Beyond Suffrage

Women’s Equal Rights in Oregon and the 1973 Legislative Session

This curriculum may be successfully used with or without a museum visit.
Developed by Sarah Anderson in consultation with OHS staff and advisory board.
## Beyond Suffrage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>Students learn about the coalition of women in the 1973 Oregon legislature who successfully passed laws to address sex discrimination in social institutions, including financial institutions, health care institutions, cultural/social organizations, and government. Students analyze primary documents from the legislative session to gain greater insight into the types of discrimination faced by women at the time and the coalition’s priorities and political strategies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Learning Objectives | › Students understand that sex discrimination existed/exists in Oregon; they can explain how women have used both activism and legislation to address it.  
› Students gain familiarity with legislative documents and vocabulary.  
› Students can analyze and interpret primary sources. |
| Guiding Questions | › How can legislation address the systemic oppression of traditionally marginalized groups in Oregon and the United States?  
› What strategies have Oregonians used to achieve greater equality for women in various social institutions? How was race considered, or not considered, by these activists and legislators?  
› How do the legislative successes of the past lay the groundwork for increased gender equality today? |
| Background Information | Oregon ratified the Equal Rights Amendment in February 1973, the 25th state to do so. The decision to ratify was galvanized by a bi-partisan group of female lawmakers (see below). There were 11 women in the Oregon legislature in 1973, comprising 12.2 percent of the body. This was the greatest number of female legislators Oregon had seen on the state level to that date.  
  
*From historian, Janice Dilg:*  
The 19th Amendment was a beginning, not an end. The struggle for women’s equality continued unabated after 1920; therefore, the 1960s–1970s was the time when many states, and the nation, actually revised legislation and laws in significant ways to make women equal. That was certainly true in Oregon. It was the first time that more than one or two women sat in the Oregon Legislature. The women in the 1973 legislature created a successful coalition to accomplish their legislative agenda — one that the women suffragists from 1912 would recognize and applaud. |
The list of women in the Rose/Watson article [see below] are the women on whose shoulders elected women today are standing. Like early women suffragist Abigail Scott Duniway — who was booed and egged for daring to be a woman speaking in public — Betty Roberts, Norma Paulus, Vera Katz, and Gretchen Kafoury took the heat 80 years later for their public stances and refused to back down. These are the people who students should associate with the ERA; they did the heavy lifting when it was not popular to do so, and they brought the ideal of equality closer to reality for women in social, financial, and professional institutions and their daily lives. (Janice Dilg, 3/2/2020)

**From the Oregon Political Leadership Archive:**

[T]he 1973 Oregon Legislative Session [was] one of the most progressive sessions in the history of the state. A bipartisan group of female legislators worked to pass eleven explicitly feminist pieces of legislation. This included the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment as well as legislation centered on civil rights, employment, family planning, and childcare. Tara Watson and Melody Rose, in their article “She Flies with Her Own Wings: Women in the 1973 Oregon Legislative Session,” highlight several factors that led to this success: a favorable political climate, with the support of a moderate Republican governor Tom McCall and male colleagues; strong women’s organizations in Oregon; and general optimism among the women’s movement in the state. Additionally, against the usual grain of spreading women legislators out amongst all the committees, Speaker of the House of Representatives Richard O. Eymann appointed five women to the House Environment and Land Use Committee and sent many of the bills dealing with equal rights to this committee.

The female legislators during the 1973 session were senators Betty Browne and Betty Roberts and representatives Mary Burrows, Peg Dereli, Nancie Fadeley, Vera Katz, Norma Paulus, Grace Peck, Mary Rieke, Mary Roberts, and Pat Whiting. For nearly half of the female legislators, 1973 was their first session. Some of the senior members, like Betty Roberts, mentored the junior legislators, which helped in forming a unified front to tackle passage of the equal rights legislation. Other legislators as well as activists, lobbyists, and lawyers supported their efforts. [http://cwldigitalexhibits.com/exhibit/1973-legislative-session/](http://cwldigitalexhibits.com/exhibit/1973-legislative-session/)

