

Missoula Women for Peace oral history project interviews, 2000

Overview of the Collection

Title	Missoula Women for Peace oral history project interviews
Dates	2000 (inclusive) 2000 2000
Quantity	12 interviews
Collection Number	OH 389
Summary	Each of the twelve interviewees recorded for the Missoula Women for Peace Oral History Project by interviewer Dawn Walsh in 2000 describe their own backgrounds, events and personal philosophies that led to their participation in Missoula Women for Peace, and often, participation in other civic activism.
Repository	University of Montana, Mansfield Library, Archives and Special Collections Archives and Special Collections Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library University of Montana 32 Campus Dr. #9936 59812-9936 Missoula, MT Telephone: 406-243-2053 Fax: 406-243-4067 library.archives@umontana.edu
Access Restrictions	Researchers must use collections in accordance with the policies of Archives and Special Collections, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, and The University of Montana-Missoula.
Languages	English.

Historical Note

The activist group Missoula Women for Peace (MWP) was formed in 1970 by a group of Missoula, Montana, mothers and other community members concerned with the escalating American military presence in Vietnam. During the Vietnam War the group was extremely active, participating in peace marches, working to end the draft, and writing letters to local, state and national officials to protest the conflict in Vietnam. In the years following the Vietnam War, MWP members continued to educate themselves and the public on a broad array of peace-related issues by hosting and attending lectures, reading books, distributing literature and holding public meetings. The group also initiated an annual bake sale on April 15th, Tax Day, during the 1970s to alert citizens to the significant amount of their tax dollars used for military purposes.

MWP continued to be an active voice for peace and social justice in Missoula throughout the 1980s. The group became a member of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1981. In 1985 MWP group members succeeded in placing a statue of Montana's prominent peace activist,

suffragette and politician Jeannette Rankin in the Statuary Hall of the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. The 1980s also marked the beginning of the group's Peace Consortium Dinners, a monthly gathering of peace groups in the Missoula area. From these dinners and similar collaborative events came the idea for a clearinghouse of peace resources in Western Montana. This vision was realized when MWP members, along with countless other groups and individuals, facilitated the opening of the Jeanette Rankin Peace Center in 1986.

The 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century have seen a slowdown in MWP sponsored activities as the founding members grow older. The group does continue to meet on a regular basis and sponsor many of its annual events such as the Tax Day Bake Sale. MWP has also vigorously protested the Persian Gulf War of 1991, the Kosovo Conflict of the late 1990s, violence in Latin America and many other conflicts around the world, and remains optimistic that future generations will take up the fight to firmly establish world peace.

Dawn Walsh, a staff member and student of the Women's History Department at the University of Montana, conducted the Missoula Women for Peace Oral History Project in 2000. The project was part of Walsh's internship with the Jeannette Rankin Peace Resource Center, and was supervised by John Bertche, a board member at the Peace Center, and Anya Jabour, a history professor at The University of Montana. The objective of the project was to document and celebrate the history of Missoula Women for Peace, as well as record the personal reflections of eleven veteran group members before they grew too old to participate in oral history interviews

Content Description

Each of the twelve interviewees recorded for the Missoula Women for Peace Oral History Project by interviewer Dawn Walsh in 2000 describe their own backgrounds, events and personal philosophies that led to their participation in Missoula Women for Peace and, often, participation in other civic activism.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. and any other applicable statutes. Copyright to these interviews is held by the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center.

Preferred Citation

[Name of document or photograph number], OH 389, Missoula Women for Peace Oral History Project Interviews, Archives and Special Collections, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana-Missoula.

Administrative Information

Custodial History

The collection was held by Dawn Walsh and the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center prior to donation.

Acquisition Information

This collection was donated by Dawn Walsh, date unknown.

Processing Note

Dawn Walsh recorded the interviews using an analog audio cassette recorder and transcribed the interviews as well. Archives staff made duplicate copies of the cassettes.

