

# Touchstone



## ON THE COVER

Dr. Ruth Ann Belinger was born in 1908 in San Antonio, where she later became an OBGYN. Dr. Belinger went to Douglas High and St. Peter Claver's Academy in San Antonio and later graduated from Howard University School of Medicine.

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# Touchstone

WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# The Legacy of Hurricane Ike on Galveston, Houston, and the Southeast Texas Coast

By Lana Tran, San Jacinto College

**O**n September 13, 2008, Hurricane Ike made landfall on Galveston Island. With winds of 110 miles per hour that spread 275 miles wide and water that rose up to twenty feet high, Hurricane Ike affected large areas including Galveston and Houston, as well as Texas residents, properties, and wildlife in various ways.

As often happens, Ike's path was unclear. At first it was projected to hit land at Corpus Christi before turning to the Galveston coast. Due to the uncertainty, local officials hesitated before issuing a mandatory evacuation for some coastal areas. The Galveston officials hoped the hurricane would move farther to the west, but as it kept moving towards the Galveston coast, they finally issued a mandatory evacuation.

Before the hurricane struck the Texas coast, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimated that about 100,000 houses would be flooded, many would not have food, and millions of residents would not have power.

With less than forty-eight hours left until landfall, officials finally issued a mandatory evacuation. On September 12, a day before the hurricane hit the Texas coast, evacuation became extremely challenging, if not impossible, as many streets in the coastal areas were already flooded. The National Weather Service (NWS) went as far as to warn the coastal residents, who were outside the seawall's protection, that they "will or may face certain death." Even with the warning from the NWS, some residents were not able to leave

and weathered the hurricane directly. With 20,000 residents failing to evacuate and approximately 140,000 residents remaining in the path of Hurricane Ike, some residents died, while others had to face life-endangering conditions.

In Houston, the storm surge reached Category 5 status even though Ike fell to a high Category 2 by landfall. Long lines were seen in many areas as residents tried to buy gas and ice to prepare for the storm. Also, widespread power outages were frequent and caused 2.6 million people to go without power for up to several weeks. To get the power working again the power company, CenterPoint Energy, used out-of-state help as well as their own linemen. Due to the power outages and storm surge, a curfew from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. was issued for a brief time. The penalty for violating the curfew was time in jail or a fine up to \$2,000.

Even the seawall, built on the coastline of Galveston Island after the Great Storm of 1900, provided little protection to the areas near the coast when Ike struck. For example, the Galveston wastewater treatment plant closed because of Hurricane Ike and was not rebuilt until 2016. The cost of the repairs to this plant was \$85 million. The hurricane went through twenty-six counties in Texas and caused about 16,000 Texas residents to live in shelters, with 10,000 Galveston residents to leaving and never coming back.

In Houston, the homeless lined up at emergency shelters in hopes of receiving a bed or at least a spot on the floor during the hurricane. For example, the Salvation Army was able to provide

shelter for families and men. They had space for about 400 to 600 men every night, about double the amount of men they normally accommodate. There was limited space in these emergency shelters, so some homeless people were forced to remain on the streets as the shelters quickly filled up. Officials attempted to solve that problem in two ways, one by encouraging people to use any abandoned buildings or parking garages they could find to weather the storm. The other solution involved evacuating some homeless out of Houston on buses.

Hurricane Ike, with its strong winds and storm surge, caused major flooding in the Galveston area, with many houses damaged. While the hurricane was a Category 2 when it hit Galveston, some people believed that the category needed to be higher because of the size of the hurricane. Its winds stretched for hundreds of miles, although, the category given to a hurricane is based on the force of the wind and not size. For instance, the storm surge was much larger than a Category 2 and more indicative of a Category 5. The rainfall, wind, and storm surge caused major damage to properties in this area of Texas. For example, hotels were swept off the ground, only leaving concrete slabs. However, property damage due to flooding was not all that the storm did.

Many objects of various sizes resurfaced because of Hurricane Ike. For instance, a vessel from the Civil War was uncovered in Galveston Bay which was not visible before the hurricane. Hurricane Ike brought this ship to a place that was more visible, giving people the ability to see the outline of the ship in the water. However, this was not the only ship—three more shipwrecks were found after Hurricane Ike. A survey using a side-scan sonar, which detects objects underwater, was done from Freeport to Sabine Pass by the Texas General Land Office. The ships were found in somewhat shallow areas. Steve Hoyt, a maritime archeologist, believed the ships were found because the sand shifted. Two of the three ships were conclusively identified as Civil War blockade runners, named Will of the West and the Acadia. The third ship, the Caroline, may have been a Civil War

blockade runner, although it could not be proven.

Due to the high-water levels in the areas that were affected by the hurricane, the mosquito population increased, and brought a higher possibility for mosquito-borne diseases to spread. In one instance, an elderly man's house became swarmed by mosquitos, and he received approximately 1,000 bites. He was later flown to a hospital and treated.

Galveston Island, beyond the seawall, was left relatively unprotected and the damages reflected that fact. In some areas, the houses and other structures were completely lifted off of their foundation and demolished. In Kemah, twenty miles inland, Ike damaged the seaside boardwalk, an important regional tourist attraction. Apart from the physical damage, Ike also affected businesses, as about eighty-five percent of Galveston's business base experienced loss.

A more personal account of the damages seen from Hurricane Ike would be that of Samantha Tran. Her family owns Rose's Seafood, founded in 1980. After a previous hurricane, the family moved into another building that was raised by sixteen feet. Even with this elevated height, their new building was still damaged by Ike, causing the family to push back their opening date by about a year.

Many parks along the Gulf of Mexico were adversely affected by Hurricane Ike. The Sea Rim, a state park located on the Gulf of Mexico, faced total devastation. The park, built on stilts, turned out to be the toughest challenge for the Park Service's Regional Maintenance Specialist, Jimmy Watson, to fix and reopen. Since the flooding was from salt water, the state was forced to replace everything. Visitors came to the Sea Rim to enjoy the natural world and to catch sight of animals such as alligators and birds. Not all of the buildings were reconstructed because of this park's many purposes. At the time of Hurricane Ike, Watson was already helping with the rebuilding efforts for multiple state parks along the Gulf of Mexico.



When Ike struck the Sea Rim, Watson immediately refocused his plans and set new goals using his department's limited budget and staff. Watson's focus was not solely on his job, he was also concerned with people in the surrounding area. Watson and the Park Service worked to get electricity for these residents by locating generators.

Besides power problems, Hurricane Ike effected a lot of physical structures, both man-made and natural. For one, big maintenance buildings were shifted off their foundations. In addition, sand dunes, which protect the beach, were torn up, taking years to rebuild. Also, hundreds of feet of beach were lost because of Ike, contributing to the island slowly shrinking.

In Galveston, many houses were left vacant after the hurricane. Buildings with more than fifty percent damaged were the slowest to rebuild and repair. By 2013, there was still no restoration progress for many of these properties. Instead, what was left was simply empty lots or decrepit buildings. More than 48,000 properties in Galveston County declined in value. The apartments in lower-income areas suffered the most as their appraised values decreased by fifty-one percent, making it financially impossible for these buildings to be rebuilt or repaired.

Houses and properties in minority and low-income areas suffered greater damage than those of majority and high-income areas, with Hispanics and African Americans suffering the most. These areas also seemed to have the lowest rates of rebuilding, perhaps because the owners of the properties were not insured and, therefore, no funds to rebuild were available. Some of the properties included shacks, trailers, and low-value buildings in parts of Galveston, San Leon, and the Bolivar Peninsula. On the Bolivar Peninsula, brutal waves shoved some buildings off their foundation. For the other homes, the water had risen high and destroyed the interior of properties. For example, John Harry, living in a low-value building, came to his house thinking it would be undamaged because of how it looked on the outside. Although, when he

opened the door, he saw that the inside of the house was very damaged by the water that left behind mold, making it necessary to replace all the sheet-rock.

More than seventy-five percent of the residential structures on Galveston Island were damaged because of Hurricane Ike. In addition, out of the 7,000 documented properties on Galveston Island, 1,500 of them were considered seriously damaged. With waves reaching fifteen feet in height and very strong winds, the damage to these properties was severe. In addition, four of the public housing developments were situated in neighborhoods that were low income and had the highest percentages of people of color. The Galveston Housing Agency (GHA) owned 900 public housing units before Hurricane Ike struck. After the hurricane, 528 of the units experienced significant damage. As a result, 578 families were immediately displaced. Yet, ten years after the hurricane, only 282 of the apartments were rebuilt and less than half of the displaced residents remained on Galveston Island.

As the hurricane began to lessen in severity, the Galveston residents noticed the apartments were not being rebuilt. They began questioning whether the Galveston authorities were planning on rebuilding them at all. Some residents even accused Galveston authorities of trying to decrease their minority population by not rebuilding these apartments. Heber Taylor, an editor for *The Galveston County Daily News*, said he believed many people had the idea that Galveston Island would be a better place if the low-income residents left. This was true to some extent, as some people with authority simply did not want to rebuild public housing. For example, the position of Lewis Rosen, the mayor of Galveston in 2012, was to not rebuild the public housing at all.

In the aftermath of the storm and many edifices that were left destroyed, the question of how the buildings in Houston and Galveston should be rebuilt arose. The buildings and structures would have to be rebuilt to better respond to any hurricane

or flooding that may occur in the future. Thus, Galveston made some changes in the building codes after Hurricane Ike.

Hurricane Ike caused some unusual losses. For instance, Tom Cooper, a complex manager for the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, struggled to repair the damages that the Anahuac Wildlife Refuge experienced. In this area, parts of the marshes were ripped apart, and then dumped into dikes and ditches, causing the wildlife to suffer substantially. Focusing largely on the salt water in the marshes, Cooper explained how the salt water that flooded the refuge, mixed with the fresh water, therefore contaminating it.

Livestock such as cattle and horses were also greatly affected by the salt water. The high concentration of salt water destroyed grazing lands as well as ruined the drinking water in stock ponds. Tyler Fitzgerald, a state agriculture agent, said the grass absorbed too much salt water and when the livestock ate it, they became dehydrated. Furthermore, because the fences holding the animals on the livestock owner's property were torn down, the animals wandered or even floated away. In Jefferson and Chambers Counties, approximately 20,000 cattle and horses were lost or had to be rounded up.

In addition to the physical and environmental damage done because of Hurricane Ike, people experienced adverse mental health effects. Surviving a natural disaster is a very stressful experience. Some survivors went on to face problems because their exposure to Hurricane Ike exposed them to extreme mental strain. Some of these problems include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, grief, anxiety, and substance abuse. Victims of Hurricane Ike with symptoms of PTSD and depression, lost belongings that were of high sentimental value, impacting their sense of identity.

Due to the mental health issues brought up by Hurricane Ike, the demand for social support was high. After a natural disaster, like Ike, social support is important to fight against post-traumatic

stress. Further, social support does not only mean emotional support, but also informational assistance and tangible support, such as how to get loans, to get help for cleaning, and to get food. After Hurricane Ike, with only a small amount of emotional support, people experienced higher rates of post-traumatic stress. The higher level of post-traumatic stress showed that the individuals did not receive enough of emotional help. The relationship between social support and PTSD after a natural disaster is bidirectional, meaning that if someone had PTSD, they would need social care.

Ike turned out to be one of the costliest hurricanes in the history of the United States, with the damage done in Texas alone costing about \$29.5 billion. FEMA stated that approximately \$3.4 billion in losses from the hurricane was for total housing damage and only sixty-one percent of those houses were covered with insurance. Even more devastating than the damage done to properties, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed that seventy-four deaths had been related to Hurricane Ike, most of the deaths found in Harris County. The deaths were caused by factors like injuries, carbon monoxide poisoning, and drowning, with injuries being the most common cause of death and drowning being the least common.

On the Bolivar Peninsula, Delores Brookshire lived with Charles Allen Garrett, her disabled son. As the floodwaters continued to rise, she called her cousin, said her goodbyes, and said that she and her son were going to drown. Brookshire and Garrett were two of the seventy-four deaths related to Hurricane Ike.

When the hurricane hit, all six fire stations in Galveston were damaged by the storm surge and winds that were 110 miles per hour. Using the Ike disaster relief money given after the hurricane struck, a new fire station was built, one that was said to be able to take on the winds of a Category 5 hurricane that would have to be at least 157 miles per hour. The fire station was also raised to eleven feet above ground level, providing protection against storm surge.

Rescue groups were sent out to areas along the coast of Texas after Ike made landfall. The Bolivar Peninsula was the last part of the Texas coast that was searched by 115 searchers looking for survivors. Brad Janacek, a Coast Guard spokesman, said the Coast Guard helicopter crews sent to the peninsula rescued sixty-five people. The rescuers found no dead bodies. In flooded neighborhoods, firefighters drove city dump trucks to rescue those who called them for help.

Finding safe, clean drinking water during and after Ike was also a problem. While the water in The Woodlands and Sugar Land was safe, the water in Galveston and Houston was not. In Galveston, water needed to be boiled. In Houston, most of the water had to be boiled as well. To conserve city water, using bottled water was encouraged.

In the aftermath of the hurricane, many houses lost shingles and residents were forced to temporarily cover their roofs with blue tarps. Also, representatives of various social service programs needed to begin helping people with the damage done to their homes. One of these programs included the Blue Tarp Program, although, it did not just focus on fixing roofs that were damaged because of Hurricane Ike, it also focused on low-income residents who would not be able to pay for the repairs to their own homes. Some residents attempted to repair their homes prior to the implementation of the Blue Tarp Program, but those repairs were of very poor quality and did not fare well against different types of weather. Additionally, some programs that came before the Blue Tarp Program helped fix thousands of homes after Ike. The repairs with these programs became delayed because of various problems, like delinquent property taxes and questions on ownership.

The Blue Tarp Program required a person to qualify based on the amount of monetary damage to their house. For instance, if the damage to a property was assessed at more than \$65,000, then the house would not qualify for this program. Instead, the house would be directed to another

program that would be able to help it be torn down and replaced instead of just repairing all the damage done as it would have been too extensive.

After no more houses were eligible for repairs under any programs, Galveston began to just tear down houses with the federal disaster recovery money. Of the 1,700 houses damaged in Galveston by Ike, 1,450 were considered to be severely damaged or destroyed. Using \$1.5 million of the federal disaster recovery money, nearly 120 houses that were damaged were torn down. *The Galveston County Daily News* stated before houses would be torn down, the county would send letters to the property owners explaining what would happen. After the houses were torn down, then the owners of the properties would still have ownership of the land. If it cost less than \$30,000 to tear down a house, then it would be razed. Anything costing greater than \$30,000 would remain.

The brutal storm surge that hit Galveston and Houston worried the residents for other reasons as well. Several feared what would happen to the United States' petrochemical industry because of Ike. With the nation's largest refining and petrochemical complex located in Houston, the residents were scared that the damage would cause disruption to the industry and, in the event of an oil rupture of some sort, create an environmental disaster. Due to this fear, on September 11, 2008, a warning was sent out to alert the residents of Galveston and Houston that it was possible for entire coastal areas to be flooded. Additionally, at least fourteen refineries in Texas were closed before the hurricane struck. However, the hurricane shifted, and the wall of water that was pushed into Houston, while still large, was smaller than anticipated. Even though the storm surge was smaller than predicted, at least twelve drilling rigs and production platforms along the Gulf of Mexico were destroyed by the storm.

There were 37,000 people living in shelters, 22 million without power, and gas stations without either power or gasoline. After the storm, the gas companies Exxon Mobil, Shell, and Chevron sent generators to gas stations along the

routes to be prepared for when residents returned to Galveston or Houston. Texas residents became worried over how they would survive and accepted any help that was offered to them. For example, Texas Southern University gave out bags of ice along with bottled water, which led to a long line of people waiting to collect their allotment. LaChandra Noel, a thirty-three-year-old woman with a deaf and blind daughter, went through the trouble to bring her daughter in a wheelchair just to wait in the line for water and ice.

Shortly after Hurricane Ike left Galveston devastated, a marine scientist and professor at the Texas A&M University at Galveston, Bill Merrell, proposed the idea of Ike Dike, a coastal barrier that would protect Houston and Galveston from storm surge. If this coastal barrier was constructed, some people believed that it would protect Galveston and Houston from inland flooding when hurricanes strike; as storm surge was the greatest threat.

While the proposal by Bill Merrell was not accepted, the Army Corps of Engineers revised the plan for the structure. With three serious hurricanes closely missing Galveston and Houston after Hurricane Ike and threatening the nation's petrochemical industry, the need for this idea increased. The Corps design would cost an estimated \$26.2 billion and would consist of a huge sea gate that would stretch across the Houston Ship Channel as well as dunes and beaches along Galveston and the Bolivar Peninsula. With the new proposal by the Corps came disagreements. Several environmentalists and coastal residents said that the Ike Dike would harm the ecology and wildlife in coastal areas, and thus decrease property values.

The Army Corps of Engineers agreed the Ike Dike would be beneficial to the Galveston and Houston area regarding disastrous storm surges, like the one brought on by Hurricane Ike, for several decades. The Corps held public meetings to receive feedback over their revised plan for the Ike Dike. They also created three-dimensional virtual tours of the newly-proposed Ike Dike so that the features of this plan would be visible to

the public. The Corps planned to present their idea for congressional authorization and funding. The Ike Dike would take twelve to twenty years to be fully designed and built. As of yet, Congress has no intention of funding the structure.

Hurricane Ike changed the lives of many Texas residents with its direct and indirect effects. Evacuations were mandatory as the storm was making its way towards the Texas coast. Experts became alarmed by the storm surge as it did not correlate with the hurricane's category. Properties, parks, and refuges were destroyed, new programs were opened, and mental health issues emerged. Many of these problems took years to repair. With the devastating impact of Ike, Texas residents put more thought into how they would fare if another disaster made landfall—thus the idea of the Ike Dike. With the strong winds and storm surge, the residents of Houston, Galveston, and the Southeast Texas Coast struggled to return to normalcy, even long after the hurricane made landfall.

#### END NOTES

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- <sup>12</sup> Rebecca E. Morss and Mary H. Hayden, "Storm Surge and 'Certain Death': Interviews with Texas Coastal Residents Following Hurricane Ike," *Weather, Climate, and Society* 2, no. 3 (July 1, 2010): 175-176, <https://0-search-ebSCOhost-com.libcat.sanjac.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.24907352&site=eds-live.>
- <sup>13</sup> Diane Cowen, "Residents Recall Impact of Hurricane Ike 12 Years Later as they Brace for Laura," *Houston Chronicle*, August 25, 2020, <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-weather/hurricanes/article/Residents-recall-impact-of-Hurricane-Ike-as-they-15513937.php.>
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- <sup>15</sup> Watson, interview.; Kelley, "Historic officials," *Abilene Reporter-News*.
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- <sup>19</sup> Sara Hamideh and Jane Rongerude, "Social Vulnerability and Participation in Disaster Recovery Decisions: Public Housing in Galveston after Hurricane Ike," *Natural Hazards: Journal of the International Society for the Prevention and Mitigation of Natural Hazards* 93, no. 3 (2018): 1629-1630, doi:10.1007/s11069-018-3371-3.; Kelley, "Historic officials," *Abilene Reporter-News*.
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- <sup>22</sup> Interview of Tim Cooper, interview by Reed Amadon, July 30, 2009, Oral Histories from the Houston History Project, *University of Houston Digital Library*, <https://digital.lib.uh.edu/collection/houhistory/item/825>.
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# Progressive Era Black Midwives and Healthcare in San Antonio, 1892-1920

By Gloria Edwards, Texas A&M University-San Antonio

An African American midwife was a revered woman who was seen as a wise and knowledgeable person in her respective community, an essential healthcare worker long before the term was ever conceived.<sup>1</sup> She had the long history of supporting women and “catching” their babies during childbirth.<sup>2</sup> For Black women “out of slavery,” through Reconstruction, the Jim Crow Era, and into the Progressive Era, a midwife was even more necessary for those marginalized women.<sup>3</sup> For many, a midwife was the only healthcare option for maternity care and would remain so into the mid-20th century, decades after the growing professionalization of the medical field discredited their work. These developments were especially pronounced in progressive-era San Antonio, Texas, where African Americans did not have the option to use a professional healthcare facility. Black women, most of whom suffered from poverty and discrimination, were especially dependent on the work of midwives, whose specialized and personalized attention in the maternity sphere of healthcare could not be underestimated in its worth. In San Antonio from 1892-1920, maternity care for Black women was supported by skillful and long-serving Black midwives, who practiced their trade despite the obstacles created in a segregated society and a newly-professionalized healthcare field.

