

A CNN FILM

NAVALNY

CNN FILMS FILMS & HBO MAX PRESENT IN ASSOCIATION WITH FISHBOYLE FILMS RAE FILM STUDIOS COTTAGE M A DANIEL ROHER FILM "NAVALNY"
STARRING ALEXANDRA HAMMIRAL PRODUCED BY AMY ENTELS COURTNEY SEXTON MARIA PEVCHIKH EXECUTIVE PRODUCER MAGNUS DE VRIES THE EDITOR NIKKI WALTZ
DIRECTED BY LANGDON PAGE MAYA DASY HAWKE PRODUCED BY ODESSA RAE DIANE BECKER MELANIE MILLER SHANE BORIS DIRECTED BY DANIEL ROHER

POISON ALWAYS LEAVES A TRAIL



JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

Learning Guide



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Note to Users: Each section is designed to be used independently and can stand alone for learning and growth in these areas in connection with the film. But sections can also be used in conjunction with one another, and some sections include suggested connections to one another. You can also use the guide in its entirety for a rich, in-depth learning experience.





Filmmakers use immersive storytelling to create space for a viewer to have unexpected thoughts and emotions. Journeys in Film uses this powerful medium as a springboard for meaningful dialogue around humanity's most pressing issues. Below, you will find suggestions for leading productive conversations that broaden perspectives, increase global competency, encourage empathy, and build new paradigms for education.

- When watching a film or having a powerful discussion, normalize taking breaks and exercising bodily autonomy. Acknowledge that conversations around complex topics can be vulnerable, complicated, and challenging.
Encourage members to voice and do what is right for them without needing to explain or apologize.
- People do their best when they know what to expect.
Start and end your meetings on time.
- **Share or co-create your intentions for the meeting.**
- **Create your space.** If possible, share snacks or find other ways to create an inviting, comfortable atmosphere.
- **Create a trustworthy space.** Maintain confidentiality and only speak to your own experience.
- **Minimize distractions** while you are together. Silence cell phones and devices so you can give your full attention to the conversation.
- **Practice whole-body listening.** Listen to words, tone, body language, and the feeling in the atmosphere.
- **Acknowledge voices that may be absent.** Is there a lived experience that isn't represented in your group? Who are the bridge people who might be able to connect you with other people in your community who might bring new perspectives to the table?
- **Adopt an attitude of positive intent.** If someone says something that rubs you the wrong way, assume positive intent and ask for more information.
- Ignite your curiosity around other people's views and opinions. **Listen to understand, not to respond.** You don't need to agree with others in your group or make it known that you are "right" to have a worthwhile conversation.
- **Words matter.** Be open to learning and practicing new ways to communicate with others.
- **Be clear, direct, and kind** in your communication. Nobody benefits when you bottle your opinions.
- Everyone has blind spots and biases; **cultivate a space of grace** as you enter into new territory together.
- If a conversation gets heated, practice acknowledging the tension, pausing as a group, and **taking a collective breath together** before diving back in or taking a longer break to reset.
- Privilege your relationships with others over the content or agenda of the meeting. **Show each other kindness.**
- **Create a closing ritual** that celebrates the time you've spent together and either gives closure or gives members something to think about before your next meeting.



AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE FILM TEAM

Documentary filmmaking is the art of being in the right place at the right time, even when that moment is incredibly precarious. What began as an entirely different project with the global investigative organization Bellingcat evolved when Bellingcat journalist Christo Grozev said, “You know that Alexei Navalny guy? I might have a lead into who tried to poison him.” As he said those words, we began the journey to tell a story we never could have imagined.

We began filming with Alexei Navalny in Germany in the fall of 2020, as he was recovering from an attempt on his life by the Kremlin, until his detainment in Russia on January 17, 2021. While we filmed, we understood we were documenting history being made before our eyes. But we had no way of envisioning the relevance of the story in a world transformed by Russia, its war in Ukraine, and the growing and treacherous threat of authoritarianism around the world.

Three weeks after the film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2022, the world watched in horror as Russian rockets rained down on Ukraine. Meanwhile in Russia, the last vestiges of independent media were crushed, and free speech has been all but extinguished. As Russia continues its vicious war, Ukraine fights for its survival, and Navalny continues to languish in a maximum security gulag while his prison sentence increases without just cause and his health rapidly deteriorates. Amnesty International has reported on Navalny’s status as a prisoner.¹

While documentary filmmaking is always fraught with unknown elements, the journey to getting this story into the world has not been easy. The Russian government tracked the actions of our team. Members of the film team were libeled on Russian state television, falsely accused in the Russian press of collaborating with U.S. intelligence services, and the film’s digital presence has been attacked by online trolls. Because of digital security concerns, the film was kept under wraps not only during filming, but it had to be hidden from the press and the public until its premiere, which was announced as a surprise just days before the event. Hours before *NAVALNY*’s premiere, Alexei and his associates were added to Russia’s official registry of terrorists and extremists alongside Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Christo Grozev, who became a significant part of our film, was prevented from attending the BAFTA awards ceremony due to security risks, and his life continues to be under serious threat, including the addition of his name to a Russian criminal wanted list.

