

A showing of this film would be a great advocacy event!

MISS REPRESENTATION FULL DOCUMENTARY:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTfYWf0xN6I>

Miss Representation film uncovers a glaring reality we live with every day but fail to see. Written and directed by Jennifer Siebel Newsom, the film exposes how mainstream media contribute to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence in America. The film challenges the media's limited and often disparaging portrayals of women and girls, which make it difficult for women to achieve leadership positions and for the average woman to feel powerful herself. In a society where media is the most persuasive force shaping cultural norms, the collective message that our young women and men overwhelmingly receive is that a woman's value and power lie in her youth, beauty, and sexuality, and not in her capacity as a leader.

STATEMENT BY MISS REPRESENTATION FILM DIRECTOR JENNIFER SIEBEL NEWSOM

For Gender Stereotypes - Gender Violence Panel - CSW 57

In our 2011 documentary film, *Miss Representation*, we detailed the connection between gender stereotypes in the media and the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and leadership around the world. We pointed out that the media continues to value women primarily for their youth, beauty and sexuality, and that our girls and boys are growing up absorbing this message - to the detriment of us all.

It's estimated that the average American teenager consumes over 10 hours of media every day, and we know that the vast majority of this media is telling our youth to see and treat women in very limiting ways. Studies have shown that as little as 3 minutes spent with a fashion magazine can negatively impact how girls view themselves and their potential. Moreover, less than 10 percent of protagonists in Hollywood films are women, and about 20 percent of global news stories are written about women and girls.

It's no coincidence then that girls' leadership ambitions peak around the age of 8. We are failing to give young women adequate female role models to look up to. Even when the media does show us successful inspiring women - whether it's a Presidential candidate or a CEO of a major company - they often comment on their looks first, and their actions second. In other cases there is an overt media backlash against successful women - unless that success is derived from their appearance. All of which sends a troubling message to our children: women are worthy of praise only for the way they look, not for what they say or do.

Violence against women takes all forms, and the sexual objectification and dehumanization of women vis a vis the media is a contributing factor to the continued oppression of women worldwide. As long as the mainstream media limits women to sexual beings they maintain the status quo where women and girls are treated as such in their day-to-day lives. Ultimately we can never reach true parity in any realm - whether it's at home or in government leadership - until the media changes its representations of gender.

So we know that gender stereotypes in the media have real world consequences, but how do we fight them? How can we change them? At MissRepresentation.org we're empowering individuals to use their consumer voices to talk back to sexist media. We're utilizing social

media to challenge the mainstream conversation - amplifying the voices of the traditionally marginalized and speaking out against those brands which use sexism to sell. Campaigns like #NotBuyingIt on Twitter have been successful in galvanizing the community around the negative influences of the media, and pressuring companies to change their practices.

Meanwhile, we are continuing to create our own media commentary to expand this much-needed international conversation around gender representation and its connection to a culture of violence. Our next documentary film series, *The Mask You Live In*, will explore the bifurcation of gender in America and the extremes of masculinity we impose on our boys and men. Ultimately the global mistreatment of women cannot end without men being a part of the solution.

It's our belief that through this work we are not only inspiring conversation, but providing individuals with avenues to take real action. As a community, we are shifting society so that everyone - regardless of age, gender, or circumstance - is free from oppression and has equal access to fulfill their dreams and aspirations in life.