

## ABSTRACT

Cup of Salvation:  
Race, Religion, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1885-1935

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The movement for the legal prohibition of alcohol, or simply “prohibition,” has attracted scholarly attention for its wide-ranging impact on culture and politics. Prohibitionist “drys” overcame anti-prohibitionists “wets” to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This amendment banned the alcohol trade in the United States and took effect from 1920 until its repeal thirteen years later in 1933, though many statewide or local prohibition laws began earlier and lasted longer. Most studies of alcohol prohibition and religion in the United States have focused on religion as promoting prohibition rather than opposing it. The interplay of prohibition and race has also received some attention, though studies have frequently treated racial and ethnic minorities as peripheral or helpless in the contest. This dissertation examines the interplay of religion, race, and anti-prohibition, using Texas as a case study.

This study covers the main years of activity in Texas on the issue of prohibition, including the first statewide vote on the issue in 1887, the imposition of statewide prohibition in 1919, and the repeal of prohibition in 1935. Throughout this period, racial

minorities tended to oppose prohibition and occasionally cast pivotal votes on the issue, particularly African, German, and Mexican Americans. A range of religious traditions, notions, and practices bolstered the anti-prohibition movement. Even for prohibition, race and religion played on both sides of a major culture war issue that reverberates today.

Cup of Salvation: Race, Religion, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1885-1935

by

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A Dissertation

Approved by the Department of History

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unstinting supporter, faithful friend, and exacting editor, all while growing an editing business and writing a novel. Her input has drastically improved the manuscript and my life in countless ways. What faults remain are fully mine.

## DEDICATION

To those who suffered the loss of their rights, the bitterness of dreams deferred, and the marginalization of their voices in the long struggle over prohibition, this work is dedicated.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

According to Daniel Okrent, the contest for prohibition—particularly the U.S. Constitutional ban on “the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors”—produced “a series of innovations and alterations revolutionary in their impact.”<sup>1</sup> Prohibition entered the U.S. Constitution in January 1919 as the Eighteenth Amendment, which was the only amendment to be repealed in fewer than fifteen years by December 1933. Despite its repeal, the impact of the national prohibition movement was tremendous: it played a critical role in the ratification of the Sixteenth and Nineteenth Amendments (personal income tax and woman’s suffrage); expanded dramatically the power of the federal government; and precipitated innovations in culture, trade, language, law enforcement (and evasion), and the relationship between the individual and government.<sup>2</sup> The wide-ranging impact of prohibition invites study through many lenses.

One lens through which comparatively few scholars have studied prohibition is religion. This is surprising since prohibitionists cast their cause as explicitly religious. For example, the two leading national prohibitionist (dry) organizations were overtly Christian: the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the Anti-Saloon

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<sup>1</sup> First quote U.S. Constitution, amend. 18, sec. 1, ratified on January 17, 1919; second quote Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2010), 3. Parts of this chapter appears in Brendan Payne, “Protecting Black Suffrage: Poll Taxes, Preachers, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1916,” *Journal of Southern History* 83 (Nov. 2017), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 3—4. While national prohibition is often written “Prohibition” in some literature, the paper treats national, state, and local prohibition as a single movement and so refers to prohibition in the lower case to avoid confusion.

League (ASL), which bore the motto, “The Church in Action Against the Saloon.” However, several leading scholars of prohibition have ignored the religious element almost completely, most notably Joseph R. Gusfield.<sup>3</sup> Those scholars that do look at religion, such as Joe Coker, generally focus on white evangelical prohibitionists.<sup>4</sup> Scholars have thus largely ignored the impact of religion of non-Anglo dries, including some African American evangelicals, recent immigrants, Catholics, and liberal Protestants. However, a few scholars have paid attention to the role of African American evangelicals in the post-Civil War prohibition movement, notably H. Paul Thompson, Jr.<sup>5</sup> While many scholars have noted the ethnic and religious diversity of anti-prohibitionists (“wets”), few have analyzed in depth religious motivations for being wet. It seems that most scholarship on prohibition has (unintentionally) bought into the rhetoric of the ASL that dries were the whole church in action, so religion only seriously motivated dries, not wets. Ironically, this assumption reinforces the rhetoric of the ASL: the church acted on prohibition, so religion must be for it.

The unspoken assumption behind this rhetoric—that abstaining from alcohol could have been religious while drinking alcohol was inherently secular—seems very doubtful. Some wets might have had religious reasons for being wet, just as dries had religious reasons for being dry. Also, a study of wet and dry religious views need not be limited to clergy, but legitimately includes lay people and everyday culture since

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963).

<sup>4</sup> Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> H. Paul Thompson Jr., *‘A Most Stirring and Significant Episode’: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887* (DeKalb, IL: NIU Press, 2013).

religious ideas permeated American culture in the prohibition era. A strict division between sacred and secular ought not be readily assumed. Religious identity, like politics, has always been subject to change over time, and often shifted according to cultural and political events, even as religious identity can take part in shaping those events. In sum, prohibition can be seen as a contest between various religious identities and theologies, yet no scholarly study has closely analyzed prohibition in this way.

This subject is far too vast to cover nationally, so this dissertation uses Texas as a case study to examine the interplay of religious and racial identities on the political question of alcohol prohibition from 1885 to 1935. I argue these identities shaped both prohibitionism and anti-prohibitionism, which in turn reshaped those identities, and explore how different religious identities in Texas interacted with politics and culture in various, even contradictory, ways. Part of the reason for choosing this topic are personal: the author is a practicing Christian who appreciates the profound impact that religion in its many forms can have on people's lives, both for good and for ill. Though personally a moderate drinker, the author seeks to examine with Christian charity the worldviews, motivations, and behaviors of all sides in the prohibition debate.

This dissertation also challenges the notion that interracial political coalitions were strangled by poll taxes in the U.S. South and would not rise again until the New Deal at the earliest. A powerful interracial anti-prohibition coalition survived in Texas for over a decade after the arrival of poll taxes in 1902. African American pastors and revivalists of various denominations, including Methodists, preached openly against prohibition before large mixed-race audiences, publicly debated white prohibitionists, set up a front organization that mobilized tens of thousands of voters, and organized

successful grassroots movements. African Americans and other ethnic minorities in Texas were not silent or helpless regarding prohibition, and some were protagonists in the contest.

This project also complicates the narrative of progress in American history. The rise of prohibition coincided with declining political and social power for people of color, both African and Mexican Americans, and growing hostility towards Catholics, especially in the presidential election of 1928. Ironies abound. Despite its ethnic and religious diversity, the anti-prohibition coalition was transparently corrupt and opposed woman's suffrage, while prohibitionists stoked racial intolerance, yet gave women the ballot and reduced destructive drinking habits among working-class people. Noble vision and ruthless pragmatism coexisted uneasily on both sides.

Beyond uncovering neglected anti-prohibitionist religious leaders, this dissertation examines the convictions and customs that motivated them. At stake were debates over sacramental wine, tradition versus modernity, holiday celebrations, nascent liberation theology, and church-state separation. Some prominent Texan Methodists opposed prohibition to varying degrees, including Governor Oscar Branch Colquitt and the AME minister Dr. Phillip C. Hunt. Religion certainly mixed with politics on the question of prohibition, but it mixed on both sides of that culture war.

Before diving into the dissertation itself, a few items are in order in this introduction. First, a brief history of prohibition in the United States and in Texas in particular provides historical context for this study. Second, a defense of the choice of Texas for a case study reveals how the state is at once unique and representative of South, West, and the nation as a whole on issues of race, religion, and prohibition. Third, a

survey of relevant historiography on prohibition demonstrates the need for and uniqueness of this kind of study in the broader scholarly context. Lastly, the introduction will close with an outline of the dissertation as a whole

*“Texas Going Dry”: A Brief History of Prohibition Nationally and in Texas*

Political activism by anti-prohibition ethnic and religious minorities is particularly significant because prohibition was a leading culture war issue in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>6</sup> As alcohol became increasingly cheap and plentiful across the new nation by the 1820s, drunkenness reached epidemic levels and was frequently linked to violence, dissipation, abandonment, sickness, and death. New England reformers, such as the Rev. Lyman Beecher, blamed the alcohol trade and sought change, initially by encouraging moderate drinking and moral suasion, but increasingly by promoting total abstinence and bans on alcohol. Prohibitionists achieved their first statewide ban on alcohol in Maine in 1851, but this first wave of temperance went largely unnoticed in the South and subsided during the Civil War, when the demand for painkilling alcohol and government revenues swept away such legislation. A second temperance wave rose in the 1870s with groups like the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which initially stressed moral suasion but turned sharply towards legal prohibition in the 1880s, often supported the minor Prohibition Party, and linked temperance reform with other reform causes such as woman’s suffrage. The third wave of prohibition coincided with the rise of the Anti-Saloon League (ASL)—a group backed by most Protestant

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<sup>6</sup> For prohibition as “culture war,” see Michael A Lerner, *Dry Manhattan: Prohibition in New York City*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin: Evangelicalism, the Roaring Twenties and Today’s Culture Wars* (New York, Palmgrave, 2010), 21–40.

churches—near the turn of the century, which focused exclusively on instituting prohibition at every level of government by winning elections and controlling politicians.<sup>7</sup>

The ASL, mixed religion, modern business-style bureaucracy, and progressive politics into one of the most powerful political pressure groups in U.S. history. First, the ASL was religious. Founded by the Congregationalist Rev. Howard Hyde Russell in 1893, the Ohio ASL<sup>8</sup> included many Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians and enlisted the support of most Protestant denominations, bearing the motto, “The Church in Action Against the Saloon.” While the ASL’s base of support was Anglo-American churches, the ASL was still ecumenical to a limited degree, putting moral reform above doctrinal purity and welcoming support from all denominations. The ASL’s blending of ecumenical religious fervor and social reform drew from revivalist religion, which cropped up throughout the nineteenth century, and Social Gospel theology, which grew from that revivalist impulse and envisioned the Kingdom of God spreading through church-led social reform. Russell did not take sole credit for establishing the organization but insisted, “The Anti-Saloon League movement was begun by Almighty God.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> “A Nation of Drunkards,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, 94 mins, PBS Video, 2011, DVD; Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 1928; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1966)

<sup>8</sup> The Anti-Saloon League began in Ohio and spread to other regions before becoming a national group in 1895; see below.

<sup>9</sup> *Proceedings of the Conventions of the Fifteenth Anti-Saloon League Convention* (1913), 89, in Odegard, *Pressure*, 6.

Prohibition was not merely a symbolic crusade by blighted souls, but in the eyes of many drys was a genuine spiritual crusade against a very real evil.<sup>10</sup>

The ASL also invoked a genuinely progressive and populist agenda. The ASL saw the liquor traffic as not only a child-devouring demon, but a monstrous political machine that by 1913 controlled lawmen and state and federal governments, and enjoyed an annual income of some 1.5 billion dollars.<sup>11</sup> The progressive movement sought to restrain exploitative big businesses and political corruption by popular will as expressed in enlightened government regulation. While not all progressives were prohibitionists and vice versa, prohibition fit naturally within the broader progressive movement. Hand in hand with progressivism was populism, which appealed to aggrieved rural farmers in the South and West who felt squeezed economically and blamed their woes on Northern and Eastern big business. Prohibition sentiment further fed off the perception that the vices of the city – including (in Texas) large numbers of non-Anglo European immigrants, Mexican-Americans, and African-Americans – threatened rural white American values.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Contra Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Byran to FDR* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), 292, who called prohibition “pseudo-reform, a pinched parochial substitute for reform” spread by the “rural-evangelical virus”; also contra Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963), who argues prohibition was a middle-class battle to safeguard declining social status by a symbolic crusade against the richer and poorer classes. Odegard, *Pressure*, 5; “A Nation of Drunkards,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick; Lewis L. Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), xi—xiii; Norman H. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1976). For more on revivalism in the early and mid-nineteenth century as an inspiration for social reform, see Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the eve of the Civil War*, second edition (New York: Abingdon, 1980), first edition Abingdon, 1957.