The film has won the BAFTA, PGA, and the Academy Award for Best Documentary, in addition to the Columbia DuPont Award for investigative journalism. It has played in festivals around the world, in hundreds of theaters, and now is accessible in most countries on digital platforms. We have shared the film with government officials and other leaders in society who have come to better know and appreciate Navalny and his work. We are grateful for the film’s success, but more importantly, we realize what its visibility can mean, and how crucial it is to keep audiences engaged and the spotlight on Navalny, knowing that as long as his name echoes through the global consciousness, it will be harder for those who would prefer to disappear him.

As Putin’s brand of authoritarianism wreaks havoc on the world, the urgency of the message of our film is more critical than ever. For this is not just the story of Navalny and Russia, but a rallying cry to stand up against the rise of injustice, a resonant opportunity to remind the world of the importance of free speech and a free press to counter dictatorship and uphold democracy. “Evil is only able to proliferate if good people do nothing, so don’t be inactive,” Navalny warns us at the end of the film.

**Navalny is not a lone leader willing to risk his life to save the day.
He must be a catalyst for the change we must make together.**



Daniel Roher, Director

Daniel Roher, Odessa Rae, Diane Becker, Melanie Miller, Shane Boris

¹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2021/05/statement-on-alexei-navalny-status-as-prisoner-of-conscience/>

THE LIFE OF ALEXEI NAVALNY



Alexei Anatolievich Navalny, a lawyer, political figure, and an anti-corruption activist, was born June 4, 1976, in Butyn, a village near Moscow. His father was in the Russian military and the family moved frequently. As a young man, he had seen himself as a liberal and backed the reforms of Boris Yeltsin, a position he later regretted because he came to view it as the beginning of modern Russian authoritarianism.

He earned a law degree from the People's Friendship University of Russia in 1998, plus another degree in economics at the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation. (A fellowship at Yale University followed in 2010.) After earning his law degree, he worked for several Russian companies. More important to him, however, were his political activities. As he matured, he assumed a political philosophy, as one book described, "reminiscent of democratic, center-right politicians in the West."¹

In 2000, Navalny married Yulia Abrosimova. They eventually had two children, a daughter and a son. Arrested during protests in 2011 and 2012, Navalny called on Russians to unite against Putin and eventually joined the People's Alliance political party; he was then generally considered the most prominent opponent of Vladimir Putin. In 2020, like other opponents of the Russian leader, he was mysteriously poisoned.

