the screenings may take place in a single theater or may involve multiple venues throughout a city. Festivals also include special events like panel discussions with filmmakers and actors. Typically, filmmakers submit their works to a festival, where a team of curators selects the best entries for inclusion in the festival. For independent and international filmmakers, festivals are often an important way to raise awareness of a film, generate an audience, and/or attract a studio to purchase the rights to distribute a film in a wider release. Acceptance into a major festival can add significant prestige to a film, with some festival awards (such as the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or) considered among the highest honors a film can receive.

There are many film festivals throughout the world, with some focusing on particular themes, such as highlighting LGBTQ films/filmmakers, specific cultural groups, or particular genres. While some of the more famous festivals may be in distant locations, there are hundreds of small festivals spread

through every corner of the world and, increasingly, festivals are using streaming access to make it easier for the public to view their curated programs.

History of Mill Valley Film Festival

Since founding the Mill Valley Film Festival in 1977, Executive Director Mark Fishkin has shepherded this once small, three-day showcase into an eleven-day, internationally acclaimed cinema event presenting a wide variety of new films from around the world in an engaged, community setting.

The festival has an impressive track record of launching new films and new filmmakers, and has earned a reputation as a filmmakers' festival by celebrating the best in American independent and foreign films, alongside high-profile and prestigious award contenders. The relaxed and non-competitive atmosphere surrounding MVFF, gives filmmakers and audiences alike the opportunity to share their work and experiences in a collaborative and convivial setting.

Each year the festival welcomes more than 200 filmmakers, representing more than 50 countries. Screening sections include world

cinema, US cinema, documentaries, family films, and shorts programs. Annual festival initiatives include Active Cinema, a forum for films that aim to engage audiences and transform ideas into action; Mind the Gap, a platform for inclusion and equity; and ¡Viva el Cine!, a showcase of Latin American and Spanish-language films.. Festival guests also enjoy an exciting selection of Tributes, Spotlights and Galas throughout the program.



The Smith Rafael Film Center, home of the Mill Valley Film Festival

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the purpose of a film festival? What are the benefits for filmmakers? For the audience? For the community?
2. How might the films at a festival differ from the films available to watch at your local movie theater?
3. What qualities do you think festival curators might look for in a film? If you are watching a festival film with a class/school group, what aspects of the film do you think made it appealing to the curators?

Get Involved!

Many film festivals have student film categories. If you are a filmmaker, explore FilmFreeway (www.filmfreeway.com) for a database of worldwide film festivals where you can submit your film.