

# EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY & THE “AGE OF OIL”

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AN AGE OF SCIENCE, MEDICINE, INDUSTRY, AND URBANIZATION

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**HOW DID TEXAS PROGRESSIVES SEEK TO EDUCATE THE  
PUBLIC ON ISSUES OF SCIENCE AND HEALTH?**

# EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY IN THE U.S. IS PART OF WHAT IS OFTEN CALLED THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

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- Typically in US history:
  - Varies but usually 1877/1890-1917/1920
- Some Texas Historians have claimed that Progressive Era in Texas ran through the 1920s (example Robert Maxwell argued 1900-1930 in his article in *Texas: A Sesquicentennial Celebration*)
- Era gets its name from the reformers during the period, often called “The Progressives”
- Today we will focus on events around 1900-1920

# EVENTS AND TRENDS SHAPING THIS ERA

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- Increased Urbanization
- Increased Use of Drilling of Oil and Increased Industry—Spindle Top, for example, 1901
- Increased Access and Focus on Science and Related Health—Germ Theory, last decades of 1800s
- Increased Transportation and Communication Capabilities

# TEXAS URBANIZATION

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- **1880:**

- Galveston (22,284)
- San Antonio (20,550)
- Houston (16,513)
- Austin (11,013)
- Dallas (10,358)

- **1900:**

- San Antonio (53,321)
- Houston (44,633)
- Dallas (42,638)
- Galveston (37,789)
- Fort Worth (26,668)

- **1920:**

- One-third of Texans already lived in metropolitan areas of 2,500 or more.
- San Antonio 161,379
- Dallas (158,976)
- Houston (138,276)
- Fort Worth (106,482)
- El Paso (77,460)



# WHO WERE THE PROGRESSIVES?

## TRAITS SHARED BY MOST “PROGRESSIVES”

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- Optimistic
  - They were invested in the belief that change was possible and that their change was the *right way to go*
- Often invested in idea that “newer is better”
  - Influenced by modernity
- Looking for answers to problems
- Invested in the role of experts/science to lead to solutions
- **\*\*\*Very often act as part of a larger group/organization/association\*\*\***
- Often, but not always, middle-class reformers
- “Progressive” did not mean egalitarian/equal

# “ASSOCIATIONALISM”

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- Most often, Progressives sought answers and reform avenues through associationalism, public appeal, government lobbying, or a mixture of some or all of these.

# EXAMPLES OF SOME TEXAS “PROGRESSIVE ERA” ASSOCIATIONS/ORGANIZATIONS

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- Texas Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (1881/1882)
- Women’s World’s Fair Exhibit Association of Texas (1890)
- Daughters of the Republic of Texas (1891)
- Texas Woman’s Press Association (1893)
- Texas United Daughters of the Confederacy (1896)
- Colored Division of the Texas WCTU (1897)
- Texas Federation of Women’s Clubs (1897)
- Texas Mother’s Congress/Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers (1909)
- Texas Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (1905)—now called the Texas Association of Women’s Clubs
- La Liga Femenil Mexicanista (1911)
- La Cruz Blanca (1913)
- Texas NAACP branches (1915+)
- Texas Equal Rights Association (1893)...Texas Woman Suffrage Association (1903)...
- Texas Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor (1920)



# CORPUS CHRISTI—A CASE STUDY

- Texas Federation of Women's Clubs & Woman's Monday Club-Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi Clubs (including the Woman's Monday Club)