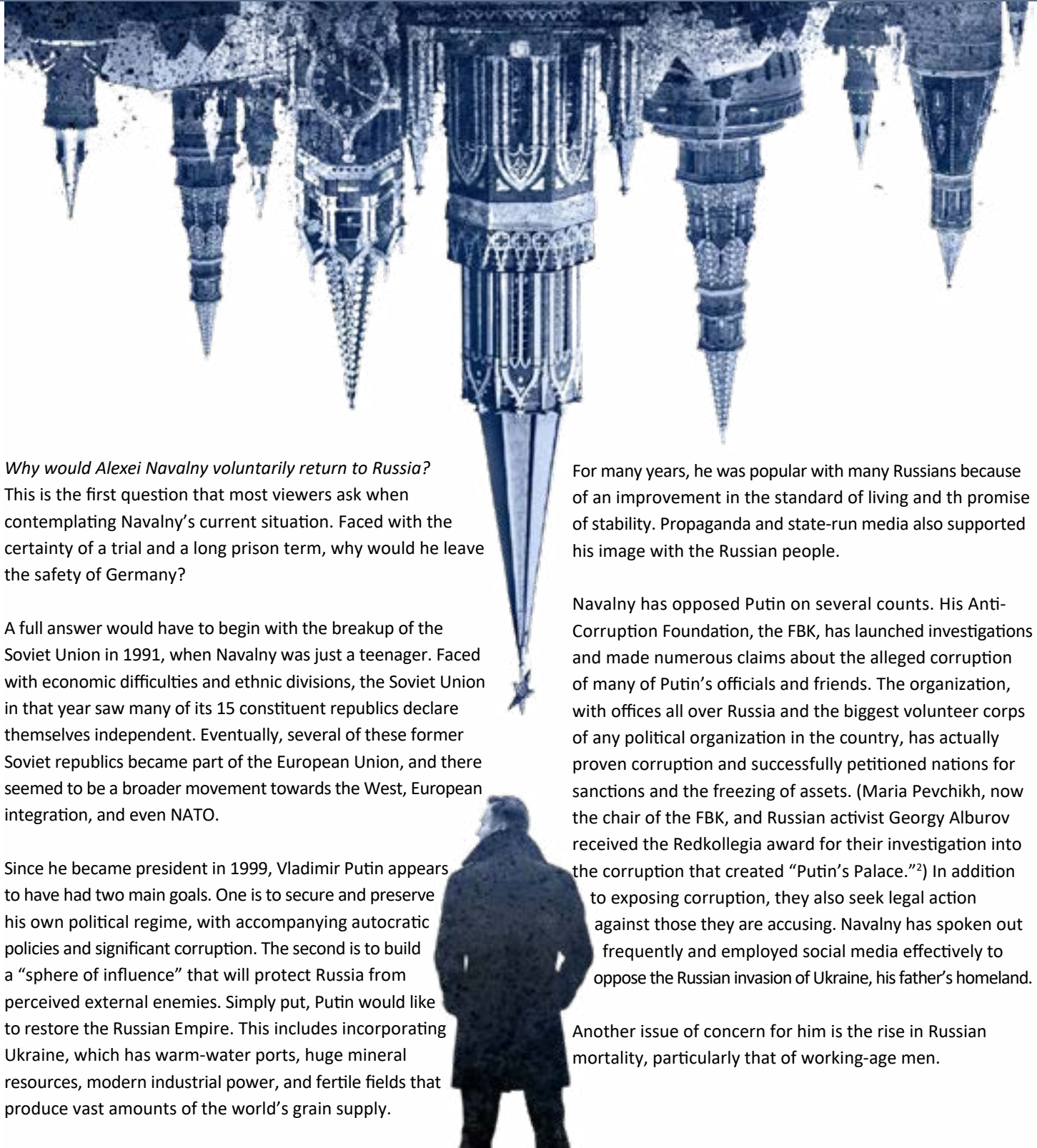
Navalny became ill during a flight to Moscow; only an emergency landing of the plane and immediate medical attention prevented his death. When this guide was originally written (in April 2023), Navalny was a prisoner in permanent solitary confinement at Penal Colony #2, a notorious prison about 150 miles from Moscow, and was identified by Amnesty International as a "prisoner of conscience." In December 2023, Navalny went missing for more than two weeks while being transferred to a maximum security penal colony north of the Arctic Circle. Alexei Navalny died as a political prisoner in the Polar Wolf penal colony on February 16, 2024.

The film *NAVALNY* begins with an interview of Alexei Navalny by film director Daniel Roher, right before Navalny's flight back to Russia after a period of recovery from the poisoning in Germany. Facing the likelihood of arrest, he nevertheless returns to his country with his wife and a planeload of reporters. The film reviews the events of the last few years — the attempt on his life, the rescue efforts of Russian and German doctors, and the attempts of a team of reporters and computer sleuths to locate the would-be assassins and to prove their guilt. The film reveals a masterpiece of detective work, and the documentary is all the more poignant because of Navalny's current imprisonment and mistreatment.

¹ Morvan Lallouet and Ben Noble, *Navalny: Putin's Nemesis, Russia's Future?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021)



NAVALNY AND PUTIN



Why would Alexei Navalny voluntarily return to Russia?

This is the first question that most viewers ask when contemplating Navalny's current situation. Faced with the certainty of a trial and a long prison term, why would he leave the safety of Germany?

A full answer would have to begin with the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, when Navalny was just a teenager. Faced with economic difficulties and ethnic divisions, the Soviet Union in that year saw many of its 15 constituent republics declare themselves independent. Eventually, several of these former Soviet republics became part of the European Union, and there seemed to be a broader movement towards the West, European integration, and even NATO.

Since he became president in 1999, Vladimir Putin appears to have had two main goals. One is to secure and preserve his own political regime, with accompanying autocratic policies and significant corruption. The second is to build a "sphere of influence" that will protect Russia from perceived external enemies. Simply put, Putin would like to restore the Russian Empire. This includes incorporating Ukraine, which has warm-water ports, huge mineral resources, modern industrial power, and fertile fields that produce vast amounts of the world's grain supply.

For many years, he was popular with many Russians because of an improvement in the standard of living and the promise of stability. Propaganda and state-run media also supported his image with the Russian people.