During the Progressive Era in San Antonio, pregnant Black women did not have very many options for professional healthcare, nor did any other Black people in need of a doctor. Like the rest of the South, segregation was practiced in San Antonio. While the city consistently had four to

six hospitals, as well as other healthcare facilities, there was evidence that certain medical centers, such as the San Antonio City Hospital, were denying Blacks admittance to their facilities. Walter R. Patterson, an African American and advocate for Black people in San Antonio, wrote a letter to the editor of the *San Antonio Daily Light* newspaper in March 1888.<sup>4</sup> In the letter he told of the experience he encountered while trying to admit his brother into the city hospital the previous fall. He recounted how he visited the city doctor, Dr. Braunagel, in October 1887 to gain admittance for his brother, who was unable to care for himself. Braunagel then told Patterson that because his brother had been a resident of San Antonio longer than six months, he would have to seek aid from the county. When Patterson told Braunagel that he would pay for his brother’s hospital stay out of his own pocket, Braunagel still refused Patterson and his brother.<sup>5</sup>

Patterson decided to write his letter to the editor because he saw a report in the *San Antonio Daily Light* regarding notes from the city council meeting. There, Patterson read that “colored people were refused admission to the city hospital.”<sup>6</sup> Patterson also pointed out in his letter that he witnessed patients who were currently admitted to the city hospital and were longtime residents of the city, yet they were given medical care free of charge. They were White patients. Therefore, Patterson respectfully argued the hospital was denying lawful, tax-paying, Black citizens their legal right to health care in the city hospital. Additionally, a Black acquaintance of Patterson, Albert Richardson, accompanied Patterson to the hospital to help him admit his brother. Richardson, who worked

as a “janitor to the city council,” was subsequently fired by the mayor, Brian Callaghan. Callaghan told Richardson that “he did not want the city administration run in favor of the negroes.”<sup>7</sup> Patterson’s letter to the editor confirmed the hardships Blacks endured while trying to access healthcare in San Antonio.

Therefore, knowing that segregation extended into the realm of healthcare for Blacks, this made the role of midwives even more significant. During the Progressive Era, most working-class women of all ethnicities used a midwife or a family member to assist them in childbirth.<sup>8</sup> However, they also called a doctor when complications arose during labor.<sup>9</sup> For high-risk pregnancies, postpartum care, and newborn pediatric care, Black women did not have any other option besides their midwife.

The lack of healthcare for Blacks was not a trivial matter either. Historian Jenny Luke explained, “...almost total neglect of the health needs of the African American population in the Jim Crow South created an indescribable level of chronic ill health.” Luke continues, “Poor health, deficient housing and sanitation, exacerbated by an inadequate medical infrastructure and institutional discrimination had taken its toll.”<sup>10</sup>

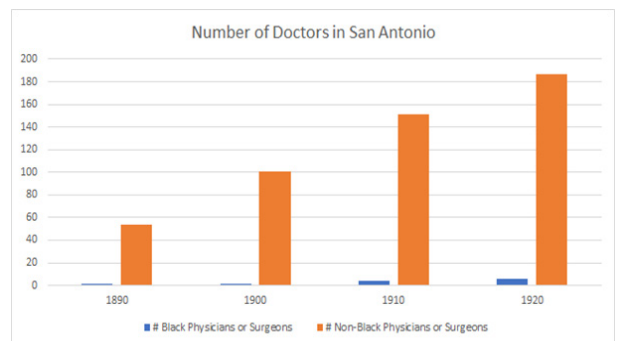
Statistics for the years 1890, 1900, 1910, and 1920 elucidate the healthcare situation for Black women and all Black people in San Antonio. In 1890, Blacks accounted for 11.2% of the population in Bexar County, according to the 1890 U.S. Federal Census.<sup>11</sup> However, only one Black physician could be found in the San Antonio City Directory Classifieds that same year.<sup>12</sup> This was possibly only one doctor for 5,504 people that made up the Black population.

In 1900, Blacks accounted for 12.5% of the population listed in the census for Bexar County.<sup>13</sup> But in 1901 there was only one Black doctor listed in the Classified Business Directory for all of San Antonio.<sup>14</sup> That possibly meant that there was only one doctor available for 8,530 Black people.

In the 1910 U.S. Federal Census, Blacks accounted for 9.7% of the population in Bexar County.<sup>15</sup> That same year, the San Antonio City Directory listed four Black “physicians and surgeons” in the Classified Business Directory.<sup>16</sup> That was possibly only four doctors available to the 11,642 people that made up the Black population at the time.

As a comparison, in 1910, Whites had the option of seeing a total number of 151 physicians, surgeons, and/or specialists according to the Classified Business Directory.<sup>17</sup> With a White population of 107,932 in Bexar County, the doctor/patient ratio was 1:715.<sup>18</sup> Whereas in 1910, the doctor/patient ratio for Blacks was 1:2,910.

By 1920 the population of San Antonio had increased to 161,370 total within the city limits.<sup>19</sup> The race and ethnicity demographics for 1920 were not readily accessible, however, there were six Black doctors in San Antonio.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the numerous hospitals and healthcare facilities in the city provided eligible patrons with additional access to specialists and other healthcare professionals.



Compiled from data in the *San Antonio City Directories*, Classified Business section. Courtesy: *San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press*

An advertisement for the Santa Rosa Infirmary from 1909 touted “the infirmary is attended by the most prominent physicians in the city. Patients select their own doctor.”<sup>21</sup> It was highly unlikely that Blacks had access to any of the medical centers in San Antonio at the time, as was the case for Patterson and his brother in 1887. Luke wrote, “Many White doctors felt no obligation to see Black patients. Some feared that by certain if any of the physicians accepted Black patients in their



private practices. Additionally, caring for Black patients they would lose their White clientele.”<sup>22</sup> They also considered it a financial liability.<sup>23</sup> Either way, Blacks were denied care at the city hospital, and as Patterson’s experience demonstrated, it was not possible to receive help or be admitted. The statistics prove that Black midwives held a vital role in the maternity care of other Black women in San Antonio, as pregnancy, delivery, and newborn care was carried out by their essential work.

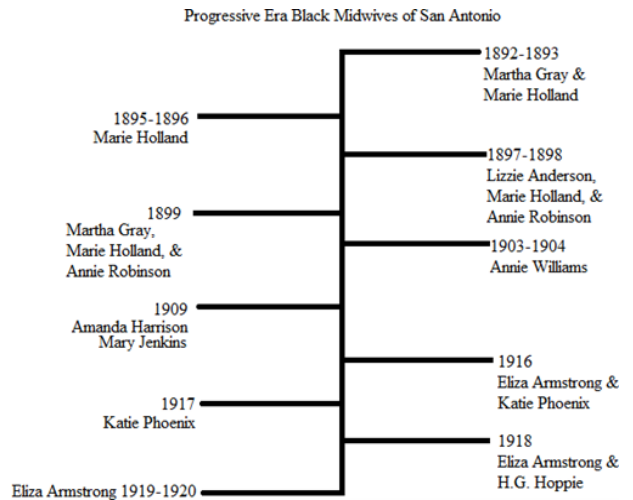
Though the historical record does not document the first two Black midwives in San Antonio until 1892, African American midwifery and its practices had a long history in the South, even before emancipation.<sup>24</sup> Enslaved midwives learned their craft through older women and other midwives.<sup>25</sup> There is evidence that some enslaved midwives interned for a number of years with doctors.<sup>26</sup> Luke argues, “The folk remedies initially brought from Africa, synthesized with Native American and some Western practices, persisted, and....that knowledge was consistently transmitted from one generation to the next.”<sup>27</sup> The San Antonio midwives of the 1890s were not far removed from the days of slavery, and were likely to have had that wealth of knowledge that had been passed down from experienced midwives. For instance, Luke wrote about Black southern midwives being knowledgeable in techniques that were used to stop hemorrhaging such as using “...cobwebs, soot, and cherry bark.”<sup>28</sup> The use of cobwebs to treat a bleeding wound was also an old remedy from South Texas as well, although not exclusively.

In the San Antonio City Directories, from 1892-1920, a total of ten Black midwives are listed, however, not consistently or simultaneously though.

Those women were, in alphabetical order:

1. Lizzie Anderson
2. Eliza Armstrong
3. Martha Gray
4. Amanda Harrison

5. Marie Holland
6. H. G. Hoppie
7. Mary Jenkins
8. Katie Phoenix
9. Annie Robinson
10. Annie Williams



Compiled from data in the *San Antonio City Directories* 1892-1920. Courtesy: *San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press*

It is important to note that although the midwives are not listed continuously from year to year, it does not mean that they were not practicing midwifery in those absent years. An example from the timeline above is Eliza Armstrong. She was missing from the 1917 directory, yet she was listed previously in 1916 and afterwards in the 1918 and 1919-1920 directories. While the historic San Antonio City Directories provided this information, it was not necessarily complete or error free. There were instances where the midwife was listed but there was no accompanying occupation. There were also times where a midwife’s husband was listed in the residential section of the directory, but her name was missing. The timeline above represents the years that the midwives were listed with their occupation confirming they were midwives.

The first year that African American midwives were in the San Antonio City Directory was

1892. That year there were two midwives entered, Martha Gray and Marie Holland.<sup>29</sup> They were designated in the residential section with their occupation, “midwife” after their name. For instance, below is the 1892 entry for Marie Holland. The “(c)” was for “colored.”

Holland F E Miss, r 212 Lake View ave.  
 Holland Houston, (c) r 2124 S Flores.  
 Holland James M, (c) painter r 718 E Crockett.  
 Holland Marie, (c) midwife, r 720 E Crockett.  
 Holland Mary, (wid) r 623 Soledad.  
 Holland Mattie, (c) servant John Gilroy, r same.  
 Holland R A, mgr Holland's Tea Store, r cor N Leona, Lake

Entries from the first year that African American Midwives were in the *San Antonio City Directory* in 1892. Courtesy: *San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press*

Sometimes the Black midwives were in the Classified Business Directory which was usually located in the back pages of the directory. There, the midwives’ names appeared with other businesses and professions under the category of midwives. For example, here is an image from the 1892 classified business directory for midwives. Marie Holland is highlighted.

**MIDWIVES.**

Abalos Martina Mrs, cor Durango, S Callaghan.  
 Chanders Jane Mrs, 319 Hood.  
 Dathe M Mrs, 117 Duval.  
 Grunder Elizabeth Mrs, 1106 Ave D.  
 Haas Maria Mrs, 310 E Nueva.  
 Heitgen Anna B Mrs, 921 E Houston.  
 Holland Marie, (c) 720 E Crockett.  
 Kraus Katrina Mrs, 305 W Market.  
 Minnette E Mrs, 403 N Leona.  
 Pollock Mary Mrs, 111 Dawson.  
 Rose R Mrs, cor North, S Alamo.  
 Shinolt M E Mrs, 522 N Laredo.

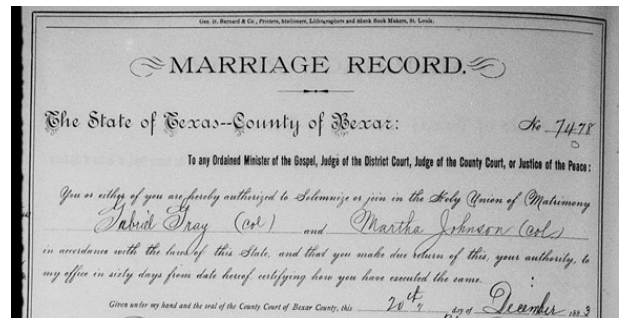
Classified business directory for midwives in 1892. Courtesy: *San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press*

Although Martha Gray was also a practicing midwife in 1892 according to the directory, it is unclear why she was not listed in the classifieds that year.

Martha Gray was the oldest of all the documented midwives. In the 1900 Federal U.S. Census, her age was recorded as 64 years old.<sup>30</sup> She was born in Arkansas in 1836, therefore, it can be assumed that she was born into slavery. Gray was in her twenties during the Civil War. In 1892, she was 46 years old when she was first recorded as a midwife in the San Antonio City Directory.

Somewhere along Gray’s life, she acquired knowledge and experience sufficient to practice midwifery.

Martha Gray, who was previously Martha Johnson, married Gabriel Gray in Bexar County in 1883.<sup>31</sup> Gabriel Gray worked as a messenger for the U.S. Arsenal in San Antonio.<sup>32</sup> In the San Antonio City Directory of 1892, Martha and Gabriel were both listed as residents of 714 E. Crockett St.<sup>33</sup> Together they purchased a lot near East Crockett Street on July 9, 1893, for one hundred dollars.<sup>34</sup>



“Gabriel Gray (col) and Martha Johnson (col)” Bexar County marriage record. Courtesy: *Texas State Library, Archives Division*.

In 1899, Martha Gray was again in the San Antonio City Directory but that year her occupation was listed as “nurse.”<sup>35</sup> It is not clear how Gray practiced her nursing, but she broadened her midwifery to include other healthcare. Her nursing line of work was a significant revelation. Jenny Luke wrote, “...the midwives whose expanded realm of work also included caring for the sick and elderly were typically older women with an accumulation of experience, specialized knowledge, and a sense of autonomy that allowed them some freedom of judgement in the implementation of that knowledge.”<sup>36</sup> Luke’s description of midwives’ work fit well into Martha Gray’s life description. Gray practiced midwifery but was also involved in performing the work duties of a nurse. Gray was a healthcare worker in her community, and she likely treated people with ailments outside the field of maternity care. Her familiarity in caring for women garnered her experience she was able to use to help tend to others. In San Antonio in 1899, Martha Gray’s presence was incredibly fortunate to her

neighbors in need.

In the 1900 United States Federal Census, Martha and Gabriel Gray were still at 714 E. Crockett St. in San Antonio.<sup>37</sup> They had an adopted son, Willis Shepard, age 7. That year the census documented Martha's occupation as "Midwife."<sup>38</sup>

U.S. Federal Census for 1900 - San Antonio City 6th Ward - Precinct 15. Courtesy: *Ancestry.com*

One of Martha Gray's neighbors in 1892 was another midwife, Marie Holland. Holland appeared consistently in the Classified Business Directory as a midwife from 1892-1899, the only one to be listed as such every year during that time period.<sup>39</sup> Holland lived at 720 E. Crockett St. in San Antonio.<sup>40</sup> Marie's husband was James Holland. Together, they purchased a lot on "the corner of Willow St. and Cleveland alley" in December 1895.<sup>41</sup> However, Marie Holland was listed as a widow that same year in the San Antonio City Directory.<sup>42</sup> That points to some type of discrepancy since the directory was compiled in 1894, but James Holland signed a land deed in 1895. Today, Willow Street stops three blocks north of Crockett Street. "Cleveland alley" does not exist. The land deed raised some questions since there is a discrepancy with the dates. In 1897, Holland was still a midwife, but her residence was at 221 N. Swiss St.<sup>43</sup> She moved east two blocks. In 1899 Holland made another move to 108 Gonzales St.<sup>44</sup> That year she was listed in the Classified Business Directory under the midwives' section for the last time.<sup>45</sup> Holland consistently being named in the directory as a midwife for seven years, despite being in transit several times, demonstrated her dedication and persistence to her work. Like Gray, Holland was also a valuable source for maternity care in her community.

Also listed in the 1899 Classified Business Directory was Lizzie Anderson. This midwife lived at 305 Duval St. in San Antonio. She resided one mile north of Holland and Gray. It was noted in her residential entry that she was the widow of "Ed."<sup>46</sup>

Being a widow was something several of the midwives had in common. It was not surprising either as Jenny Luke wrote that most Black midwives were older women. However, not all widows were old, and Anderson's birth date was not confirmed. It is true sometimes Black midwives were referred to as "granny midwives" or "grannies."<sup>47</sup> That term fell out of favor though and is not used anymore.<sup>48</sup> Anderson was found twice in the San Antonio City Directory, 1897-98 and in 1899.<sup>49</sup> However, no other information could be found on Anderson in the Census records or otherwise.

This entry of Marie Holland and Lizzie Anderson (shown below) from 1899 is significant because that was the last time any Black midwives were listed in the Classified Business Directory.<sup>50</sup> From 1900 to 1920, there were not any Black midwives in the classifieds anymore. From 1892-1899 there had been at least one "colored" midwife listed each year. The "(c)" was still being used throughout the directories to identify African Americans, however, none of the midwives listed were so designated after 1899.

MIDWIVES.	
Abalos Martina Mrs. cor Durango, S Cal-lahan.	
Anderson Lizzie (c), 305 Duval.	
Dathe M Mrs. 923 Dallas.	
Faleon Alvina, 829 S. Medina.	
Haas Maria Mrs., 109 Centre.	
Hardman Fred Mrs., 218 S. Alamo.	
Heitzen Annie B Mrs., 921 E. Houston.	
Holland Marie (c), 108 Gonzales.	
Kraus Katrina Mrs., 305 Market.	
Minnette E Mrs., 1722 Monterey.	
Moehring R Mrs., 512 Indiaola.	
Schwartz P Mrs., 1018 E. Commerce.	

The 1899 San Antonio City Directory- Classified Business Directory. Courtesy: *San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press*

Nonetheless, there were still practicing African American midwives in San Antonio. That is known because they happened to have their occupation listed after their names in the residential section of the directory. However, it was curious and concerning that Black midwives were no longer in the classifieds after 1899. Had it become too expensive to have their name or business listed? Were they carelessly omitted? Either way, this assuredly led to further difficulties in Black women finding a midwife for their maternity healthcare needs. It would be like an essential business or agency today being eliminated from an online internet search.



Also in 1899, there was another practicing midwife, Annie Robinson. Robinson was listed in the residential section of the San Antonio City Directory, but she was not listed in the Classified Business Directory for that year either, as shown in the image above.<sup>51</sup> Again, questions are raised as to why Robinson was not listed. Was it another discrepancy? Or perhaps there were issues with cost or missed deadlines to be listed in the directory? Either way, it would have been hard to search for Robinson's midwife services unless one already knew her name. Annie Robinson was in the residential section of the directory twice, 1897-98 and in 1899.<sup>52</sup> She was listed as "Robinson, Annie Mrs." and lived at 307 Victoria.<sup>53</sup>

Amanda Harrison, who was in the San Antonio City Directory in 1903, had similarities to the other midwives.<sup>54</sup> She was also a widow and was living at 430 W. Cevallos.<sup>55</sup> She was 62 and was born in 1848 in Tennessee. Akin to Martha Gray, Harrison was also sure to have been born into slavery. Harrison was in her teens during the Civil War. She too had made her way to San Antonio and gained experience in caring for women's maternity needs. Harrison had likely gained experience from her own life as a mother, as she had fifteen children, ten of which were living in 1910.<sup>56</sup> Her own life experiences with childbirth certainly qualified her for midwifery. Harrison's pregnancies gave her knowledge and wisdom that allowed her to assist other women through the challenges of giving birth and caring for a newborn baby.

Harrison was consistently listed in the directory with the same address until 1924. However, she was not listed as a "midwife" until 1909.<sup>57</sup> That was the first and only time that she had the "midwife" title after her name. However, it is doubtful that she was only a midwife for one year. It was more likely that she was just not mentioned or not listed properly, for whatever reason. The failure to have been listed as a "midwife" was like those midwives not listed in the classifieds; the reasons are just not known.

Amanda Harrison stood out in this research

because a considerable amount of information on her children was available through the U.S. Federal Census records and the San Antonio City Directories. Harrison had three sons and four daughters living in her home, as well as one granddaughter, all while she was working as a midwife.<sup>58</sup> Harrison's four oldest children, living with her in 1910, were well employed too. Alexander, 25, was a real estate agent and Florence, 24, was a dressmaker. Moseby, 22, was a porter at the railroad. And Ada, 19, was a music teacher for private families. All the children in the household, the youngest being 9, could read and write. It is evident that Harrison was able to help her children succeed despite living through the days of segregation, the Texas Black Codes, and continual inequality. Harrison's accomplishments were no small feat considering the work of a midwife was challenging and had inconsistent hours. Midwives were known to stay by the side of women giving birth all day and throughout the night.<sup>59</sup> Midwives would also return for days after to check on new moms and their babies.<sup>60</sup> Harrison's work and example to her family no doubt had a positive impact.

Amanda Harrison's descendants continued to live in San Antonio and her family could be traced down to 2021 in San Antonio.