<sup>11</sup> “Child devouring demon” is no exaggeration: the League’s 1913 official history described the liquor traffic as “Moloch,” an ancient Mideastern deity that demanded child sacrifice and which early twentieth century evangelicals would have regarded as a demon (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:19-20). Ernest H. Cherrington, *History of the Anti-Saloon League* (Westerville, OH: American Issue Publishing Company, 1913), 7.

<sup>12</sup> Gould, *Progressives*, xi—xiv.

Third, the League perfected pressure politics by applying professional organization and relentless attention to a single political issue. The ASL considered alcohol a terrible vice imposed upon the public by nefarious big business interests, yet the ASL's professional structure was ironically modeled off of the very big business it aimed to dethrone. By methodically leveraging faithful dries as a crucial swing vote in Ohio and across the country, the ASL rewarded allies and destroyed the political careers of enemies, most notably governor Myron T. Herrick of Ohio in the 1906 election. By 1917, the ASL had the support of two-thirds of Congress for a proposed federal constitutional amendment for national prohibition, and by 1919 the ASL had convinced three-quarters of the state legislatures to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment, enshrining prohibition in the U.S. Constitution. The harsh Volstead Act interpreted the "alcoholic" beverages to be anything with more than 0.5 percent alcohol content, effectively banning all drinks but the most tepid beers. With good reason, some historians have hailed the ASL as one of the most powerful single-issue pressure groups in American history.<sup>13</sup>

It was not to last. As the 1920s roared on, prohibition faltered, particularly in large urban centers that had never fully embraced it from the start. Even though the 1928 Democratic nominee for president, Al Smith, lost in a landslide to his dry opponent, Herbert Hoover, the fact that a major-party presidential candidate campaigned against prohibition made the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment a live issue in national politics in a way it had not been before. The advent of the Great Depression pushed public

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<sup>13</sup> Okrent, *Call*, 35—41; "A Nation of Drunkards," *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick; Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, vii—ix, 3—9; Gould, *Progressives*, xii; Kerr, *Organized*. "Dethroning" alcohol is a term dries often used, as in Ferdinand Cowle Iglehart, *King Alcohol Dethroned* (Westerville, OH: The American Issue Publishing Company, 1919).

priorities towards job creation, economic stimulus, and tax revenues, which in turn generated even more support for the legalization of alcohol industry. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and fellow Democrats swept to power in 1932 promising to repeal prohibition and delivered on the promise. After the election, Congress immediately modified the Volstead Act, redefining “alcoholic beverages” to permit beers with up to 3.2 percent alcoholic content and then set into motion the repeal of constitutional prohibition by sending the Twenty-First Amendment to the states for ratification. By December of 1933, the Eighteenth Amendment was repealed, and national prohibition was over. Prohibition still persisted in some states into the 1960s and in various locales to the present day, but they were holdouts against a larger trend towards accepting and regulating alcohol.

Prohibition in Texas largely followed the nation as a whole. Texas had flirted with prohibition when it was a republic, and in some ways Texas had been a pioneer in prohibition. In 1843, the Republic of Texas (then an independent nation) had passed the first local-option law in North America, allowing cities and counties to vote to ban alcohol for themselves. (Maine had statewide prohibition in 1851.) An 1845 Texas law banned saloons, but was never enforced and was repealed by 1856. Texan temperance groups formed throughout the post-Civil War period. By 1870 groups such as the United Friends of Temperance, Sons of Temperance, Band of Hope, and Temperance Council had formed around the state, the next year a newspaper titled the *Temperance Family Visitor* existed in Houston, and a state chapter of the Women’s Christian Temperance

Union formed in 1883. The 1876 Texas Constitution required local-option laws, finding first success when Jasper County voted to go dry in December of that year.<sup>14</sup>

From that point on, prohibition's progress in Texas lagged behind the rest of the nation, even within the South. While Texas, like other former Confederate states, progressively banned alcohol from many cities and counties through local option elections from 1876 onward, a statewide prohibition vote failed in 1887 by a nearly 2-to-1 margin. The 1887 referendum was crushed by over ninety thousand votes out of some three hundred fifty thousand cast, 37 percent dry to 63 percent wet. Even Jefferson Davis, the beloved former President of the Confederate States of America, publicly opposed the proposed statewide prohibition referendum. After this drubbing by wets, dries focused on local option elections until the founding of the ASL years later.<sup>15</sup> Even in towns and counties dried by the diligent advocacy of Methodist and Baptist preachers, businesses called "blind tigers" or "blind pigs" got around laws against *selling* alcohol by ostensibly (and legally) charging patrons a quarter to look at a pig or dog and then giving them a complimentary drink. Also dodging the spirit of the law while adhering to the letter of it were druggists who sold liquors for allegedly medicinal purposes.<sup>16</sup>

After a false start in 1902, a Texas chapter of the ASL was firmly founded around 1907, the same year the first Southern state (Georgia) adopted statewide prohibition.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America's Most Powerful Bible-Belt State* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), 59.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas," *Texas Almanac* (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>16</sup> Wuthnow, *Rough Country*, 60.

<sup>17</sup> The details of the founding are uncertain; presumably the national ASL sought to create a state branch, but could not find sufficient support for a new organization, since older ones had long been

This Texas ASL (TASL) boasted some early successes in 1907-1908 local option elections, yet encountered difficulty in supporting statewide prohibition. A 1908 election narrowly approved submission of a vote on statewide prohibition, yet nothing came of it until a 1911 referendum almost succeeded, losing by just six thousand votes out of nearly four hundred seventy thousand cast, a margin of just over one percent of the vote. Rather than being discouraged by this defeat, drys redoubled their efforts in the 1910s. By 1915 almost all former Confederate states had banned saloons, with the notable exceptions of Louisiana and Texas – coincidentally the southern states with the highest proportion of Catholics.<sup>18</sup> Yet the relentless prohibitionists had been focusing on local option elections, which they used to dry up over two hundred Texan counties, leaving forty-three partially wet and only ten completely by 1918. By March of that year, the legislature passed and the governor signed into law a statewide ban on alcohol that went into effect in June. Federal prohibition was ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures by January 1919, and Texan voters in May of that year followed suit by adding statewide prohibition to the Texas constitution by a comfortable margin of almost exactly twenty thousand votes, about seven percent out of nearly three hundred thousand cast. The Lone Star state went dry just a few months before the US Constitution's Eighteenth Amendment, which went

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established. Sources obliquely state that it was founded in 1902 “without success,” such as H. A. Ivy, *Rum on the Run in Texas, a Brief History of Prohibition in the Lone Star State*, introd. by George C. Rankin (Dallas, TX: Temperance Pub. Co., 1910), 61. Cf. K. Austin Kerr, "ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE OF TEXAS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vaa02>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>18</sup> In 1916 the Catholic population of Louisiana was 59% and of Texas was 22% according to the U.S. Census Bureau's report, *Religious Bodies, 1916*, ed. William Chamberlin Hunt and Edwin Munsell Bliss (U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC: 1916), 112 (<http://books.google.com/books?id=BvaJUuJ2u-IC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>), accessed December 2, 2013. For Wet and Dry states, see the official newspaper of the Texas ASL, *Home and State*, “Wet and Dry Map of the South,” 30 Sept. 1915, 5, and note that Florida still allowed the purchase of sealed liquor bottles, but not saloons.

into effect in January 1920.<sup>19</sup> Texas had in the span of a generation jumped from solidly anti-prohibition to comfortably pro-prohibition, and the TASL had no little hand in the change.<sup>20</sup>

While dries rejoiced in their apparent victory, agitation increasingly mounted against prohibition as the 1920s roared on and violations of prohibition laws rose. The high-water mark of this clash was the 1928 presidential election, which not only featured the first major presidential candidate since the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment to campaign against prohibition, but provided a makings of perfect culture war election. Alfred Emanuel “Al” Smith was a wet, German-Irish Catholic, Tammany Hall Democrat, while Herbert Hoover was a dry, old-stock Protestant Republican. After one of the ugliest campaigns in U.S. history, Hoover won in a landslide, yet just four years later the people voted out Hoover in an equally dramatic landslide against an equally wet (though Protestant) Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt, largely due to the growing crisis of the Great Depression. Through a series of direct statewide elections, three quarters of the states (including Texas) voted to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment by December 1933 and national prohibition was finished. Texas still had statewide prohibition on the books, however, which was repealed by another statewide vote in 1935.<sup>21</sup> Though local option

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<sup>19</sup> Robert Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas,”; U.S. Constitution, amend. 18, sec. 1, ratified on January 17, 1919. Though the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified in 1919, it did not take effect until a year later.

<sup>20</sup> The Eighteenth Amendment was ratified by the 36<sup>th</sup> state (then ¾ of the 48 states) on January 16, 1919, but Texas did not vote for prohibition in their state constitution until May 1919. “Prohibition Elections in Texas,” *Texas Almanac*, Texas State Historical Association (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/population>), accessed December 2, 2012. Kerr, “ANTI-SALOON”; *Anti-Saloon League Year Book*, (Westerville, OH: American Issue Press, 1918), 207.

<sup>21</sup> Robert A. Slayton, *Empire Statesman: The Rise and Redemption of Al Smith* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 237—328; Christopher M. Finan, *Alfred E. Smith: The Happy Warrior* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002), 189—230; K. Austin Kerr, “ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE OF TEXAS,” *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vaa02>), accessed November 28, 2012,

elections have kept parts of Texas dry to this day, prohibition as a statewide and national effort was finished.

*Why Texas? Some Reasons for this Case Study on Race, Religion, and Prohibition*

While the progress of prohibition in Texas was in some ways indicative of the South as a whole, the state offers a particularly valuable case study of race, religion, and anti-prohibition due to its large population, political influence, and its ethnic and religious diversity. As Robert Wuthnow argues in *Rough Country*, Texas is in various ways representative of the United States as a whole, especially in how prohibition set a precedent for the rising influence of religious leaders engaging directly in modern politics. While the Lone Star state's experience is unique, he argues persuasively that it is also representative of the nation's tendency to explain, enact, and justify racial and other social divisions through religious organizations, rituals, and beliefs. As the fifth-largest state in the Union and largest southern state at the turn of the twentieth century, Texas wielded great political and cultural influence commensurate with its size. The state produced prohibition's champion in the U.S. Senate, Morris Sheppard, as well as a strong lobby of in-state brewers. Texas was also religiously diverse. Beyond Baptists and Methodists, Texas had notable numbers of Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Jews, and more Catholics than any Southern state outside majority-Catholic Louisiana. Texas also boasted more recent European immigrants and more German and Mexican Americans than any other formerly Confederate state.<sup>22</sup>

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published by the Texas State Historical Association; *Anti-Saloon League Year Book*, (Westerville, OH: American Issue Press, 1918), 207.

<sup>22</sup> Wuthnow, *Rough Country*, 1–15. In 1916 the Catholic population of Louisiana was 59.1% and of Texas was 22.6%, more than any formerly Confederate state; in addition, Louisiana had more than half a

Texas boasted a remarkably diverse and resilient anti-prohibition coalition that kept liquor legal in the state longer than any Southern state save Louisiana. Even after the imposition of a poll tax in 1902, African American Methodist and Baptist preachers joined with Anglo Episcopalians, German Lutherans, Jews, skeptics, and Catholics of various ethnicities to form a potent inter-faith, bi-partisan, and interracial anti-prohibition coalition deeply informed by religious ideas and cultures. Most African, German, and Mexican American voters consistently resisted prohibition throughout the period studied, and state and national brewers and distillers poured millions of dollars into the state over several decades to organize the payment of poll taxes for tens of thousands. Especially in the closely fought prohibition election of July 1911, ethnic and religious minority voters overcame poll taxes to keep the state wet for another eight years – longer than any formerly Confederate state outside of Louisiana. Per the suggestion of Norman Clark, a leading scholar of prohibition since the 1960s, the best way to understand prohibition throughout the nation may be through case studies at the state level.<sup>23</sup> Such examinations bridge the gap between local microstudies, which provide deep knowledge but have

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million Catholics while Texas had just over 400,000. The next largest Catholic populations in the former Confederacy was Florida at 7.6%. Maryland was one other state in the South with a higher proportion of Catholics than Texas at 36.4%, though its position as a Union state during the Civil War and its unique cultural legacy as a haven for Catholics makes it difficult to compare to Texas. U.S. Census Bureau's report, *Religious Bodies, 1916*, ed. William Chamberlin Hunt and Edwin Munsell Bliss (Washington, DC: 1916), 110—112. (<http://books.google.com/books?id=BvaJUuJ2u-IC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>), accessed December 2, 2013. While the African American population of Texas grew from nearly 400,000 in 1880 to over 620,000 in 1900, their proportion of the population slipped from 24.7% to 20.4%. The Hispanic population of Texas was about 165,000 in 1900, and Mexican-born Texans rose from 43,161 in 1880 to 71,062 in 1900, suggesting that most Hispanic Texans were US-born. Alwyn Barr, "LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY TEXAS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/npl01>), accessed November 21, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>23</sup> Norman H. Clark, *The Dry Years: Prohibition and Social Change in Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965).

narrow application, and larger national macrostudies, which are more widely relevant yet often lack important details.

