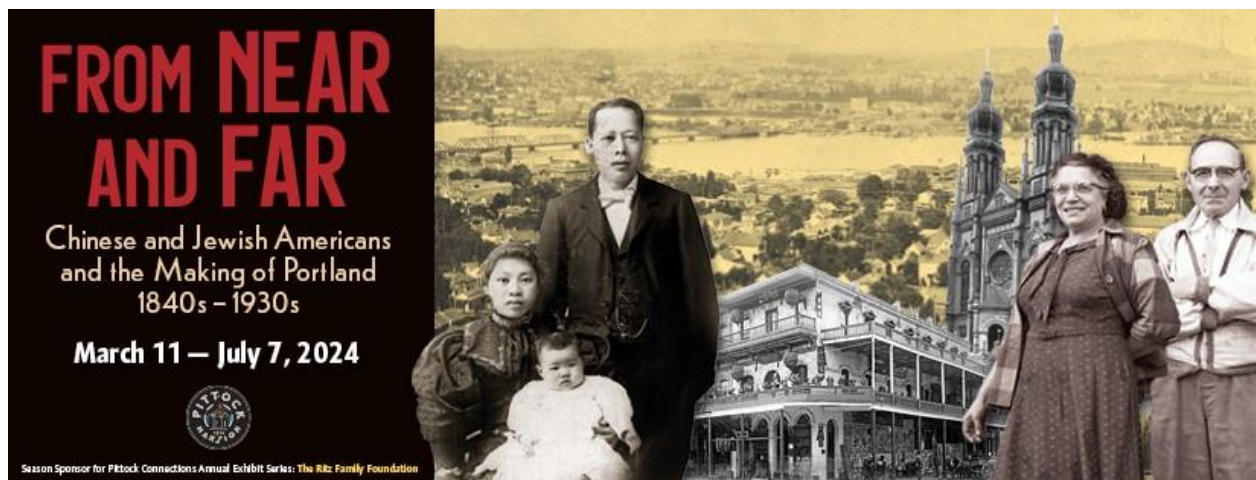




Pittock Mansion

On Display until July 7, 2024

From Near and Far: Chinese and Jewish Americans and the Making of Portland



Overview

For Teachers

Though often overlooked, Chinese and Jewish Portlanders are among the city's founders and first non-Native people to settle in Portland. Both the Chinese and Jewish communities are as integral to the development of Portland just like Henry Pittock and other recognized founders. They have lived here since the late 1840s, shortly before the city's incorporation in 1851. At turn of 20th century, Chinese people made up 10% of Portland's total population, however, it is known that that number is an undercount. Their contributions in business, agriculture, and industry transformed Portland from a 2.1 square-mile stumptown into a city. Faced with different, but overlapping challenges and prejudices, Chinese and Jewish Portlanders created resilient and dynamic communities that shifted and broadened the definitions of what it means to an Oregonian and a Portlander.

ODE Standards Alignment

This exhibit explores themes of how a local group of people shaped history, overcame adversity, and shows historical sources and artifacts to illuminate this history. This lesson and the exhibit fulfills ODE standards of Historical Knowledge, Historical Thinking, and Social Science Analysis. Below is a sampling of the ODE standards this information covers for the 3rd grade.

Historical Knowledge (Focus: Our Community and Beyond [Emphasis on Oregon Geography and Local/Regional History])

3.11 * Describe how the inclusion or exclusion of individuals, social and 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 has shaped events and development of the local community and region.

8 3.12 * Describe how the identity of the local community shaped its history and compare to other communities in the region.

Historical Thinking

3.13 Apply research skills and technologies to gather information about the past in a region.

3.14 Explain why individuals and groups (e.g. socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious groups, and other traditionally marginalized groups) in the same historical period differed in the way they viewed and interpreted historical events.

3.15 Explain how sources serve different purposes for answering historical questions.

3.16 Generate questions using multiple historical sources and examine their validity.

Social Science Analysis

3.17 Use a variety of historical sources including artifacts, pictures and documents to identify factual evidence.

3.18 * Identify how systems of power, including white supremacy, institutional racism, racial hierarchy, and oppression affect the perspectives of different individuals and groups when examining an event, issue, or problem with an emphasis on multiple perspectives.