Navalny has opposed Putin on several counts. His Anti-Corruption Foundation, the FBK, has launched investigations and made numerous claims about the alleged corruption of many of Putin's officials and friends. The organization, with offices all over Russia and the biggest volunteer corps of any political organization in the country, has actually proven corruption and successfully petitioned nations for sanctions and the freezing of assets. (Maria Pevchikh, now the chair of the FBK, and Russian activist Georgy Albuorov received the Redkollegia award for their investigation into the corruption that created "Putin's Palace."²) In addition to exposing corruption, they also seek legal action against those they are accusing. Navalny has spoken out frequently and employed social media effectively to oppose the Russian invasion of Ukraine, his father's homeland.

Another issue of concern for him is the rise in Russian mortality, particularly that of working-age men.

² <https://time.com/5934092/navalny-putin-palace-investigation/>

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: POLITICAL CORRUPTION, NATIONALISM, LEADERSHIP



DRIVING QUESTIONS

What are the responsibilities of global citizens regarding civic engagement? What are some of the most effective methods to amplify voices and increase visibility?

Personal Reflection

1. What instances of civic engagement in past or modern history have impressed or moved you? If you could time travel, which social or political movement would you like to witness and participate in? Have you participated in, or been affected by, robust civic engagement in your life?

Discussion Questions

1. In the film, in what ways did you see Russian citizens publicly voicing their concerns? What obstacles were in their way? In what ways were they successful?
2. Consider the weight of Navalny's message to his people to "not be afraid" and that "we are stronger than we even know." What is the effect of these sentiments to galvanize his supporters?
3. Navalny's work expands beyond that of a political leader into the realm of investigative journalism. What benefits do you see in the cross-pollination of these roles? Are there any potential conflicts of interest in investigating and reporting on the corruption of one's opponents?

Extension Activities

1. Watch a sample of the films produced by Navalny's movement, [The Anti-Corruption Foundation](#), and shown on his [YouTube channel](#). Evaluate and discuss their core message. Examine their tone, pacing, graphics, and other compelling elements. What do you think of the movement's ability to circumvent the state-controlled media? Are their attempts effective?
2. Compare the state-controlled, nationalist media in Russia to the capitalist media in the United States. Whom does each system benefit? How can viewers critically engage with either? Locate how messages are spread to initiate citizens' involvement with the political process. When and how are people called on to vote, contact their representatives, protest, or boycott?
3. Investigate and assess youth-led civic activities in Russia and internationally. What issues are young people most vocal about? Do the concerns of young people overlap or are there differences? How do young people make their voices heard? Consider protests, walkouts, social media, meetings with officials, public forums, and more. How effective do these methods appear? (See articles on page 8.)



Cross Connection to



POWER: WHAT IS POWER? WHO HAS POWER?

How can opposition leaders promote change in corrupt political environments while navigating the risks of an authoritarian regime?

Additional Resources

Anti-Corruption Foundation, Navalny's non-profit.

<https://acf.international/>

Bellingcat, "an open-source investigative unit that is redefining the way we think about news, politics, and the digital future."

<https://www.bellingcat.com/>

Report on Russian Corruption published by the Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe

<https://www.csce.gov/international-impact/publications/corruption-russia-overview>

Russia's Young Civic Activists: Lessons from the Moscow Protests

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/russias-young-civic-activism-lessons-the-moscow-protests>

Russian Youth in the Moscow Protests

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/commentary/long-take/russian-youth-in-the-moscow-protests/>

Seven Times in History When Students Turned to Activism

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/05/us/student-protest-movements.html>

A Year of Resistance: How Youth Protests Shaped the Discussion on Climate Change

<https://theconversation.com/a-year-of-resistance-how-youth-protests-shaped-the-discussion-on-climate-change-129036>

DATA TRACKING, STATE SURVEILLANCE, AND THE ROLE OF JOURNALISM



DRIVING QUESTION

Like any powerful tool, data tracking can be used both to help, and to harm. Is it possible for data tracking to be used for justice without compromising individual privacy?

Data tracking is often one of the tools used by authoritarian governments to maintain state surveillance.

It is also a tool that independent investigators and journalists, such as those working with Bellingcat, have used to hold individuals and institutions, including governments, accountable.

Useful Term

Tracking Data means (a) any information or data collected in relation to online, mobile, or other electronic activities or communications that can reasonably be associated with a particular person, user, computer, mobile or other device, or instance of any application or mobile application, (b) any information or data collected in relation to off-line activities or communications that can reasonably be associated with or that derives from a particular person, user, computer, mobile or other device or instance of any application or mobile application or (c) any device or network identifier (including IP address or MAC address), device activity data or data collected from a networked physical object.

