



We Are the Radical Monarchs

VIEWING GUIDE

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teaching the film

We Are the Radical Monarchs is a documentary chronicling the three year journey of a troop of 8 -13 year old girls of color and their two leaders.

A class screening of this film may complement a curriculum in history or social studies, specifically around social justice movements and student activism.

Grades 5 - 8

Taught in conjunction with this guide, the film will encourage students to think about the importance of taking pride in one's culture, and what it means to be an activist.

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All SFFILM Education materials are developed in alignment with California educational standards for media literacy. SFFILM Education welcomes feedback and questions on all printed study materials.

More info at sffilm.org/education



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about the film

Directed by Linda Knowlton

(USA 2019) English, 96 min

wearetheradicalmonarchsmovie.com

The Radical Monarchs are an Oakland-based leadership development troop, specifically for girls of color, that don't earn badges for cookie sales but rather for social justice, activism, and "allyship."

Following the two moms, Anyavette and Marilyn, who founded the troop and the girls through a season of badges, growing pains,

and reactions to the current political climate, **We Are the Radical Monarchs** shows that with groups like these, the future is indeed female and ready to take action.

subject areas

Activism

Black Lives Matter Movement

Feminism

History

Latinx Studies

Leadership Development

Social Justice

Peer/Youth Issues

Women and Gender Studies

connect online

Radical Monarchs Organization
radicalmonarchs.org

Teaching Tolerance (a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center)
tolerance.org

Resources for teaching social justice
cultofpedagogy.com/social-justice-resources

Contact your elected official
usa.gov/elected-officials

The *Rad Women* series
radgirlscan.com

Anthology of Amazing Women: Trailblazers Who Dared to Be Different

by Sandra Lawrence and Nathan Collins | Feb 13, 2018

Limitless: 24 Remarkable American Women of Vision, Grit, and Guts

by Leah Tinari | Nov 6, 2018

When We Fight, We Win: Twenty-First-Century Social Movements and the Activists That Are Transforming Our World

by Greg Jobin-Leeds and AgitArte | Jan 5, 2016

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discussion questions

pre-viewing topics & discussion

We Are the Radical Monarchs is about a group of girls of color who learn how to take pride in their identities and make a difference in their community. Before viewing the film, ask students to consider their own experiences:

- How do you describe your identity? What is your gender, race, or ethnicity? How do you think these identities impact your life?
- Have you seen or participated in any action to make change, such as a protest or a rally? What issue was the action about? What did it feel like to watch or participate?

The film references topics and terms which may be unfamiliar to some students. It will be helpful to review what a documentary film is, and to explain the terms Black Lives Matter, Ferguson, LGBTQ, Black Panthers, social justice, ally, and activism.

character and story

1. The Radical Monarchs troop was started by two women named Anayvette Martinez and Marilyn Hollinquest.

- How would you describe them?
- What motivated them to start The Radical Monarchs?
- Do you think they do a good job of leading the troop?
- What are some of the challenges they encounter in running the organization?

2. How would you describe the girls who are in the troop?

- What makes them want to join?
- What do they learn or gain from being in the troop?
- How do they grow and change during the three years they are in the Radical Monarchs?

3. Think about the name Radical Monarchs. Maya says that to her, 'radical' means "you make a difference in the world and you're not just standing in the background. You're loud and proud."

- How do you define 'radical'? Do you think the Radical Monarchs are radical in their beliefs and activities? Explain.
- What is a monarch? What is its significance and why do you think it was chosen to represent this troop?

3. Part way through the film, the leaders decide to start a Troop #2 so that more girls can experience the Radical Monarchs.

- What were the steps in the process of creating Troop #2?
- What challenges and obstacles were there and how were those handled?
- Would you want to be in Troop #1 or Troop #2? Why?

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'Radical' means "you make a difference in the world and you're not just standing in the background...You're loud and proud."



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discussion questions

post-viewing discussion

context

Co-founder Anayvette Martinez was inspired to start the Radical Monarchs when her daughter became interested in joining the Girl Scouts. She says, "I wanted her to have an experience where she was part of a troop that centered her identity as a girl of color."

- What does she mean by this statement?
- How would the Radical Monarchs be different if it also included white girls, or boys?
- Do you think it is important for girls of color to have a space that "centers their identity"?

2. One member, Maya, says that "people without knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots."

- What does this mean?
- Do you agree?

3. When the Radical Monarchs became famous, one news organization claimed they were being "exploited," "indoctrinated," and "brainwashed to be racist."

- What do these words and phrases mean?
- Why do you think these people felt so strongly?
- Do you agree with this criticism? Why or why not?

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Do you think 8 - 13 year olds are too young to learn about serious topics like racism, police brutality, gender rights, and sexuality?

4. Co-founder Marilyn Hollinquest says that, "Youth get underestimated a lot, how much they hear, see, and know. And because of the adults around them being uncomfortable talking about topics, then things don't get talked about."

- Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
- Do you think 8-13 year olds are too young to learn about serious topics like racism, police brutality, gender rights, and sexuality?
- In what ways do you think adults underestimate what young people are aware of?

film for media literacy

Why do you think filmmaker Linda Goldstein Knowlton wanted to make a film about the Radical Monarchs?