Another midwife with Tennessee roots was Katie Phoenix. Phoenix was born in Texas, but both her parents were born in Tennessee.<sup>61</sup> Phoenix's birth year estimate was 1858.<sup>62</sup> She was first listed as a midwife in San Antonio in 1916, when she was approximately 58 years old.<sup>63</sup> However, Phoenix had been a midwife since she was at least 40 years old.<sup>64</sup> In 1910, she and her husband Henry Phoenix, were living in Austin, TX and her occupation was listed as "Mid Wife" working for "private families."<sup>65</sup> After moving to San Antonio she continued to work as a midwife until at least 1918. Phoenix's work experience was fascinating as she was the longest documented working midwife in this study, at almost 20 years. However, Katie Phoenix lived until she was 82 years old, so it is very likely that she had a much longer career in midwifery than the approximately 20 years that were noted here. Katie

Phoenix died on September 27, 1939, in Bexar county.<sup>66</sup>

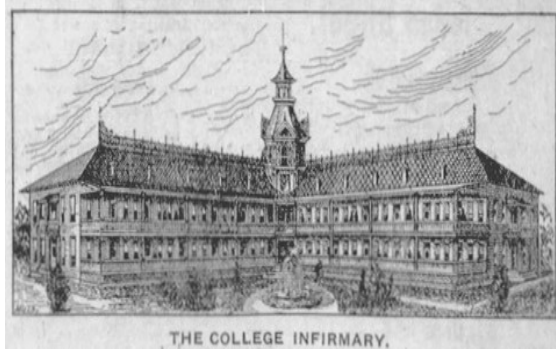
Many of the midwives, or their mothers, had somehow made their way across the old South to San Antonio. Annie Williams was also one of those women. Williams was born in Mississippi in 1842.<sup>67</sup> Her husband was named Henry Williams.<sup>68</sup> Annie Williams also undoubtedly endured slavery and lived through the Civil War as a young woman. She was another midwife who carried the legacy of midwifery knowledge from slavery days.

Mary Jenkins was listed as a midwife in the directory for the year 1909. She was born in Texas circa 1850 and her parents were both from Missouri.<sup>69</sup> Jenkins was previously “Mary Whitfield” and she was married to John Jenkins in Bexar County in 1896.<sup>70</sup> They lived at 1118 S. San Marcos St. Researching Mary Jenkins was challenging because there was another married Black couple in San Antonio named John and Mary Jenkins, who lived on Gravel St.<sup>71</sup>

Researching the midwives did not always produce results. For example, H.G. Hoppie did not have any further information besides being listed as a midwife in the directory for 1918.<sup>72</sup>

Walter Patterson’s editorial, combined with other complaints, were likely to have pressured the city of San Antonio to accommodate the healthcare needs of the Black community. In 1900, the *San Antonio Daily Light* announced the purchase of land to build a hospital for African Americans. The article read, “When complete it will be...a credit to the city of San Antonio, a token of the liberality and friendly feeling of the Whites toward the colored people.”<sup>73</sup> The self-congratulatory statement suggested a spin on what was likely bad press for many years. African Americans felt they were denied healthcare previously and even while the

hospital was being built demonstrated that there was not any “friendly feeling” from the city’s leaders. San Antonio was not necessarily benevolent, although the city felt a segregated hospital was a step in the right direction. It is unclear when the hospital eventually opened.



Newspaper image of “The College Infirmary,” March 25, 1900. Courtesy: *San Antonio Light*.

The African American community needed access to modern medicine in a hospital setting and they lobbied for it in San Antonio. However, starting in the early 20th century, nationwide, an increased number of hospitals and physicians in the sphere of maternity care would lead to all midwives being discounted and pushed out of their line of work.<sup>74</sup> Beginning around 1900, this national push to have women give birth in hospitals led to a stigmatization of midwives. The work of the midwife would eventually be described as unsanitary, unsafe, and the midwives themselves discredited as practicing superstitious medicine.<sup>75</sup>

It is uncertain if the midwives listed here were able to practice freely through the Progressive Era of San Antonio. If Black women had no other option than to give birth at home or with a midwife, then it would seem logical that Black midwives were allowed to practice their work. However, it was also probable that they may have suffered through instances of discrimination in their line of work. Professional, science-based, health care that a hospital could provide was an improvement for the overall wellbeing of the Black community. However, doctors demeaning the work of midwifery assured that all midwives everywhere had to fight discrimination and attacks.<sup>76</sup>

The Progressive Era midwives of San Antonio lived through difficult times, even through undeniably impossible injustices. Yet, the challenging time period in which they lived made their line of work an enormous contribution to their community.

While childbirth was a natural event, it also created uncertainty, anxiety, and the potential for health complications. The midwives served to alleviate concerns and help women through their labor and delivery and educated the new mothers concerning the care of their newborn baby. The midwives provided a service which assuredly brought care and comfort to women and families at a time when they most needed it. For many women, midwives were the only source of knowledge to assist them in birthing their children. For other African Americans, midwives that were knowledgeable in other wellness areas were also able to provide medical assistance when they were not able to receive help anywhere else. These Black midwives were essential healthcare workers in the African American community of San Antonio. This work, herein, was intended to bring their names out of obscurity for the lifesaving work that they provided to the marginalized Black community in desperate need of healthcare. They should be remembered as historical figures for their accomplishments and incalculable medical services to African American families during San Antonio's Progressive Era.

#### END NOTES

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<sup>3</sup> Luke, *Delivered by Midwives*, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Walter R. Patterson, "Walter Patterson Replies to the Mayor's Message about Negroes in the Hospital," *San Antonio Daily Light*, March 21, 1888. <https://www.tamusa.edu/> (accessed February 24, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Katy Dawley, "Campaign to Eliminate the Midwife," *The American Journal of Nursing*, 100, no. 10 (October 2000): 50-56, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3522317>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-27.

<sup>11</sup> *1910 Abstract Supplement for Texas Population:*

*Agriculture Manufactures Mines and Quarries*, p.604, <https://www2.census.gov/> (accessed March 1, 2021)

<sup>12</sup> Greene J. Starnes, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1890-1891), 451.

<sup>13</sup> *1910 Abstract Supplement for Texas Population*, p.604,

<sup>14</sup> G. J. Starnes, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1901-1902), 591.

<sup>15</sup> *Abstract of the Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920-Population*.p.604 <https://www2.census.gov/>(accessed March 1, 2021).

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<sup>17</sup> *San Antonio Business Directory, San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1910-1911), 1189-1191.

<sup>18</sup> *1910 Abstract Supplement for Texas Population*, p.604,

<sup>19</sup> *Abstract of the Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920-Population*.

<sup>20</sup> J.S. Cameron, W.M. Drake, W.R. Maynard, J.G. Selby, G.J. Starnes, J.T. Walton, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1919-1920), 777-778.

<sup>21</sup> Santa Rosa Infirmary advertisement, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1909), image 3. [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (accessed February 20, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Luke, *Delivered by Midwives*, 27.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Martha Gray, Marie Holland, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1892-1893), 327 & 363.

<sup>25</sup> Luke, *Delivered by Midwives*, 27.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>29</sup> Gray, Holland, *San Antonio City Directory*, 327 & 363.

<sup>30</sup> Year: 1900; Census Place: San Antonio Ward 6, Bexar, Texas; Page: 13; Enumeration District: 0103; FHL microfilm: 1241611. [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com). Obtained February 2021.

<sup>31</sup> "Texas, County Marriage Records, 1837-1965," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QV1-3FK2:23> February 2021), Gabriel Gray and Martha Johnson, Dec. 24, 1883; citing Marriage, citing Bexar, Texas, United States, Texas State Library, Archives Division, and various Texas county clerks; FHL microfilm 24,921.

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- <sup>35</sup> Martha Gray, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1899), 283.
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- <sup>38</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup> Marie Holland, *San Antonio City Directories* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1892-1899).
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- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., 338.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., 611.
- <sup>46</sup> Lizzie Anderson, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1899), 138.
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- <sup>49</sup> Lizzie Anderson, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio, Jules A. Appler Press, 1897-1899)
- <sup>50</sup> Lizzie Anderson, Marie Holland, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1899), 611.
- <sup>51</sup> Annie Robinson, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1899), 611.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid., 490 & 611.
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- <sup>54</sup> Amanda Harrison, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1903), 238.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>56</sup> Year: 1910; Census Place: *San Antonio Ward 1, Bexar, Texas*; Roll: T624\_1531; Page: 2A; Enumeration District: 0006; FHL microfilm: 1375544. Ancestry.com. Obtained February 2021.
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- <sup>63</sup> Katie Phoenix, *San Antonio City Directory* (San Antonio: Jules A. Appler Press, 1916), 503.
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# What Provoked the Houston Riots of 1917? - Who was at Fault?

By Anthony Gammage, San Jacinto College

With America's entrance into World War One, the United States Army began constructing training camps in Houston, Texas. Soldiers were needed to stand guard around the construction site, and that assignment fell on the Tenth Cavalry, an all-Black division of soldiers led by White officers. These soldiers gained battle experience fighting western plains Indians, the Mexicans in the southwest, the Spanish in Cuba, and during the Philippine American War. During their years of service, these soldiers earned themselves a reputation of commitment, dedication, and bravery. However, in 1917, they received orders that would bring major changes to their lives. They found themselves thrown into highly segregated Texas and a whole new social environment. They were psychologically unprepared to move from the open frontier where they fought Indians and bandits, to the unsettling reality of standing guard duty in a racist city. These battle-hardened soldiers were not prepared to live in a society with extreme segregation towards Blacks. The Houston White society had an unfounded distrust of Black soldiers. The African American soldiers felt they earned a respectable place in society by serving with distinction on the plains, fighting Indians, but instead were treated horribly by a repressive racist society that provoked them at every opportunity. Over time, the Black soldiers felt they had no choice but to fight back. They took up arms and revolted against the police and White population, causing the deaths of seventeen Whites including four police officers. The ensuing army court-martial, the largest in U.S. history, tried 118 soldiers, convicted, and executed

seventeen, and sentenced forty-one others to life in prison.

The origin of the Buffalo Soldiers began in 1866 in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War. The U.S. Army began to release soldiers in May 1865 and continued doing so through May of the following year. The army volunteers went from a high of over 1,000,000 soldiers down to less than 11,000. Most of those remaining were Black soldiers who were next to be given their pay and released from the army. General Ulysses S. Grant realized that the remaining troops would be too few to maintain proper border security. He petitioned Congress for permission to increase the ranks up to 80,000 volunteers. Congress responded by granting him 54,000. On July 28, 1866, Congress passed the Army Organization Act. Part of the act called for the formation of four additional regiments of cavalry, two of which consisted of Black enlisted men with White officers. This act has been considered instrumental in forming the first "regular" enlisted Black soldiers in the U.S. Army, later to become nicknamed the "Buffalo Soldiers."

The African American population was poor, struggling, and segregated in the Jim Crow South. To some young Black men, the Army was more appealing than working as a laborer or cotton picker. They felt the oppression of segregation and Jim Crow laws, so they saw a sense of freedom by joining the Army, and it would put money in their pockets. Though the earnings were only a meager 13 dollars a month plus food, clothing, and shelter—it was more than most of them could hope to earn in civilian life. Congress paved the way for



Black men to serve their country and earn a better living by passing the Army Organization Act. In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, an estimated 25,000 African American men served in the Army, making up around ten percent of the Army personnel. The Army maintained regiments of Black soldiers from 1866 until after the Second World War when they were disbanded and incorporated into the regular Army.

The new Black recruits of 1866 went through their basic training in New Orleans during that winter and relocated to San Antonio in the spring of 1867. Their postings would keep them in the Southwestern U. S. and the Great Plains, with little interaction with the White pioneers who lived there. The soldiers' tasks consisted of protecting settlers from attacks by the Indians, encounters with cattle rustlers, thieves, and railroad crews along the Western Front.

Even though classified as "Regulars," the same as the White enlisted men, the Black soldiers were segregated in every aspect. Army leaders assigned Black soldiers some of the lowest duties that the Army could. These men often contended with aged horses, deteriorating equipment, and inadequate ammunition supplies to fight against fierce Indian tribes, Mexican revolutionaries, cattle thieves, and outlaws. Though they overcame the odds against Indians and criminals, they could not overcome the prejudice and discrimination directed at them by the U.S. Army. Despite this treatment, they proved themselves trustworthy, dedicated, and courageous.

Exactly how these Black soldiers came to be called "Buffalo Soldiers" is unknown. However, there is evidence that the Plains Indians probably gave them this name. The Native Americans thought the tightly curled hair of the Black soldiers resembled the curly hair on a bison's face. The Indians also considered the courage and fierceness of the fight in the Black soldiers like that of the wild buffalo. As the Indians valued the bison, the nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" was considered a term of respect. The Buffalo Soldiers proudly adopted the

name and featured a bison on their regimental crest.

The Buffalo Soldiers lived up to their new name on many occasions. For example, in 1880, members of the Tenth Infantry were sent out to rescue a wounded Lieutenant Colonel George Alexander Forsyth and what remained of his group of scouts trapped on a sand bar on the Arikaree River. In carrying out their mission, they came across hundreds of Native Americans. A fierce battle ensued, but Buffalo Soldiers' valiantly fought and eventually routed the Indians and rescued Lieutenant Colonel George Alexander Forsyth and his men. A few weeks later, they received an official letter of appreciation from General Philip Sheridan, the U.S. Army's General-in-Chief. General John Pershing commanded the Tenth Infantry from 1899 to 1903, during Spanish American War and later in the Philippine American War. After his experience in the field with these soldiers, he said of them, "I never saw braver men anywhere." Even so, the Army and U.S. government failed to recognize them as they should have. In a National Park Service article, Park Ranger Dave Bieri wrote, "While over 400 veterans of the Indian Wars received Congressional Medals of Honor, only eighteen African American enlisted men received the award despite being on the forefront of the fighting throughout the quarter-century-long conflict."



Sgt. John Denney, one of 18 Buffalo Soldiers, who received the Medal of Honor during the Plains Wars. Sgt. Denney saved a fellow soldier in 1879 at Las Animas Canyon, New Mexico. Courtesy: *Library of Congress*.

One of the problems the U.S. Army dealt with was the significant problem of alcohol and drunkenness among its soldiers. More specifically, with the White soldiers, because it was a rare issue among the Buffalo Soldiers. Also, during a period when nearly a third of the White army soldiers deserted, the Buffalo Soldiers' records show that they had the U.S. Army's lowest desertion and court-martial rates.

In 1897, General Pershing joined the tactical staff at West Point as an instructor. West Point cadets disliked the high standards he expected of them and his disciplinary treatment. In reprisal, they labeled him with the derogatory nickname "Nigger Jack" because they learned that Pershing respected the Black soldiers who served under him. The time that General Pershing spent with the Black soldiers significantly impacted him and that experience stayed with him throughout his military career. General Pershing remained concerned about the well-being of the Black soldiers and was instrumental in getting the Black troops into combat rather than being relegated to support operations in the rear.

During the Spanish American war of 1898, General Pershing, now nicknamed "Black Jack," led the Tenth Infantry Buffalo Soldiers in the fight for San Juan Hill in Cuba. Pershing and his Tenth Cavalry's gallantry in the Battle of San Juan Hill caught Theodore Roosevelt's attention, as he was also charging his way up San Juan Hill with his "Rough Riders" regiment. The Rough Riders were volunteers of the First Volunteer Cavalry that Roosevelt recruited to free Cuba from the Spanish. The First Cavalry consisted of cowboys, miners, law enforcement officials, and college athletes and became known for their colorful and often exagger-

ated exploits published in American newspapers, along with Roosevelt's own writing of the history of the regiment and the silent film reenactments made a years later.

The courage and bravery shown by the Tenth Cavalrymen gained Pershing's respect and admiration. He often praised the Black soldiers when talking to others, an unusual thing to do during this time. Pershing said of them, "Damn good soldiers . . . perhaps the best in the entire Army." President Roosevelt showed his confidence in the Buffalo Soldiers when he personally requested that



Buffalo Soldiers took a photograph at Camp Wikoff in Montauk, NY, upon their return from the Spanish-American War in 1898. Courtesy: *U.S. Army Archives*.

the Buffalo Soldiers serve as his security when Roosevelt visited San Francisco in 1903. Roosevelt was the first president to have a security detail following the assassination of President William McKinley. Historians argue that Roosevelt made his security request to honor the African American

soldiers. Their military competency enabled his Rough Riders to make their heroic charge up San Juan Hill in the Spanish American War.

To get a proper understanding of the Houston Riot of 1907 one must not only understand the background of those Black soldiers involved, but also the circumstances that made them feel they needed to fight back on the night of August 23, 1917. It is important to include details that paint that part of their picture.

After the United States entered World War I, the U.S. Army built two training bases, Camp Ellington and Camp Logan, in Houston, with Camp Logan located in what is now Hermann Memorial Park. The bases served as boot camps for training White soldiers to fight in World War I. The Third Battalion of the Twenty-fourth Negro Infantry Regiment consisted of 654 Black soldiers and

eight White officers. It was given the assignment of protecting Camp Logan during construction. It is necessary to note that for most of the fifty years before moving to Houston, the Third Battalion was stationed on the plains fighting Indians, bandits, and cattle rustlers. In part, due to the sparse population, these troops were disconnected from White populations in the west and, as a result, did not have much experience in living near White communities.

Consequently, the soldiers were not accustomed to racial segregation and having racial epithets thrown at them. When they transferred to Houston, they found themselves dropped into one of the strongest Jim Crow states in the South, and the Black soldiers were mentally unprepared and psychologically ill-equipped for the oppression they experienced. Additionally, the White Houstonian population feared having armed Black soldiers in their city. Charles Anderson, a relative of Sergeant William Nesbit, one of the Black soldiers, said, "They sent those soldiers into the most hostile environment imaginable; there was Jim Crow law[s], racist cops, racist civilians, laws against them being treated fairly in the streetcars, while the workers building Logan camp hated the soldiers' presence."

During this era in the South, Texas enforced segregation and had a reputation for violence against Blacks. Lynching occurred all over the state, including in the cities of Temple, Waco, and Galveston. Houston's population knew ahead of time that the soldiers would be given leave and venture into the city to spend their money. In this aspect, many residents were happy the Army was coming and welcomed the military installation. Houstonians felt it as financially advantageous to have the camps nearby. In an effort to alleviate the misgivings the public had about the Army, the "... Houston Chamber of Commerce and other city officials, blinded by economic dollar signs, foolishly assured the army their Black troops would be just fine in a city where African Americans were routinely disrespected and publicly demeaned by Whites, in general."

However, many government officials still did not agree with their arrival. The mayor of Houston, Dan M. Moody, commented, the "...feeling that something was going to happen [was] in the air from the moment the Twenty-fourth Infantry arrived on Saturday, July 28, 1917." Another important factor left out of the discussion of Black soldiers coming to Houston was that the city chamber members failed to come to terms with the fact that the city's police department had elements of unprofessional racist behavior. When the city's White population learned Black soldiers possessed loaded weapons, the citizens expressed their reservations. In response, the White regimental leadership ordered all the Black soldiers to turn in their guns and ammo where the weaponry was locked up. The only soldiers allowed to carry weapons were the guards who were issued five rounds and ordered to only load the weapon if threatened.

Initially, the Houston Chamber of Commerce did not allow the soldiers in the city. However, the War Department stated that these soldiers were the only ones available for this guard duty, so the chamber of commerce yielded especially when presented with the economic benefit to the city. The Army also assured city officials that the Black troops would only be in the city for a total of seven weeks, giving enough reassurance for the Chamber of Commerce to concede to the Army. The Chamber of Commerce did not want to say no if there was any way they could avoid it. Even though they were aware that the city was extremely prejudiced, they took the financial benefits over the peace and safety of the residents and soldiers. *The Houston Post*, on July 23, 1917, reported the Camp Logan project alone would provide the city an input of two million dollars, an equivalent of \$41.4 million in 2021.

The soldiers of the Third Battalion were not naïve to the prevailing racial injustices taking place in Texas. W.E.B. Du Bois, the publisher of *The Crisis*, the magazine for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the *Chicago Defender*, another Black newspaper reported on the racial tensions

and violence against Blacks. The soldiers also knew of the 167 Buffalo Soldiers who were dishonorably discharged a decade earlier in Brownsville, Texas, in which White citizens falsely accused the soldiers of killing a bartender and wounding an officer. Additionally, The Third Battalion heard the stories of the lynching and other acts of violence committed against Blacks for as little as a rumor started by a White citizen. Shortly before the Third battalion arrived in Houston was a lynching in Galveston on June 25, 1917, when a Black man accused of assaulting a White woman was taken from jail by an armed White mob and hung on a street signpost. The Black troops were uneasy about their post in Texas after hearing about these atrocities. The soldiers felt this assignment, assigned to guard duty, was a demotion after spending most of their time in New Mexico fighting Indians. They saw themselves as “fighters” and wanted to stay that way because it gave them a sense of dignity and purpose. Battalion Commander Col. William Newman filed a report that said, “I had already had an unfortunate experience when I was in command of two companies of the Twenty-fourth Infantry at Del Rio, Texas, April 1916, when a Texas Ranger killed a colored soldier for no other reason than that he was a colored man; that it angered Texans to see colored men in the uniform of a soldier.”