For a more comprehensive background of the 1973 legislative session and the Oregon Women’s Caucus, read “She Flies With Her Own Wings: Women in the 1973 Legislative Session,” by Tara Watson and
Note that the vocabulary definitions below for the terms “feminism” and “feminist legislation” come from this article. |
| Delivery Time | Three 45-minute class periods |
| Vocabulary |  
› Advocate: (noun) a person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy; (verb) to publicly recommend or support  
› Bill (house or senate): a draft of a proposed law presented to parliament for discussion  
› Caucus: (in this context) a conference of members of a legislative body who belong to a particular party or faction  
› Cultural/Social Organization: an organization that offers a sense of common purpose, such as a club or sports team  
› Domicile: a person’s residence or home.  
› Federal: relating to the national government as distinguished from the states  
› Feminism: a broad process of creating equality among the genders  
› Feminist Legislation: legislation that supports equality among the genders by opening opportunity, preventing discrimination, and addressing policy issues that had previously been ignored by male legislators  
› Financial Institution: an organization that deals with business, money, investments, and currency exchange  
› Government: an institution that provides laws, regulations, and services to society  
› Health Care Institution: an organization that deals with community health services, such as a hospital or clinic  
› House Committee: a small group of legislators appointed to consider a specific issue before that issue is sent to the whole group  
› Legislation: laws, considered collectively  
› Legislative Session: a meeting of a legislative body (one that makes laws) to conduct its business  
› Lobbyist: a person who attempts to influence legislators in the making of laws or policy  
› Paternalism: a practice on the part of people in authority of restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to them in the subordinates’ supposed best interest |
Vocabulary (continued)
› **Primary Source:** information about an event or time in the past made by someone who lived during that time and learned about or participated in the event or time. Some examples include a letter, speech, or artifact, such as a basket or shoe, as long as they were made or used by the person at that time.

› **Public Accommodations:** facilities, both public and private, that are used by the public. Examples include stores, rental facilities, restaurants, schools, and parks.

› **Ratify:** sign or give formal consent to (a treaty, contract, or agreement), making it officially valid (noun: ratification)

› **Secondary Source:** information about an event or time in the past that was created after the fact by someone who did not experience it first-hand or participate in the events or time. Some examples include scholarly books and articles and reference books, such as encyclopedias.

› **Sex Discrimination:** the unjust or prejudicial treatment of a person based on sex

› **Social Institution:** organizations founded by a group of people who come together for a common purpose; these may be financial, cultural/social, government, related to healthcare, or other social concern

› **Statute:** a written law passed by a legislative body

Materials Needed
› Equal Rights Lesson Slideshow
› Equal Rights in Oregon Primary Documents
› Equal Rights Primary Source Analysis Sheet
› Equal Rights in Oregon: Additional Information on Primary Documents
› Chart paper and markers
› Optional: hand lenses for examining the primary documents

Step by Step Instructions
**Step One:**
Tell students that soon after the 19th amendment passed, Alice Paul, a leader in the national movement, proposed another amendment for women. Write the amendment proposal on the board (this is the current version that was revised from Paul’s original in 1943):

“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”
| Step by Step Instructions (continued) | Ask students if they agree or disagree that this statement should be part of the United States Constitution (thumbs up/down, pair/share, or discuss). Why do you think women wanted an amendment protecting women's rights beyond the right to vote? Tell students that this amendment was introduced in every session of Congress from 1923 to 1970, without ever being presented for a vote. In the 1970s, Congress finally voted for the amendment and sent it to states for ratification.  

**Step Two:**  
To understand why activists wanted an Equal Rights Amendment, let’s look to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which inspired a renewed women's rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Begin the [Equal Rights Lesson Slideshow](#), which starts with a review of the 15th amendment. Follow the speaker notes to share the slideshow with your students. *Note* Although there are many overlapping qualities between the Civil Rights Movement and the women's movement, there were also significant differences. For example, protesters in the Selma march for voting rights faced severe consequences and were taking extreme personal risks (including the possibility of jail or death) which was not the same reality for the women protesting the City Club. This is yet another place to consider intersectionality. Black men had been admitted to the City Club decades before women. But it is also worth recognizing that the women protesting the discriminatory practices of the City Club and who initially protested for membership were primarily white.  