On the other hand, a close look at congressional votes for the Eighteenth Amendment suggests that Texas may not have been such an outlier in the South after all. The ASL's Year Book in 1918—a source that was generally accurate on numbers and unlikely to exaggerate the strength of wets—stated that half of the congressmen in Texas, Louisiana, and Alabama voted wet, and that when a two-thirds majority was needed to pass the amendment. Rather than leading the nation in prohibition, as Coker stated in passing, at least three deeply Southern states (including Alabama, one of the states in his study) were significantly below the national average in congressional support for the Eighteenth Amendment. Furthermore, the congressional vote split support and opposition for the prohibition amendment on non-partisan lines, meaning that even given support for prohibition from the heavily Democratic South, there was at least as much support for the Eighteenth Amendment from Republicans in the North.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the South was not as dry as some scholars have supposed.

*Scholars on Tap: A Brief Historiography of Race, Religion, and Prohibition*

Having examined the rise and fall of prohibition in Texas and some reasons to use Texas as a case study for a study of race, religion, and prohibition, an examination of the relevant historiography further reveals the need for this kind of study. Despite its profound and wide-reaching legacy upon US law and society, the prohibition of alcohol

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<sup>24</sup> Ernest Hurst Cherrington and Anti-Saloon League, eds., *The Anti-Saloon League Year Book: An Encyclopedia of Facts and Figures Dealing with the Liquor Traffic and the Temperance Reform* (Columbus, Ohio: Anti-Saloon League Year Book, 1918), 9.

formerly stood in the popular and scholarly imagination as a cautionary tale against the imposition of morality by law, particularly when that morality stems from conservative evangelical religion. Richard Hofstadter in his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Age of Reform* (1955) infamously called prohibition a “pinched, parochial... pseudo-reform” and a “reaction against the Progressive temper” spread by the “rural-evangelical virus” that shared the nativist impulse of the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>25</sup> Since then, various scholars have convincingly refuted Hofstadter’s charge that prohibition was reactionary and have shown that prohibition was a genuine part of the populist-progressive political movement, particularly in Texas.<sup>26</sup> Racially, ethnically, and religiously, however, most scholars from the 1920s to the 2010s have contended that prohibition generally set pro-prohibition (“pro” or “dry”) Anglo Protestants – mostly evangelicals – against anti-prohibition (“anti” or “wet”) Catholics, Jews, African Americans, recent immigrants, and other racial and religious minorities.<sup>27</sup> As far as prohibition was concerned, progressivism, racism, and evangelicalism apparently went together.

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<sup>25</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform; from Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Vintage, 1955), 289–290; cf. 289–93.

<sup>26</sup> The two main arguments are in James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); and Norman H. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition*, *The Norton Essays in American History* (New York: Norton, 1976). The case for Texas is in Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*.

<sup>27</sup> For example, Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League*, Reissue edition (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 18. Mark A. Noll described prohibition as “the last gasp of Protestant hegemony” in the United States in Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1992), 135. Jeanette Miller Schmidt suggested that “the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1933 was symbolic of the end of rural Protestantism’s dominance in the United States” in Jeanette Miller Schmidt, *Souls or the Social Order: The Two-Party System in American Protestantism*, *Chicago Studies in the History of American Religion* (Brooklyn, N.Y: Carlson Pub, 1991), 199; Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1992), 135. See also Okrent, *Last Call*.

Or did they? Some scholars such as Mark Noll (1992) and Barry Hankins (2010) disagree with Hofstadter's claim that prohibition was an evangelical phenomenon and point out that conservative and liberal Protestants alike embraced prohibition with equal fervor, even garnering some support from Roman Catholics.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, Joe Coker (2007) stresses the leading role of Anglo-evangelicals in southern prohibition. Coker argues that evangelicals (particularly Methodists and Baptists) from 1880-1915 successfully indigenized prohibition in the South, which in turn led the nation in the dry cause, by portraying it as in line with Southern values, including the separation of church and state, honor, racial hierarchy, and hierarchical gender roles.<sup>29</sup> Coker's study, however, was limited to the eastern South states of Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee, and its thesis not been tested in the western South. As Norman Clark has suggested, more case studies at the state level would best help scholars understand the peculiarities of prohibition across the nation.<sup>30</sup>

Robert Wuthnow builds a similar kind of bridge in his recent work, *Rough Country* (2014), which examines the development of the relationship between religion, race, and culture in American culture through the case study of Texas, with particular attention to the often ignored middling levels of religion and society that connect local communities to national culture and politics. In Wuthnow's telling, the issue of

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<sup>28</sup> Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, Mich: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1992), 295—9; Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin: Evangelicalism, the Roaring Twenties and Today's Culture Wars*, 1st ed (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 21—40. See also Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive*.

<sup>29</sup> Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement* (Lexington, Ky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2007).

<sup>30</sup> Norman H. Clark, *The Dry Years: Prohibition and Social Change in Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965).

prohibition was a turning point in Texas's and the nation's history, because through speaking out for it – particularly in the contentious presidential election of 1928 – Protestant pastors gained newfound popular sanction for speaking directly on a political issue: prohibition.<sup>31</sup>

Bridges also remain to be built between ethnicity and religion. As Sabine Meyer has argued in her recent study on temperance in Minnesota, monographs on temperance since the 1970s have tended to focus upon a single facet such as class or gender rather than examining the interplay of multiple identities bearing on the issue, including cultural understandings of space, religion, and ethnicity. Meyer rightly noted how ethnicity has been particularly understudied. Ethnic groups such as Irish and German Americans have been frequently homogenized as anti-prohibition blocs and given insufficient analytical attention, interethnic discourses and interactions have attracted little study, and the connection between many immigrants' involvement in temperance work and the formation of their immigrant identity remains under-examined.<sup>32</sup>

Some studies of prohibition have given considerable attention to religion beyond white Protestants, particularly among Catholics and Jews. Scholars have generally scoffed at claims that these religious groups rendered meaningful aid to prohibition.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Wuthnow, *Rough Country*, 103–20.

<sup>32</sup> Sabine N. Meyer, *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 2–4. See also Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 117.

<sup>33</sup> Quote in Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 18; Odegard himself, however, observed that a Catholic priest from Texas gave a speech at the 1913 Anti-Saloon League's annual convention, proving that some notable Catholics were dry, 24–25; Percy Andreae, “the brewers' star orator,” declared in 1915 that the ASL's “real purpose is of a religious, sectarian character”: after all, “How many Roman Catholics are prohibitionists? How many Jews? ... Lutherans? ... German Protestants generally?” Percy Andreae, *The Prohibition Movement in Its Broader Bearings upon Our Social, Commercial and Religious Liberties: Addresses and Writings of Percy Andreae*. (Chicago, IL: Felix Mendelsohn, 1915), 12.

Noll, however, noted that some Catholic clergy rendered dry Protestants “considerable assistance,” in part to prove that Catholics were good, sober, and loyal Americans. John Quinn elaborated this point in detail, particularly noting the tendency of some Irish Catholics to embrace abstinence and even prohibition much more willingly than their German co-religionists.<sup>34</sup> Daniel Okrent gives adequate space to Jews and Catholics in his wide-ranging study of prohibition, ably arguing that Jews gave virtually no support to prohibition and endured vicious attacks for their associations with the liquor industry, but less convincingly mocks the idea that many Catholics, even 0.2 percent of them, supported prohibition by 1915.<sup>35</sup> Marni Davis’s *Jews and Booze* deftly treats the cultural and religious reasons Jews embraced alcohol production, in part to solidify their identity as Americans, though dries ironically denied Jews’ patriotism precisely because of those links to liquor.<sup>36</sup> Catholics and Jews have received some scholarly attention in studies of prohibition, though such studies are more heavily concentrated upon Northern cities and invite further studies in the South.

Several racial, ethnic, and religious groups enlisted in Texas’s anti-prohibition coalition. From the 1850s until the end of the nineteenth century, Germans made up about five percent of the total population of Texas, or roughly 150,000 by 1900, the largest such

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<sup>34</sup> Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 298; John F. Quinn, “Father Mathew’s Disciples: American Catholic Support for Temperance, 1840-1920,” *Church History* 65, no. 4 (December 1996): 624–40. Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 24–25.

<sup>35</sup> He sniffed that the Catholic Prohibition League of America “unconvincingly claimed a membership of thirty thousand” in 1915; given a national Catholic population of between fifteen and seventeen million that year, that equals less one in five hundred Catholics as dry. Okrent, *Last Call*, 74; 44–46, 75–6, 86–7, 105, 111, 148, 169, 186, 238–39, 303, 245, 257, 262–63, 269, 305–9, 359, 367.

<sup>36</sup> Marni Davis, *Jews and Booze: Becoming American in the Age of Prohibition. Goldstein-Goren Series in American Jewish History* (New York: NYU Press, 2012).

population by proportion or absolute numbers anywhere in the former Confederacy. Like German Americans nationally, they were fond of their beer-drinking culture and dominated the brewing industry that funded two-thirds of the anti-prohibition campaigns. With roots in the state since it was an independent republic, German Texans leaned Republican and were predominantly wet Catholics or Lutherans, though thousands were Jews, teetotaling Methodists, or freethinking atheists.<sup>37</sup> South Texas had a sizeable population of Mexican descent, overwhelmingly Catholics with a handful converted to Protestantism, which likewise embraced drinking as a natural part of its culture and resisted prohibition, though their votes expressed more the will of political bosses than ethnic autonomy.<sup>38</sup> The big-business brewers also collaborated with white labor unions,

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<sup>37</sup> Thousands of Germans settled in Texas since the 1830s, but by the turn of the century most were recent immigrants from the old world. Today roughly 18% of Texans claim German heritage. Terry G. Jordan, "GERMANS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 15, 2010), <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/png02>. Brewers' correspondence shows that Texan Germans widely trended Republican, letter from Ormund Paget to Otto Wahrmond, December 6, 1910, in B. F. Looney, ed., *The Brewers and Texas Politics* (San Antonio: B. F. Looney, 1916), 291–92; such correspondence also showed the vitality and wide geographic distribution of German-speaking groups by their plans to send employees "who can speak German ... along the Southern Pacific R.R. into the German settlements and urge upon the people to pay their poll taxes," particularly in southwest Texas, letter from Paget to San Antonio Brewing Association (SABA), January 19, 1909 in Looney, *Brewers*, 272; Two-thirds of the TBA budget came from brewers and one-third from the distillers, Looney, *Brewers*, 1.