On July 27, 1917, the troops arrived in Houston by train from New Mexico. The first Saturday evening after their arrival, most of the soldiers decided to explore this new town, get acquainted, and find places for entertainment. Over that weekend, several negative interactions took place involving the soldiers, mainly on the trams. The segregation policies did not allow Black folks to sit in the White section. The White tram driver grew upset with a group of soldiers and threw them off. By Monday morning, the news of the incident spread all over town. More occurrences happened between White civilians and the soldiers around the city.

Another sensitive area the Black soldiers navigated was regarding the White employees going onto the base. Soldiers standing guard duty

were under strict orders to check the I.D. of every person who entered the grounds. The Whites did not like doing this and played pranks on the guards by showing baseball cards instead of their credential cards. At the trial, Sergeant William C. Nesbit of Company I reported that “...those White people out there would not obey and said they were not taking orders from niggers.”

At the same time, if the Black guards did anything that was considered discourteous, or gave the appearance of such, Whites immediately reported them. In response to the increasing number of complaints, an Officer of the Day was assigned to Camp Logan to quickly resolve any incidences before they got out of hand. In the report “The Houston Mutiny and Riot of 1917,” author Robert V Haynes wrote, “From all indications, the soldiers were, if anything, too conscientious. Workmen going into and out of the camp demonstrated their resentment by making snide comments as they passed or by blatantly addressing the guards as “Niggers.” The treatment of all Blacks, whether civilians or soldiers, was the same.”

The friction continued daily and grew into heated confrontations. The Buffalo Soldiers got tired of the ridicule and the “N” label. White officers made efforts to keep their soldiers on base by relaxing conditions for the local Black civilians to visit base and extended visitation hours. This worked well, and for many Black soldiers who did not like going to White areas, it was easier for them. Black social groups held picnics and other activities to occupy and entertain the soldiers.

However, resentment steadily rose when the police began what was considered “unwarranted harassment of Black soldiers.” During the trial it came out that the police played a heavy role in causing friction between the Whites and Blacks. Haynes wrote,

Of all the prejudiced groups which they encountered in Houston. Black soldiers, as well as Black Houstonians, resented most the condescending manners and the strong-armed tactics of



the city police. Although both Colonel Newman and Chief of Police Clarence Brock had arranged for cooperation, members of the police force either had not been properly informed of the agreements or chose to ignore them.

Subsequently, effective communication was never established between the military and civil police. Among several incidences that took place, one consisted of two soldiers riding on a trolley who protested the police physically assaulting some youths. The police stopped the trolley, and when the soldiers confronted them, the police pistol whipped the soldiers and took them to the station. Actions like these played a significant role in the friction between the soldiers and police. When law officers physically assaulted Black soldiers, circumstances became increasingly contentious.

As the situation slowly but steadily escalated, the soldiers became more on edge. On a hot August day, as temperatures rose to a humid 102 degrees, the racial tensions came to a head through a series of events that lit the fuse for trouble. A group of local Black residents were playing craps on the morning of August 23, 1917, when two White police officers, Rufus Daniels and Lee Sparks, broke up the game and chased after them. Sparks then entered the home of a young African American woman and forced her out onto the street in her bathrobe. Private Alonso Edwards, who was nearby, saw the excitement and went over to ask what the problem was. He approached Sparks and asked what the problem was. In reply Sparks, publicly known as a racist, pistol-whipped the private and locked him up. Later, when Private Edwards' superior, Corporal Charles W. Baltimore, heard what had happened to Edwards, he went to Sparks and asked him why Edwards had been arrested. Sparks took offense to a Black man asking him questions in this manner, so he struck Baltimore with a pistol and then shot at him three times. Corporal Baltimore fled from the scene, but the police pursued him until he was cornered in an unoccupied house. Police arrested him, and by the time news reached the camp, Baltimore's fellow Black

soldiers assumed he was dead.

The news sent the soldiers into an emotional frenzy. Corporal Charles Baltimore was one of the most respected soldiers in the 24th regiment, and several soldiers vowed to avenge his death by getting the policemen who killed him. Not long after, the White battalion commander sent his assistant to the police station to bring Baltimore back. The commander then canceled all leave and tightened security, thinking the matter was resolved. However, several members of the company were not content about the day's events and decided to go after the policemen.

That evening at eight o'clock, Vida Henry, the acting first sergeant of Company I, informed Major Kneeland Snow that he felt like there might be some trouble, so Snow gave the order to have all weapons and ammunition collected and locked up. While the weapons and ammo were collected and in the process of being locked up, one of the men, a private, went into the rear of the camp and yelled, "Get your guns, men! The White mob is coming!" Seizing their Springfield rifles and some ammunition, the soldiers intended to kill the policemen who had beaten their fellow soldiers—and as many other policemen as they could locate.

Following the outcry, things moved rapidly and eventually led to the revolt ringleaders rallying some 75 to 100 soldiers. By nine o'clock, they marched into town to find Sparks and Daniel. This is when facts blurred. The number of soldiers involved in the march into town was estimated from the records of the three hearings. However, the Army tried 118 men, with insufficient evidence presented for several of the men who ended up being found guilty by the military boards.

As the soldiers entered San Felipe, a White part of town, they shot into buildings and eventually encountered police where shootouts ensued. After a time, some soldiers deserted the group and returned to the camp, while the rest fell into disarray or went into homes to hide, where police and the Army caught them the next day. That night Daniels and three other policemen were killed, with

three others wounded.

Evidently, Sergeant Vida Henry, one of the leaders of the riot, realized the seriousness of what had taken place and refused to return to camp or hide in one of the houses. Instead, he shook hands with each of those still there as they left. Rumors swirled, but were never confirmed, he committed suicide with his own gun. The following morning Henry was found dead, with the back of his head blown off. A pathology report on Sgt. Henry reported there were indications his head was crushed, and the actual circumstances of his death remain unclear. Other contrasting reports indicated that he requested his men to kill him. All accounts indicate that he was unwilling to return to Camp Logan. The investigation into the riots and the most significant Army court-martial procedures in American history left a lot to be desired. The investigation was tainted with the same Jim Crow attitudes that instigated the whole unrest.

Unfairly, any soldiers who missed the duty call, roll call that night, or were found to be off the base during the night of the riots, were assumed to be rioting and were immediately arrested. Priscilla Graham, a Houston author, and historian said, "... there was no investigation, and some of those found guilty probably were, but under the circumstances, there was no way of knowing who fired the guns that killed people." She indicated people were executed, who maintained innocence, and insisted that they were not part of the riot until the end. Another irregularity concerning the trials was the fact that the one defense attorney who represented the soldiers at the court-martial, Major Harry S. Grier, was simply a law professor at the U.S. Military Academy. He had no trial experience, and never received his license to practice as a lawyer. Grier received two weeks to prepare for the opening trial and represented 118 soldiers in the three successive trials.

While considering the events leading up to the riot, the riot, the trial, and the executions, it is an understatement to say that it all fell in line with the Jim Crow era policies and racial prejudice

in Houston at the time. There was no "innocent until proven guilty." The prevailing spirit of racism predetermined that the color of the skin—in this case, not White—had a bearing on the outcome of the trial. Also, with such a polarized society at the time, no White person was going to stick out their neck for any Black person socially, politically, or physically. To do so would have been dangerous, if not actual death.

During the rioting, four soldiers and 15 White civilians were killed. "The riot has the ignominious distinction of being the only race riot in U.S. history where more Whites than Blacks were killed, and it also resulted in both the largest murder trial and the largest court martial in U.S. history" as described in a research paper by Prairie View A&M University. One hundred and fifty-six soldiers were charged for the riot with 118 soldiers being convicted. Thirteen were charged in the first of three trials and 6 more in the second trial for rioting and murder and another 41 were sent off to Fort Leavenworth for life imprisonment.

The soldiers found guilty did not understand they would be executed. Two days after the trials, army engineers built the gallows not far from where the soldiers were confined and finished before daylight the morning of the execution. Upon waking in the morning, the soldiers learned of their fate. The executions were held at 7:30 am, at the present-day location of the 15<sup>th</sup> tee at Ft. Sam Houston Golf Course. Thirteen Buffalo Soldiers of the Third battalion were hung on the December 11, 1917, at Camp Travis in Houston. Sixty-three other soldiers were given life sentences, and in September 1918 an additional six soldiers were hung at the same Camp Travis site. The executions took place in total secrecy.

Did the trial properly determine the guilt or innocence of these soldiers? It would be a denial of the truth, with the facts surrounding the case, to say yes. An argument can be made that had the Army command listened to the opinions and wisdom of the Black soldiers' supervisory field officers about moving the Black troops into a White racist

community in Texas, there would probably have been no story to write. The Third Battalion should have stayed in New Mexico, where they felt safer fighting Indians and were content to be seen as the soldiers they felt they were. They did not want to move to Texas. They were aware of the prejudice against Black people there. Once the Third Battalion moved into Houston, numerous warning signs of potential trouble were ignored.

Tensions grew quickly between the soldiers and the city's White citizens. Numerous incidents happened where tram operators forced Black soldiers off the tram, Whites mocked the Black soldiers using the "N" word, and pistol whippings were reported, as well as, lockups by the city's White police officers. All of this horrible treatment against them put too much psychological and emotional pressure on the soldiers not to succumb to the emotional stress. They were so pent up with fear and emotions that it was like a powder keg waiting for one spark to light the fuse, and it came on that fateful night of the riot. All it took to set them off was one lone man shouting, "Get your guns, men! The White mob is coming," for pandemonium to hit. The riot was a sad travesty, a shameful stain on American history. The Army court-martials were a Whitewash of pure injustice. To add insult to injury, the Army assigned only one defense attorney, Grier, who was the Inspector General, 36th Division and taught law at the U.S. Military Academy with considerable experience in courts-martial proceedings. Grier was not a trial lawyer.

Two months after the riot, on November 1, 1917, a general court-martial convened at Fort Sam Houston. The accused, 156 soldiers from the 24th Infantry, faced charges of assault, mutiny, disobeying a lawful order to remain in the camp, and murder. All those charged pleaded not guilty and were assigned Major Grier, to defend them. The trials lasted for 22 days and heard 193 witnesses. The most critical evidence against the defendants was from nine soldiers who took part in the riot. It was assumed that they had been offered special immunity in exchange for testimony. During the trial,

Major Grier, fighting for the defendants, argued since the prosecution had not proven guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, several of the men should be acquitted and charges dismissed. He also argued some men should be acquitted because they lacked the "mens rea," or the criminal intent or evil mind for the crimes. During the hearings, 193 witnesses testified for the prosecution, saying under oath that they could not identify any of the defendants because the riot took place at night with heavy rain coming down.

In his closing argument, Grier conceded that some of the accused were guilty. However, he also placed responsibility on the Houston Police for their failure to work with the military authorities to keep the peace between the White Houstonians and the African American soldiers. When the trial wrapped up, the court agreed with the defense but only acquitted five of the accused. Two days later, in a rushed secret execution, the 13 sentenced to death were executed at daybreak, later another six were executed, and forty-one others sentenced to life in prison in Fort Leavenworth. The executions were carried out quickly after the trial, leaving no opportunity for an appeal. In a report in *The Army Lawyer*, a U.S. Army monthly legal publication report:

Brigadier General Samuel T. Ansell, then serving as acting Judge Advocate General, was particularly incensed. He later explained, "The men were executed two days after the end of the trial and before their records could be forwarded to Washington or examined by anybody, and without, so far as I can see, any one of them having had time or opportunity to seek clemency from the source of clemency, if he had been so advised."

Over 100 years after this terrible event, what conclusion can be drawn from the assortment of evidence about the real cause of the riot? How should it be judged? It is clear from the evidence that many factors contributed to this devastating tragedy. Despite the trial's outcome, it is crucial to acknowledge these Black soldiers' honorable service to their country. History attests to the

bravery, dedication, and commitment they gave to their country and the protection they provided settlers in the west from Indians, bandits, and robbers. Famous men like General John Pershing and President Theodore Roosevelt commanded them with pride and commended them for their fighting ability and bravery. The soldiers were loyal to the Army, even though the Army was one of their most powerful antagonists.

The trial showed unjustifiable behaviors by the U.S. Army command and the White Houston society. The Army made poor decisions in not heeding the requests of the White officers commanding the Buffalo Soldiers, in requesting that they not be sent to Houston. If the U.S. Army had been more sensitive to the Jim Crow practices of the White Houstonians and had shown more genuine concern for the welfare of their men, these men would not have been sent to Houston. Another issue was that the Houston Chamber of Commerce had been motivated by financial profiteering to take on the federal contract for the Army bases and the money the soldiers would spend on liberty in town. In that case, they could have easily refused to take the Black soldiers. The city's leaders knew full well that the racial nuances of the city folk would become like a fuse waiting to be ignited. Finally, the spark that did light the fuse was the White Houston police officers with their rough, deliberate racist style of handling the Black soldiers.

Additionally, suppose the Third Battalion's ranking White officer had taken the warning from his leading petty officer of his having premonitions of trouble brewing more seriously on the night of the riot. In that case, the riot might have been avoided. In the end, these African American men felt ensnared in a trap of emotional fear and confusion: fearing for their lives and unprotected by their leaders. Acting out of a spontaneous reaction, they decided they needed to protect themselves. Evidence does not show that the Houston Riot of 1917 was the fault of rebellious soldiers' intent with hatred to kill Whites randomly. These men were simply human beings, like everyone else, whom God had given Black skin rather than White; who,

without choice, became caught up in a system of prejudice and provocation until they could take it no more.

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# Sudden Surge: From Past-Aid to Future-Aid Healthcare in the Lone Star State

By Jessie Parchman, Northeast Texas Community College

Texas, the brainchild of a revolutionized healthcare system, has a substantial hold on medical advancements. This can be seen through the healthcare plaza of Houston; not only has it been coined the “Heart Capital,” but it contains over 300,000 healthcare employees. The Texas Medical Board stated nearly 80 percent of licensed physicians receive training there; moreover, this large-scale growth took place with the foundation of the Texas Medical Center.<sup>1</sup> However, Texas’s monumental and often volatile revolution of modern medicine does not correlate with the state’s medical history. One of the first hospitals in the Lone Star State, Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, did not open its doors until 1884; fifteen years after Nebraska’s Clarkson Hospital, thirty-one years after St. Joseph’s Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a full thirty years after the first hospitals in the less-populated western states of Washington and California. Additionally, nursing schools in Texas followed the development pattern long after other

states, such as Louisiana, Arkansas, and California. The first teaching hospital dedicated to nursing was developed in 1890, and the first accreditation of nurses appeared in 1909.<sup>2</sup>

Bred into the society of the South, specifically Texas, was an ideology of profitable vassalage. “*The Cotton Kingdom: A Traveler’s Observations on Cotton and Slavery in The American Slave*

*States, 1853-1861*,” was a book written by Frederick Olmsted who was a prominent landowner and most known for his development of New York’s Central Park. Although Texas worshiped the cotton empire, Olmsted noted the state lacked basic human necessities. He stated roughly five hundred men told him their life depended on cotton and they subsisted on coarse food.<sup>3</sup>

These men produced little and brought in little, so there was a lack of basic supplies to support human growth and development. Texas was shielded from medical care and was reticent about advances



Frederick Law Olmsted in 1857 as he began of his position as superintendent and landscape designer of Central Park. Courtesy: *New York Public Library*.

in medicine. These tendencies toward the “Past-Aid” principles were embedded in the prosperity of healthcare.

The complex concepts of “Aid-of-Past Medicine” and “Aid-for-the Future Medicine” highlight medical dependency in Texas. Although the world has experienced this through the gradient of medical expansion, Texas serves as a case study for the need for medical advancement. The Lone Star State ricocheted from a lax medical backwater to having a pioneering, new-age medical city.

In order to explain “Past-Aid” medicine, one must first correlate the older perspective of Texas’s history of the relationship between sought homeopathic applications and their improvement amelioration, and how these methods were noted, retained, and utilized. Regarding the study of “Future Aid” medicine, it is necessary to examine the exponential growth of medical dependency. “Future-Aid” entails normative periodic checkups for the entirety of a population, emergent use of drugs, government intake in regulations and medical literacy, a fixation on professional medical care as the only way to deal with a medical problem, the reliance on medical insurance, and a belief that the medicine of the future can be better than merely a compilation of best, past applications.

“Past-Aid” medicine was prominent in Texas communities in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Numerous Native American tribes used these methods and have found relief at the hands of plants and herbs—the Apache mashed Poison Ivy to alleviate ringworm. The Comanches were able to treat fractured limbs and gunshot wounds successfully. Early Anglo settlers also gained knowledge of medicine by reading the literary works of earlier Europeans and Arabs—that wormwood trees could help with malaria and willow provide pain relief. Moreover, this was the first evidence of nursing as an occupation instead of a duty. Due to the steady flow of babies, mothers dedicated their lives to nurturing them and finding what worked. During the Texas Revolution, these “Past-Aid” medicine practices began to merge. This is evident through the integration of

nurses such as María Andrea Castañon Villanueva and Susanna Dickinson, as they were the earliest to aid Texan casualties from battle.<sup>4</sup>

Confederate physicians lacked medical competency during the Civil War, in large part, due to the massive number of patients. Doctors amputated limbs by giving alcohol freely to numb the pain; soldiers bled to death, developed gangrene, and drank bacteria-ridden water. Medical practices remained stagnant, partly due to a lack of innovation.<sup>5</sup> Deeply rooted in southern culture was a belief that they knew what to do regarding medicine, so there was not a push for embarking on medical breakthroughs. The dogma of past medicine was cultivated within the Colonial Era expanding into the Civil War epoch. Rather than building upon “Past-Aid” medicine, the South remained a flat line. However, it was no secret that the South could not keep up with the North economically, and medical progression was no different.

A leading Confederate doctor estimated that three-fourths of the deaths of Confederate soldiers resulted from disease rather than on the battlefield.<sup>6</sup> The lack of medical advancement falls to what Dr. Hunter Holmes McGuire, in 1889, called “plenty of elbow room” in terms of environmental recognition and cultivation.<sup>7</sup> During the 1870s, Galveston built one of the largest medical facilities in Texas and City Hospital officially opened in 1875 then added St. Mary’s Infirmary in 1876.<sup>8</sup> Greenville S. Dowel, a surgeon in the Confederate Army, took his medical career on the path to medical innovations. He became a physician at City Hospital and was known for taking on poor patients in Galveston. He also treated African Americans who were sent to him by the Freedmen’s Bureau and other governmental agencies.<sup>9</sup>

Even though Texas was a stagnant medical backwater, there was a lurking boastful society that harnessed the medical profession. This reputation was ingrained in southern society but led to a defined and marked prosperity of healthcare. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, two prominent medical schools accepted a pitifully small class of future southern

physicians. The University of Pennsylvania was created in 1765, and Jefferson Medical College was developed in 1824.<sup>10</sup> These students were the heirs of prominent landowners, but parents did not send their youth to these cutting-edge medical schools or urge their children to join the ranks of leading southern physicians; instead, these families wanted their successors to become elite “American Gentlemen.” From the beginning, the South had a skewed, skeptical view of medical advances. Benjamin Rush, an American physician and politician who also signed the Declaration of Independence, coined this viewpoint the “Republic of Medicine.”<sup>11</sup>

From 1850 to 1861, the South had a deficiency in the number of students studying at Jefferson Medical College and the University of Pennsylvania. Moreover, Texas remained the lowest for both schools while having no students from 1802-1840 at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. The reputation of these Philadelphia schools was beyond excellent at the time, but the South’s medical students and society worshiped the “republic” more than education. John Harley Warner was one of many southern elitists who argued that Philadelphia schools praised medical nationalism that benefited the North and attempted to indoctrinate negative views on southern peers.<sup>12</sup> The stereotypes and dogma of slavery caused friction, which contributed to the low numbers of students enrolled in medical school and created an issue for southern healthcare. Many scholars believed exposure to the abolitionist sentiments found in the North was dangerous and offensive.