**Step Three:**  
When you arrive at slide #13, you will need to pause to teach vocabulary and check for understanding. This slide gives definitions for different types of social institutions that discriminated against women. You could ask students if they can give more examples in addition to the ones on the slide. You can also ask students why or how they think those institutions may have discriminated against women. Consider keeping a list of theories that you can come back to after students explore primary documents.  

**Step Four:**  
What were the priorities of the women’s caucus in the 1973 Oregon legislative session? What did they want and why? We will examine primary documents to better understand their goals and priorities. Give each student or pair of students a primary document. There are 12 total documents, so more than one student or student pair will have the same document. Each student or student pair should complete a primary document analysis sheet. The sheet contains definitions for... |
the different social institutions and provides an abbreviation key that will be helpful when deciphering the documents. Give students 10–20 minutes to read the document and complete the sheet.

**Step Five:**
Post four pieces of chart paper around the room. Title for each one of these different categories on their analysis sheet:
- Bills and Resolutions
- Issues and Proposed Changes
- Key Words
- Social Institutions

Have student pairs rotate in small groups to each chart paper and add notes in the form of words and phrases.

**Step Six:**
When everyone has added their notes, post all four chart papers in front of the class. Use these discussion questions to guide a class, small group, or pair/share discussion.
- Based on the documents we investigated, who was working to end sex discrimination in Oregon in the 1973 legislative session?
- What do the documents tell us about the types of sex discrimination proposed laws were trying to address? Did they succeed?
- What do the documents tell us about the political strategies used to end sex discrimination?
- Whose voices or perspectives were missing from the documents?
- What do you notice about the words we chose from the documents? What insights can we draw from them about the priorities of the women’s caucus?
- What did you learn that surprised you?
- What questions do you have after investigating documents and comparing notes? How might we find out the answers?

**Step Seven:**
Lastly, share with your students that although the ERA was ratified in Oregon, it was not ratified by the necessary number of states needed to be amended to the Constitution (see extension for activities on the anti-ERA movement, and Oregon’s 2014 referendum to adopt a statewide ERA).
### Step by Step Instructions (continued)

However, female lawmakers in Oregon continued to pass legislation that expanded access to more Oregonians in the years after 1973. Examples include:

- **Avel Gordly**, who among other priorities, championed **SB 785**, which created an Office of Multicultural Health.
- **Susan Castillo**, who among other priorities, sponsored bills on farmworker and immigrant rights.
- **Kathryn Harrison**, who pushed for tribal restoration to ensure the recognition of Indigenous peoples’ sovereignty.

### Assessments

- Document analysis sheets

**3-2-1 Exit Ticket Slip**

- What were three different legislative priorities held by the Oregon women’s caucus in 1973?
- Who were two women working to end sex discrimination in the 1973 legislative session?
- What was one law that was passed in 1973 to counter sex discrimination?

### Teacher Notes

The term “sex discrimination” may be unfamiliar to students, especially now when we may be more familiar with the term “gender discrimination.” This may be a good and necessary time for you to review the difference between sex and gender, and the two different/overlapping kinds of discrimination.

This lesson references the racist origin of the state’s constitution and other founding laws. For a comprehensive set of lessons on this topic, see the [Experience Oregon curriculum for grades 6–8](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/15th_amendment/) in which students analyze the lasting legacy of Oregon legislation in relation to its current racial diversity.

For more about Oregon and the 15th amendment:

https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/15th_amendment/

### Support for All Students

- Consider which documents would be a good fit for your individual students. Some documents are more text-heavy than others.
- Consider modeling document analysis with one of the documents as a whole class before breaking up into pairs. Documents #2 or #4 may be good options for this.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Extensions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Investigate the anti-ERA movement, led by women. Show students the following clip of the PBS documentary, “Makers: Women Who Make America” and this photo of Oregon women gleefully throwing ERA signs into a landfill. (Note the signs partially obscured in the photo: “RIP ERA” and “ERA Dies Today.”)</td>
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**Discussion questions:**

› What reasons did you hear for opposing the ERA?

› If you did the Nevertheless, They Persisted lesson on “Arguments For and Against Suffrage,” ask students to compare and contrast the anti-suffrage and anti-ERA arguments.