<sup>38</sup> Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 49–50. One saloon operator, Pedro Velasquez of Encinal, who stated "next month will be the month to get the poll tax receipt and I am asking you if you are willing to give me help with something to make up a good amount of poll tax receipts for my customers [sic]," Velasquez to SABA, Dec. 19, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 300. Brewer organizer on La Salle County election: "some of your friends in Cotulla... tell me that they cannot induce the Mexicans to pay their poll tax, claiming that they have not the money to do it," Paget to Otto Wahrmond, Dec. 11, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 236. "[V]ery few Mexicans pay their poll taxes," Paget to M. Andrew, beer dealer, Dec. 13, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 236; cf. 238. "[T]he Mexican population... will not pay their poll taxes. This is a very serious matter for all concerned and especially for your interest," Paget to SABA, Dec. 13, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 237. One brewer confessed that in Cameron County, "All our votes are Mexicans, but we need money to work it. Very near all are good votes, but they do not pay their poll taxes unless someone does it," C. Schunior, to Houston Ice and Brewing Association, Dec. 26, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 650; cf. Looney, *Brewers*, 685, 709, 715, 719. For Protestant converts, see Joshua Grijalva, *A History of Mexican Baptists in Texas 1881-1981: Comprising an Account of the Genesis, the Progress, and the Accomplishments of the People Called "Los Bautistas de Texas"* (Dallas, 1982); Paul Barton, *Hispanic Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists in Texas*, 1st ed, Jack and Doris Smothers Series in Texas History, Life, and Culture, no. 18 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006). For more on racial tensions between whites and Mexican Americans, see Edward Lonnie Langston, "The Impact of Prohibition on the Mexican-United States Border: The El Paso-Ciudad Juarez Case" (M.A. Thesis, Texas Tech University, 1974); Robin

including the Texas State Federation of Labor.<sup>39</sup> The coalition also mobilized Italians, Poles, Jews, and other modestly sized ethnic populations against prohibition.<sup>40</sup>

Yet of all the ethnic and religious groups in the South that reliably resisted prohibition, African Americans were by far the largest. While Texas's African American population slipped from 31 percent of the total in 1870 to just 20 percent in 1900, it had one of the largest populations by absolute numbers of any state, and African Americans there enjoyed relatively more leverage than in most other formerly Confederate states.<sup>41</sup> African Americans' declining proportion of the population and slipping voter turnout, combined with a substantial in-state presence of recent European immigrants and

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Espy Robinson, "Monte Carlo of the Southwest: A Reinterpretation of U.S. Prohibition's Impact on Ciudad Juarez" (M.A. Thesis: University of Texas at Arlington, 1997); and Arnolde De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

<sup>39</sup> In November 1909 Paget promised his office would bring out "the colored voters, and if permitted, the laboring vote"; his office had "done so previously and [was] now better prepared to do so than before." Looney, *Brewers*, 47. Paget's general reports to the brewers repeatedly mentioned in 1909 and 1910 the importance of bringing out the full strength of the African American vote, followed immediately by calls to bring out the labor vote, suggesting that the two were linked in his mind. Perhaps he was referring to 1905, when he advised a "beer dealer": "[I]f there are any labor unions in your city we can have one or two of the leading labor men in the State go down there and make speeches and otherwise arouse interest in the payment of poll taxes." Looney, *Brewers*, 236. Brewers even worked with the Texas State Federation of Labor to pay their poll taxes. Looney, *Brewers*, 47—48, 482—83.

<sup>40</sup> One agent of the brewers refers to the "population in Lavernia, Wilson County," which is possibly "Polish instead of German, but not understanding either language, I class them, as is usually done, as Germans. Whatever they are, they seem to be very nice people and I would be very sorry to see them in the dry column." O. Paget to Otto Wahrmond, November 9, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 1128. Such evidence suggests that other European immigrant groups such as the proudly wet Czechs of West, Texas, were likely subsumed under "Germans" in much of the brewers' correspondence. The brewers in 1909 explicitly mentioned encouraging "Germans, Italians, and Jews" to vote, suggesting that all three groups were expected, like the Germans, to vote overwhelmingly wet. S. T. Morgan to O. Paget, January 19, 1909, in Looney, *Brewers*, 274. In addition to this evidence, one can infer Jewish support for the wet cause in Texas because American distillers (who contributed roughly one third of the brewers' coalition's advocacy revenue) were generally associated with Jews, much as Germans led the American brewing industry and highly correlated with voting wet. Okrent, *Last Call*, 44, mentions various that liquor industry leaders like Steinberg, Schaumberg, and Hirschmaum attracted attacks just as nativist and racist as those against African and German Americans.

<sup>41</sup> Chandler Davidson, "AFRICAN AMERICANS AND POLITICS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 9, 2010), <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/wmafr>.

Mexican Americans, ironically improved their relative position by complicating racial politics and reducing their potential threat to white dominance.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, through their still-significant numbers of eligible voters and the determination of key figures, African American voters and activists played a critical part in the diverse anti-prohibition coalition.

Given the amount of scholarly attention given to other religious and ethnic religious groups, it seems puzzling that African American Protestants should be so understudied on prohibition. This omission of African Americans reflects the selectivity of prohibition scholarship on the region where most African Americans then lived: the U.S. South. Scholars from Jack Block and Thomas Pegram to Gaines Foster and Joe Coker have viewed the South as the region that tipped the nation into the Eighteenth Amendment, yet state studies of prohibition there have focused almost entirely on the activism of dry progressive white evangelicals.<sup>43</sup> Lee Willis's account of prohibition in

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<sup>42</sup> "In a paradoxical way the pervasiveness of racism in Texas and the relatively small size of the African American population kept the question out of most political campaigns," Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 49. According to the meticulous calculations of the Anti-Saloon League (biased yet in census data statistically accurate), the African American population of Texas in 1917 was 17.7 percent of the total population, considerably below the numbers for most Southern states. Ernest Hurst Cherrington and Anti-Saloon League, eds., *The Anti-Saloon League Year Book: An Encyclopedia of Facts and Figures Dealing with the Liquor Traffic and the Temperance Reform* (Columbus, OH, 1917), 227.

<sup>43</sup> Though Coker limits his recent regional study of religion and prohibition to dry white evangelicals, he emphasizes the importance of dries embracing racial hierarchy to successfully indigenize prohibition into Southern culture from 1880 to 1915. Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement* (Lexington, KY, 2007), 1—3; Blocker, *Retreat from Reform*; Pegram, *Battling Demon Rum*; Gaines M. Foster, *Moral Reconstruction: Christian Lobbyists and the Federal Legislation of Morality, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, 2002); state studies include Paul E. Isaac, *Prohibition and Politics: Turbulent Decades in Tennessee, 1885-1920* (Knoxville, TN, 1965); Jimmie Lewis Franklin, *Born Sober: Prohibition in Oklahoma, 1907-1959* (Norman, 1971); Douglas Wiley Carlson, "Temperance Reform in the Cotton Kingdom" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1982); Michael Richard Strickland, "'Rum, Rebellion, Racketeers, and Rascals': Alexander Copeland Millar and the Fight to Preserve Prohibition in Arkansas, 1927-1933" (M.A. Thesis, University of Arkansas, 1993); Lee Willis, *Southern Prohibition: Race, Reform, and Public Life in Middle Florida, 1821-1920* (Athens, GA, 2011); William Graham Davis, "Attacking 'the Matchless Evil': Temperance and Prohibition in Mississippi, 1817-1908" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Mississippi State University, 1975). The nuances of the term "progressivism" in the South and Texas are discussed ably by William A.

Middle Florida notes that some African Americans supported prohibition, partly because dry rhetoric fixated on the danger of blacks with alcohol, but focuses on two local option elections and says relatively little about African American's agency beyond mentioning a few were saloonkeepers.

One exceptional study that puts African Americans front and center in prohibition scholarship is H. Paul Thompson Jr.'s work on prohibition in Atlanta from 1865 to 1887. The book focuses on local option elections and proves beyond doubt that Atlanta went dry in 1885 and then wet again in 1887 because of the African American swing vote. Yet Thompson limits his close analysis of elections to the 1880s, restricts his study to one city, and concludes that by 1893 African American votes on prohibition throughout the South had shrunk to inconsequential levels.<sup>44</sup> Scholarship investigating African American involvement in prohibition across the South has largely been restricted to a few local option elections and the late nineteenth century, and much work remains to reassert the vital role played by African American Protestants on prohibition.

Not only has prohibition scholarship missed African American political activism on prohibition after the imposition of poll taxes, but broader studies of religion, politics, and race describe African American Protestants' role in prohibition as marginal. Paul Harvey in *Redeeming the South* notes well the struggles of white and black Baptists to

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Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill, 1992); Dewey W. Grantham, *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition*, 1st ed, Twentieth-Century America Series (Knoxville, 1983); and Larry D. Hill, "Texas Progressivism: A Search for Definition," in Walter L. Buenger et. al., eds., *Texas through Time: Evolving Interpretations* (College Station, 1991), 229–250.

<sup>44</sup> David M. Fahey, *Temperance And Racism: John Bull, Johnny Reb, and the Good Templars* (Lexington, Kent., 1996), 131, 140—150; Lee L. Willis, *Southern Prohibition*, 2—3, 87, 91—92, 99, 104, 107, 114—15, 144—45; H. Paul Thompson, *A Most Stirring and Significant Episode: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887* (DeKalb, Illi., 2013), 242—246.

enforce alcohol abstinence amongst their church members and, after the 1880s, to institute legal prohibition. Yet Harvey has also observed the racist bent of most white prohibitionists and the secondary role of African Americans within the movement. John Giggie's study of African American religion in the Mississippi Delta only mentions prohibition advocacy briefly in the context of black fraternal organizations.<sup>45</sup> In *God and Race in American Politics*, an excellent synthesis of most literature on the subject, Mark Noll only mentions prohibition on a single page, where he does not even mention African Americans but merely observes the "relative superficiality of the reformist religion" that supported it and "the relative weakness of the federal government to enforce it."<sup>46</sup> Given the title of his book, it seems ironic that a scholar of Noll's reputation does not note any connection between prohibition and race, though this perspective largely reflects the selectivity of the scholarly literature. Barry Hankins makes the omission of African Americans on the prohibition question even more explicit in *Jesus and Gin*, in which he devotes a chapter to explore prohibition's importance in a "white culture war," yet reflects mainstream historiography by remarking that African Americans' cultural marginalization meant that they "played almost no part" in cultural controversies such as prohibition. In Hankins's telling, African Americans "either took a pass or were not allowed to participate."<sup>47</sup> In these accounts, black participation on prohibition ranged

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<sup>45</sup> Paul Harvey, *Redeeming the South: Religious Cultures and Racial Identities among Southern Baptists, 1865-1925* (Chapel Hill, 1997), 17, 78, 81, 84—86, 187, 198, 214—18, 225, 232, 237—38. John Giggie, *After Redemption: Jim Crow and the Transformation of African American Religion in the Delta, 1875-1915* (Oxford, 2008), 71—72.

<sup>46</sup> All quotes Mark A. Noll, *God and Race in American Politics: A Short History* (Princeton, 2010), 63, see also single entry for "Prohibition" in index, 207.

<sup>47</sup> All quotes Hankins, *Jesus and Gin*, 170; chapter on prohibition pp. 21—40.

from marginal to non-existent and favored the dry cause. This was certainly not the case in Texas.

Studies of religion and prohibition in Texas have mentioned ethnic minorities on the issue, though mostly in passing. Lewis Gould contends that African, German, and Mexican Americans generally opposed prohibition, and their stance helped move progressive white Texans to support poll taxes and rally against the self-interested, politically conservative brewers and their saloons that peddled personal vice and public corruption. Jared Sutton supported Gould's findings by demonstrating empirically that African, Mexican, and German Americans in Texas overwhelmingly opposed prohibition. Larry Jerome Watson and James Ivy have explained the difficulty of imposing prohibition in Texas in the late nineteenth century by suggesting that progressive white evangelicals were not yet politically dominant in Texas, but did not seriously address African Americans as an integral part of that post-Reconstruction political order. Wuthnow's *Rough Country* examines the importance of religious liberty and the separation of church and state in delaying the political ascendancy of prohibition, but only once mentions the role of African Americans on the issue, noting that some clergy openly supported prohibition—a statement seemingly at odds with the weight of evidence suggesting most African Americans opposed it.<sup>48</sup> Texan studies have granted that African Americans took action on prohibition, but have not spoken with one voice on

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<sup>48</sup> Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 44–55, 90, 125, 169, 230–31. Larry Jerome Watson, “Evangelical Protestants and the Prohibition Movement in Texas, 1887-1919” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Texas A&M University, 1993); James D. Ivy, *No Saloon in the Valley: The Southern Strategy of Texas Prohibitionists in the 1880s* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003); Jared Paul Sutton, “Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1919” (M.A. Thesis, University of North Texas, 2006). See also H. William Schneider, “Dr. James B. Cranfill’s Prohibition Activities, 1882-1887” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1971); Thomas J. Brian, “The 1887 Prohibition Crusade in Texas” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1972); Wuthnow, *Rough Country*, 171.

the nature or significance of that action. In sum, scholarship on racial and ethnic minorities and prohibition has generally treated them as marginal actors whose contributions to the issue are either negligible, minor, or unclear.