Southern students carried a scarlet letter of disgust that made them virtual outcasts within some church communities as well. People of anti-slave views vowed vocally to participate in the Presbyterian church headed by Dr. Henry Boardman due to his anti-slave material and perspective. Southern medical students studying in the North were a target of abolition views and were excluded from the cycle of matriculating like-minded individuals through medical schools, Southern medicine did not stand a chance.<sup>13</sup> Lunsford Yandell noted the struggle of southern physicians in the *Transylvania*

*Journal of Medicine* in 1836. His essay focused on Dysentery and the effects of the disease, but he also highlighted insecurities within the profession. Physicians struggled with self-identity.<sup>14</sup> Many professionals became disquieted by patients’ questions or their authority over subjects themselves. Their claim to righteousness regarding healthcare began to loosen at the foundation. During the 1860s, Yandell saw physicians lacking in knowledge and noted how the laws of science were being redefined due to society’s mistrust and lack of confidence. Moreover, around 1900, most physicians were considered “true general practitioners,” they were considered pioneers or quacks, but most were educated. In a sense, diploma mills began showing up, as there were uneducated physicians. The Medical Association attempted to clean this up in 1907 with the Texas Medical Practice Act. Henry Pritchett followed with Abraham Flexner’s report issued in 1910. These advancements highlighted a crisis and distanced Texas medical schools. During the upheavals of World War I, doctors were traditionally still limiting themselves to one specialty. Until 1937, the idea of one doctor providing a single service such as a family specialist began to fall apart for two reasons: the end of the Great Depression and the prominence of the medical research field.<sup>15</sup>

The lack of medical innovations and old-world medical knowledge affected society and literature. Early 19<sup>th</sup> century journals showcased this lack of physician content by their editors. The publications were short-lived and were focused on economic and political advances. Dowell was credited with finding the first medical journal in Texas. The publication, *Galveston Medical Journal*, was established for Texas physicians. The majority of publishers were from the Galveston Medical College and surrounding branches. However, around 1871, Dowell’s contributions to the journal ceased because reports lacked financial independence. In 1873, John D. Rankin revived medical publications in Texas and created the *Texas Medical Journal*.<sup>16</sup> What makes the journal Rankin attempted unique was that he had six editors that were spread across the state; unfortunately, the diverse outlook and options did not provide a solid foundation for medi-



cal journals in Texas and this publication failed in 1879. However, the tides were turning, with the publication of the *Texas Courtier-Record of Medicine* in 1883 and *Daniel's Texas Medical Journal* in 1885 creating a 30-year legacy. The first publication that became a specialty periodical was *Texas Health Journal* in 1888. The journal went through evolutions but remained a pillar to Texas medical publications.<sup>17</sup>

Within the new era of medical dependency, the history of nursing is incredibly symbolic. Society began to test the early limits and expand the field of science, which many urban elites believed needed to be continuous. As a result, Texas approached a new age, and “Future-Aid” medicine was developing from the embryonic stage. This was evident by the first school of nursing opening in Galveston, Texas, in 1890.<sup>18</sup> This would have taken place sooner; however, it was delayed due to legislative controversy. The Texas legislature voted to establish a university with a medical branch; however, there was a dispute about the location. Eventually, Galveston was named as the primary location, and a university in Austin was named as a secondary one. The Galveston hospital was coined John Sealy Hospital after John Sealy, who donated funds to build the foundation. It was not until March 10, 1890, that the efforts of the Lady Board of Managers also paid off. On this day, the John Sealy Hospital opened its first training school for nurses in the state of Texas.<sup>19</sup>

The new and improved nursing school founded in 1890 was beneficial to nurses and healthcare physicians. While a hospital was valuable to the community, many nurses were left out in the cold with no economic prospects. This fueled a shift with healthcare providers across the state. The John Sealy Hospital graduates were recruited to train new nurses for new hospitals. This increase in hospitals fueled demand for nurses, but hospitals soon found a way to cheat the system. Hospitals across the state began to use student labor as cost-cutting measure, and training schools within hospitals began to swell up. This idea of expansion spread across the country; there were 132 train-

ing schools in 1890 and increased to 548 by 1900. So-called “school-trained” and “practical” nursing left society wondering who could provide the best care or what the difference truly meant.<sup>20</sup> However, unemployed nurses were not the only problem the first nursing school created; there was a deficiency of education and a question of quality. However, pushing into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nurses unified and improved the system. Nineteen nurses established the Texas Graduate Nurses’ Association in Fort Worth. They also founded the Texas Board of Nursing. Among the nineteen nurses was Jennie Cottle Beaty, who brought the bill governing Colorado nursing to the legislature to model a similar one in Texas. It was not until March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1909, that Governor Thomas Mitchell Campbell signed and passed Senate Bill 111. The passing of Bill 111 established the Board of Nurse Examiners (BON).<sup>21</sup> The first formal public health nursing program was started in 1908 as an initiative in Houston by a school principal. School nursing services were approved by the Houston Settlement Association, which created the visiting nurse services. The nursing industry began to transform, and the field of public health separated from medicine. Thus, the parameters of nursing expanded.<sup>22</sup>

The first three decades of the twentieth century in Texas saw the Pragmatic Era. Pragmatism led to a philosophy of science in culture, which won over society’s elite. Medical representation started taking both physical and visual forms within a community. This was primarily due to physicians outlining their clinical and formal scientific education along with their political and economic viewpoints. In 1914, radiologists conceptualized “inside medicine.” Likewise, in 1915 surgeons organized professional societies. Both the increase in nursing and medical representation were taking steps toward “Future-Aid” medicine.

A unique product of this era, which began in Texas, was hospital insurance. Blue Cross was the prominent medical insurance created in 1929 when Baylor University extended a plan to reduce hospital costs for teachers in Dallas. This inspired females to seek after-service support and was a pil-

lar in the feminism rise most noted in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Before medical insurance in 1905, white male Texans had a life expectancy of 47.5 years, and females were 50.2 years. However, by 1929 when insurance was introduced, male expansion rose to 59.7 years, and women rose to 63.5 years. One could analyze that the introduction of hospital insurance was a pillar of “Future-Aid” medicine as it began to set monetary security that would increase in the 1970s.<sup>23</sup>

As hospital advancements increased and patient care needs became more technologized, along with the decline in work hours, a greater need in the quantity of nurses and doctors was required in the 1950s. In 1955, The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) earned \$600,000 in funds from the United States Public Health Service for research. This was not the only large grant for biomedical research in the state, as the United States Public Health Service also gave Baylor scientists roughly \$400,000 and M.D. Anderson Hospital for Cancer Research \$300,000 in 1955.<sup>24</sup> While biomedical research and funding were reproducing exponentially, aerospace was experiencing growth. Aerospace facilities became a leading biomedical expansion in Texas.<sup>25</sup>

During the 1960s, a steppingstone to the “Future-Aid” mentality began with Lyndon B. Johnson, a Texas native, elected as United States President who started the initiation of Medicare and Medicaid during 1964-1965.<sup>26</sup> Since the government got involved, healthcare was becoming a fundamental human right. There was an increased presence in feminist movements during this time, and women realized the value of becoming a part of the healthcare scene. Nurses were filling the gaps between patients and doctors. During the 1960s, advancements in pharmaceuticals became known as “inside medicine,” and rather than reject it, society accepted it and grew with the new world of “Future-Aid.”

Texas was at the forefront of medical advancement in finding a treatment for one of the worst medical diagnoses to hit the country, which

was heart abnormalities. This diagnosis became a crucial tipping point of the “Sudden Surge.” *Life Magazine* shook the medical field and history for years to come. The April 10, 1970, magazine enlightened how Michael DeBakey and Denton Cooley dedicated their lives to the circulatory system through heart transplant surgery and the artificial heart.<sup>27</sup> However, *Life Magazine* did something more, the public now realized that doctors could do anything, but we started to see ethical dilemmas; leave it to two native Texans to go to war over the heart. *Life* deftly portrayed the interpersonal drama that society has begun to crave. The DeBakey-Cooley conflict was contained in the scuffled patch of St. Augustine grass that separated them, but the Houston wind spread their witty discussion across the nation. Moreover, *Life* was able to portray their banter and the brilliant minds of the Texan rivals. Also, the chance at an article and a well-publicized photograph in a magazine as far-reaching as *Life* provided the opportunity to solidify the advancements of the Texan medical empire. Of course, everything is bigger in Texas, especially the tipping point of “Future-Aid” medicine of the 1970s.

A dramatic sign of the “sudden surge” in demand was the meteoric rise in healthcare costs. From 1975 to 1983, three-fold, such as \$6 million to \$18 million, led to numerous healthcare initiatives.<sup>28</sup> Healthcare initiatives mixed with family wealth, corporations, and the government created a medical jackpot. During the 1970s, educational healthcare centers were at the forefront of supporting researchers and establishing research facilities. This perspective was reinforced by the idea of relationships between education and private organizations. UTMB campus and the Shriners of North America were the earliest examples of the cross-over in 1963 and joined to create the Shriners Burns Institute that opened in March 1966. The ideologies and crossovers germinated funding and research leading to healthcare expansion during and after the 1970s.<sup>29</sup>

The foremost sign of the sudden surge in the 1970s came with the wearing of scrubs for the first time, both for nurses and doctors. The “Surge

of the 1970s” describes how the nurses changed from pure white dresses to colorful unisex scrubs. Debbie Beagle, who entered the healthcare field in the early 1970s, described the transition from formal white dress attire to the modern era of scrubs. She remembered the white uniforms were uncomfortable to wear and reinforced the sexist view of the profession. Her hats often got caught in the privacy curtains making her patient interaction challenging. She embraced the idea of discarding the old white uniform for the scrub pants and a top. Along with this change, came black shoes instead of the stark white ones which introduced additional practicality to the job. Beagle noted patients felt “more human” and were more comfortable interacting with her when they arrived in the hospital due to the transition of nursing attire. This more relaxed, yet professional, attitude helped nurses “interact more with patients, and it was nice.” While the doctors did not mind the change, she believed nurses and patients all around the country felt more relaxed, and a new era of the medical field and feminism was established.<sup>30</sup>

During the 1970s, there was a surge of divorce and a kind of society-wide realization that half of all marriages were ending in divorce. From the 1960s to 1990, never-married women aged 25 to 29 increased from 10% to 30%. Coincidentally, it is roughly the same age Texan women began their careers. Divorce reports starting in the 1970s continued to rise until they hit a peak in 1981 with 101,865 divorces.<sup>31</sup> Women wanted a career they could support themselves in, thus, they embraced nursing and did not fear becoming destitute if they got divorced.

At the same time, three-year diploma-based hospital program numbers decreased and associate-degree pathways in universities began to increase. Nurses did not have to impress patients by the way they dressed, but rather by their medical knowledge. Hospitals and patients were fortunate to have a full team of nurses. Remarkably, in a decade that should have forced many of these new nurse recruits to claw their way into a career, the nursing profession welcomed a multitude of

women who needed a career to cover the disintegrating American family.<sup>32</sup>

The medical network established during the “Sudden Surge” took both “Past-Aid” and “Future-Aid” concepts and accelerated them. Whether divorce rates, *Life Magazine*, or scrubs were not viewed as medical advancements through the 1970s, the general public was able to turn on their television and get a dose of telehealth. In fact, leave it to a Texan native with a cowboy twang and an old-fashioned folksy way of delivering medical advice to influence millions. Dr. James “Red” Duke Jr. became one of the most significant on-screen telehealth professionals. He was on air for fifteen years through *Texas Health Reports* or *Dr. Red Duke’s Health Reports*.

Dr. Duke began his medical career as a trauma surgeon and became a professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. He was recognized as a pillar of the Life Flight program. Life Flight was introduced in 1976 and was the only hospital-based air medical transportation service in Houston. Duke’s flamboyant personality and “Future-Aid” techniques were translated into “*Buck James*,” a TV series based on the Texan doctor that ran from 1987-1988. In essence, Dr. Duke captured not only Texas but also the nation with his commitment to and innovative advancement of “Future-Aid” medicine.<sup>33</sup>

The improvements in healthcare and medical dependency opened the door for medical fraud and complacency. Dr. Eric Scheffey’s care would be a staple story in the abundance of fraud. What made Scheffey’s career so unique is that not only was he a fraud with an actual degree from the Galveston Medical Branch, but the medical system allowed him to practice for twenty-five years. Regardless of adverse publicity, seventy-eight malpractice suits, and the payout of thirteen million dollars in damages, the doctor remained in the profession. One of his patients bled to death in the operating room as Scheffey’s tourniquets proved inadequate. Scheffey’s propensity to go where no

other spinal surgeon dared tread led him to amputate spinal discs and implant bionic fixtures with reckless abandon. This caused excruciating pain to perhaps hundreds of patients—several committed suicide. It does not make sense why so many people were willing to trust and ready to believe Scheffey. The medical system lacked checks to stop someone like Scheffey, simply allowing the promise of care and relief to override all else, so this fraud continued for decades.

The system in Texas has a specific problem of over-examinations. In turn, this causes overdiagnosis and overtreatment. This overuse of medical care hurts individuals and society due to the lack of alternate healthcare avenues. One example of this is PSA testing for prostate cancer. Doctors traditionally only recommend men be tested yearly after they reach a certain age. However, doctors realized this was not sufficient and began to add to that recommendation to include earlier tests for men with a family history of prostate cancer or risk factors. This was because the PSA test alone was not enough and did not necessarily save lives but could have complicated them with invasive procedures. The idea of advanced medicine is to catch illnesses before they develop. However, simply seeking specific diseases misidentifies people who are not really at risk and undergo useless testing. Moreover, doctors will order a meridian of tests and avoid critical thinking about the actual patient's needs. In retrospect, it is not surprising that in a state of "Future-Aid" and an abundance of advances, there would be a risk for over-examination.<sup>34</sup>

In analyzing the change from "Past-Aid" to "Future-Aid," or in simpler terms, medical stagnation to an essential healthcare city, the most notable consequence of the "surge" would be social interaction. The stepping-stone to "Future-Aid" was the DeBakey-Cooley conflict, where citizens were able to sense the passion and medical value behind the native Texans and know their sickness would be taken seriously. Looking back 120 years to "Past-Aid" medicine, medical professionals had a reputation for socializing and leaving citizens relying on outdated techniques. Medical dissemination in the

1970s also supports the "Future-Aid" concept as seen through Dr. Duke" as he used innovative avenues to expand healthcare and education. Whereas, in the "Past-Aid" realm, medical dissemination could not be formed due to the loose foundation of unreliable journals.

The genuinely inspirational "Sudden Surge" identified "Past and Future Aid" of feminist movements. "Past-Aid" highlights a rather negative stereotype of women in medicine, often witnessed through their stark white uniforms. However, in the 1970s, the tide turned at the peak of "Future-Aid," as can be seen by the transformation in clothing, and education allowing women to enter a career if they found themselves divorced.

Texas remains the great "can-do" spot on the globe in medicine, a living symbol of the modern medical revolution. Still, the national trend has not bypassed Texas in that there has been a decline in life expectancy along with a spike in obesity. However, Texas medical ingenuity will come to the aid of Texas residents who live in the most medically innovative place in the world. Even so, this will lead to ethical questions, such as when is enough and is there a point when Texas will lose its power to the constantly running medical corporate machine?

#### END NOTES

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# The Life and Career of LGBTQ+ Activist: William Waybourn

By Annie Forte, San Jacinto College

William Waybourn was an ex-journalist, turned gay rights activist from Dallas, Texas, during the horrible HIV/AIDS epidemic that overtook America during the late twentieth century. A powerful political organizer, Waybourn concentrated on the LGBTQ+ community in Dallas with his actions and advocacy. In fact, Waybourn co-founded multiple organizations and events, such as the AIDS Resource Center, the Nelson-Tebedo Community Clinic for AIDS Research, the AIDS Arms Network, the Dallas Legal Hospice, the Dallas Dinner Committee, the Dallas Gay Alliance, and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.<sup>1</sup> Due to Waybourn's actions and advocacy, many LGBTQ+ members were able to receive aid, support, and resources, thereby saving many lives, and preventing the mortality rate from going much higher.

Originally born in Houston, Waybourn began his professional life as a journalist before becoming a gay rights activist and political organizer. While a journalist, Waybourn learned how to become a "master of manipulation," which later helped him in his career.<sup>2</sup> However, what motivated Waybourn to become a gay activist, was losing his friends and other queer individuals to AIDS. In fact, Waybourn recounted attending 2-3 funerals a week at one point.<sup>3</sup> These funerals, along with delivering eulogies, were the hardest part of being an activist according to Waybourn, especially when parents and other individuals of the deceased requested Waybourn keep their sons' sexual orientation a secret. Of course, he refused to do so.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Waybourn grew up in a family

that supported fighting discrimination of any kind. Waybourn's mother fought for the rights of minorities, women of domestic abuse, and women's rights in general. Therefore, Waybourn felt as if activism was his true calling. Waybourn recalled his family losing a bus contract because his parents allowed Black passengers to sit at the front of their restaurant, which was controversial during a time filled with racism and segregation.<sup>5</sup>

In the early 1980s, the state and national government tended to treat gays and LGBTQ+ individuals unfairly. In Dallas, police arrested gay men and women because their behavior was a "moral offense," and they were considered "perverts." Furthermore, the state passed laws against sodomy, which led to LGBTQ+ individuals losing their jobs and added to their general suffering. In response, LGBTQ+ alliances grew, and Waybourn joined these groups to help put a stop to these mistreatments, despite the hurtful abuse that was hurled at him by the people he considered his friends.<sup>6</sup> In addition, no one knew much about HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, so healthcare professionals did not treat those patients properly or even at all, for fear that they would contract the disease as well. Finally, LGBTQ+ individuals received inhumane and poor treatment motivated by religious beliefs.<sup>7</sup> These examples showcased only a few of the multitude of problems that faced gay men and women in Dallas at the time.

As Waybourn continued to make a name for himself, his critics became hateful and the treatment severe, as they vehemently opposed his ideas and the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Furthermore, Waybourn being a gay rights activist during such a conservative time did not make him a popular man. For example, a man, dubbed “The Nut,” repeatedly left Waybourn harsh and homophobic telephone messages on his Dallas answering machine when Waybourn was the president of the Dallas Gay Alliance. Eventually, authorities traced the calls which ended the harassment by “The Nut,” however, Waybourn kept the messages to use as motivation for himself and his actions.<sup>8</sup> Most often, Waybourn responded to hatred with wit and stoicism, which lifted the overall LGBTQ+ community’s confidence and also helped to protect them from these harsh people.

Waybourn’s actions and advocacy improved the lives many LGBTQ+ people. He helped lead the Dallas Gay Alliance, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, and the Victory Fund. Additionally, Waybourn handled specific cases that aided the battle for LGBTQ+ rights and equality. For example, some incidents Waybourn effectively became involved in include: the verbal abuse of Don Baker, the unduly harsh sentence issued by Judge Jack Hampton, the Defense Authorization Bill, and specific cases of discrimination against people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and LGBTQ+ individuals in general.

One specific example of advocating for the right of HIV/AIDS patients was when Waybourn and others sued the Dallas County Department Hospital. As a result of an influx of patients, the hospital planned to limit the number of beds, doctors, and medications available to indigent AIDS patients. In addition, the hospital had extremely long delays when it came to providing HIV treatment - which led to the death of seven patients. Therefore, Waybourn and others sued the hospital to prevent more deaths and put a stop to the hospital’s poor actions. The outcome of the lawsuit was a new law, which created the right of indigent people to have readily available healthcare.<sup>9</sup> The creation of this law motivated Waybourn to continue to pursue change for society as a gay activist.<sup>10</sup>

Another example of Waybourn fight-

ing discrimination and hatred is when the Dallas Gay Alliance (DGA), was verbally attacked with derogatory language by Don Baker. Even though Baker was a gay activist himself, he was known for criticizing the previous DGA presidents, their actions, and the DGA as a whole. Once Waybourn became president, he decided to do what other presidents had not, and responded to Baker’s comments to confront the situation, and settled this public issue. Baker repeatedly called various reporters claiming that the DGA did not represent the entire gay community.<sup>11</sup> Baker’s ultimate goal appeared to be to weaken the DGA’s credibility in the media and sabotage their reputation. Waybourn quickly issued a public statement to all members of the DGA. In the letter, Waybourn responded to all the rude comments Baker made, discrediting the claims that Baker tried to paint the DGA and the AIDS Resource Center in a bad light. In addition, Waybourn continued to criticize Baker and his actions.<sup>12</sup> By standing up to Baker, Waybourn protected the reputation of the DGA and other LGBTQ+ organizations. Furthermore, Waybourn shut down this issue before it became a bigger matter for the general LGBTQ+ community in Dallas. Eventually, Baker realized his own image suffered once the other leaders and supporters of DGA called him out as well.<sup>13</sup>

Waybourn was out front in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights when Judge Jack Hampton handed down an unfair, shorter sentence to a murderer due to the sexuality of the two victims involved. Originally, the convicted murderer, Richard Lee Bednarski, received the maximum punishment - a life sentence. However, Judge Hampton instead gave the murderer a sentence of thirty years in prison, with the eligibility for parole after only seven-and-a-half years. Hampton said this was because the victims were “queers,” and their death were comparable to the death of a prostitute - meaning the death of both did not matter to society.<sup>14</sup> As expected, the LGBTQ+ community was outraged with this and was quick to voice their displeasure and anger. In fact, Bednarski himself commented, “Everybody’s life is worth the same amount, no matter what they are.” As the president of the DGA, Waybourn quickly

sent out a letter on behalf of the DGA. In the letter, Waybourn explained the situation and highlighted Judge Hampton's misconduct. Furthermore, Waybourn called for society to fight the bigotry and prejudice of Judge Hampton and the murderer's reduced sentence. After explaining the situation, Waybourn wrote about the ways citizens could help, including letters reprimanding Judge Hampton for his actions and calling for his resignation, and/or donating to the DGA.<sup>15</sup> Waybourn's actions brought attention to the situation and garnered support to try to ensure that the victims found justice. Finally, his actions helped people realize that discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community was a common occurrence.