Related Materials

The Archives & Special Collections also holds Mss 580, The Missoula Women for Peace Oral History Project, with research files including organizational materials and photographs.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Description	Dates
<p>OH 389-01: Interview with May McDonald Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 30 leaves May MacDonald describes experiences that led her to join the Missoula Peace Group in 1963, the first group of its kind formed in the state of Montana. Macdonald then discusses how she joined Missoula Women for Peace in 1970, and its first year, describing some activities she was involved in with that group. She mentions her admiration for Jeannette Rankin, and talks about her feelings for the cause.</p>	2000 February 27
<p>OH 389-02: Interview with Alice Campbell Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 18 leaves Alice Campbell describes growing up in Missoula, Montana, and the experiences that shaped her views on war and peace. She discusses Jeannette Rankin, her Missoula Women for Peace-initiated Rankin statue in Washington, D.C., and the origins and early actions of MWP. Campbell considers the possibility of world peace, the importance of education, and explains the origins of the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center in Missoula, Montana.</p>	2000 March 5
<p>OH 389-03: Interview with Jean Pfeiffer Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 24 leaves Jean Pfeiffer discusses growing up in British Columbia, Canada with her socialist mother and conservative bank manager father, attending the University of British Columbia, marrying, and finally ending up in Missoula, Montana. Pfeiffer describes her involvement with the Missoula Peace Group</p>	2000 March 4

Description	Dates
<p>in 1963 and the beginnings of Missoula Women for Peace in 1970. Pfeiffer finishes by discussing her feelings about the cause of war.</p>	
<p>OH 389-04: Interview with Nancy Erickson Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 25 leaves Erickson describes her childhood, her time living in Germany, and coming to Missoula, Montana. She talks about her involvement and her husband's involvement in the University of Montana around the beginning of the Vietnam War, and about the peace group Professors Against the War. Erickson describes her feelings on the interrelatedness of the feminist, environmental, and peace movements, her artwork, and her involvement in Missoula Women for Peace. She finishes by talking about her family, vegetarianism, and what MWP means to her.</p>	2000 April 11
<p>OH 389-05: Interview with Jackie McGiffert Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 16 leaves Jackie McGiffert describes growing up in Pennsylvania, her father and his experience in WWI, her own experience working in a war plant during WWII between semesters of college, and her feelings on war in general. She explains her move to Missoula, Montana, to be a journalist and meeting her husband. She also discusses the beginnings of her activism, her subsequent involvement with Missoula Women for Peace, and her disagreement with Jeannette Rankin over WWII.</p>	2000 March 4
<p>OH 389-06: Interview with Sandra Perrin Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 25 leaves Sandra Perrin begins by talking about her childhood and education in France, and the political turmoil there during that time. She describes her move to the United States, and her experience and involvement with her husband in the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago and San Diego. Perrin then shifts to 1972 when she moved to Missoula, Montana, and got involved in Missoula Women for Peace through friends. She talks about Vietnam, the memorial in Washington, D.C., and war in general. Perrin concludes by talking about current activities of MWP.</p>	2000 March 12
<p>OH 389-07: Interview with Valerie Clubb Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 21 leaves Valerie Clubb speaks about her family and their constant moves while she grew up. She discusses her father, who was involved in the oil industry and just narrowly missed the drafts for both WWI and WWII. She then jumps forward to her adult life in Missoula, Montana, and explains how the possibility of her sons being drafted for the Vietnam War got her involved in activism. Clubb describes her experience in Burma, her philosophy on war and peace, and her involvement in Missoula Women for Peace. She discusses the possibility of a</p>	2000 April 8