Over 45 years after the 1973 legislature session, have we elected a higher number of female lawmakers? What does congressional gender balance look like in Oregon? How about compared with other states? Use this site to explore these questions: [https://www.ncsl.org/legislators-staff/legislators/womens-legislative-network/women-in-state-legislatures-for-2018.aspx](https://www.ncsl.org/legislators-staff/legislators/womens-legislative-network/women-in-state-legislatures-for-2018.aspx)

Follow the unfolding story of the effort to add the ERA to the U.S. Constitution. The amendment has been passed in three more states, qualifying for ratification. See the ratification map here: [https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era-ratification-map](https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era-ratification-map). As of spring 2020, it is still uncertain if congress will allow the amendment to be ratified since it was not done before the 1982 deadline.


Tell students that in 2014, Oregon was one of several states to consider adding an Equal Rights Amendment to its state constitution. Look at the Voters’ Guide from 2014 to see the arguments supporters made for the amendment. Hand out copies of the Voters’ Guide for Ballot Measure 89, along with copies of the Note-taking Sheet for Voters’ Guide.

After students have completed reviewing the text and taking notes, ask them to select one of the issues from the first box in the sheet to learn more about. Students can then form small groups to learn more about the different issues and learn what has happened in Oregon since 2014. Topics will most likely include pay inequity, sexual harassment, domestic abuse/assault, and reproductive health rights.
### Extensions (continued)

Use the [Issues from 2014 Voters’ Guide Resource Sheet](#) as a starting point (or definitive list, depending on time) for research. Students can use chart paper to record a title, key facts (laws passed, supporting data, etc), and other information about this issue. Students present their findings to each other. This could be another opportunity to compare issues important to women today to issues important to women during the suffrage era. (See “Different Agendas: Why Did Women Want the Vote” lesson from *Nevertheless, They Persisted*). How have the issues changed? How have they stayed the same?

### Connect to the National Story

Other lessons on the national story of the ERA:

- “The Equal Rights Amendment” from the Digital Public Library of America.
- “The Equal Rights Amendment” from the National Women’s History Museum.
- “The Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s and Today” from the Center for Civic Education.
- Equal Rights Amendment ratification map.

### Additional Educator Resources

- *Oregon Encyclopedia* articles and other resources on the women leading legislative effort in 1973 and after:
  - Betty Roberts: [https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/roberts_betty_1923_2011/](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/roberts_betty_1923_2011/)
  - Norma Paulus: [https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/paulus-norma/](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/paulus-norma/) and an archive of her papers at Willamette University: [https://libmedia.willamette.edu/archives/as/repositories/2/resources/77](https://libmedia.willamette.edu/archives/as/repositories/2/resources/77)