3.19 Analyze different ways that people, other living things, and the environment might be affected by an event, issue, or problem.

Lesson

From Near and Far: Chinese and Jewish Americans and the Making of Portland

Chinese and Jewish people were some of the first immigrants to settle in Portland. The earliest Chinese people who came to Portland were from southern China. The first Jewish people who came to Portland came from central Europe. The Jewish people who came to Portland mostly came from Germany.

Chinese and Jewish immigrants made important contributions that helped Portland grow from a rustic town into a city. Between the 1840s and 1910s, both groups lived and worked near in the southwestern part of downtown Portland. Chinese Portlanders worked as laborers, doctors, store owners, farmers, cooks, launderers, and more. Jewish Portlanders worked as store owners, doctors, politicians, businessmen, junk peddlers, and more. The buildings they built and the stores they owned were some of the first places established in Portland.

Both groups faced discrimination. The city and state limited the ability of Chinese people to own property and did not allow Chinese people to marry white people. In 1882, the United States passed the Chinese Exclusion Act which made it illegal for Chinese workers to enter the United States. Jewish people were often not allowed to join social clubs or buy homes in certain neighborhoods. In 1924, the United States passed the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1924. This law which made it very difficult for Jewish people to immigrate to the United States. Although Chinese and Jewish Portlanders had fewer rights than white people, many still became very successful and created meaningful lives for themselves and their families in Portland.

Think about it:

How did the Chinese community help shape the beginnings of the City of Portland? How did the Jewish Community?

What do you think life was like for Chinese and Jewish people in Portland 100-150 years ago?

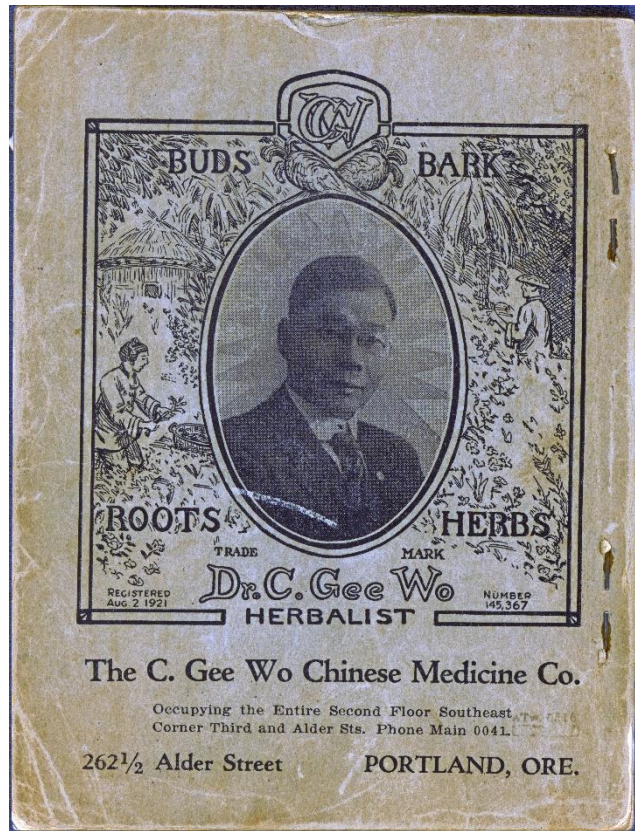
Looking at these pictures below were some types of work that Chinese and Jewish Portlanders did? How did their work help Portland grow? How did their work help the people of Portland?