One valuable addition to this scholarship is Joseph Locke's 2012 thesis, which chiefly examined how white evangelical preachers' engagement in politics through prohibition advocacy in Texas helped form the Bible Belt, yet in chapter seven dealt in depth with African Americans. While the main form of black activism on prohibition Locke mentioned was that of drys working with white drys, he also noted "the general hostility of black populations towards prohibition," organized opposition to prohibition by black leaders such as the Republican operative and minister Melvin Wade, Populist organizer John B. Rayner, and revivalist J. L. "Sin Killer" Griffin.<sup>49</sup> He argued that white evangelical drys consistently sought support from the "best" sort of men across racial lines but always assumed white supremacy, and increasingly blamed black resistance for their political failures. While granting that black Americans sometimes cast decisive votes in local option election and perhaps the 1887 statewide election, he stated that poll taxes ended most black political activism by 1908. Locke also contended that the division between the righteous and unrighteous, which might or might not lie along racial lines, motivated drys more than racism as such. Locke's attention to black Texans in the prohibition struggle substantially expands upon comments on the subject by Walter Louis Buenger and Alwyn Barr.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Joseph Locke, "Making the Bible Belt: Preachers, Prohibition, and the Politicization of Southern Religion, 1877-1918" (Ph.D. Thesis, Rice University, 2012), quote on 256—257.

<sup>50</sup> Locke, "Making the Bible Belt," ii—iii, esp. 260—267, also 222—259; Walter Louis Buenger, *The Path to a Modern South: Northeast Texas Between Reconstruction and the Great Depression* (Austin:

This dissertation agrees with the growing scholarly consensus that prohibition was a pivotal culture war issue that contributed to the growing acceptance of political preaching in the twentieth century. At the same time, it complicates that narrative by examining how religious convictions and practices, deeply informed by notions of race and ethnicity, not only supported prohibition but also opposed it. Scholarly studies of religion and prohibition, particularly in Texas, have focused upon Anglo evangelicals and ignored or claimed the political irrelevance of groups such as African American Protestants, Mexican American Catholics, Scandinavian American Lutherans, and Anglo Episcopalians. Yet these groups played critical roles in the prohibition debate in Texas and illuminate the potential for ethnic, racial, and religious divides to inform a surprisingly wide spectrum of approaches to the decisive political issue of the day. Even in the face of poll taxes, anti-prohibitionists in Texas forged an inter-racial and inter-religious coalition in which African, Mexican, German, and Anglo Americans, as well as Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, all played an essential role in keeping Texas wet longer than any other Southern state save Louisiana. This remarkable and largely untold story forces us to reappraise the importance of groups and figures that have lived too long in the shadow of history, yet were critically important in debates over prohibition, the major culture war issue of their day.

My research challenges various scholarly assumptions. Contrary to the notion that interracial political coalitions were strangled by the imposition of poll taxes in the U.S. South and would not rise again until at least the New Deal, the Texan experience

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University of Texas Press, 2001), 25; Alwyn Barr, *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas, 1528-1995* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 113.

demonstrates that a powerful interracial political coalition survived over a decade after the imposition of poll taxes. African Americans not only proved a crucial voting bloc against prohibition, but African-American pastors and revivalists of various denominations preached openly against prohibition before large mixed audiences, publicly debated white prohibitionists, set up a front organization that mobilized tens of thousands of voters, and organized successful grassroots resistance to prohibition. Ethnic and religious minorities in Texas were not silent or helpless on prohibition, but were protagonists in the contest.

Countering the fixation of religious history upon prohibitionists, this research uncovers the neglected religious leaders, convictions, and customs that undergirded anti-prohibitionists. African American church leaders' ideals of pursuing liberation and dignity for their race moved some of them to side with the brewers against their fellow Baptists and Methodists. Meanwhile, ancient traditions of sacramental wine usage and embattled minority status informed the resistance of Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Jews to prohibitionists' attempts to impose their moral vision upon the society. Even Anglo elites such as Texan governors Richard Coke (Episcopalian), Oscar Colquitt (Methodist), and Miriam Ferguson (Baptist) invoked religious arguments as they spoke out against statewide prohibition. Prohibition scholarship has explored how race and religion interacted with prohibition, yet far more investigation is vital to provide an increasingly well-rounded understanding of these factors' impacts on prohibition.

### *Designated Driver: Chapters in Outline*

Having considered relevant historiography, all that remains is an outline of the remainder of the dissertation. Chapter two, "Flog Them Back," examines the dominance

of anti-prohibition sentiment in Texas politics in the 1880s, as illustrated by the resounding defeat of prohibition in the statewide contest of 1887. Dry leaders sought to court Texans of every racial, ethnic, and religious background but were met instead with violent hostility. Opposition to prohibition from Confederate leader Jefferson Davis and so-called Redeemer governor Richard Coke implicitly reframed the issue as an extension of the Civil War, mobilizing Lost Cause religion against the allegedly Northern reform movement. Concerns about gender roles, racial hierarchy, the separation of church and state, and old-fashioned ideas of honor being satisfied by violence also played a role in prohibition's 1887 defeat. The failure of prohibition also indicated the relative weakness of political preaching in a Texas that was still largely rough country.

Chapter three, "Cup of Salvation," focuses on the theological divides that informed quarrels between wets and dries in the churches, from whether or not to use wine in communion to the Bible as for or against alcoholic beverages. Church structure mattered in these debates: top-down Methodists tended to be more united, better organized, and earlier on prohibition activism than bottom-up Baptists, but Baptists were a larger group in Texas and were much more visible when they turned dry. Theology also mattered: high-church groups such as Catholics, Episcopalians, and Lutherans tended to defer to traditional readings favoring wine in communion and at home, while relatively low-church denominations such as Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians employed more common-sense individualist readings that were more likely to unmoor church practice from tradition and thereby encouraged theological innovations such as prohibition.

The fourth chapter, “Politics Dark and Peculiar,” focuses on the intermingling of religion, race, and ethnicity in the prohibition question. The role of African Americans, both real and imagined, proved crucial in the debate over prohibition. The more inclusive approach of dries in 1887 was soon replaced by a greater stress on converting white voters and disfranchising “unworthy” voters, particularly racial minorities, while brewers aggressively courted all possible voters and scandalously backed widespread payment of poll taxes by ethnic and racial minorities. Other ethnic divides are also explored, such as the gradual transition of Southern and Eastern European immigrant groups from perceived racial inferiors to equals with old-stock whites also played into the prohibition question.

Chapter five, “Fidelity to That Liberty,” examines the religious arguments for liberty against prohibition. In addition to arguing that prohibition from above undermined self-governance of the individual, family, and small community, anti-prohibitionists also contended that prohibition was more Islamic than Christian, thwarting the growth of distinctively Christian virtues that could only be achieved by facing temptations rather than removing them. White evangelicals sought to use the state to perfect society, while religious and ethnic minorities preferred a more limited government so they could practice their cultural and religious traditions in peace.

The sixth chapter, “Wars and Rumors of Wars,” particularly focuses on racial anxieties connected to the Mexican Revolution and conflicts against Germans during World War I. The Mexican Revolution spilled over onto Texas in the so-called Bandit War of 1910-1916, in which thousands of Mexicans and Tejanos were killed or uprooted from South Texas, and the end of the conflict marked the retreat of Mexican Americans

from state politics for decades to come. Germans had dominated the brewing industry of Texas and across the United States, but the entrance of the US into WWI stigmatized all things German, including beer, and the national turn against that culture pushed Texas over the brink to outlawing alcoholic drinks. The success of prohibition also signaled the growing ascendancy of Anglo evangelicals in Texan culture.

Chapter seven, “Rebels Against Rum and Romanism,” focuses on the relationship between Catholicism, political preaching, and prohibition, particularly in the election of 1928, in which Texas narrowly voted against the Democratic presidential candidate, Al Smith, an openly wet Catholic. Instead of fearing a union of church and state by Protestant preachers, as had been the case in the 1880s, by the 1920s more Protestants feared rule by Catholic laymen such as Smith.

The eighth chapter, “Repenting Prohibition,” details the dramatic shift against prohibition in the 1920s and 1930s. While prohibition initially reduced drinking in the early 1920s, voters grew alienated from the program of prohibition by its more exuberant devotees such as Hiram Wesley Evans and J. Frank Norris. Despite giving a decisive victory to the dry candidate, the 1928 presidential race created a backlash against prohibition among moderates as the original vision of progressive improvement was increasingly replaced by ruthless appeals to law and order. In the wake of the Great Depression, the contraction of church membership and influence as well as a sharp change in evangelical clerics’ attention from reshaping society to merely maintaining their churches contributed to declining support for prohibition. Another major factor was the impression that prohibition had betrayed its millennial hope for social improvement and instead only made society worse. The turn of respectable women from a reliably

prohibitionist constituency to one that voted on both sides of the issue began in earnest in 1929 and contributed greatly to the revolution in attitudes on prohibition. A brief epilogue sketches subsequent developments in alcohol regulation, political affiliation, and the empowerment of racial and religious minorities in Texas. It also discusses the broader significance of prohibition in Texas for the study of religion and social reform in academic and popular circles today.

The story of prohibition in Texas began not with success, but a resounding failure in 1887, the first statewide election on the issue. Though it had been a state since 1845, Texas was still a rough country with iconoclasts as well as preachers, and the later political ascendancy of evangelical ministers was by no means certain. Religious citizens of various racial and religious backgrounds held a wide variety of stances towards prohibition, and many clergy preferred not to engage the issue. Even among Baptists and Methodists in the pews, some regarded the political activism from leading pulpits as breaking the sacred role of ministers to save souls rather than mobilize voters. When prominent clergy strayed from merely spiritual topics and began preaching prohibition, some opponents of prohibition accused them of betraying their southern values and threatened to flog them back.

## CHAPTER TWO

### “Flog Them Back”: Prohibition and Political Preaching in the Election of 1887<sup>1</sup>

On August 15, 1885, a 56-year-old Episcopalian layman with a dark receding hairline and white wispy beard addressed a crowd of thousands in Waco, Texas on the evils of political preaching. If pastors strayed from the Gospel into politics, “Flog them back!” he cried to cheers and loud applause. “Flog them back!” he repeated, to continued acclamation. The particular target of his ire was the campaign led by prominent clergy of the city, a citadel of Baptist life in the state, to dry the area in a local option election later that year. He denounced “prohibition as a movement dangerous to the great principle of personal liberty, one of the pillars on which this government was founded,” since it “could be carried out only by inquisitorial measures that must invade the privacy of the household.”<sup>2</sup> The speaker, Richard Coke, had considerable clout for his central Texas audience: he was a current US senator from Texas, the former Democratic governor of Texas during the state’s so-called Redemption from Reconstruction, and a Confederate veteran who had served on Jefferson Davis’s personal staff. The crowd applauded as Coke also attacked prohibition as a northeastern invention and likened it to churches’ wrongful interference with politics in the abolition movement that he believed had largely

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<sup>1</sup> Part of this chapter appears in Brendan Payne, “Southern White Protestant Men, Church-State Relations, and Prohibition in Texas, 1865-1920.” *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 29 (Winter 2015), forthcoming; and Payne, “Protecting Black Suffrage: Poll Taxes, Preachers, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1916,” *Journal of Southern History* 83 (Nov. 2017), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> Editorial, *Austin Daily Statesman*, 16 August 1885. See also H. William Schneider, “Dr. James B. Cranfill’s Prohibition Activities, 1882-1887” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1971), 40—41.

caused the Civil War. Perhaps most ominously, he declared that prohibitionists sought to undermine Democratic rule, which equated to white rule against the perceived usurpation of power during Reconstruction by corrupt carpetbaggers, scalawags, and blacks.<sup>3</sup> Under such urging, prohibitionists' defeat in the local option vote was a foregone conclusion.