(<https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/tracking-data>)



Personal Reflection

1. Imagine you are a journalist seeking to hold a corrupt institution accountable for its actions. Data tracking can provide proof of the illegal activities of that institution. How would you balance respecting individual privacy with the need for evidence in procuring justice?
2. Who can you identify that is tracking your own personal data, and how is that data used?

Discussion Questions

1. How has the role of journalism evolved in Russia, particularly in the context of state surveillance and media censorship? How have Russian journalists navigated reporting on controversial topics, such as corruption and human rights violations, and what challenges and consequences have they faced in doing so?
2. How have international actors, such as the United States and the European Union, responded to Russia's state surveillance practices and the treatment of opposition figures such as Alexei Navalny? Do those entities, the U.S. and the EU, also engage in surveillance practices? What impact can journalism and media coverage have on shaping public opinion and policy decisions?
3. What are the ethical considerations involved in using data tracking to monitor and track individuals, particularly in the context of political dissent and opposition movements? How can data tracking be used responsibly and ethically in this context, and what safeguards should be put in place to protect individuals' privacy and civil liberties?

Extension Activities

1. Four Corners Debate

Research a real-world example of data tracking being used either by those in power, or by those seeking to hold people and institutions with power accountable. Navalny, his core team, and Bellingcat's use of data tracking is an example of **investigative journalism** in pursuit of justice. Other examples include:

Mass Surveillance by Governments: The Chinese government has invested extensively in facial recognition and data-tracking systems to monitor the movement of its citizens.

Whistleblowers: Whistleblowers such as Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning exposed the United States government collecting data on millions of people, including their own citizens, without their consent or knowledge.

Social Activism: The Black Lives Matter movement has used surveillance, crowd-sourced, bystander and body camera footage to expose police brutality, leading to investigations and calls for greater accountability.



Prepare for debate:

Write a concise statement about your real-world example of data tracking and surveillance. For example: *Data tracking is ethical when it is used to expose and hold society accountable for systemic racism.*

Set up four positions:

Strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. These can be physically designated – one for each corner of a room, for example – but can also be set up on graphic organizers, in video chat breakout rooms, etc.

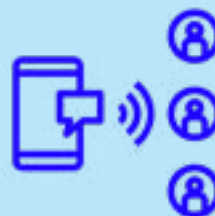
If you are alone or in a small group, choose your position, and prepare your strongest arguments. Next, imagine what counter-arguments may arise, and make those counter-arguments as strong as you can. Respond to your counter-arguments by strengthening and adding effective supporting detail to your original position, then do the same for the counter-argument. Consider writing the debate out as a script, with unique voices for each argument.

For larger groups: Read the introductory statement, then have participants indicate which position they initially align with. Once positions have been taken, open the floor for participants to justify their positions. After each position has been presented, responses, questions, and counter-arguments may begin. If swayed by another position's arguments, participants may change positions. After a set number of responses, have each participant give a final, closing argument, and bring the debate to an end.

2. How is data tracking and mass surveillance used by your own government? First, write down your best guess as to how closely and extensively your government watches individual residents and citizens. How much data is collected on the average person residing in your country? How is that data collected? How is it used? Then: look for the answers! Finally, compare. How close was your initial estimate to the facts you found? Was it easier or harder to find information on government surveillance than you anticipated?

Cross Connection to PROPAGANDA

Can you tell a real social media profile from one created to disseminate propaganda?



<https://spotthetroll.org/>

Try taking the quiz to test your skills!

Build on your quiz experience by investigating the role of social media and other digital platforms in shaping public opinion and disseminating information.

It may be helpful to start with a specific controversial issue or event with global impact. For example: A recent election for a prime minister or president, national or international response to the Covid-19 pandemic, or international action against Covid-19.

How did social media algorithms and fake news impact public opinion?

What role can individual users play in combating misinformation and propaganda?



Additional Resources

ACLU Privacy and Surveillance:

This website includes news coverage, court cases, press releases, and podcasts concerning the intersections of privacy and surveillance.

<https://www.aclu.org/issues/national-security/privacy-and-surveillance>

Bellingcat:

This independent investigative journalism organization uses open-source and digital research methods to uncover evidence and expose the truth about a wide range of issues, including state-sponsored assassinations, war crimes, and corruption. Their website includes reports, news updates, and resources for learning about their methods and investigations.

<https://www.bellingcat.com/>

Columbia Journalism Review:

This publication covers issues related to journalism, including the role of journalists in exposing abuses of power and holding governments accountable. Their website includes articles, analysis, and commentary on these topics, as well as resources for improving journalism ethics and practices.