Photos courtesy of Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education



Photo courtesy Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

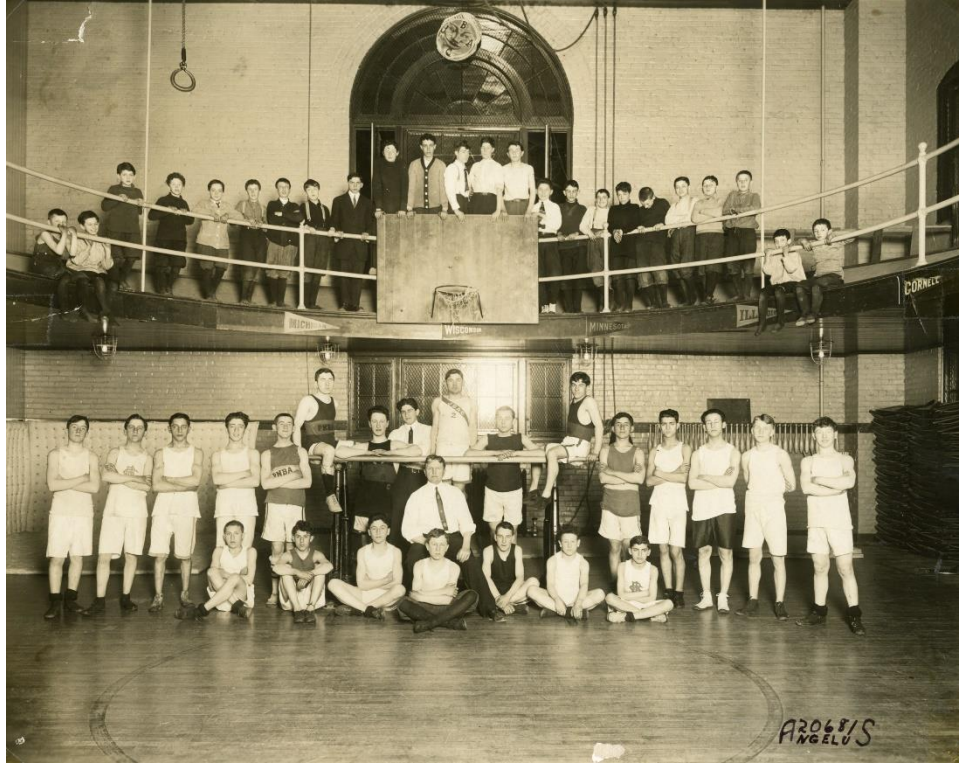


C. Gee Wo Chinese Medicine Co., Photo courtesy Norm Gholston Collection



Andrew Kan's Store, Photo courtesy Norm Gholston Collection

Looking at these pictures what are some of the things Jewish children did in Portland?



Photos courtesy of Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

Wo-Miller Shops



Photo courtesy of Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

This photograph is of a building at SW 3rd and Alder Streets—downtown Portland--(circa 1924) The signs on the outside of the building tell us what businesses were inside. On the ground floor is the Miller's for Men clothing store, owned by Henry Miller, a Jewish immigrant from Germany. On the second floor is the C. Gee Wo Chinese Medical Company, owned by Dr. C. Gee Wo from China.

What things do you see in this picture that tell you that the picture is from a long time ago?

What types of businesses were on the first and second floor? What could someone buy from these places?

Who do you think visited these businesses?

How might the customers who visited the medical company on the 2nd floor be different from the customers who visited the clothing store on the first floor?

Neighborhood House

Neighborhood House was started by a group of Jewish women who were a part of the National Council of Jewish Women, Portland section. When it began, Neighborhood House offered English classes, a Kindergarten, and vocational training. These classes helped new immigrants find jobs and gain U.S. citizenship. Neighborhood House is an organization that still exists today. Now, it still operates in many ways to serve the community. There are many locations in Portland that provide programs. These programs are early education, housing, and assistance for senior citizens among many other services. The original Neighborhood House building is now home to Cedarwood school.

This is the original Neighborhood House building located in south Portland circa 1925.



Photo courtesy Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

This is a picture of a Kindergarten class at Neighborhood House circa 1925. How is this classroom similar to classrooms today?

How is this classroom different from classrooms you see today?



Photo courtesy Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

This picture shows a cooking class for new immigrants at Neighborhood House. Imagine this cooking class was taught at your school today. What would be different?



Photo courtesy Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

This is a current photo of the original Neighborhood House building today. It is now Cedarwood School.



In Gallery Activity (these questions along with the previous material can be combined to create an in-gallery activity for students)

Write 3 main facts for both communities:

Chinese Portlanders

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Jewish Portlanders

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Write 1 question you have about both communities.

Chinese Portlanders

Jewish Portlanders