Still, a significant and growing minority in Waco and elsewhere in Texas saw the issue differently. Most prominent of these offending clergy was the pastor of Waco's First Baptist Church, Benajah Harvey Carroll, who not only led the failed 1885 attempt to prohibit alcohol in Waco, but would soon lead the dries in the doomed 1887 campaign to dry the entire state of Texas. The Rev. Carroll bristled at Coke's accusations, accurately countering that Democrats had put the local option in the so-called Redeemer Constitution of 1876 in the first place and expressing his view that prohibition neither constrained personal liberty nor produced a "union of church and state."<sup>4</sup> To those worried about church-state union in the 1887 contest, Carroll declared that he wanted neither a union of church and state nor a union of whiskey and state.<sup>5</sup> Still, the wets carried the day: the statewide prohibition amendment proposed that year was defeated by 220,627 votes against to 129,270 for.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Schneider, "Dr. James B. Cranfill's Prohibition Activities, 40—41.

<sup>4</sup> B. H. Carroll, *Prohibition: Dr. B. H. Carroll's Reply to Senator Coke* (Austin, TX: J.B. Link, 1885), 2—16, in Schneider, "Cranfill's Prohibition," 41—42.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas J. Brian, "The 1887 Prohibition Crusade in Texas" (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1972), 18.

<sup>6</sup> James W. Endersby, "Prohibition and Repeal: Voting on Statewide Liquor Referenda in Texas," *Social Science Journal* 49 (December 2012): 506; Cantrell, "Dark Tactics," 91; Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas."

This chapter examines the wariness of most Texan voters to political preaching in the 1880s, particularly on the issue of prohibition, and the perceived moral urgency of the issue that provoked ministers to take unprecedented action on an undoubtedly political issue. Three sections help explain the effusion of clerical involvement in the watershed election of 1887. The first section weighs the importance of southern regional identity in keeping prohibition from taking root in much of the South in the decades immediately following the Civil War. Given the origins of the prohibition movement in New England and its early associations with radical Yankee reformists, it is perhaps surprising that distinctively regional Methodist and Baptist denominations by the 1880s proved more eager to embrace prohibition by the 1880s than had Episcopalians, who had rushed to reunite across the Mason-Dixon by the end of 1865 but, perhaps because of their concern with church unity, shunned divisive reform efforts. Despite its northern roots, prohibition appealed to Southern Methodists and Southern Baptists because the hardening of their attitudes toward alcohol and saloons had grown concomitantly with their confidence in their power to shape society. The second section examines the strategies of prohibitionists in the election of 1887. The third section examines the rhetoric and strategy of anti-prohibitionists, including not only the state anti-prohibition committee's publications but also the independent works of many Episcopalians as well as a few prominent Baptists and Methodists about the wisdom of prohibition. A brief consideration of the demographics of the vote precedes the conclusion.

Before diving in, a few words on the historiography of prohibition in Texas before 1887 are in order. Scholarship on prohibition in Texas has mostly focused on the period after the 1887 statewide election, though some have zeroed in on this early period. Larry

Jerome Watson and James Ivy have explained the difficulty of imposing Prohibition in Texas in the late nineteenth century by suggesting that progressive white evangelicals were not yet politically dominant in Texas. Robert Wuthnow's *Rough Country* examines, among other matters, the importance of religious liberty and the separation of church and state in delaying the political ascendancy of Prohibition, but focuses on the religion of prohibitionists rather than anti-prohibitionists. Joe Coker, writing on prohibition across the South from 1880 to 1915, argues that the southern understanding that the church should stay out of politics proved a major barrier to southern acceptance of prohibition, especially in the 1880s and 1890s. As Coker and Ivy have separately argued, Protestant women played an important yet secondary roles to male preachers in most southern prohibition campaigns, particularly in the 1880s, due to prohibitionists' efforts to tailor their activism to fit regional patriarchal social norms. In 1887, prohibitionists were embattled, in the minority, and struggling to assert their southern identity against intense opposition from entrenched interests.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 44–55, 90, 125, 169, 230–31. Larry Jerome Watson, “Evangelical Protestants and the Prohibition Movement in Texas, 1887-1919” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Texas A&M University, 1993); James D. Ivy, *No Saloon in the Valley: The Southern Strategy of Texas Prohibitionists in the 1880s* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 1, 7–23, 28, 31, 47–52, 56–64, 68, 89–90, 100–101, and especially 118: “By 1911 [prohibitionists] could reject the assistance of women because they were confident that they could accomplish their goal without them”; Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 1–3, church-state relations 79–121, gender and women 199–229; Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America's Most Powerful Bible-Belt State* (Princeton, New Jersey, 2014), 171; Jared Paul Sutton, “Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1919” (M.A. Thesis, University of North Texas, 2006). See also H. William Schneider, “Dr. James B. Cranfill's Prohibition Activities, 1882-1887” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1971); Thomas J. Brian, “The 1887 Prohibition Crusade in Texas” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1972). For more on women and prohibition in Texas, see James D. Ivy, “‘The Lone Star State Surrenders to a Lone Woman’: Frances Willard's Forgotten 1882 Texas Temperance Tour,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 102, no. 1 (1998): 44–61 (on which chapter 1 of Ivy's *No Saloon* was based); and Judith N. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

### *Prohibition from the Civil War to 1887*

In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, churches in the former Confederacy were too preoccupied with rebuilding to pay much attention to sweeping social reforms such as prohibition. This relative inactivity in social reform, however, was no indication that they held to the “spirituality of the church,” the doctrine that churches should stick to the Gospel and leave out politics, but merely that they were busy with more the immediate concerns of rebuilding their region. Southern clerics never strictly observed the “spirituality of the church,” as their advocacy for slavery and the Confederacy attested. Those churches, however, continued to use their influence to preserve cultural, political, and economic as well as theological orthodoxy, even though they avoided direct lobbying to influence legislation until their fight for prohibition.<sup>8</sup>

Southerners came to support prohibition later than most northerners partly because the reform was first seen as northern. This was a problem for prohibitionists because most white Methodists and Baptists in Texas had belonged to explicitly southern denominations since 1845, when the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) and Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) were formed. Southern Methodists in particular resisted northern efforts to take over their churches, and MECS only united with northern Methodists in 1939; Southern Baptists remain separated from the northern denomination to this day. Southern Episcopalians, however, only formed the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America in 1861 to conform to the new political reality after several states had seceded. They rejoined with their coreligionists in the

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<sup>8</sup> Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009, first edition 1980), especially xi, 7—8, 87—88.

North by the end of 1865 without punishment, and the national Episcopal Church even accepted the consecration of Richard Hooker Wilmer, who had been appointed the Bishop of Alabama by Confederate bishops during the war.<sup>9</sup> Roman Catholics, naturally, had never officially split their denomination at all. Given their readiness to rejoin with the North, one might suspect that Episcopalians were more likely to share the northern reformist zeal that had first produced prohibition, while Methodist and Baptist would shun any association with the hated Yankees and their alleged puritanical fanaticism. This hypothesis fits with Gaines M. Foster's view (2002) that southern churches' increasing advocacy for prohibition was evidence of their integration into a national reform culture.<sup>10</sup>

In the decades following the war, however, Texan Methodists and Baptists rather than Episcopalians and Catholics took an increasingly prohibitionist stances. Ironically, denominations that were more prone to southern separatism, particularly Methodists and Baptists, also showed a greater willingness to embrace the northern reform of prohibition than did denominations that were less prone to protracted regional schism, such as Episcopalians and Catholics. Methodists in particular took the lead in fighting for prohibition, and their united front for prohibition transcended division between North and South as well as black and white. The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) had since the 1830s taught abstinence from all kinds of alcohol and since the 1850s backed

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<sup>9</sup> Hunter Dickinson Farish, *The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969). Joseph Blount Cheshire, *The Church in the Confederate States: A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912).

<sup>10</sup> Gaines M. Foster, *Moral Reconstruction: Christian Lobbyists and the Federal Legislation of Morality, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

prohibition laws to purify society at large and white Methodist churches followed a similar trajectory.<sup>11</sup> Ardently prohibition bishops such as Henry M. Turner of Georgia tightly controlled the Methodist denominations, while Baptists church structure allowed far greater independence for local preachers to make up their own minds on controversial issues.

Texan Methodists sought to stem the rise in drunkenness after the war, yet many showed hesitation up to the early 1880s about employing the church to meddle in the affairs of the state by lobbying for prohibition laws, preferring instead to work through moral suasion of their own members. Temperance advocacy accelerated after the denomination's General Conference in 1886 denounced the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks as sins punishable by the church. The denomination as a whole plunged into prohibition lobbying under the banner of fighting against an extraordinary evil and discharging the church's basic duty to defend public morality, even while they continued pursuing the tactic of temperance by moral suasion within their churches.<sup>12</sup>

Like Methodists, Southern Baptists lagged behind their northern counterparts in supporting prohibition, but by the 1870s, the tide was turning toward prohibition in Texas. Baptists generally agreed that wine was permitted in the Bible and even consumed by Jesus, but Baptist prohibitionists used arguments from common-sense and the "spirit" of the Bible rather than the letter. In 1875 the Baptist State Convention of Texas adopted the report of its Committee on Temperance, which provided a catalog of the evils of the

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<sup>11</sup> H. Paul Thompson, *A Most Stirring and Significant Episode: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887* (DeKalb, IL, 2013), 35.

<sup>12</sup> Farish, *The Circuit Rider*, 317—324; see also 5, 98, 367, and 398.

liquor traffic: it “is costing over nine-hundred millions of dollars a year, and is murdering over sixty thousand of our citizens. ... [I]t is corrupting the ballot box; it is hastening monopoly, and at the same time is planting the seeds of communism. It causes more than three-fourths of all crime, and fills our almshouses and asylums for the insane.”<sup>13</sup> Though Texan Baptists had taken a firm stand for prohibition in the 1870s, Southern Baptists as a denomination did not turn decidedly in favor of abstinence until the 1880s, before which most favored moderation in drink, believed only reliance upon the gospel of grace could cure a drunkard, focused on discipline of church members, and shunned advocacy of liquor legislation on the grounds of the separation of church and state. Widespread support for local-option laws in the 1870s and 1880s slowly morphed into growing support for statewide prohibition or even national prohibition by the 1890s. Nonetheless, Southern Baptists did not see temperance as all-important, and denounced allies such as the Prohibition Party for undermining white supremacy in the South by bolting the Democratic Party. Though the Southern Baptist Convention was slow to back prohibition, its first temperance resolution in 1886 was a sea change after which more and more Southern Baptists turned inexorably against demon rum and played a key role in encouraging legal prohibition.<sup>14</sup>

When Anglo Texas Baptists from two competing state conventions came together to form the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) in 1886, one of the issues that they sought to rally around was opposition to alcohol. “The time has come in the history

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<sup>13</sup> Baptist State Convention of Texas, *Minutes of the Thirty-eighth Annual Session* (Dallas, TX: 1875), 32, in Thomas J. Brian, “The 1887 Prohibition Crusade in Texas” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1972), 47.

<sup>14</sup> Rufus B. Spain, *At Ease in Zion: A Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900* (Tuscaloosa, AL: Alabama University Press, 2003), 174—197.

of Texas,” stated that year’s BGCT temperance report, “when no Baptist can afford to give an uncertain sound on the temperance question,” and “the correct attitude of every Christian man” was to back prohibition. The need for action against saloons became urgent because they threatened the sacred authority of the embryonic, fragile church in two ways. Firstly, the nature of the saloon was “in direct antagonism to every pure thing that ever came from the hand of God”: its “blackening, fiendish breath,” has “destroyed our homes, ... sent our noblest men to drunkards’ graves, annihilated the Christian Sabbath, made virtue a by-word and a hiss, scattered crime and murder the state around, and cursed the very name of God.” Secondly, with “more saloon keepers in Texas than there are ministers of all the denominations” and some “4,500 rum-shops,” the saloons were seemingly better organized than the churches. By assaulting the homes and morals upon which a decent Christian society depended and overwhelming the organizational resources of churches, saloons posed an existential threat to Christian ministry, especially one that was still establishing itself to rough people in a rough country.<sup>15</sup>

The endorsement of legal prohibition among Baptists represented a decisive shift from “the old slogan of ‘moral suasion,’ which has been rung in our ears so long by those who never did anything *for* moral suasion, has ceased to be potent [emphasis in original].”<sup>16</sup> In addition to the pronounced impotence of suasion, the report noted the failure of state to enforce laws restraining the liquor business. “No law that has ever been

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<sup>15</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the First Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (1886), 9. For more on how Texas as a rough country where the churches were in relative infancy, see first several chapters of Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America’s Most Powerful Bible-Belt State* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014).

