



Mattie Gunterman

Film Summary: The life and images of early photographer Mattie Gunterman, both capture the lives as lived by ordinary and pioneering peoples in British Columbia. Her extraordinary life turns on its head the preconceived notions of woman's work of that time.

Curriculum Application
Social Studies 10

The Essential Question:

How effective is photographic evidence as sources of historical information and perspective?

Summary of the Lesson Activities

1. Focus questions for the vignette provide a short lesson option. (15 minutes)
2. This lesson package examines the portrayals and the perceptions of "ordinary lives" in turn of the century British Columbia through the eye of this remarkable photographer.
3. Lesson includes: Backgrounder and discussion questions
4. Small group activity on photographic analysis and interpretation.

Learning Objectives

1. To examine the portrayals of ordinary working and pioneering peoples in early British Columbia, and to explore aspects of their lives.
2. To explore the community and social meanings of these portrayals.
3. To examine the period gender roles, and the manners in which Pioneer Photographer Matte Gunterman accepted and challenged them.

Materials and Resources Provided

- [Mattie Gunterman Episode 1. Working People: A history of Labour in British Columbia](#)
- *Lesson Activity 1* Mattie Gunterman
- *Document 1* Biography of Mattie Gunterman
- *Extension Activity 2* Mattie Gunterman
- Document 2 Mattie Gunterman Photographs
- Document 3 Photographic Analysis

Additional Suggested Materials

- [Mattie Gunterman: Photographer and Camp Cook](#)

Vignette Questions

1. Why was the Bull's Eye Camera an important development?
2. How did Mattie and her family get to their new home in Thompson's Landing BC?
3. Who did Mattie take pictures of with her new camera?
4. Why would the candid nature of her photographs be significant sources of historical information?
5. Why is Mattie's work as a photographer noteworthy?
6. Are there modern examples that parallel the significance of the Bull's Eye camera in today's society? How might these examples be used by future historians?

Lesson Activities

1. Students will have some previous teaching on the subject of Victorian social norms, and the influence upon them of class and gender. Ask them to recall some of this teaching, and also any movies, books, and other media portrayals of Victorian Life.
2. Brainstorm a list of common themes, words, and images under headings such as:
 - "Class: Upper, Middle, Lower";
 - "Men's work & Women's work"
 - "Society Do's & Don'ts"
 - "Public & Private Lives"
3. Show the Vignette "Mattie Gunterman".
4. Distribute the Handout "Mattie Gunterman: Biography" and read it to the class, or have them read it individually, or in groups.
5. Use the discussion questions in *Learning Activity 1(download folder)* to guide post-video discussion
6. Use the 10 Photographic samples provided in Document 3 for Extension Activity 1 (*download folder*)

Credit: Teaching Activities and Lesson Plan developed by Gavin Hainsworth