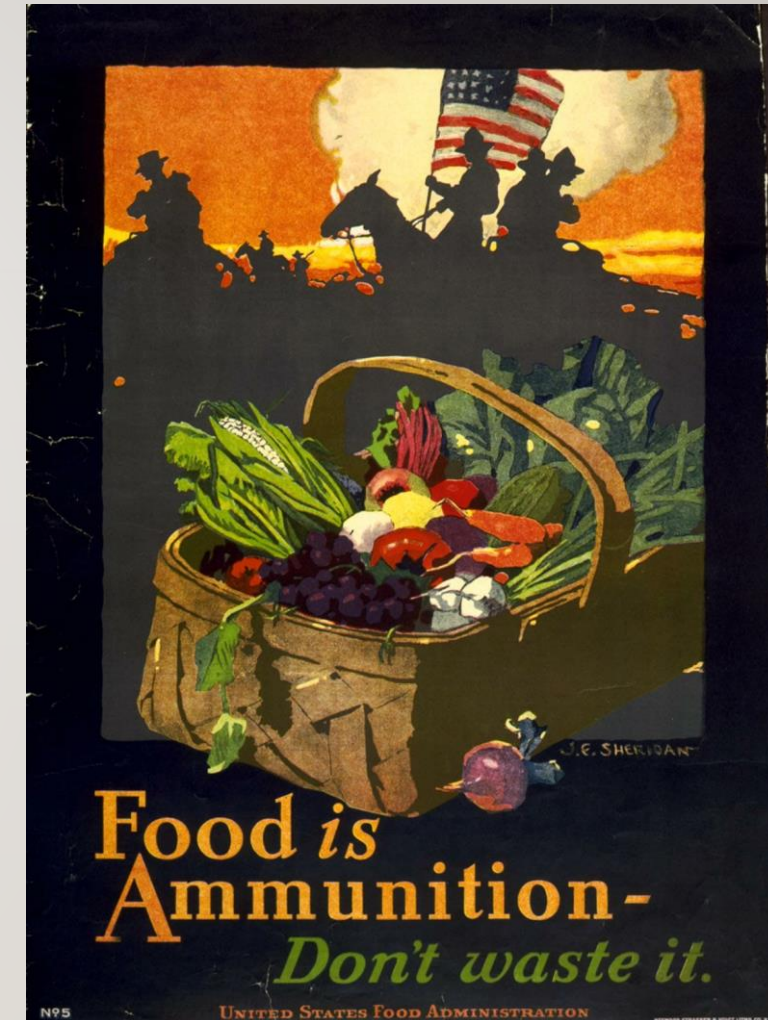
- Participated in Mosquito Eradication
- City Clean-Up Activities
- Inspections of Bakeries and Other Local Commercial Food Establishments





# WORLD WAR I—A NEW FOCUS FOR ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZING

- Once the U.S. mobilized to enter WWI—financial sources, goods and services had to be dedicated to the needs of military troops and other groups being gathered for training and then transported to Europe.
- Organizations and Associations all over Texas started to focus on using their reform structures to benefit the war effort.
- One of the focus was to produce as much food at home to preserve the industrial production to ship food and goods to U. S. troops, support services, and residents of war torn nations.



- TEKS— 7.1 Analyze the political, economic, and social impact of major events, including World War I, ... on the history of Texas

# UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICES WERE A FORM OF PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

- Ways Higher Ed Supported Texans' Lives
  - Access to Information BUT ALSO access to expensive equipment
- Canning and Food Preservation Assistance Provided for the War Effort and Provided Texans with everyday assistance
  - Certain foods need to be processed at higher rates of heat and pressure to be preserved safely
  - The equipment to do this is expensive and requires knowledge and access to safely and properly run



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VOL. XXX.

LIBERTY, TEXAS, FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1917.

NO. 5.

## A SYSTEMATIC PLAN TO SAVE ALL FOODS IN TEXAS

Three Hundred Young Women Will Demonstrate in Canning, Drying Fruits and Vegetables.

Systematic and organized effort to prevent the wastage of one bit of fruit or vegetables which may be canned or preserved and thus saved for the country will be waged in every county of the State if the citizens of these counties co-operate with the extension service of the Agricultural and Mechanical College. Letters appealing to the county judges of every Texas county to pave the way for the assignment of one of the 300 young women who will be available for work as demonstrators in canning and drying of fruits and vegetables have been sent out by Director Ousley of the extension service.

These 300 young women will come from the University of Texas, the College of Industrial Arts and the various normal schools. Director Ousley has been advised by the heads of those schools that there will be at least 300 young women, trained in canning and drying of fruits, ready for this work by June 1.

The plan is to assign these young women, who will work without remuneration other than actual expenses, to the various counties, as they may be needed, to work under the general supervision of the extension service

In his letter to the county judges Director Ousley has urged that these officials, as the most conspicuous county officers, assemble the leading women of the town and country districts to discuss this plan. Transportation and living expenses must be borne by the counties which these young women are assigned. Each county also will be asked to purchase a demonstration kit, which will cost \$8. The ladies will be asked to perfect permanent organization in order that definite schedules for work may be made to the end that none of the young ladies' time shall be wasted.

It also is requested that the demonstrators be entertained in the homes of the county. County judges are requested to advise the extension service of the number of young women needed.

Every school has entered heartily into the work and the young women are eager to discharge this patriotic service.

Enough fruit and vegetables will go to waste through June and July to feed the whole State during the winter unless the plan can be carried out successfully. Just as soon as the various county judges are heard from the assignments for the various counties will begin.

# PRIMARY SOURCE DISCUSSION