Description	Dates
third world war, young people, peace groups in general, police, and a peaceful world.	
<p>OH 389-08: Interview with Mary Taylor Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 27 leaves</p> <p>Mary Taylor describes growing up in Canada with her twin brother and pacifist father, their activities with the church, and sending care packages to German families. She moves on to Missoula, Montana, her family, writing letters to Montana's Senator Mike Mansfield, and the Missoula Peace Group. She describes her experience at the Hiroshima exhibit, the League of Women Voters, and being a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer. Taylor discusses her peace philosophy, the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center, poverty, and finally family.</p>	2000 March 27
<p>OH 389-09: Interview with Claudia Brown Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 22 leaves</p> <p>Claudia Brown describes how growing up in Butte, Montana, and the Vietnam War, helped form her belief in peace activism. She discusses Missoula Women for Peace, the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center, the League of Women Voters and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She mentions Missoula, Montana, residents and activists, Rae Horan and Connie Skousen, and their influence. Brown discusses what peace means to her, and how she thinks it can be achieved in modern society. Brown explains her work with Missoula Women for Peace and its organized activities, emphasizing the stereotype-defying characters of fellow activists.</p>	2000 March 20
<p>OH 389-10: Interview with Florence (Flo) Chessin Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 39 leaves</p> <p>Florence (Flo) Chessin briefly discusses her childhood in Columbus, Ohio, her high school experience during WWII and her marriage shortly thereafter. She relates her experiences in Missoula, Montana, with her young family, and her involvement with the founding of the Missoula Peace Group in 1963 in response to the escalation of the Vietnam War and increased military recruitment in area schools. Missoula Women for Peace took root in 1970. Chessin describes the speakers, fundraising, potlucks, and primary goals of this group. Chessin finishes with a reflection on her own children's level of involvement with the peace movement, and on the Jeannette Rankin Peace Center.</p>	2000 March 30
<p>OH 389-11: Interview with Lois Hove Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 24 leaves</p> <p>Lois Hove describes how her life was affected by WWII, the Korean War, Vietnam War and the Iran-Contra affair. She recalls traveling with a Lutheran church group to Mexico and Central America during the latter. She</p>	2000 March 29

Description**Dates**

discusses her involvement with Missoula Women for Peace and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

OH 389-12: Interview with members of the Missoula Women for Peace
Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog
Transcript, 7 leaves

2000 August 21

Assorted members of Missoula Women for Peace detail how their involvement in the organization came about. Present are Florence Chessin, Alice Campbell, May MacDonald, Valerie Clubb, Mary Taylor, Sandra Perrin, Lois Hove, Jean Pfeiffer and Jackie McGiffert.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Civil rights movements--United States
Petroleum industry and trade--United States
Poverty--United States
Vietnam War, 1961-1975
Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Women--United States
Women and peace
Women and peace--Montana--Missoula--Societies, etc.
Women pacifists
Women journalists--Montana
Women pacifists--Montana--Missoula--Interviews
Women--Montana--Interviews
World War, 1914-1918
World War, 1939-1945
World War, 1939-1945--Women

Corporate Names :

League of Women Voters of Missoula
Missoula Women for Peace
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Jeannette Rankin Peace Center (Missoula, Mont.)

Form or Genre Terms :

Interviews--Montana
Oral histories--Montana

Other Creators :**Personal Names :**

Brown, Claudia, 1937, interviewee
(interviewee)
Campbell, Alice, 1932, interviewee
(interviewee)
Chessin, Florence, 1926, interviewee
(interviewee)
Clubb, Valerie, 1928, interviewee
(interviewee)
Erickson, Nancy, 1935, interviewee

(interviewee)
Hove, Lois, 1933, interviewee
(interviewee)
MacDonald, May, 1915, interviewee
(interviewee)
McGiffert, Jackie, interviewee
(interviewee)
Perrin, Sandra, interviewee
(interviewee)
Pfeiffer, Jean, 1927, interviewee
(interviewee)
Rankin, Jeannette, 1880-1973
Taylor, Mary, 1924, interviewee
(interviewee)
Walsh, Dawn, interviewer
(interviewee)

Finding aid prepared by Teresa Hamann
2012



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Creative Commons Licenses in Archives West:
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/cc-attr.shtml>