<sup>16</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the First Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Dallas, TX: Texas Baptist Publishing House, 1886), 9. Thanks to the staff at the Texas Collection Library of Baylor University for providing me with this and related sources on Baptists in Texas.

made for [the saloon's] restriction has been enforced,” and “there is not a saloon keeper in Texas that obeys the laws” that restrict the business.”<sup>17</sup> This sad turn of events forced many Baptists, including the authors of the temperance report, to believe that “no man can, in the nature of things, be in favor of moral suasion unless he is also an advocate of legal suasion.”<sup>18</sup> While Christian duty includes praying and working against intemperance, “we must as citizens VOTE against this hydra-headed monster,” since “it is our duty as Christians to vote for prohibition” and to fill state offices with men “for God, and home, and native land”—the last line being a direct quote of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union slogan. What if such action should lead to a backlash, such as the boycott of political preachers urged by Richard Coke in the “scourge ’em back” campaign of 1885? The committee urged, “let us force the boycott.” The report then invoked Psalm 2 (“let the heathen rage”) and the U.S. Declaration of Independence (“let us pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor”) to inspire their comrades in their “work of exterminating this greatest of all iniquities.” The report in its entirety was adopted by the BGCT, suggesting Texas Baptist unity on the subject.<sup>19</sup>

A year later, that apparent unity among Baptists was revealed as agreement among pastors, but apparently did not extend to everyone in the pews. While non-Baptist Texans doubtless helped the anti-prohibition cause, a split on the issue among Anglo Baptists laymen contributed significantly towards the crushing defeat of the statewide prohibition vote just weeks before the Baptists’ statewide convention. The terse BGCT

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<sup>17</sup> *First Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas*, 10.

<sup>18</sup> *First Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas*, 9.

<sup>19</sup> *First Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas*, 10.

temperance report that year was a single sentence on how Baptists ought to view the liquor traffic: “*Truceless, uncompromising, eternal war*” [emphasis original].<sup>20</sup> Even the temperance committee’s full name—“On the Attitude which Baptists *should* Occupy toward the Liquor Traffic” [emphasis mine]—belied the illusion of Baptist unity on the issue by implying the need of temperance-minded ministers to persuade their far more moist congregants.<sup>21</sup>

### *Drys in the 1887 Campaign*

As an example of this sea change among Baptists, the 1887 Texan campaign for statewide prohibition was heavily influenced by Baptists. Reflecting upon that campaign from the distance of 1923, the white Baptist minister James B. Cranfill recalled how the 1886 convention organizing the dry forces appointed him chairman of a committee on Texan Baptists’ attitudes toward prohibition. The very existence of the committee indicated the importance of Baptists in the eyes of the campaign leaders. The appointment of prominent Baptist preacher and former Confederate soldier B. H. Carroll

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<sup>20</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Second Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Dallas, TX: Texas Baptist Publishing House, 1887), 43.

<sup>21</sup> *Second Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas*, 5. A year later the BGCT committee abbreviated its title to “The Attitude of Baptists toward the Liquor Traffic,” but its reports for years after remained terse and mentioned no progress against that traffic. Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Third Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Printing Co., 1888), 5, 26; Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Dallas, TX: Texas Baptist Publishing House, 1889), 47; Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Fort Worth: Mail Publishing Co., 1890), 75; Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Dallas, TX: Jas. A. Dorsey & Co., 1891), 51–52.

as head of the dry forces in the 1887 campaign again highlighted the role of Baptists in the campaign.<sup>22</sup> By 1887, Baptists indisputably led the state in the fight for prohibition.

Though preachers, especially of the Baptist variety, took part in the prohibition campaign, they did not see their participation in the campaign as political. B. H. Carroll and many of his fellow prohibitionists in the late nineteenth century viewed prohibition not as a political issue, but as an overriding moral issue that naturally flowed out of Christian faith and love of humanity. Carroll's insistence that prohibition was a moral rather than political issues suggests that he and many other Texans believed that pastors ought not preach on political issues, and fits with his firm political support for the Democratic Party, which he by no means wanted the prohibition issue to split. For Baptists like Carroll, prohibition did not supersede theological and political orthodoxy but complemented it. These efforts at painting prohibition as non-political were unsuccessful at convincing the majority of Texans, in part because prohibitionists were divided between "non-political" loyal Democrats like Carroll and those like Cranfill who were more overtly "political" because they supported the alternative Prohibition Party and so overtly challenged Democratic rule. Though Carroll sought to distance himself from the more obviously political (and vitriolic) Cranfill by denying his newspaper was an official organ of the prohibition movement, Carroll's decision to write articles for that

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<sup>22</sup> J. M. Carroll, *A History of Texas Baptists* (Dallas, TX: Baptist Standard Publishing, 1923), 663 fn 1. The footnote concludes with "-EDITOR," which refers to J. B. Cranfills J. A. Reynolds, "CARROLL, BENAIAH HARVEY," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fca63>), accessed December 13, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

paper helped anti-prohibitionists paint all prohibitionists as political and anti-Democratic.<sup>23</sup>

Race also divided dries. At first, dries sought to express their cause in such universal terms that they even shunned racial divisions. When Texan dries, led by Carroll, decided against using race as a wedge issue in the election, John Rayner offered free campaign advice.<sup>24</sup> Rayner advised Carroll how best to win the African American vote: enlist as many African American ministers and newspapers as possible from the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), and Baptist churches. Carroll apparently took his advice. Prominent African American ministers, including the national leader of the AME, Bishop Henry M. Turner of Georgia, soon thereafter campaigned in the state for Prohibition, and Rayner himself campaigned heavily in Robertson and the surrounding counties. At the same time, Rayner had warned Carroll that many African American Baptist ministers and newspapermen would side with the brewers if not first secured by the dries with promise of payment.<sup>25</sup> Despite the racially inclusive platform and bridge-building by Carroll, his fellow white Baptist minister Cranfill sabotaged these plans with his racist editorial, “The Native White Man,” which sought to rally “the native, white, Anglo-Saxon elements of the South” around

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<sup>23</sup> Alan J. Lefever, *Fighting the Good Fight: The Life and Work of Benajah Harvey Carroll* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1994); H. William Schneider, “Dr. James B. Cranfill’s Prohibition Activities, 1882-1887” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1971), 87—89.

<sup>24</sup> J. B. R. to B. H. Carroll, *San Antonio Express*, July 27, 1887; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 193.

<sup>25</sup> For more on Turner, see Stephan Ward Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African American Religion in the South* (Lexington, Kent., 1992); and Andre E. Johnson, *The Forgotten Prophet: Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and the African American Prophetic Tradition* (Lanham, MD, 2012).

prohibition against the “bo-dutch,” “nigger,” and “low-bred foreigners.”<sup>26</sup> Even after an official apology by Carroll, this kind of rhetoric pushed every ethnic group into the wet camp and still did not win dries the majority of the old stock Protestant vote.<sup>27</sup> Interracial bridges proved far easier for dries to burn than to build.

Baptist preachers defended prohibition advocacy as their Christian and civil duty to resist the evil of the saloon. For these dries, the specter of a church-state union was a red herring since the clear and present danger of alcohol, not the positive moral influence of the church, was the true threat to liberty. Responding directly to Senator Coke’s call to “scourge back the preachers, and stop their rations,” the “old time Baptist” preacher I. B. Kimbrough pronounced in 1887, perhaps at the Baptist State Convention, “Before I would allow any politician to put a padlock on my mouth on this question of prohibition, I would live on corn cobs and stump water.” Recalling the speech decades later, Cranfill called it a “more eloquent plea for temperance and prohibition” than he ever heard before or since at a Baptist State Convention, emphasizing the intensity of the battle for prohibition that year.<sup>28</sup> Beyond its passion, the words deserve further scrutiny. The language of poor rations might be an allusion to the sufferings of ill-fed Confederate troops on the verge of defeat for the Lost Cause in 1865 or simply to preachers willing to preach the Christian faith boldly even if that means alienating wealthy parishioners who would support saloons. In either case, the language inverted the wet rhetoric against political preachers and gave them the moral high ground for taking a divisive stance. The

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<sup>26</sup> Editorial, Waco *Daily Examiner*, 27 May 1887.

<sup>27</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 89—101.

<sup>28</sup> Both quotes in Carroll, *Texas Baptists*, 663 fn 1.

notion of “a padlock on my mouth” for a preacher appealed to the freedoms of religion and free speech assured by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. While southern clergy sought to assert their regional distinctiveness, their campaign also indisputably tied them into a national movement that informed citizenship with the supposedly universal Christian value of opposing demon rum.

### *Wets in the 1887 Campaign*

While many Methodists became increasingly involved in prohibition advocacy, others opposed it. Roger Quarles Mills, a Methodist from Corsicana, had been an ardent prohibitionist publishing his own monthly paper, *Prairie Blade*, arguing for prohibition laws. One 1855 issue of that paper berated the argument that the liquor traffic is good because it brings in government revenue, comparing it the argument that “a maiden should sell her virtue or a man his honesty for gold or silver.”<sup>29</sup> Yet by 1887 Mills, a twice-wounded Civil War veteran, former U.S. Representative, and future U.S. Senator, had become a leading figure among the anti-prohibitionist “True Blues,” contending that any kind of legal prohibition opposed Jeffersonian democracy. By the spring of that year Mills had withdrawn from the Methodist church in protest to constant “political preaching,” and in a debate with B. H. Carroll countered the reverend’s invective by retorting, “Hell is full of better preachers than that man, so full that their legs are hanging out at the windows.”<sup>30</sup> While some Methodist laymen were turned by their preachers to

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<sup>29</sup> *Prairie Blade* quote from *Baptist Standard* (Austin, TX), 2 June 1887, 1. See also Brian, *Prohibition Crusade*, 38.

<sup>30</sup> Ray Jefferson, *B. H. Carroll* (Nashville: Sunday School Board Press, 1927), 122; while a hagiographic work, it seems faithful in most details and was written by a man who knew Carroll well and likely heard a report of the event from Carroll himself. See also Brian, “Prohibition Crusade,” 38—40, 45; and Schneider, “Cranfill’s Prohibition,” 89—90. For more on Mills see Alwyn Barr, “MILLS, ROGER

support prohibition, others grew alienated by the political preaching and at least one lost his faith because of his church's species of political activism.

Texan Episcopalians generally believed that southern and Protestant views of liberty meant that preachers should stay away from politics, and one lay Episcopalian played a leading role against the prohibition amendment. As noted earlier, Richard Coke of Waco was not only a US Senator from 1876 to 1896 and the first "Redeemed" governor of Texas, but probably raised Episcopalian, and proved a powerful political figure and an outstanding opponent of prohibition in late nineteenth century Texas, particularly in Waco's 1885 local option campaign.<sup>31</sup> Coke, a Civil War veteran, urged parishioners of prohibitionist preachers to "scourge the preachers back, and stop their rations."<sup>32</sup> For Episcopalians like Coke, the fight against prohibitionists was for southern, Democratic, and Christian values against foreign innovation and tyranny, an echo of the Civil War.