- *Hewitt v. SAIF 653 P.2d 970 (1982)*: This case created the legal foundation of equality in all aspects of Oregonians’ lives, not the 2014 ERA initiative. Students can use a court decision to learn about the legal process.
- “*Oregon Ratified the Federal Equal Rights Amendment Almost 47 Years Ago and Added a State Version in 2014,*” *Oregonian*
- *Oregonian article* about Oregon’s Equal Rights Amendment
### Oregon Social Studies Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Middle School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>› 7.1 Describe the role of citizens in governments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 7.25 Identify issues related to historical events to recognize power, authority, religion, and governance as it relates to systemic oppression and its impact on Indigenous peoples and ethnic and religious groups, and other traditionally marginalized groups in the modern era.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>› 7.27 Critique and analyze information for point of view, historical context, distortion, propaganda, and relevance including sources with conflicting information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 7.28 Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 7.29 Assess individual and collective capacities to take informed action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levers of power, strategies and potential outcomes.</td>
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<td>› 8.4 Examine the evolution of political parties and interest groups and their effect on events, issues, and ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 8.5 Examine and analyze important United States and Oregon documents, including (but not limited to) the Constitution, Bill of Rights, 13th–15th amendments and Oregon Constitution.</td>
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<td>› 8.7 Analyze the expanding eligibility of citizenship in the continuing struggle for the expansion of rights for ethnic and traditionally marginalized groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 8.8 Analyze important political and ethical values such as freedom, democracy, equality, equity, and justice embodied in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.</td>
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<td>› 8.9 Analyze the effect of historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 8.10 Explain specific roles and responsibilities of citizens (such as voters, jurors, taxpayers, members of the armed forces, petitioners, protesters, and office-holders).</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 8.14 Investigate how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals within a group (such as enslaved people, Indigenous peoples, women, and children), businesses, and society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› 8.22 Evaluate continuity and change over the course of United States history by analyzing examples of conflict, compromise, cooperation, interdependence, and social justice from multiple perspectives.</td>
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<td>Oregon Social Studies Standards (continued)</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>8.25</strong> Evaluate the influence of the intersections of identity, including but not limited to gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, and class on the experiences of peoples, groups, and events</td>
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<td>› <strong>8.27</strong> Determine and explain the importance and contributions (products, events, actions, and ideas) of key people, cultures, ethnic groups (including individuals who are American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian or Americans of African, Asian, Pacific Island, Chicano, Latino, or Middle Eastern descent), religious groups, and other traditionally marginalized groups (women, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees, and individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender) in Oregon, the United States, and the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>8.28</strong> Identify issues related to historical events to recognize power, authority, and governance as it relates to systemic oppression and its impact on ethnic and religious groups, as well as other historically persecuted individuals in the United States in the modern era (bias, injustice, discrimination, and stereotypes).</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>8.29</strong> Use and interpret relevant primary and secondary sources pertaining to U.S. history from multiple perspectives.</td>
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<td>› <strong>8.30</strong> Synthesize information and data to construct an account of historical events that includes multiple sources and varied perspectives.</td>
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<td>› <strong>8.31</strong> Analyze intersecting identities and relationships within the living histories of ethnic groups such as individuals who are American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian or Americans of African, Asian, Pacific Island, Chicano, Latino, or Middle Eastern descent), religious groups, and other traditionally marginalized groups (women, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees, and individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender) in the United States.</td>
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<td>› <strong>8.32</strong> Critique and analyze information for point of view, historical context, distortion, bias propaganda and relevance including sources with conflicting information in order to question the dominant narratives in history.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>8.33</strong> Analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.</td>
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<td>Oregon Social Studies Standards (continued)</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.1</strong> Analyze the impact of constitutional amendments on groups, individuals, institutions, national order.</td>
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<td>› <strong>HS.5</strong> Evaluate the relationships among governments at the local, state, tribal, national, and global levels.</td>
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<td>› <strong>HS.7</strong> Analyze political parties, interest and community groups, and mass media and how they influence the beliefs and behaviors of individuals, and local, state, and national constituencies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.9</strong> Examine and evaluate documents related to the Constitution and Supreme Court decisions (such as Declaration of Independence, Federalist Papers, Anti-Federalist Papers, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Constitutional amendments).</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.10</strong> Explain the roles and responsibilities of active members of a democracy and the role of individuals, social movements, and governments in various current events.</td>
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<td>› <strong>HS.11</strong> Examine the pluralistic realities of society recognizing issues of equity and evaluating the need for change.</td>
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<td>› <strong>HS.54</strong> Evaluate continuity and change over the course of world and United States history.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.63</strong> Identify and analyze ethnic groups (including individuals who are American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian or Americans of African, Asian, Pacific Island, Chicano, Latino, or Middle Eastern descent), religious groups, and other traditionally marginalized groups (women, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees, and individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender), their relevant historic and current contributions to Oregon the United States, and the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.65</strong> Identify and analyze the nature of systemic oppression on ethnic and religious groups, as well as other traditionally marginalized groups, in the pursuit of justice and equality in Oregon, the United States and the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.66</strong> Examine and analyze the multiple perspectives and contributions of ethnic and religious groups, as well as traditionally marginalized groups within a dominant society and how different values and views shape Oregon, the United States, and the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.67</strong> Evaluate historical sources for perspective, limitations, accuracy, and historical context.</td>
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<tr>
<td>› <strong>HS.74</strong> Analyze an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon, critiquing and evaluating characteristics, influences, causes, and both short- and long-term effects.</td>
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