

Prohibition became an even more important political issue in the early 1900s. The Dallas Morning News described prohibition as the "paramount [dominant] . . . issue in our politics." Candidates often ran for election chiefly on the prohibition issue. In 1917 U.S. senator Morris Sheppard of Texas sponsored a constitutional amendment for national prohibition. The Eighteenth Amendment won the support of enough state legislatures—including the Texas legislature—to be ratified in 1919. As a result, the manufacture and sale of alcohol became illegal throughout the nation in 1920.

Reading Check Analyzing Information How did prohibition affect the Texas Democratic Party?

That's Interestina

Preserving the Alamo

Texas women took up many causes, such as preserving the state's historic structures. In the early 1900s, Adina de Zavala and Clara Driscoll worked with the Daughters of the Republic of Texas to save the Alamo. The old mission had been purchased by a wholesale grocery company and fallen into poor condition. Driscoll used her personal fortune to buy the Alamo property, helping to save it for future generations.

The Suffrage Movement

Women played a key role not only in prohibition but also in most progressive reforms. They fought to protect working mothers' rights and for new laws limiting child labor, ensuring food safety, and requiring school attendance. Some women even held political office. In 1918 Annie Webb Blanton became the first woman to win election to a Texas state office. She served as the state's superintendent of public instruction. As state superintendent, she helped establish a system of free textbooks, revise the teacher certification process, and improve rural education.

An overriding issue for women of the time was the effort to gain the right to vote. In 1913 Eleanor Brackenridge was chosen president of the Texas Woman Suffrage Association, later known as the Texas Equal Suffrage Association. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, Annie Webb Blanton, and Jane McCallum were other important suffrage leaders in Texas. Association leaders believed that "no state can be a true democracy in which one half of the people are denied the right to vote." They campaigned across Texas in favor of voting rights for women. However, the suffragists faced strong opposition in the state. Cunningham and the other suffrage leaders struggled to convince Texans that women should be allowed to participate in the state's politics.

Women in other states were also working for suffrage. Finally, in 1919 the U.S. Congress proposed the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting women the right to vote. The Texas legislature ratified the amendment in June 1919, and in 1920 women across the nation were able to vote.

Jane McCallum and other leaders went on to work with the Women's Joint Legislative Council. This group focused on education, prison reform, and child-labor issues. Nicknamed the Petticoat Lobby, this group was an influential force in Texas politics for years to come. Reading Check Summarizing How did Texas women exercise their civic responsibilities in the early 1900s?



Limits of Reform

African American and Mexican American women in Texas also fought for reforms. In many cases, however, they were not welcomed by white reformers. For example, many women's suffrage groups were white only. Nonetheless, Christia Adair, a black Texan, worked for women's suffrage and equal rights for all black Texans. In South Texas, Jovita Idar organized people to support women's rights as well as rights for Mexican Americans in Texas. She also campaigned for education for poor children. Like many Texas women, Idar played an active role in reform efforts during the Progressive Era. Despite the efforts of Adair, Idar, and others, measures were passed in Texas denying suffrage to members of minority groups. Voting in local Democratic primary elections was restricted to white Texans only. In 1902 Texas began to require a poll tax, a tax on voting. As a result, poor Texans, many of whom were African American and Mexican American, could not afford to vote.

African Americans in Texas were denied the benefits of reform in other areas as well. The state legislature and city governments passed more Jim Crow laws during the early 1900s. Between 1910 and 1925, several Texas towns imposed segregated housing laws. Public facilities, restaurants, and hotels—even drinking fountains—were segregated. African Americans also faced racial violence. Increased racial hostility sometimes led to the lynching—or killing by a mob—of black citizens. Many years would go by before laws were passed to help protect the rights of African Americans and Mexican Americans in Texas.

Reading Check Finding the Main Idea What were some of the limits of reform?



BIOGRAPHY

Jovita Idar (1885-1946) As a young woman, Jovita Idar of Laredo worked for her father's newspaper, La Crónica. The news paper became a political tool for Mexican Americans. Idar helped establish the League of Mexican Women and served as its first president. After her marriage in 1917, Idar moved to San Antonio. There she was active in community service and served as an interpreter for Spanishspeaking patients in a hospital. How did Jovita Idar exercise her civic responsibilities in her lifetime?



Section 4 Review

hmhsocialstudies.com **ONLINE QUIZ**

1. Define and explain:

- temperance movement
- prohibition
- poll tax

2. Identify and explain

the significance of the following:

- * Eighteenth Amendment
- * Annie Webb Blanton
- Jane McCallum
- * Nineteenth Amendment
- * Jovita Idar

3. Analyzing Information

Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to show how activists in Texas affected national progressive reforms.

> Eighteenth Amendment

Nineteenth Amendment

4. Finding the Main Idea

- a. Explain the different points of view held by members of the Democratic Party on prohibition. How did differing points of view affect the party?
- b. Who did not benefit from the progressives" reforms?

5. Writing and Critical Thinking Wittenny

Summarizing Write an editorial on the achievements and the limitations of the effort to expand democracy in the Progressive Era.

Consider the following:

- * the Nineteenth Amendment
- the poll tax and Jim Crow laws