

Chapter 12

Montana's Response to Global Conflict

(16:39 minutes)

Synopsis

This 17-minute video details the life of Jeannette Rankin as a Montana stateswoman. The video notes Rankin's early influences, her work as a suffragist, and her election to the United States Congress in 1916 and again in 1940. Rankin knowingly compromised her political career to uphold her convictions to maintain peace by being the only American congressperson to vote against both world wars. Her legacy towards working for peace continued through the Vietnam era until her death at age 92.

- The video begins with students giving their best answer to the following focus question: **“Who was Jeannette Rankin?”** Teachers may wish to ask their students the same question before viewing the episode.

The narrator answers the focus question:

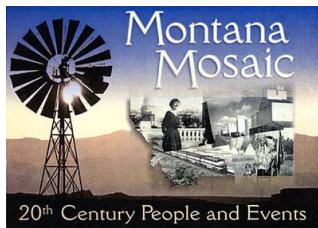
“Montanans are tied subtly and deeply to the nation and the world. Federal politics have affected the daily lives of Native Americans, students needing loans, senior citizens seeking medical prescriptions, and ranchers leasing lands. International markets affect everything from crop selection to beef production to timber prices in Montana. Montanans have defended their country in global crises from the Spanish-American War to the conflict in Iraq. We fight for what we believe in. Look, for instance, at Montana’s Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress. An acknowledged pacifist, Ms. Rankin voted against U.S. involvement in both World War I and World War II. Her stand incurred the wrath of millions of Americans—including many, but not all, Montanans. Jeannette Rankin reflects our toughness, our courage, and our integrity. She is especially a Montana story.”

Post-viewing Discussion Questions

Engage students’ critical thinking skills and elicit their emotional responses with the following four questions, most easily remembered through the acronym DICE: What **disturbed** you? What **interested** you? What **confused** you? What **enlightened** you?

Getting at the Meaning Questions

1. At the beginning of the video, the narrator suggests that Jeanette Rankin’s career is an example of the way federal policies and international politics affect Montana. How else have federal decisions impacted Montana?
2. What factors contributed to Montana enacting women’s suffrage (1914) before the rest of the nation (1920)?
3. After she voted against war, some people called Jeannette Rankin unpatriotic. Can someone oppose war and still be a patriot? Why or why not?
4. What connections, if any, do you see between Rankin’s feminism, her status as the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress, and her pacifism?
5. Even as the first woman elected to Congress, do you think Rankin would have been as memorable if she had not voted against both world wars?



(Chapter 12, continued)

Additional Resources

For more information on topics addressed in this episode, see *Montana: Stories of the Land*, Chapter 16, “Montana and World War I, 1914–1918,” (<https://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/chapter16/Chapter16.pdf>), and *Montana: Stories of the Land*, Chapter 19, “World War II in Montana, 1939–1945” (<https://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/chapter19/Chapter19.pdf>).

Content Standards

Montana State Social Studies Standards

SS.CG.6-8.5. Identify events and leaders that ensure that key United States principles of equality and civil rights are applied to various groups, including American Indians.

SS.H.6-8.2. Analyze how the historical events relate to one another and are shaped by historical context, including societies in the Americas.

SS.H.6-8.5. Explain how Montana has changed over time and how this history impacts the present.

SS.H.6-8.6. Understand that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.

SS.CG.9-12.5. Evaluate how citizens and institutions address social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international levels.

SS.CG.9-12.10. Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

SS.CG.9-12.11. Analyze the impact and roles of personal interests and perspectives, market, media, and group influences on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.

SS.H.9-12.1. Analyze how unique circumstances of time, place, and historical contexts shape individuals' lives.

SS.H.9-12.2. Analyze change and continuity in historical eras in US and world history.

SS.H.9-12.3. Identify ways in which people and groups exercise agency in difficult historical, contemporary, and tribal contexts.

SS.H.9-12.7. Analyze how historical, cultural, social, political, ideological, and economic contexts shape people's perspectives.