Another scenario showing Waybourn's fight for LGBTQ+ equality was the DGA's lawsuit with the Parkland Memorial Hospital, which was similar to Waybourn's lawsuit with the Dallas County Department Hospital. The lawsuit started when Parkland Memorial Hospital denied AIDS patients with pneumocystis pneumonia their only effective treatment - a inhalant pentameter. Furthermore, Parkland did not elaborate on their actions. So, to force the hospital to provide this treatment to AIDS patients, Waybourn and the DGA stepped up and filed a lawsuit against the hospital.<sup>16</sup> The actions of Waybourn and the DGA saved lives and brought awareness to the poor medical care HIV/AIDS patients received.

Another way that Waybourn aided the LGBTQ+ community was by advocating for Jeffery Germata, and others like him. B. Dalton Bookstores fired Germata for being gay. Germata then came to and was given help by the DGA. However, Germata later reported that the DGA did not help him with his issue of gay employee discrimination.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, Waybourn and the DGA responded to Germata and his complaints through the *Viewpoint* newspaper. Waybourn explained that he and the DGA did respond to Germata, and updated him on the situation through a phone call, and a follow-up letter. Waybourn said that the DGA wanted to help, but were not able to, because at the time, discrimination against homosexuals in

Texas was not against the law. Furthermore, gay people without AIDS were not a protected class in Texas. Therefore, because Germata was an individual without AIDS, the DGA was unable to do much about this situation.<sup>18</sup> Waybourn explained why the DGA could not help everyone and why people must support the DGA and LGBTQ+ rights in general.

Yet another case that demonstrated Waybourn's passion for LGBTQ+ justice was his opposition to the Defense Authorization Bill, which allowed for discrimination against HIV-positive soldiers in the military.<sup>19</sup> At the time, Bill Clinton was President of the United States, so Waybourn wrote to Clinton on behalf of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), in hopes of urging him to veto the bill to stop discrimination against HIV-positive individuals. Furthermore, Waybourn explained that the bill would leave thousands discharged from the military, with no health care or benefits. Waybourn urged President Clinton not to follow the discriminatory ways of society, but instead, to help better it.<sup>20</sup> Overall, Waybourn's actions helped people understand what life would be like for thousands of HIV-positive soldiers if the bill was passed. In addition, Waybourn's action also helped in the long-term fight for individuals with HIV/AIDS by shining a light on government discrimination.

Finally, another way that Waybourn advocated for the rights of the LGBTQ+ was by founding the LGBTQ+ Victory Fund. This organization worked to increase the amount of LGBTQ+ elected officials in positions of power in the government. The organization's goal is to ensure these candidates reflect the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and uphold the promises they made to those they serve.<sup>21</sup> Multiple founding members, including: William Waybourn, Howard Menaker, David Detrick, Vic Basile, Tim McFeeley, John Thomas, David Mixner, Hilary Rosen, Roberta Bennett, Scott Hitt, and Lynn Greer, created The LGBTQ+ Victory Fund.<sup>22</sup> Waybourn and the others established this organization to increase LGBTQ+ representation in government, which in turn, would



help the LGBTQ+ community and their rights. In turn, the LGBTQ+ elected officials brought additional awareness to other queer issues and helped provide aid.

Ultimately, Waybourn played an important role in history, especially for LGBTQ+ history in Dallas, specifically, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Dallas. A compassionate and smart man, Waybourn saved many lives during the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and advocated for the rights and lives of many more. Through his actions, advocacy, support, and leadership, Waybourn succeeded in building up a strong community for suffering HIV/AIDS patients, gay men, and gay women to lean on. Waybourn did this with the help of his various organizations, such as the AIDS Resource Center, the Nelson-Tebedo Community Clinic for AIDS Research, the AIDS Arms Network, the Dallas Legal Hospice, the Dallas Dinner Committee, the Dallas Gay Alliance, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, and the Victory Fund.<sup>23</sup>

The purpose of these institutions was to provide help and support to individuals with AIDS and/or the LGBTQ+ community as a whole. The AIDS Resource Center worked to offer services and care to AIDS-ridden individuals, while also continuing to educate the general public about the devastating disease. Using money from donors to operate and grow, the AIDS Resource Center supported the Dallas community.<sup>24</sup> Similar to the AIDS Resource Center, the AIDS Arms Network's objective was to meet the needs of AIDS patients, and the organization succeeded, helping over half of all AIDS cases in Dallas.<sup>25</sup> Next, the Nelson-Tebedo Community Clinic for AIDS Research was a clinic sustained by funding from the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR) which researched AIDS and provided medical services to AIDS patients.<sup>26</sup> In addition, another group was the Dallas Dinner Committee, which assisted with raising money for the Human Rights Campaign Fund and became the most prominent fundraiser for LGBTQ+ individuals in the country.<sup>27</sup>

Overall, Waybourn helped HIV/AIDS

patients to receive proper care, he helped them to fight against discrimination, and he called out injustices within the government. In addition, Waybourn brought awareness to the injustices that the LGBTQ+ community faced, such as the Parkland Hospital issue, or the Judge Hampton issue, amongst many other things. The impact Waybourn had on LGBTQ+ history cannot be denied as he was instrumental in changing the semi-conservative Dallas society and introducing them to the concept of the LGBTQ+ community and showed that LGBTQ+ individuals are human just like everyone else. Furthermore, Waybourn made lots of influential and impactful decisions as the president of the DGA. These decisions included things like making strong public statements, planning timely public responses, and controlling the affairs of the DGA. Waybourn's showed he was an influential player in the community through his actions and strong positions which earned him the respect of his peers and community, despite his identity as a gay man.

One specific example of Waybourn's actions earning him respect was when he mailed Judge John Marshall and got a response back. Judge Marshall ruled on the Parkland Hospital lawsuit in favor of Waybourn and the DGA. Even though they had both never formally met outside of the courtroom, Waybourn took the time to send a thank you note to Judge Marshall after the lawsuit against Parkland Hospital concluded. Judge Marshall responded back showing his admiration, explaining that Waybourn's actions, and the thank you letter helped Judge Marshall understand how influential his role as a judge is, especially for the LGBTQ+ community.<sup>28</sup>

Waybourn handled many difficult situations, such as the slanderous comments of Don Baker, Judge Jack Hampton's unjust murder sentence for Bednarski, the Defense Authorization Bill, instances of discrimination against people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, and specific cases of discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in general. The calm manner in which Waybourn navigated these situations garnered him respect; he demonstrated principles, morals, and integrity.

Therefore, Waybourn's actions also allowed him to network and earned him more clout for his causes and organizations. Waybourn and his organizations' advocacy provided many LGBTQ+ members and HIV/AIDS patients the proper aid, support, and resources, which therefore saved lives, and prevented the mortality rate from being much higher.

Now retired, Waybourn lives happily with his partner of forty-eight years, Craig Spalding. Together, they both endured harassment and security threats as gay activists. In fact, at one point, the couple required around-the-clock police protection in front of their house.<sup>29</sup> Waybourn moved from Dallas, Texas, to Washington, D.C. in 1991. Once in Washington, D.C., Waybourn helped establish the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund and the Gay and Lesbian Association Against Defamation (GLAAD), which became a national organization. Waybourn served as the head of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), which was later tasked with encouraging the accurate portrayals of LGBTQ+ individuals in the media.<sup>30</sup> Today, Waybourn and his spouse continue to live peacefully in Washington, D.C.

Waybourn's legacy is that of an influential gay activist who, with a calm, empathetic, and professional manner overcame social obstacles, while providing a guiding light for others in the LGBTQ+ movement, gaining him respect as a gay man. Furthermore, Waybourn always went above and beyond for what he believed through his advocacy and leadership, which was witnessed by those around him. Without that self-discipline and empathy, Waybourn would not have been able to provide aid, to bring awareness to queer issues, and to help HIV/AIDS patients.

In summary, Waybourn was an impactful man, and his actions and leadership carved the way for the LGBTQ+ community in a semi-conservative Dallas, and later on, he forged a pathway for LGBTQ+ rights on a national scale. To the LGBTQ+ youth of today, Waybourn says to get involved. One might not be able to change the world, but it is worth it to change a single person.<sup>31</sup>

## END NOTES

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# The Well-Being Activist: Dr. Red Duke

By Maiko Estrada, Northeast Texas Community College

In 2023 Texas remains an oil, gas, and wind energy center, and recently Elon Musk has embellished the state's reputation for space exploration by building a launch site for SpaceX near the Mexican border. But modern Texas should equally be known for its penchant for the best in medicine. The Texas Medical Center of Houston, with its sixty medical institutions, 106,000 employees, its vibrant award-winning hospitals, its tradition of celebrity physicians, and willingness to fight serious cases of cancer, amyloidosis, and heart disease, is a world-class center for the best in diagnostics, complete treatment, and transformative care. Its flagship hospitals, Houston Methodist, MD Anderson, and St. Luke's consistently rank among the nation's best in treating the country's most lethal diseases.<sup>1</sup>

The lack of appreciation for medicine in Texas is typified by a deletion mutation in the state's historical awareness of Texas's medical history. Texans have quickly forgotten the case of Dr. James Henry "Red" Duke, an intriguing, unusual doctor, who I will describe as a path-breaking "well-being activist." Duke was a health leader who pioneered an ideal interface between the world of medicine and ordinary people. He was both a proactive, media-savvy Paul Revere who warned the populace of health dangers and a winsome spokesman for a wholesome life.

Described as an authentic "full-blooded" Texan, Duke was both a man of the people and an arresting health specialist. He was particularly visible through his popular television spots in the 1980s and 1990s. Dr. "Red" Duke stands out from

many of today's medical experts due to his promotion of the "good news of health." There are, for example, other doctors who are using their various platforms and positions to get in front of the public, such as, Dr. Anthony Fauci, a brilliant spokesman of medicine, and then there is Russian American, Dr. Mikhail Varshavski, a rising star who has begun to unfurl medicine on social media. Fauci's ability to sway public opinion cannot be denied. He conducted innovative work in HIV-AIDS research assisting in the development of efficacious drugs to lower the disease's monumental mortality rate. He became an expert in the West Nile virus, SARS, Ebola, and finally, the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Mikhail Varshavski, on the other hand, is known for his popularity for being the "sexiest doctor alive." His animated talks and stunning physique appeal to many.<sup>3</sup> However, today's health experts, however spot-on about the facts, are culturally out of step, and in some ways anti-democratic. They impose their opinions with imperious stares, and in the case of Fauci, dull monotones. They are like kings from another world, not leaders of a democratic society. Texas's Red Duke understood far better a role for health in the world—not as an authoritarian naysayer, but as a democratic enthusiast of a better life.

Dr. Red Duke's early life and his remembrance of it played a vital role in his development as a "well-being activist." He was born in Ennis, Texas, in the blackland prairie east of Waxahachie. It was a city with land famous for its rich, fertile soil and capacity to grow unlimited cotton. Ennis was a railroad town having a direct connection to Dallas. Railroads and cotton played key roles



in the story of Duke's family. Ennis attracted Ivo Donegan (Duke's maternal grandfather), a train conductor, and a first-rate salesman for the Lone Star Gas Company, and James Henry Duke (Duke's father). This ultimately led to the match of James Henry and Helen Donegan, who began their life at Ennis. On 16 November in 1928, at 1:30 a.m. in a tiny little hospital, James Henry Duke Jr. added a digit to the human population. During Duke's early years, he enjoyed playing baseball for a peewee team and dancing for the Ennis Dancers at the Texas Theatre. Duke and his family then moved to Hillsboro, Texas.<sup>4</sup>

The future well-being activist had a young life in Hillsboro that was both challenging and compounded by health problems. Duke's dad experienced hard times, and Duke felt the brunt of fatherly criticism. He worked with his father harvesting cotton and spading ditches. In Hillsboro, Duke was baptized with his nickname "Red" due to his curly red mane. Duke's dad insisted on excellence in everything, and when Red achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, he did it with such public-service panache that he appeared in the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. However, Duke's health life took a "wild" turn.<sup>5</sup> Duke suffered intense pain when a lightning bug lodged into his ear canal, and he had to be hospitalized. Three years later, he was diagnosed with pneumonia and found that he also had an eye disorder, diplopia, which causes double vision. Duke was given special glasses that stuck with him and gave him his trademark look later.

Duke later craved the good life and a better life, as much of his young life was troubled. His daughter later noted:

I think the reason he was so driven is that he never felt like he was ever good enough, not smart enough, not hard-working enough. That was, of course, ridiculous, but he talked about it with me many times. That notion came from his father. Henry Duke was a cruel and mean man. He was brutal to Red as a child and demanded more of him than any

child could give. Henry Duke was harsh and cruel to many people in the family and outside the family, but it wasn't something we talked about openly; after all, he had an image to uphold. But that meanness set Red up from an early age to feel unworthy, to figure out what he could do, what problem he could solve, what situation he could make better, so that he could finally prove he was "good enough." He had accomplished so many amazing things, improved systems, and individuals' lives and trained a generation of great surgeons, but in his mind, the bar of excellence was always moving away from him. No matter how much he did or accomplished, it was never going to be enough because of the legacy his father handed him. That legacy flowed downstream. My dad's attention was on fixing great problems and saving people's lives, not on me or the family. If I needed him, or just wanted him to be around, he always had the best excuse in the world--he was saving someone's life.<sup>6</sup>

As a future health populist, Duke was both a man of the people and a troubled overachiever. He appropriately found a place where both his academic overachievement and need to hang out, country style, could come together. After Hillsboro High School, he attended the University of Texas A&M at College Station. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in science in 1950. He also gained recognition for being the yell leader. He started a tradition by becoming the first Aggie to render the poem, "The Last Corps Trip," during the school's bonfire. Duke lived another Aggie tradition, gaining military experience, serving two years as a tank commander in Germany during the Korean War after obtaining his bachelor's degree.

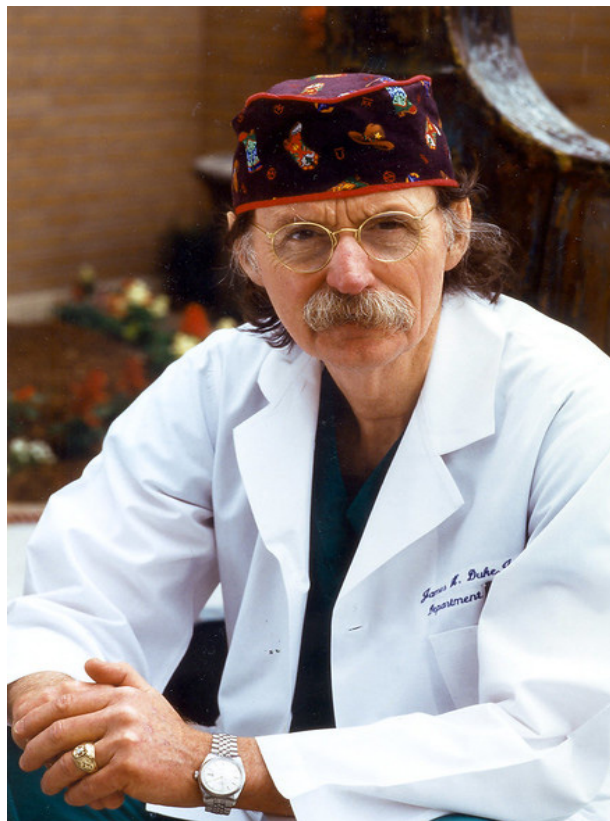
In the Texas evangelical scene, ministers need to be outgoing, cordial, and full of the "good news" of the Gospel to make it. It is notable, that the church-going, religious Duke, once aspired to be a minister in this tradition. Once back from Germany, he enrolled in the conservative Southwestern

Baptist Theological seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. In 1955 he achieved his Master of Divinity degree. During his seminary days in Fort Worth, Duke read a book by Albert Schweitzer, the humanitarian physician, that stimulated him to seek a career in academic medicine. Duke thought he could best serve his community by first earning an M.D. Duke added another layer to his skill sets and complex personality when he achieved his medical degree at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas in 1960. He then completed his residency in general surgery at the Dallas Parkland Memorial Hospital.<sup>7</sup>

By the early 1960s, Duke knew how to entertain others with buoyant stories. He knew he had a gift for heart-to-heart speaking. Duke nevertheless continued to focus on advancing his credentials in the medical world. He did this in an impressive fashion. He became a surgical professor at the University of Texas Southwestern and at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. Duke also pursued more graduate studies in chemical engineering, biochemistry, and computer sciences at the University of Columbia. Five years later, in 1970, he moved with his family to Jalalabad, Afghanistan, where he served as a temporary professor and one of the main residing chairmen of surgery at the Nangarhar University School of Medicine. The experience in Nangarhar was singular as “modern technology” did not exist there. This reinforced the side of Duke’s awareness that appreciated the possibilities for health, when advanced medical options did not exist.

But on the other side of the ledger Duke, unlike many health specialists, kept abreast with the best in ultra-invasive, hard-scale care. He returned to Texas in 1972 and became a professor at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, now partnered with UT Health. At Memorial Hermann and Houston, he became obsessed with the problems attending Level-One trauma care. Out of the impasses he felt there, in 1976, Duke forged an innovation--Life Flight, an air ambulance system. It consisted of an organized network of helicopters that transported patients in censorious

conditions. Duke served as the medical director of this program for the rest of his life. It was the first air ambulance system in Texas and one of the first in the nation.<sup>8</sup>



Dr. James H "Red" Duke (1928-2015), respected trauma surgeon, became known for his passion for teaching the next generation of doctors and educating the public about health. Courtesy: *University of Texas Health Center at Houston*.

Duke’s reputation as a humorous, heartfelt speaker and a health expert won notice in the Houston area. Dr. Roger Bulger, President of the UT Health Science Center, became both a fan of Duke’s and an adamant supporter of televising medical information. When a local filmmaker emerged to fulfill Bulger’s quest, Bulger directed the producer to Duke. Despite the filmmaker’s initial opposition, Duke aired his first health broadcast in 1981. The feedback was so positive that Duke soon found himself scrambling to fill a whole new role.<sup>9</sup> Dr. Red Duke wasn’t just any well-being activist but a country well-being activist, who appeared ready to reach an audience in the millions. Richard Andrassy, a local physi-

cian, claimed at the time that Duke had an uncanny way of ingratiating his audience, even to the point where he could say something bizarre and get away with it. Dr. Red Duke had a name for Dr. Andrassy at this time and it was: “Booger.” This was a good name according to Dr. Duke.<sup>10</sup> Country people in Texas, expressed themselves in earthy ways, and Dr. Andrassy took the nickname as a sign that he had become something like Duke’s boyhood friend. Dr. Duke also employed his own nickname in his television shows, “Red.” Duke also made sure that these shows expressed his interest in living in the country, in the out-of-doors, being a hunter and attaining exercise. To evade the impression that he was simply a rifle-toting redneck, Duke was also a wildlife conservationist. According to his book, *I’m Dr. Red Duke*, his grandmother, Nancy Cherry, was a descendant of the Cherokee Indians. She, according to Duke, shared with Albert Schweitzer a “reverence of life,” an attitude he always admired.<sup>11</sup> Duke thus sought to stay on television appealing to as large an audience as possible, being simultaneously known as the former tank-commander, and country doctor who also was concerned about conservation, the treatment of Indians, and love for animals. Indeed, he won the Peter Hathaway Capstick Award (Dallas Safari’s most prestigious award for wildlife conservation). He led the Wild Sheep Foundation and the Boone & Crockett Club, organizations that promote policies to conserve wildlife lands, and their relationship with people.

In his remarks to the Boone & Crockett Club one evening, Duke showed how good he was at making an appeal to a general audience. He said:

I was born right before the Great Depression. And you learned during those years that whatever you had was precious. When I got older, I got involved in wildlife; it was obvious I was just doing what I felt like God wanted me to do. You know God created this unbelievably wonderful world in which we find ourselves and all the other creatures on it. We must learn to take care of it. Its got a finite ability to support reckless use.<sup>12</sup>

Here, in just a few sentences, Duke suggested a kind of empathy he had for old-timers, Christians, conservationists, the poor, animals, and environmentalists.