<https://www.cjr.org/>

Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF):

This organization advocates for civil liberties in the digital world, including issues related to data tracking, state surveillance, and internet freedom. Their website includes reports, news updates, and resources for taking action and protecting your rights online.

<https://www EFF.org/>

Cross Connection to



POWER: WHAT IS POWER? WHO HAS POWER?

How can independent media help to balance power by promoting democracy and transparency?

The Intercept:

This news organization provides in-depth reporting on issues related to surveillance, data tracking, and government secrecy. Their website includes articles, analysis, and commentary on these topics, as well as resources for taking action and protecting your privacy.

<https://theintercept.com/>

Privacy International:

This organization advocates for privacy rights around the world, including issues related to data tracking, government surveillance, and corporate surveillance. Their website includes reports, news updates, and resources for taking action and protecting your privacy.

<https://privacyinternational.org/>

An example of a student project on the ethics of government surveillance:

<https://cs.stanford.edu/people/eroberts/cs181/projects/ethics-of-surveillance/ethics.html>



DRIVING QUESTION

Social media and propaganda are intertwined and essential components of the cultural dispersal of information. How can we consume informational media with a critical eye?

The majority of people around the world now get their news through social media posts and links. This unfettered media has both the positive effect of amplifying a wide range of voices and the negative effect of drowning folks in information, much of which is highly propagandistic or outright false. This can lead to cognitive overload and impair critical thinking. It is important to ground oneself in the tools of persuasion and propaganda to be a savvy consumer of social media.

It is important to note that all political agendas use the tactics of persuasion, rhetorical appeals, and propaganda. By noticing them, viewers can dig deep into the core message of the speaker.

Useful Terms

When trying to convince a friend or social media audience member, persuasive **rhetorical appeals** can be made in three ways. An appeal can focus on **emotion**, creating a deep connection between the content and the viewer by sharing moving anecdotes or comparing current events to historical events that carry weight in the public imagination. Or, an influencer might take a **rational** approach, using rational ideas and building an argument that includes statistics, data, and seemingly irrefutable facts. Finally, persuasive appeal is a rhetorical approach in which the worthiness and respectability of the speaker or the people at the center of their cause are the main focus.

Propaganda uses the rhetorical device of persuasion along with a few other tactics, such as personal attacks or other measures that incite strong emotional responses. Also common in propaganda is incessant repetition, blatant omissions of information, simplistic language, or purposeful confusion in order to drive a specific viewpoint.



Personal Reflection

1. How are you shaped by your social media feed? Can you locate the line between persuasion and propaganda? How might you maintain a critical eye while consuming social media?

Discussion Questions

1. How was social media used to circumvent state-sanctioned censorship to share Navalny's political messages and the investigative story of his poisoning? Do you think social media effectively built his case?
2. Which of the three appeals (emotional, rational, character) described above are used in Navalny's social media presence and speeches? Are there elements of propaganda in his messaging? What about this documentary in particular? How are the filmmakers appealing to viewers?
3. In the scenes where the various talk show hosts discuss Navalny, what tactics do they use to undermine his legitimacy? Have you seen similar tactics in viewing American news and talk shows?
4. Consider issues that are important to you. What tools of persuasion or propaganda have you noticed that build visibility and/or draw supporters to those causes?

Extension Activities

1. Watch and read a variety of local and national political speeches, soundbites, and election ads. Can you locate the core message? Can you identify elements of propaganda in the construction of the media piece? Be sure to study pieces from multiple points of view. It is reasonable that you both agree with a core message and can critically identify the elements of propaganda.
2. Create a poster, TikTok, or social media post using the tools of persuasion and/or propaganda to promote a nonpartisan cause, even something silly, like what constitutes the best breakfast. Share your creation in your learning community and discuss the effectiveness of the message and the tools utilized.

Cross Connection to



POWER: WHAT IS POWER? WHO HAS POWER?

How does propaganda, censorship, and disinformation impact the balance of power in Russia? Does the availability of social media increase or decrease disinformation and propaganda? Why?

Additional Resources

Alexei Navalny's YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsAw3WynQJMm7t-My093y37A>

Dasha Navalny's (Alexei Navalny's daughter) YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/@dashanavalnaya4177>

Mind Over Media: Propaganda Education for a Digital Age by Renee Hobbs. W.W Norton and Company, 2020

Mind Over Media website (teacher resources and collection of reader uploaded contemporary propaganda images)

<https://propaganda.mediaeducationlab.com/teachers>

The State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda (online resource developed by The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)

<https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/propaganda>

STATE-SANCTIONED ASSASSINATIONS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS



DRIVING QUESTION

How has the Russian government's use of state-sanctioned assassinations and imprisonment of political dissidents impacted civil liberties, democracy, and human rights in modern Russia?