What is the message or point of view of this film? Do you feel that it approves or disapproves of the Radical Monarchs? What evidence from the film supports your opinion?

Some parts of the film followed the girls and their activities, while other scenes depicted the two founders and their process of forming and leading the troop. What scenes interested you the most? Did the photography and music add to or detract from the film's message?

Several times throughout the film, we hear the voices of newscasters reporting news stories that are happening at the time the documentary is being filmed. What purpose does this serve? Do you think it was an effective technique?

activities

design a badge

how would you design a badge?

The girls in the Radical Monarchs troop designed the badges that they could earn through their activities. How would you design badges for the units on Black Lives Matter, Radical Pride, Radical Coding, Radical Healing, Radical Beauty, Justice and Entrepreneurship? Think of other badges and determine how they could earn those badges.

social justice timeline

outline history

Develop a timeline of highlights in the fight for social justice in this country, beginning with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 up to the present day, including the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote in 1919, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the many events that led to these laws (such as the Montgomery bus boycott, the formation of the Black Panther Party, the march on Washington in 1963, and the Women's March in 2017).

biography of a woman

research and report

Read a biography of a woman who has made a difference in the fight for social justice or who has advanced the cause of women's rights by being a leader in her field. Present a brief oral report to the class, or create a poster describing the woman and her achievements. A list of women leaders who have been the subjects of biographies can be found in the book *Rad American Women A-Z* (see **web resources** section).

take action

discuss issues with elected leaders

As part of their Radical Advocacy unit, the Monarchs traveled to the state capitol in Sacramento and met with legislators to advocate for issues that were important to them. If you had gone with them, what issues would you want to discuss with your elected leaders? Write a letter to an elected leader about an issue you care about (resources for finding legislators in **web resources** section).



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california media literacy standards

common core standards

English-Language Arts Content Standards:

Grade 5: Standard 1.8 Analyze media as sources for information, entertainment, persuasion, interpretation of events, and transmission of culture.

Grade 6: Standard 1.6 Support opinions with detailed evidence and with visual or media displays that use appropriate technology.

Grade 6: Standard 1.9 Identify persuasive and propaganda techniques used in television and identify false and misleading information.

Grade 6: Standard 2.8 Note instances of unsupported inferences, fallacious reasoning, persuasion, and propaganda in text.

Grade 7: Standard 1.8 Analyze the effect on the viewer of images, text, and sound in electronic journalism; identify the techniques used to achieve the effects in

each instance studied.

Grade 7: Standard 2.6 Assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of the author's evidence to support claims and assertions, noting instances of bias and stereotyping.

Grade 8: Standard 1.9 Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, illustrators, news photographers) communicate information and affect impressions and opinions.

Health Education Standards:

Standard 7: The student will understand individual differences in growth and development. Sample assignment: Students will collect images of "ideal" bodies from the media and will compare those images with class observations of what reality is.

This lesson addresses the English and Language Arts Standards for Reading Informational Texts in grades 5-8. Additional specific standard applications are below:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.7

Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.2

Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2

Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.2

Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.



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media literacy resources: screening with meaning

We live in a world where technology mediates a large portion of human interaction and the exchange of information. **Every projected** image, every word published on a page or a website, and every sound from a speaker reaches its audience through the medium, through the language of the device. The ability to parse the vast array of media messages is an essential skill for young people, particularly in a mainstream commercial culture that targets youth as a vulnerable, impressionable segment of the American marketplace. Most students already have a keen understanding of the languages different media use and the techniques they employ to inspire particular emotions or reactions, but they often lack the skill or awareness to fully deconstruct the messages they continuously receive. Analysis of a media message—or any

piece of mass media content—can best be accomplished by first identifying its principal characteristics:

- (1) Medium: the physical means by which it is contained and/or delivered
- (2) Author: the person(s) responsible for its creation and dissemination
- (3) Content: the information, emotions, values or ideas it conveys
- (4) Audience: the target audience to whom it is delivered
- (5) Purpose: the objectives of its authors and the effects of its dissemination.

Students who can readily identify these five core characteristics will be equipped to understand the incentives at work behind media messages, as well as their potential consequences. Media literacy education empowers students to become responsible consumers, active citizens and critical thinkers.

common core standards

MEDIUM

All Media Is Constructed.

- What is the message, how is it delivered and in what format?
- What technologies are used to present the message?
- What visual and auditory elements comprise the media content?
- What expectations do you bring to the content, given its medium and format?

CONTENT

Media Is A Language For Information.

- What is the subject of the media message?
- What information, values, emotions or ideas are conveyed by the media content?
- What tools does the author employ to engage the viewer and evoke a response?
- To what extent did the content meet your expectations, given the format/author?

PURPOSE

All Media Messages Are Constructed for a Reason.

- Why was the message constructed?
- Who benefits from dissemination of the message? How?
- To what extent does the message achieve its purpose?
- What effect does the message have on the audience it reaches, if any?

AUTHOR

All Media Is Constructed by Someone.

- Who is delivering the message?
- Who originally constructed the message?
- What expectations do you have of the content, given its author(s)?

AUDIENCE

All Media Messages Reach an Audience.

- Who receives the message?
- For whom is the message intended?
- What is the public reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- What is your reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- How might others perceive this message differently? Why?