Public speaking is often described as “prepared remarks,” but 2,400 years ago, Aristotle, the “world’s greatest authority” at the time, delineated it a little differently. He said, “in public or private, we speak for one reason: to persuade.”<sup>13</sup> Public speaking is for many a major challenge; people tend to get nervous, and their anxiety levels cause the heart to beat faster than when they run. Others, however, understand the fundamentals. Aristotle says, “These persuading people think about their audience not about themselves; they make the audience happy, and they speak in their audience’s language.”<sup>14</sup>

Duke’s health-report programs that made him a star are still extant. Thus, one still can experience Aristotelian proficiency in action. Red Duke’s health report titled, “Potato,” was about the potato--how a potato is healthy until abused by society. The theme stays consistent throughout the entire video. He accomplishes his goal flourishingly; he knows he wants to improve a person’s life by educating them about the potato. He then sets perfect examples and uses the common English language: “If you decide to bake or steam the potato, please don’t smother the poor thing with great globs of sour cream and butter, that’s what makes it fat,” Dr. Duke says, in a manner that is simple and crisp for the human ear to comprehend.<sup>15</sup> The video consists of his quite satisfying personable tone and Texan accent. Though much of the video relies on supportive imagery--such as a clip showing potato peels being needlessly shoved down a garbage disposal unit--when Duke appears, he communicates on all levels. His hands, for example, gesticulate smoothly and constantly, underlining elements of his message. Most importantly, he appears at the end of the video with a friend, a bearded cowboy, who sullenly nods in favor of Duke’s message.<sup>16</sup>

In another excellent segment, “Kidney Stones,” Duke again exhibited his Aristotelian vir-

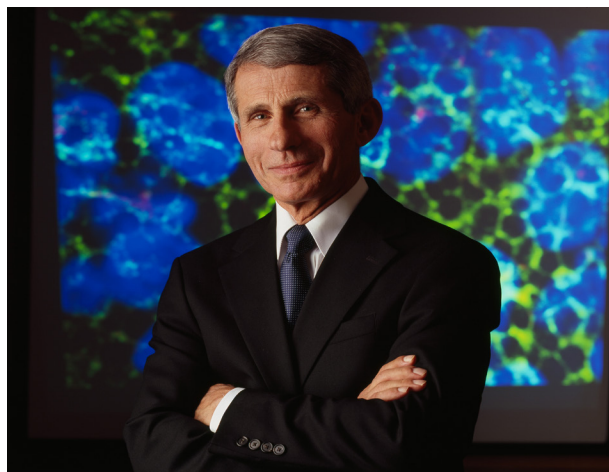


tues, and kinship with brilliant imagery. In this segment Dr. Duke compared the surgical procedure of kidney-stone removal to the work of a jackhammer, battering away at concrete. Of course, he begins the video by personally operating the jackhammer. He lets the viewer experience the actual noise and power of the jackhammer. The subtext was clear: do not consume more sugar or salt than necessary. If you do, you will experience the restorative surgery of the lithotripter, which works like a jackhammer on stone. But Duke did not leave off there. He trumpeted the news that modern surgery leaves the patient with a recovery time of only two days rather than several weeks. In one short video, he attracts attention—gives younger people the good news they can avoid this, and for those experiencing the pain of a kidney stone, the good news that recovery is much easier than in times past.<sup>17</sup>

There is a significant difference in the way Duke communicates his message of health through entertainment and the manner in which Dr. Anthony Fauci attempted to educate the public. In a summer of 2021, in a CNBC (Consumer News and Business Channel) interview with Dr. Anthony Fauci, the expert was asked about how southern states like Mississippi and Louisiana are going to be affected by COVID-19. Dr. Fauci responded:

Well, with regard to the immediate, they're sending--we're sending surge teams to help with the actual implementation of the immediate response, and that's FEMA, that's CDC people. That's people from the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response to help setting up to provide some treatment like monoclonal antibodies to help with the hospital situation. That's the immediate thing. But, you know, as-, aswe'r- [sic] as you know, Nancy, as we've discussed many, many times, all of this is entirely predictable. And yet, on the other hand, entirely preventable. We've got to get people vaccinated. We have about 90 million people who are eligible to be vaccinated, who are not vaccinated. And that's very highly concentrated in the southern states, including Mississippi

and other states in which you have, compared to the general average of vaccinations in the country, an under-vaccinated group. And those are the people in whom the outbreak with a highly, highly transmissible Delta variant is spreading. And it's tragic because we're seeing a lot of people get seriously ill.<sup>18</sup>



Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, appointed as Director of NIAID in 1984, made issues of public health his life's work. Courtesy: *National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases*.

Dr. Fauci often could not resist using the most precise medical lingo available. He used expressions like “surge teams” and “monoclonal antibodies,” terms that are not part of the common language. His preference for acronyms like ‘FEMA’ and ‘CDC’ helped to insure he lost more people in his discourse. Dr. Fauci’s approach to educating the public involved an awkward attempt to inspire people to trust his obvious expertise. Now one wonders how Dr. Red Duke may have fared with COVID-19, but, in his era he did, in fact, tackle health education’s hottest topics. The “Potato” health segment video, for example, focused on the greatest cause of death in America—heart disease—which is caused by eating unhealthy, greasy foods, such as putting “globs” of butter on your potato.

Dr. Red Duke, to be sure, lacked the erotic appeal of Dr. Mikhail Varshavski. Dr. Varshavski, more commonly known on YouTube and social media as “Dr. Mike,” produces short videos that relay important capsules of medical information. His videos are meant to be provocative, carrying



such titles as: “Here’s What Happens When a Doctor Lies,” “Doctor Reacts to Squid Game Injuries,” and “Here is Why my Blood is Actually Yellow.” Dr. Mike uses comparisons the same way Dr. Duke did. Dr. Mike talks about plasma and says, “our blood in the tunnels it travels through without plasma would be like you riding down a waterslide without any water.” Dr. Mike also seems to take a page from Dr. Duke’s record with his enthusiastic, motivational energy. He screams, smiles, and, in a twenty-first-century touch, shows “memes” which provide an entertaining coating to his message.<sup>19</sup>

Dr. Varshavski may seem like a twenty-first-century upgrade to Duke, but as a well-being activist, Dr. Mike is a disappointment. Many of his videos pander to his image as a celebrity male. While sex may interest some younger, turned-on viewers, this cult of personality as a health feature becomes a total distraction, and waste of time. Dr. Mike as a proud physician is by nature a talker about invasive strategies. The fear factor is stronger in his videos, the vision of a better life absent. Duke was all about living a healthy life and enjoying it. Dr. Mike assumes that the world is somehow inside his doctor’s office, or a hospital, waiting for some procedure that might rectify but could hardly improve life. With Dr. Mike, we see pertinent illustration clips, but we don’t see clips of the sexy doctor doing things, of being places, or making friends. Dr. Mike’s clips, featuring people with diseases, and blown-up renditions of bacteria acting like monsters—are scary. Finally, Dr. Mike appeals to an audience mainly of turned-on females, and lacks a basic, general appeal. Unlike Duke who played through broad swaths of the West and South as the ultimate doctor you could trust and learn from, Dr. Mike tends to connect with younger viewers, who ironically have fewer health problems and issues.<sup>20</sup>

Duke had his limitations. Unlike the other two members of the famous Texas medical troika of the late-twentieth century—Denton Cooley, and Michael DeBaKey—Duke lacked a vitae brimming with publications and awards for developing new procedures. But on a wider level, Duke radiated a greater wisdom about medicine in a democracy.

More than solutions-to-problems, people want in general the simplest pact they can make with their society, to stay healthy and enjoy life. Duke tried to provide this basic information. Duke also understood the disease of diseases—anxiety and tried to allay panic by humor and folksy charm. Duke understood that to be successful, the health community had to try to connect with the largest possible public. The achievements of the Texas well-being activist of the 1980s and 1990s have transcended his time and remain a model for the health community of the twenty-first century.

#### END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Heart disease and cancer remain the nation’s two most deadly maladies. MD Anderson is consistently ranked among the top cancer hospitals in the nation. It is currently number one. Both Houston Methodist and the Texas Heart Institute at St. Luke’s are also internationally-acclaimed, and nationally ranked, in this case, for heart issues. “Best Hospitals by Specialty” *U.S. News and World Report*, <<https://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/rankings>> [Accessed 24 September 2023]. “The World’s Most Comprehensive Life Science Ecosystem” *TMC* <<https://www.tmc.edu/>> [Accessed 24 September 2023].

<sup>2</sup> “Dr. Mike Biography” (Mikhail Varshavski), *The Famous People*, <<https://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/doctor-mike-43623.php>> [Accessed November 6, 2021].

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<sup>4</sup> Bryant Boutwell, *I’m Dr. Red Duke*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2018), 8-20.

<sup>5</sup> “Remembering Dr. James Red Duke: A True Pioneer” *Memorial Hermann UHealth*, <<https://www.uth.edu/dredduke/>> [Accessed: 28 August 2021].

<sup>6</sup> Boutwell, *Dr. Red Duke*, 74-77.

<sup>7</sup> One might see Joel Osteen, the Houston celebrity preacher; Wally Criswell, the long-term pastor of First Baptist in Dallas and former head of the Southern Baptist Convention; and Billy Graham, the global evangelist, as setting the style for this Southern evangelical tradition.

<sup>8</sup> “History of Memorial Hermann Life Flight” *Memorial Hermann*, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4GqlAv1Jz8>> [Accessed 5 January 2022].

<sup>9</sup> Boutwell, *Dr. Red Duke*, 168-169; “Remembering Dr. James Red Duke.”

<sup>10</sup> “A Tribute to James H. “Red” Duke Jr., M.D.” *UTHealth Houston*, <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gf303ZNISUQ&list=PLXIOdiUL4VfT\\_uF6LH-ZCxuIni-XyJ9CY&index=17](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gf303ZNISUQ&list=PLXIOdiUL4VfT_uF6LH-ZCxuIni-XyJ9CY&index=17)> [Accessed 17 September 2021].

<sup>11</sup> Boutwell, *Dr. Red Duke*, 87-88.

<sup>12</sup> “Dr. James H. “Red” Duke” Department of Range-land, *Wildlife & Fisheries Management*, <<https://rwfm.tamu.edu/dr-james-h-red-duke/>> [Accessed 6 November 2021].

<sup>13</sup> “Aristotle was a Key Figure in Public Speaking” *CNBC*, <<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/12/aristotles-3-most-important-rules-for-being-more-persuasive-in-public-speaking.html>> [Accessed 12 January 2021].

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> “Potato” *UTHealth Houston*, <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioT9YK\\_EqPE&list=PLXIOdiUL4VfT\\_uF6LH-ZCxuIni-XyJ9CY&index=7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioT9YK_EqPE&list=PLXIOdiUL4VfT_uF6LH-ZCxuIni-XyJ9CY&index=7)> [Accessed 12 September 2021].

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> “Kidney Stones” *UTHealth Houston*, <[https://www.google.com/search?q=Red+Duke+Kidney+stones&rlz=1C1GCEA\\_enUS972US972&oq=Red+Duke+Kidney+stones&aqs=chrome..69i57.8285j1j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=Red+Duke+Kidney+stones&rlz=1C1GCEA_enUS972US972&oq=Red+Duke+Kidney+stones&aqs=chrome..69i57.8285j1j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)> [Accessed January 5, 2021].

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<sup>19</sup> Boutwell, *Dr. Red Duke*, 171-173.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.; “Dr. Mike Reacts to PERFECT Medical Memes” *Doctor Mike*, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sf0pGe8UIy0>> [Accessed 5 October 2021]; “Is Vaping Causing Your Strep Throat?” *Doctor Mike*, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sf0pGe8UIy0>> [Accessed 5 October 2021].

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# The Immigration of Thousands of Jews through the Galveston Movement

By Nancy Zamora, San Jacinto College

**T**he Galveston movement was a historical event that took place between 1907 and 1914 in Galveston, Texas; in which approximately 10,000 Jews immigrated into the United States through the Port of Galveston. There were several internal and external factors that contributed to the movement. One of the biggest internal interests was to divert the immigration and concentration of Jews from the northeast states, but more specifically, New York. International Jewish leaders supported the initiative to help the Jews in Russia and other parts of Europe who suffered continued persecution. The Galveston movement facilitated the arrival of immigrants, and once processed by the immigration office, they were relocated throughout several participating cities in the western states, where the competition for jobs was minimal compared to those states in the northeast. Unfortunately, the Great War forced the Galveston Movement to shut down as the United States enacted stricter immigration laws, but there is no doubt that it was a well-executed and successful program that positively impacted thousands of Jewish lives providing them with new opportunities.

In the late nineteenth century, the Jewish community in Russia was victim to a series of oppressive events that started after the assassination of Czar Alexander II in March 1881. His death opened the gate to a state of unrest throughout Russia. Many Jewish businesses, homes, and even the insular Jewish communities were invaded, sacked, destroyed, and burned. The anti-Jewish riots increased in violence and spread to more than 150

Russian towns. The government failed to protect and support the Jews, and as a result, they started emigrating to other countries in search of better conditions for their families.

The same year, the United States became the sought-after destination for many Russian-Jewish immigrants. The most common port of entry was Ellis Island in New York. The Jewish immigrants tended to settle in the northeastern cities of Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston, and mainly, New York City and the surrounding suburbs. Upon their arrival, the Jewish immigrants inhabited areas known as slums, which were eventually labeled ghettos. Jewish leaders in the United States identified the massive immigration and relocation of Jews to the northeast as a potential problem that might cause an increased anti-Semitism sentiment, as well as tighter immigration restrictions.

In 1901 the Industrial Removal Office (IRO), a new organization based in New York, was created. The main purpose of the institution was “to remove Jewish immigrants on an individual basis to small urban centers throughout the United States.” Under the direction of David M. Bressler, the Industrial Removal Office successfully distributed approximately 79,000 immigrants during its operations between 1901 and 1922. The agency partnered with committees located in the Southwest United States, who would commit to accept relocating a certain number of immigrants per month. The Galveston Movement examined the IRO’s philosophy and would later implement a similar methodology.

Jacob Schiff, a prominent New York banker, was a leader who cared for the American-Jewish community. He advocated the idea that a positive approach to solving the issue of Jewish concentration in the northeast was to divert the immigration masses to another port, and at the same time, to come up with a plan to distribute the immigrants throughout the nation to prevent a similar problem.

In 1906, per Schiff's own recollection, the United States Commissioner-General of Immigration Franklin Pierce Sargent contacted him. Sargent suggested that Schiff help find a way to relieve the heavy inflow of Jewish immigrants arriving in the eastern ports by diverting immigration to the ports located in the Gulf of Mexico. Schiff immediately started working on an action plan, which led him to reach out to Israel Zangwill, a prominent Jewish English writer, who was the president of the Jewish Territorial Organization (ITO), an organization focused on finding a territory in which Jews from Russia and other countries could safely settle down.

Schiff believed in the new plan to such a degree that he contributed \$500,000 from his personal funds to the American side of the project. As the Galveston Movement evolved, three cities were considered. Charleston in South Carolina was eliminated first because they were reluctant to welcome Jews. They preferred Anglo Saxon immigrants instead. New Orleans in the state of Louisiana was an option, but it was dropped due to being a thriving city that could pose as distraction and temptation for Jews who might want to stay and settle there instead of dispersing throughout the area. Galveston ended up being chosen as it was

closer to the West, it had access to a railroad line, and was not a big city. The most important reason why Galveston was the perfect choice was because the city had a port that served the Lloyds Shipping Company, a company that did business with the port of Bremen in Germany, which provided an established connection to an already common port from which Jews left the European continent.

Morris Waldman, a member of the Industrial Removal Office, worked with the new Galveston project. He invited Rabbi Henry Cohen, a local leader of the Jewish community of Southeast Texas, to contribute to the Galveston Movement. Together, they established the Jewish Immigrants' Information Bureau (JIIB). The JIIB played an essential role in the success of the Galveston Movement. They were in direct contact with the ITO in Europe and coordinated every Jewish transportation, as well as the locations the immigrants were going to be distributed once they arrived in the United States.

The JIIB created a set of guidelines for the recruitment efforts abroad aimed at potential emigrants that would fit the available opportunities

in the cities that would welcome them. These guidelines indicated that strong laborers, under the age of forty with special trades like ironworkers, shoemakers, carpenters, butchers, painters, and tailors, among others, were

needed. A pamphlet, originally written in

Yiddish, printed in the Ukraine in 1907 served as a guide to Texas for emigrants, and detailed various jobs available and provided general information on what to expect upon arrival into the Galveston port.

The JIIB procured and remodeled a ware-



A pamphlet printed in the Ukraine in 1907 that was used to promote Jewish immigration to the US through Galveston. Courtesy: Photo by Jeff Fitlow. Rice University, Office of Public Affairs.



house to offer adequate shelter to the immigrants for just a few days, but it was never intended for prolonged stays. Unfortunately, one day before the insurance policy went into effect, and just two days before the arrival of the first wave of immigrants, the warehouse caught fire and was destroyed. Despite such challenges, the JIIB team found alternate places and carried out the plans to welcome the immigrants.

The S.S. Cassel sailed from the port of Bremen in Germany on June 6, 1907. There were eighty-seven Jews on board heading to Galveston. Among them, were sixty-six men, six women, and fifteen children; from which fifty-four men and two women were recruited in Russia. Upon their departure from Germany, the ITO wired a list of the passengers with details about their occupations, as can be seen in a letter that Rabbi Cohen received on June 10, 1907. The ship entered the Galveston port early in the morning of July 1, 1907. The Jewish immigrants disembarked first and passed through the immigration office's legal inspections, after which, they climbed into large wagons and went to the headquarters of the JIIB.

The immigrants received a warm welcome by Rabbi Cohen, Waldman from the JIIB, and his assistant, Mr. J. Lippman, among others. At the JIIB offices the new arrivals received the opportunity to bathe and ate a nice Kosher meal. Later that evening, Mr. Henry Landes, mayor of Galveston, greeted the Jewish travelers with the assistance of Rabbi Cohen. The mayor encouraged them to make good citizens and obey the laws. Landes then shook the hands of attendees. One of the immigrants responded to the mayor's welcoming gesture saying, "...we are overwhelmed that the ruler of the city should greet us. We have never been spoken to by the officials of our country...we will do all we can to make good citizens."

The immigrants set out for their new city the same day they arrived, but if they were lucky they were allowed to spend the night and rest before they continued on the next day. They were assigned to several different cities with prearranged

accommodations for their arrival, located in different states such as, Minnesota, Missouri, Iowa, Colorado, Illinois, Wisconsin, Texas, and Oklahoma among others. No immigrants remained in Galveston.

The second wave of immigrants arrived almost two weeks later. They were also effectively relocated to different cities. By the end of 1907, almost 900 immigrants were spread throughout the United States with the help and support of all the organizations and entities partnered with the JIIB. As shown in Bressler's recollection, the Galveston Movement proved to be successful.

In an effort to make sure the immigrants who arrived first in July 1907 were doing well, Waldman made arrangements to tour various cities. For the most part, he encountered good news. Most of the immigrants adapted well and were working. A few even sent money to other family members they left behind. In some cases, Waldman learned the information provided by the Bureau in early communications was not entirely accurate. The standard operating procedure for the the JIIB was to share the list of incoming immigrants with the receiving entity, including their age and occupation. Some, however, did not match, meaning that the Jews were claiming they possessed certain skills that they, in reality, did not. Waldman addressed the issue with the ITO, so they could ensure the information they provided was accurate.

The Galveston Movement provided many families with new opportunities to provide lasting legacies to their future generations. They settled in the cities they were sent to and built peaceful, promising, and prosperous lives. This was the case of Wolf and Annie Novit. Wolf arrived in Galveston in 1907 as part of the Galveston Movement. His wife and daughter followed two years later. Upon arrival, he relocated to Fort Worth, Texas. There, Wolf opened a fruit and vegetable cart. As his business prospered, the Novits opened a store in Dublin, Texas, where they eventually built a home with running water and an indoor bathroom. Coming to America changed not only their lives, but

also their descendants. As Annie Novit recalls, "... our American neighbors didn't look down on us as foreigners...they were wonderful."

The influx of Jewish immigrants did not remain steady. During the first quarter of 1914, the average number of arriving immigrants dropped from 217 in the same period of the previous year, to 162. Also, as the rate of immigrants decreased, the ratio of deportations increased.