Personal Reflection

How many political prisoners, past and present, can you name? How do the stories you have read or heard about political prisoners impact you? Have you ever been inspired to action, research, or inquiry through learning about someone who has experienced political imprisonment?

Discussion Questions

1. How do state-sanctioned assassinations and political prisoners in modern Russia reflect larger issues of democracy, human rights, and international law? What implications do these issues have for the global community?
2. What is the role of international law and institutions in responding to state-sanctioned assassinations and political imprisonment? Should all nations be accountable to the same laws regarding state-sanctioned violence and political imprisonment? How might that level of accountability impact your own country? How might it be implemented?
3. What actions can individuals, civil society organizations, and governments take to promote democracy and human rights in Russia and other countries facing similar challenges?

Note to Facilitator



Possible examples of political prisoners to share with learners:

Mahatma Ghandi
Nelson Mandela
Mumia Abu-Jamal
Aung San Suu Kyi
Leonard Peltier



Extension Activities

1. Conduct a mock United Nations Security Council meeting focused on addressing state-sanctioned assassinations and political imprisonment in Russia. If you are working in a group, have group members choose different roles (e.g. representatives of different countries, NGOs, the Russian government); if you are working alone, choose one or two roles to represent and prepare arguments and strategies for addressing the issue.
2. Navalny is one of many political prisoners. Investigate other individual cases of Russian state-sanctioned assassinations and political imprisonment, such as Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov or Russian punk rockers Nadya Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina. Research the facts of the cases, analyze the motivations and implications behind them, and then create presentations or reports to share with an audience.
3. Are there political prisoners in your own country? Research and analyze the case of a specific political prisoner in nations beyond Russia, then create a presentation or report outlining their situation and the broader context of political imprisonment in that country.

Additional Resources

Freedom House:

This organization provides annual reports on the state of political freedom and civil liberties around the world. Its reports include detailed analysis of countries where state-sanctioned assassinations and political prisoners are common, including Russia.

<https://freedomhouse.org/>

Human Rights Watch:

World Report: This annual report provides a global overview of human rights abuses and political repression around the world. It includes in-depth analysis of countries where state-sanctioned assassinations and political prisoners are common, including Russia.

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023>

United Nations Human Rights Council:

This website provides information on the human rights situation in countries around the world, including Russia. It includes reports, news updates, and resources for advocacy and action.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/home>

POWER: WHAT IS POWER? WHO HAS POWER?



DRIVING QUESTIONS

What does it mean to have power? Who and what regulates who has power and who doesn't? How does the distribution of power impact individuals and societies?

It is important to note that power is not always distributed evenly or fairly in society, and there may be inequalities in access to power based on factors such as race, gender, or socioeconomic status. Additionally, power constantly shifts and evolves as new technologies, social movements, or political changes alter the balance of power.

Personal Reflection

1. How does the story of Navalny's activism and imprisonment challenge your understanding of power? What insights does his story provide regarding the dynamics of power and political opposition in authoritarian states?
2. How can individuals and communities challenge power imbalances and promote human rights and democracy in repressive political environments?

Discussion Questions

1. What is power, and how do individuals and institutions acquire and exercise it?
2. How can we measure power, and what are some of the challenges involved in measuring power?
3. Can power be used for both good and evil purposes, or is it inherently corrupting?
4. How has the power balance between Putin and Navalny shifted over time, especially before and after Navalny's imprisonment? What factors have contributed to these changes?
5. Do you think this film and the critical acclaim and attention it receives is a media tool that can give Navalny (and those seeking to free him from prison) power? Why or why not?
6. What do the latest developments in Navalny's case, including his imprisonment and the crackdown on his supporters, reveal about the current state of power and political opposition in Russia?



Extension Activities

1. Analyze the role of activists in promoting change and challenging power. How have activists in various countries (Russia, the United States, or any other countries of your choosing) organized to promote human rights and enact democratic reforms? What strategies have they used that had a significant impact on the balance of power?
2. Conduct a comparative analysis of the balance of power and political opposition in different authoritarian regimes. How do power dynamics differ in countries such as China, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, or Iran, compared to Russia? Look at similarities and differences in the tactics and strategies used by opposition leaders in different countries and note what can be learned from their experiences.
3. What are some organizations or initiatives that are working to promote democracy and human rights in Russia, and how can individuals and communities support their efforts?
4. How have international sanctions and pressure affected the power balance between Putin and Navalny? What role have other countries played in shaping this dynamic? Are some types of sanctions more effective than others? If so, which sanctions would you especially recommend or discourage? Consider how sanctions impact the economic and political conditions within Russia, and how these conditions affect the power balance between Putin and Navalny.¹

Cross Connection to STATE-SANCTIONED ASSASSINATIONS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS



How do state-sanctioned assassinations and political prisoners impact the balance of power in an authoritarian state?

¹ U.S. Department of State Press Statement by Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State. *Imposing Sanctions on Russia for the Poisoning and Imprisonment of Aleksey Navalny*. <https://www.state.gov/imposing-sanctions-on-russia-for-the-poisoning-and-imprisonment-of-aleksey-navalny/>. Accessed 25 March 2023

NPR World, by Bill Chappell: *EU Sanctions Russian Officials over Navalny Poisoning, Citing Chemical Weapons Use*. <https://www.npr.org/2020/10/15/923982672/eu-sanctions-russian-officials-over-navalny-poisoning-citing-chemical-weapons-us>. Accessed 25 March 2023.

The Economist, by Leonid Volkov. *Alexey Navalny's Chief of Staff Says Personal Sanctions Need Rethinking*. <https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2023/03/14/Alexey-navalnys-chief-of-staff-says-personal-sanctions-need-rethinking>. Accessed 25 March 2023.



Additional Resources

Books/Articles

Bill Browder, *Freezing Order: A True Story of Money Laundering, Murder, and Surviving Vladimir Putin's Wrath*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2022)

Bill Browder, *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance, Murder and a Man's Fight for Justice*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015)

Erica Chenoweth, *Civil Resistance: What Everyone Needs to Know*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021)

Erica Chenoweth and Maria J Stephan, *The Role of External Support in Nonviolent Campaigns: Poisoned Chalice or Holy Grail?* (Washington, D.C.: International Center on Non-violent Conflict, 2021)

Luke Harding, The Guardian: *Face off: the extraordinary power struggle between Vladimir Putin and Alexey Navalny*
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/06/face-off-the-extraordinary-power-struggle-between-vladimir-putin-and-Alexey-navalny>.

Luke Harding, *Shadow State: Murder, Mayhem, and Russia's Remaking of the West*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2020)

Paul LeBlanc, CNN: 'We don't realize how strong we actually are': How Alexey Navalny became Russia's opposition leader
<https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/22/world/who-is-alexey-navalny/index.html>. Accessed 25 March 2023.

Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022)

Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995)

Bertrand Russell, *Power*. (London: Routledge Classics, 2004)

Other Media Resources

[The Third Harmony](#) Podcast

Pod Save the World: Inside Navalny's Operation
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/pod-save-the-world/id1200016351?i=1000567355325>

The Power Vertical Podcast by Brian Whitmore: Navalny vs. Putin
<https://podcasts.apple.com/is/podcast/navalny-vs-putin/id1538016458?i=1000506222187>

Related Film Resource from Journeys in Film

[Crip Camp Curriculum Guide: Lesson 5: The Strategic Use of Power](#)

Websites

Carnegie Moscow Center:
<https://carnegie.ru/>

Harvard Nonviolent Action Lab:
<https://carcenter.hks.harvard.edu/non-violent-social-movements>

The Moscow Times:
<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/>

YouTube

The success of nonviolent civil resistance: Erica Chenoweth at TEDxBoulder
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w>



CREDITS

Film Credits

Director **Daniel Roher**

Cast **Alexei Navalny, Yulia Navalnaya, Maria Pevchikh, Christo Grozev**

Executive Producers **Amy Entelis, Courtney Sexton, Maria Pevchikh**

Social Impact Executive Producers **Geralyn White Dreyfous, David Fialkow, Nina Fialkow, Jim Swartz, Susan Swarz**

Cinematography **Niki Walzl**

Editors **Langdon Page, Maya Daisy Hawke**

Music by **Marius DeVries, Anna Drubich, Matt Robertson**

Image Credits

Page 1: *NAVALNY* film poster

Page 2: Image from the film *NAVALNY*

Page 4: Headshot of Daniel Rohrer, provided by the filmmakers

Page 5: Image from the film *NAVALNY*

Page 6: Image from the *NAVALNY* film poster.

Page 9: Image from the film *NAVALNY*

Page 13: Image from the film *NAVALNY*

Page 17: Image from the film *NAVALNY*

This discussion guide for the film *NAVALNY* was written by Eileen Mattingly of Journeys in Film.

For additional free materials for teaching and learning with films, see journeysinfilm.org.

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PO Box 65357
Albuquerque, NM 87193