The Galveston Movement continued operating until the summer of 1914. Approximately 10,000 Jews benefited from its operations and settled among at least fifteen different participating states. Texas took the most, followed by Iowa, and Missouri. These immigrants received the rare opportunity to live and raise their children in a conflict-free country. The JIIB ceased operations with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. Unfortunately, the Galveston Movement was forced to shut down due to the Great War, as the result of stricter immigration laws enacted in the country. There is no doubt this program was well-executed and successful that positively impacted thousands of immigrant Jewish lives providing them with new opportunities. By 1915, Galveston earned the nickname the "second Ellis Island."

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<sup>5</sup> Marinbach, *Galveston, Ellis Island of the West*, 3.

<sup>6</sup> David B. Green, "1907: First Group of Jewish Immigrants Docks in Texas," *Haaretz.com* (Haaretz, July 1, 2013), [https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/1907-european-](https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/1907-european-jews-dock-in-texas-1.5289536)

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<sup>7</sup> Cyrus Adler, *Jacob H. Schiff; His Life and Letters*, *HathiTrust Digital Library* (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, Doran, 1928), <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006830860/Home>, 96.

<sup>8</sup> Jane Manaster, "Galveston Movement," *Handbook of Texas Online*, (Texas State Historical Association), accessed March 4, 2021, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/galveston-movement>, 1.

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<sup>10</sup> Ronald A. Axelrod, "Rabbi Henry Cohen and the Galveston Immigration Movement, 1907-1914," *East Texas Historical Journal* 15, no. 1 (March 1977): page 26.

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<sup>15</sup> "Jewish Immigrants," *Galveston Daily News*, July 2, 1907, 9.

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<sup>17</sup> "Results and Significance of the Galveston Movement," *bjpa.org* (Bulletin of the National Conference of Jewish Charities, August 1, 1914), <https://www.bjpa.org/bjpa/search-results?search=Galveston%2Bmovement>.

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# In Touch With The Past



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# History Beneath Our Feet

By Richard B. McCaslin, PhD, TSHA Director of Publications

**T**he Texas legislature in 2019 created Hunter Ranch Improvement District Number 1 in Denton County so that developers, such as the Perot family, could build subdivisions and other such projects. Mindful of the area's history, builders asked for a survey of the area's past, uncovering a rich narrative of what had been known as Pilot Knob Ranch for more than a century. This of course links its identity to the property's most prominent feature, Pilot Knob, the second tallest point in Denton County. Pilot Knob Ranch was created by John H. Paine, but it has been occupied and enjoyed by many other people.

The first people to arrive on the site during the historic era, although they never established permanent settlements there, were Indians. Wichitas were the most numerous in Denton County, with incursions by Comanche and Kiowa. Early Denton County settlers also spoke about Kichais, a Caddoan subculture about which little is known. Neither Spanish nor Mexican explorers came to the area, although Spanish soldiers may have passed close by during their failed expedition in 1759 to attack a Wichita settlement that Anglos later misidentified as Spanish Fort (in Montague County on the Red River).<sup>1</sup>

The first Anglo settlements in Denton County appeared after William S. Peters and his partners received a colonization grant that included the area from the Republic of Texas in 1841. Within five years there were enough people to create Denton County, with its seat at Alton, on Hickory Creek near what would be Pilot Knob Ranch. After 1856, however, the local government moved to

a new community, Denton, which was nearer the center of the county, as the law required, but further from Pilot Knob Ranch.<sup>2</sup>

It was about the time that Denton became the county seat that settlers began locating land grants in the vicinity of Pilot Knob, but there is little evidence that many of them lived there (as was common all over Texas at that time). Much of the land was also surveyed into grants for railroads, and these companies, like the individual grantees, sold their certificates to generate profits.<sup>3</sup>

One exception to the general pattern of land speculation was the Paine clan. John H. Paine later said he came to Denton just after the Civil War with his family. There were already many Paines in the Denton area, and it is difficult to establish John H. Paine's relationship with previous arrivals who shared his last name. All that can be taken from his death certificate and his own recollections, most of which are incorporated in his 1922 obituary, is that he was born in Mississippi in 1848 to Murrell (or Marshall) Paine and his wife. He was too young to serve in the Confederate army, unlike other Paines, including his uncle, Randolph Paine, who lived in nearby Medlin Settlement.<sup>4</sup>

Randolph became the key to John becoming a rancher. John went to work for his uncle and, after the elder Paine died in 1872 at just 29 years of age, John continued to manage the ranch for his widowed aunt, Mattie J. Paine, who lived until 1897. By that time, John had taken advantage of the construction of a railroad just east of his operation, which prompted the establishment of the town

of Argyle in late 1881. While the railroad generally facilitated a shift from cattle ranching to wheat cultivation in Denton County, Paine raised thousands of head of cattle. To do this, he acquired more land, eventually owning about 10,000 acres, with 8,000 in Pilot Knob Ranch, on the eastern side of which he built a large home.<sup>5</sup>

Paine also remained active in other enterprises. He was one of several citizens that established Argyle State Bank, chartered in October 1906, and he served on its first board of directors. At the time of his death, he was on the board of directors for the Exchange National Bank in Denton as well as the Denton Oil and Cotton Company. Finally, he was active in the Old Settlers Association of Denton County, which produced one of the first published histories of the county. A road on his old estate bears his name.<sup>6</sup>

Many others worked on the Pilot Knob Ranch with and for Paine. A small community developed, named Pilot Knob, that had its own school and post office. The latter operated for just a little more than three years, from 1878 to 1881, before being replaced by the new post office in Argyle. The first postmaster was Emily V. Wilson (nee Faught), a native of Peoria, Illinois born on Christmas Day in 1848, the same year as Paine. Interestingly, her mother was Sarah Paine Wilson, who lived near Pilot Knob. Next came Reuben N. Bullard, and then Herman R. Fehleison, a native of Indiana who served as the first postmaster at Argyle for almost 21 years. The school, which often doubled as a church or meeting place, proved to be more enduring. Built before the turn of the century, the wooden building had separate doors for boys and girls. It expanded from seven grades in one room to nine grades in three rooms before it closed in the mid-1930s, after which Pilot Knob Ranch children attended classes in Argyle or Denton. Many of those who lived on Pilot Knob Ranch were sharecroppers. Each family had a house and barn, well, garden plots, and pastures for their own livestock. They raised cotton, corn, oats, and wheat, giving a share of their crop to Paine as rent.<sup>7</sup>

Paine never married, so after he died in June 1922 Pilot Knob Ranch passed to Thomas E. Carruth and his wife, the former Iva Myrtle Poindexter. Carruth may have been related to Paine, but no definite link has been found. Paine's old home burned in 1930, Iva died in 1933, and Carruth passed his sixtieth birthday in 1934, all of which apparently prompted him to being selling portions of Pilot Knob Ranch. The estate was reduced to about 5,300 acres before Carruth's death in 1937.<sup>8</sup>

The next owner of Pilot Knob Ranch was Alex McCutchin, a Dallas oilman and rancher. He raised cattle, horses, and hogs on the farm, as well as a half dozen buffalo. His stock, which included prized quarter horses and Palominos, grazed on thousands of acres, but 800 acres of wheat, corn, and oats were grown and ground onsite. His orchards produced plums, peaches, apricots, cherries, pears, and grapes. Water came from nine wells, for which there were eight windmills and a gasoline-powered pump, and ten stock tanks, three of which were supplied with catfish and sunfish by state agents. There were five houses for his workers, and fifteen barns for his animals.<sup>9</sup>

McCutchin suddenly died at the age of 50 in May 1949, leaving Pilot Knob ranch to his wife Alma and four sons: Jerry, Gene, Ronald, Benjamin. While Gene might fly his plane in from an oil site or business meeting and work with the livestock, and Alma liked to entertain at the ranch house, daily operations were overseen by foreman George Johnson, who lived on the place with his wife. Johnson was able to have a Brahma bull mate with the sole surviving buffalo cow in 1956, producing the first cattalo born at Pilot Knob Ranch.<sup>10</sup>

Charles S. Erwin, a Navy veteran of the Pacific Theater in World War II who married the former Melba Mare Hamrick, succeeded Johnson as foreman for the last twenty-five years that the McCutchins owned the property. Erwin supervised in 1972 as three small impoundment lakes were constructed on Hickory Creek as part of a flood control effort. He also welcomed the Texas Sesquicentennial Wagon Train—150 wagons traveling

from Sulphur Springs to Fort Worth—to camp for a night at Pilot Knob Ranch in 1986.<sup>11</sup>

Ross Perot Sr. in 1987 purchased most of Pilot Knob Ranch from the McCutchin family, who sold other parcels as late as 2020, bringing more than eighty years of their land stewardship near Pilot Knob to an end. Hillwood Land & Cattle, owned by Ross Perot Jr., raises beef cattle at the 3,179-acre site, which was renamed Hunter Ranch, as part of larger operation that included property in Tarrant County. The McCutchins had drilled for oil with little success, and the Perots likewise prospected for natural gas.<sup>12</sup>

Stories persist that legendary outlaw Sam Bass hid part of his loot (gold, of course) in a cave on Pilot Knob. Jesse James allegedly took refuge on the hill as well. Others insist it was a lookout for Indians, Spanish, Mexicans, and Anglos. Probably none of that is true, but Pilot Knob was a favorite place for children to play and families to picnic. Locals were upset in 1912 when John H. Paine decided to enclose 2,200 of his acres with fifteen miles of wire fence. This meant that a very popular spot on Hickory Creek, known as “Blue Hole,” could no longer be easily reached by those seeking to escape the heat of a Texas summer.<sup>13</sup> But, in the right hands, what was once Pilot Knob Ranch could resume its prominent place not just as an economic enterprise, but also a place for recreation with an interesting history hidden underneath.

#### END NOTES

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<sup>3</sup> Odom, “Denton County;” *Texas Legislature Online*, <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=86R&Bill=HB4683> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023). For a good map of the Hunter Ranch with surveys, see <https://www.mineralanswers.com/texas/denton-county/properties/hunter-ranch/09-257066> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023).

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<sup>5</sup> Find a Grave website for John H. Paine, Randolph Paine, Mattie J. Paine; *Denton Record Chronicle*, Feb. 24, 1964; Yvonne A. Jenkins, “Argyle Texas” (1981), <https://apps.dentoncounty.gov/website/HistoricalMarkers/PDFs/ARGYLE.pdf> (p. 4) (acc. Nov. 14, 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Jenkins, “Argyle,” 7-8; Edmond F. Bates, *History and Reminiscences of Denton County* (Denton: McNitzky Printing Company, 1918), 178.

<sup>7</sup> Jenkins, “Argyle,” 3-4, 27-28; Jim Wheat, “Postmasters and Post Offices of Texas, 1846-1930,” <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~txpost/denton.html> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023); Find a Grave website for Sarah Payne [Paine] Wilson.

<sup>8</sup> Find a Grave website for Thomas E. Carruth, John H. Paine; *Denton Record Chronicle*, Feb. 24, 1964; <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc306950/m1/134/zoom/?q=%22Pilot%20Knob%20Ranch%22&resolution=2&lat=2911.5&lon=750> (p. 2) (acc. Nov. 14, 2023).

<sup>9</sup> *Denton Record Chronicle*, Apr. 24, 1949.

<sup>10</sup> *Denton Record Chronicle*, May 18, 1949, Apr. 24, 1952; Apr. 29, 1956; *Dallas Morning News*, May 4, 1951.

<sup>11</sup> *Denton Record Chronicle*, June 4, 1972; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 25, 1986; Find a Grave website for Charles S. Erwin; Jenkins, “Argyle,” p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> “Denton Ranch Land Acquired for Business Development,” *Fort Worth Business Press*, <https://fortworth-business.com/real-estate/denton-ranch-land-acquired-for-residential-development/> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023). For a good map of Hunter Ranch and Cole Ranch with oil and gas well sites, see: <https://www.mineralanswers.com/texas/denton-county/properties/hunter-ranch/09-257066> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023)

<sup>13</sup> D. J. Taylor, “Looking Back,” *Denton County Historical Commission Retrospect*, <https://www.denton-county.gov/Archive/ViewFile/Item/618>; <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc306950/m1/134/zoom/?q=%22Pilot%20Knob%20Ranch%22&resolution=2&lat=2911.5&lon=750> (p. 2). For a good picture of the alleged Sam Bass cave, see: <https://texas-history.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph12594/?q=sam%20bass%20cave> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023). For a picture of the Blue Hole, see <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph611632/?q=%22Pilot%20Knob%20ranch%22> (acc. Nov. 14, 2023).

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# Webb Society Happenings



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# Walter Prescott Webb Historical Society

The Walter Prescott Webb Historical Society works through college and university history departments to encourage students to discover, research, write, and publish the history of Texas as they find it where they live.



Organized activities include:

- \* Annual Fall Meeting \* Annual Spring Meeting \*
- \* Caldwell Writing Contest (below) \*
- \* *Touchstone* Journal \*

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## C. M. Caldwell Memorial Award for Excellence in History

Submit your student research papers for this prestigious award. Winners receive a cash award, and select papers are invited to publish in *Touchstone*, the undergraduate journal of the Walter Prescott Webb Historical Society. Deadline to enter is mid-January of each year.

The contest is open to all lower division (freshmen, sophomore), upper division (junior, senior), and graduate level students.

For information visit:

<http://www.webbsociety.club/awards/>  
or contact Lisa Berg at [lisa.berg@tshaonline.org](mailto:lisa.berg@tshaonline.org)  
or call 512-471-2600

# Webb Society Happenings



## Jacksonville College

**T**he Barnwell Anderson Chapter at Jacksonville College was named in honor of a beloved former professor.

Our chapter is committed to continue his legacy. The students and sponsors participated in the following activities:

1. We attended the Virtual Spring Conference for Webb Society and for the Texas State Historical Association. Our chapter won the project award for the scavenger hunt activity, and our sponsor (Dr. Patricia Richey) was named the recipient of the Mary Jon and J.P. Bryan Leadership in Education Award.
2. Students submitted papers to the Caldwell Memorial Writing Contest. One of our student papers was selected to be included in *Touchstone*.
3. We sponsored an essay contest about pandemics. The contest was open to students in grades 3-12 and cash prizes were awarded. Webb Society members served as judges.
4. Webb Society members created and distributed Valentines for children, senior citizens, and veterans.
5. Our chapter promoted Constitution Day, Veterans Day, Black History Month, and Hispanic Heritage Month.
6. We held a demonstration of Civil War reenactments.
7. Students participated in Reacting to the Past game over Texas annexation.
8. Jacksonville College was the only two-year school to participate in Undergraduate Research Day. Our topic was Trammel's Trace.
9. Three of our students presented papers at the East Texas Historical Association Fall Conference.

10. We attended the Webb Society Fall Conference and presented our chapter report.

11. We distributed copies of the U.S. Constitution and voter registration cards.

**Dr. Patricia Richey and Professor Brett Eckles, Advisors**

## Northeastern Texas Community College By Victor Diaz<sup>1</sup>

**O**ur influenza scholar, Raul Leija, notes that the really deadly year for the Spanish Flu in Texas was 1918, particularly in October of that year. After that, the flu persisted, but it was not as dangerous. The year of 2021 reminds us, therefore, of the year 1919. The worst part of the pandemic was over, and our Webb Chapter was able to participate live in every main Webb function but the spring state meeting on 6 February, and the meeting of the Great Plains Honors Council on March 19. Both, however, were on Zoom. So, 2021 wasn't quite normal. Our film premiere in the spring had to be postponed, and when it occurred on 26 March, we had to take numerous precautions. The radio station, K-Lake could not accommodate us in December of 2021 to discuss our film, because they could not afford to have an announcer get sick, and most students in our chapter were unvaccinated at the end of 2021.

But all in all, we were fortunate to be able to move forward. In early January after some frenetic last-minute work on our works of research, we were able to submit to education director, Lisa Berg, some nicely focused essays. We were thrilled in February when we learned the results of this effort. Aaliyah

Avellaneda came in first in the state in the lower division with her work on “*Texas Ticketsplitter*,” Bill Ratliff, a former lieutenant governor. Avellaneda was one of our leading prospects for the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship.

In May, Honors Northeast, the honors program of NTCC, sponsored the Annual McGraw Hill Poster Contest, funded by the preeminent education corporation. Amazingly, and for the first time, our Webb history projects swept places one through four, with Brian Ramirez winning \$400, Maxime Risner \$300, Cade Bennett \$200, and John Rodriguez \$100.

One actual advantage of the COVID year by May was that our honors program at NTCC had plenty of travel money by May. However, we also found that the largest library holding on our new film subject, Carroll Shelby, the doer-developer of the American Muscle Car, was at NTCC. This was due to the fact that NTCC has the only official Shelby automotive program in the country, and that it also has Shelby patron, Steven Borkowski, who has a late-in-life mission to build the best Shelby library in the country. Fortunately, NTCC’s administration graciously allowed us to rent a nearby Airbnb so we could keep our Shelby research team together, well-fed, and motivated.

Our film team, funded again in addition by our wonderful film donors, Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery, grew as we hoped after the initial bout with research. Brian Ramirez accepted the role of director. I accepted the role of producer. Cade Bennett again agreed to play the main role—in this case being Carroll Shelby. Israel Perez, and John Rodriguez played significant roles. Evan Sears became our chief film scholar. We were so thankful for the participation of Andrea Reyes, our PTK/Honors Title V Mentor and Coordinator. On the night of 16 June, when the leadership group had found a common evening to have dinner in Mount Pleasant, there was a power outage throughout our tri-county area. We moved the meeting to Hughes Springs, two counties over to the east. Reyes, who is a resident of Hughes Springs, not only guided us to a very appropriate restaurant for the meeting, but

gave us a little historical tour afterwards of downtown Hughes Springs.

With our Shelby script coming together, we had an informative visit to the Shelby shop at NTCC, and a few of us had the experience of fancying ourselves Le Mans racers in a classic American Muscle Car, Shelby’s Cobra. The Director of the Shelby program, Ron Luellen, was very helpful and supportive of our film project. He gave our whole team Shelby T-Shirts and permission to film at his shop in August. We, in turn, learned how the Shelby Foundation to this day continues to support the NTCC shop very generously. Soon the shop will have in its possession two more Cobras, besides the two we used in the film, worth millions of dollars.

The Shelby story, we found to our amazement, was already as documented as any film project subject we have undertaken. For example, there was an excellent book on Texas governors, Ma and Pa Ferguson by Carol O’Keefe Wilson which we used for our 2015 film. We even visited with author Wilson in Belton and went through many relevant papers at the Dolph Briscoe Center. Yet with Shelby there were three books directly about him, plus another sixty that Mr. Borkowski had purchased for our library. Most of this literature, however, tended to be mythic, to the extent the authors deeply respected Shelby as a racer and car developer. But what did this mean? Yes, Shelby was a great racer, but not as good as fellow Texan, A.J. Foyt. Yes, he was also a developer, but he certainly lacked the power of an Iacocca, or DeLorean. For a time, we were not even sure what to call Shelby. Our film scholar, Evan Sears, in time worked out the best formulation. Shelby was the greatest emissary of the Muscle Car. The ‘Muscle Car’ is a classification, unique to Australia and North America, which represents a blend of racer, and sports car. Like classic Victorian cartoons, where a muscle man kicks sand in the face of a weaker male, sitting beside a beautiful woman, Muscle Cars gave those who rode them, an edge. Thus, they appeared in James Bond’s *Goldfinger*, and Taylor Swift’s “Blank Space,” driven by top, macho guys. Shelby was, like Mikhail Kalashnikov of the machine

gun, and Glenn Curtiss of the navy plane, a doer-developer, only in this case of the Muscle Car. He also lived the Muscle Car mystique, being married many times, and continually amassing, and discarding—or losing, girlfriends. Finally, Shelby was the emissary of the Muscle Car, as he not only was the entrepreneur who gave us the Corvette-killing Cobra, but he also remained a unique corporate presence of the late-twentieth century, working first for Ford, and then for Chrysler, battling at every turn for the maintenance of the Muscle Car idea.

Our team began to reach out more and more, and attempt to complete a vision of casting. We had an expensive dinner at Nardello's in Mount Pleasant, thanks to our donors, and were pleased to welcome Maiko Estrada, Ruben Guerrero, Raul Leija, and Jessie Parchman, as well as our composer, Kenny Goodson, and his wife Ann. Ann expressed her willingness to help the film at this time, and this was a true breakthrough. Ann had taken a Texas History honors course back in a time before the Webb Society was active at NTCC. But now she would become not only an actress, and make-over artist, but a kind of morale director, readying us to make the most of the experience.

#### END NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Diaz was assisted in this article by NTCC Webb Director, Dr. Andrew P. Yox.



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# Touchstone 2023

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