Other Episcopalian laypeople denounced prohibition and the church's involvement in the question. One Episcopal newspaper, the *Texas Churchman* of Austin, declared itself "emphatically in favor of temperance" and against "the degradation, suffering and crime which comes from the use of liquors," yet doubted legal prohibition could achieve true temperance. "Will prohibition meet the case and convert the people

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QUARLES," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmi40>), accessed December 14, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>31</sup> The paper regards him as an Episcopalian because he was likely raised as one, though he later in life he attended Baptist churches. John W. Payne, Jr., "COKE, RICHARD," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fco15>), accessed December 13, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>32</sup> Carroll, *Texas Baptists*, 663 fn 1.

into a nation of teetotalers? Vain delusion!” True temperance, the Episcopalian paper declared, could only be achieved by the church, not the state, and in any case it was not the church’s business to interfere in politics.<sup>33</sup>

Perhaps the strongest Episcopalian voice against prohibition was not a Texan, but his standing as former president of the Confederacy gave him all the authority of Lost Cause religion. Jefferson Davis had served in the war with Richard Coke, who had served on his staff and coaxed his old friend to offer his input on the question of government regulation of alcohol. Davis replied with an open letter against statewide prohibition. Davis began by politely excusing himself for intruding upon the politics of another state, just as he had done earlier that year in his open letter to Tennesseans facing a similar measure. While temperance was good and alcoholism a great evil, he stated, prohibition tended “to destroy individual liberty and moral responsibility” and as such would effectively “eradicate one evil by the substitution of another, which it is submitted would be more fatal than that for which it was offered as a remedy.”<sup>34</sup> The letter dominated news around the state for several days, and all parties believed it played a major role in the amendment’s decisive defeat. The president of the former Confederacy was not merely a political, but almost a religious leader for many southerners who embraced the religion of the Lost Cause. For them Jefferson Davis’s word on the question was doubtless more sacred than the word of any preacher, veteran, or so-called Redeemer politician, no matter how venerable.<sup>35</sup> Despite their modest numbers, Episcopalian

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<sup>33</sup> *Dallas Morning News*, 8 May 1887, 6, in Brian, “Prohibition Crusade,” 25.

<sup>34</sup> *The Dallas Morning News*, July 27, 1887, 1. See also Brian, “Prohibition Crusade,” 62.

<sup>35</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 98—99; Brian, “Prohibition Crusade,” 62—63. For more on Lost Cause religion see Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009, first edition 1980) and Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the*

laypeople played a notable role in the defeat of the 1887 prohibition amendment, though their impact owed more to their adherence to southern civil religion than their theological arguments.

As with dries, wets played on both sides of the race line, but they did so far more effectively. Appealing to the white majority, the anti-prohibition state committee's statement of principles included the claim that prohibition was "at war with the fundamental principles of Anglo-Saxon civilization." Prohibition would "destroy the inalienable right of the [white male] citizen to determine for himself by what method he will pursue his own happiness." Wets believed that white male supremacy was threatened by prohibition agitation, and they were not entirely wrong. Not only did prohibitionists divide Democrats internally and often work hand-in-hand for woman's suffrage, but, the Prohibition Party sought to create a viable third part across the nation that may have peeled away Democratic votes and threatened white supremacy through one-party rule. These Prohibition Party members were instigated "by foreign [northern] emissaries." Indeed, the Prohibition Party had much more impact in the North than the South, though the fear of an interracial third party came to pass in the Populist movement of the 1890s.<sup>36</sup> For white wets, opposition to prohibition was part of maintaining Anglo-Saxon supremacy.

Wets also made political hay out of the direct interracial collaboration between Rayner and Carroll. In early June, some wets obtained and published Rayner's secret

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*Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

<sup>36</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 98—99.

letter to Carroll, claiming (with some justification) that African Americans were the brains behind the dry campaign. The wet press dubbed African American ministers campaigning for Prohibition “Rayner’s Seven” and cited the involvement of the African American church in the dry campaign to discredit the role of religion in politics in general. One wet editor demanded explanation for the Rayner letter and Bishop Turner’s activism and denounced Carroll for mixing religion and politics, particularly across the race line.<sup>37</sup> Some wet editors went so far as to declare this collusion between white and black ministers for political advancement to doom the campaign. “The success of the [wet] cause has never been doubtful for one moment,” the Waco *Examiner* crowed, “since Parson Rayner came to Parson Carroll’s help with advice as to how to run the campaign.”<sup>38</sup> Drys were particularly susceptible to accusations of the union of church and state since clergy fueled the grassroots mobilization. Wets cited prominent political roles by African American ministers to discredit the drys’ mixing of religion and politics more generally.<sup>39</sup>

While some wets mobilized white voters by hinting that drys would undermine white supremacy, wet African American speakers effectively mobilized many votes among their race. Norris Wright Cuney, an African American and the leader of Texan Republicans from 1884 to 1896, did not speak out on the issue directly and refused to serve on the state executive committee for either drys or wets in the 1887 campaign,

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<sup>37</sup> San Antonio *Express*, July 7, 1887; see also Waco *True Blue*, July 1, 1887; Waco *Examiner*, June 18, 1887; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 195.

<sup>38</sup> Waco *Examiner*, July 2, 1887; see also Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 195.

<sup>39</sup> Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 193–98; Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 27–28; Waco *Examiner*, June 18 and July 2, 1887; Ivy, *No Saloon*, 45–51.

perhaps because he was concerned that the issue would divide the GOP at least as much as the Democratic Party.<sup>40</sup> His longtime daily habit of sipping claret after dinner, however, spoke for itself. African American Republicans such as J. C. Akers of McKinney and Melvin Wade, who stumped East Texas giving anti-Prohibition speeches and debating drys, indicated official Republican machine opposition to prohibition. A former slave, Wade had risen up to become prominent black business owner in Dallas and took leadership roles in a number of state Republican conventions. According to him, the black man “looked on the subject [of prohibition] differently from the white man” because his “passion for freedom... made him object to prohibition.” In essence, white drys were telling blacks, “you are a little too fresh, we will curtail your freedom.” Such arguments worked wonders on a population chaffing under so-called Redemption and recalling the days of slavery. Despite Cuney’s silence on the issue, Akers and Wade’s contention that Prohibition would further limit their already compressed liberty apparently struck a chord with African American Republicans.<sup>41</sup>

Opponents of prohibition had more reasoning for their case than opposing political preaching. Texas’s anti-prohibition state convention in 1887 issued a 26-page pamphlet that distilled many arguments that Texan antis used to fight prohibition

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<sup>40</sup> Cuney had been named “as one of the sixty-two members of the executive committee” by Texas’s anti-prohibition convention but declined the honor to avoid “giving the anti-prohibition movement political recognition and sanction, which has been so far avoided on both sides.” Denison *Sunday Gazetteer*, 15 May 1887, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> Quotes each respectively from Waco *Examiner*, 31 May 1887, 4 August 1887; and Victoria *Advocate* 9 July 1887; all in Gregg Cantrell, “‘Dark Tactics’: Black Politics in the 1887 Texas Prohibition Campaign,” *Journal of American Studies* 25 (Apr. 1991), 89. Cuney’s concerns about party division in Cantrell, “Dark Tactics,” 86. Cuney’s wine habit in Maud Cuney-Hare, *Norris Wright Cuney: A Tribune of the Black People* (New York, 1913), 84. More on Akers and Wade in Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 28–31; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 198–99.

throughout the campaign. The pamphlet provides a representative look at the kind of arguments their speakers used on countless occasions across the Lone Star state. The booklet likewise advanced two basic arguments that expanded upon the pamphlet's subtitle: *A Discriminating License the True Policy; Prohibition a Fraud and Failure*. First, it extolled a well-conceived license system at the local level as the most effective policy for limiting excessive drinking, particularly by encouraging the use of less potent fermented beverages such as beer and light wine while taxing more intoxicating distilled drinks. Second, it denounced prohibition as counter-productive in curbing drunkenness because the impulse to imbibe alcohol was natural and healthy, so any attempt to ban such drinks would only encourage citizens to subvert the law and overdrink. These arguments appealed to swing voters who opposed excessive drinking but could be persuaded to vote against prohibition.

The pamphlet first appealed to human history to demonstrate how alcohol consumption was natural to humans in all times and places. Nearly every people group had used alcohol – Trojans, Abyssinians, Zulus, Swedes, Tartars, and Peruvians, to name just a few. Some of the greatest of these civilizations drank liberal amounts of naturally fermenting beverages. Ancient Greeks “of all classes and both sexes” drank freely, while modern Germans, “one of the greatest nations on earth” whose king Wilhelm “is greater than Charlemagne,” likewise drank large quantities of milder beer.<sup>42</sup> The pamphlet likely overstated the commonality of alcoholic drinks in human civilizations, particularly in the ancient world and overlooked the fact that alcohol production required a controlled

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<sup>42</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question: A Discriminating License the True Policy; Prohibition a Fraud and Failure* (Dallas: [Texas] Anti-Prohibition State Convention, 1887), 3.

process in a society with enough of a food surplus to permit significant social specialization. However, it did accurately portray that human civilizations the world over had consumed alcohol for thousands of years.

The right solution to the human tendency to consume alcohol, the pamphlet suggested, was not counter-productive prohibition, but wise application of the license laws. These laws sprang from the assumption that “man is a drinking, as well as an eating animal,” and this good, natural impulse tended towards abuse for some, so some safeguards should be placed around drinking to reduce possible injury from overindulgence while preserving his freedom as an individual to drink.<sup>43</sup> Along with bans on alcohol sales to minors and those already drunk, local governments had begun regulating drink by increasing license fees on businesses selling alcoholic beverages, which not only generated needful government revenue but also discouraged the use of more harmful distilled drinks while encouraging consumption of more harmless beers and light wines.

To justify its views on alcoholic drink, the pamphlet appealed to sacrosanct voices for late-nineteenth century Americans: politicians from the early days of the Republic. Citing Congressional debate about taxation of drinks in 1789, the pamphlet quoted U.S. Representatives such as James Madison, who expressed the desire for “malt liquors” such as beer and cider to “take deep root in every state in the nation.” Such lighter drinks, explained Representative Fisher Ames of Massachusetts, were “not so pernicious as those [distilled drinks] in common use.” At that time Pennsylvania alone boasted 5,000 stills and a per capita whiskey consumption exceeding three gallons annually around 1789, yet

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<sup>43</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 4.

beer-drinking Germans earned the praise of the physician, Founding Father, and godfather of the American temperance movement, Benjamin Rush. By Rush's account, "The State of Pennsylvania is so much indebted for her prosperity and reputation to the German part of her population" that the rest of the United States would do well to follow their example in frugality, love of liberty, piety, and sobriety, since "very few of them ever drink distilled spirits, their common drink being beer, wine and cider." Alexander Hamilton likewise bemoaned the excessive consumption of distilled spirits and suggested higher taxes on them to "encourage the substitution of cider and malt liquors." Liquors with higher alcohol content were taxed at a higher rate: 5 cents per gallon for ale, beer, and porter and 10 cents for spirits.<sup>44</sup>

Anti-prohibitionists also pointed to growing distinctions between malt liquors and spirits as beer became the nation's beverage of choice between the 1860s and 1880s. During the Civil War, U.S. Congressmen in the North from Anson Morrill of Maine to Senator John Sherman of Ohio likewise favored lower tax rates for wine and beer and higher ones for more intoxicating spirits. The war created very high temporary taxes on alcoholic drinks of all types, but however tax rates fluctuated, beer continued to be cheaper than distilled drinks. Methods for mass-scale production of beer developed in the mid-nineteenth century and made beer "the cheapest and best beverage of the people." A chart based on tax receipts from 1860 to 1880 showed that, as the U.S. population increased from 31 to 50 million, annual distilled liquor consumption declined from about 90 million to 64 million gallons while annual malt liquor consumption quadrupled from about 100 million to 400 million gallons. In other words, per capita consumption of

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<sup>44</sup> All quotes in *Drink and the Drink Question*, 5.

spirits had halved from 2.9 to 1.4 gallons while malt drinking nearly tripled from 3.2 to 8.3 gallons. By the 1880s, beer had clearly supplanted “the more fiery and hurtful beverage” of distilled liquors as the most popular alcoholic beverage in the nation.<sup>45</sup> The logic was clear: the dangerous drinks were on the decline, increasingly replaced by healthy, harmless beer.

Anti-prohibitionists did not credit this change from more harmful to more healthful beverages to prohibitionists, but insisted that prohibitionists unjustly judged all alcoholic beverages alike. Since beer had taken up a growing share of that market, prohibitionists had focused more of their literature against it, thus driving those with the thirst for alcohol into the clutches of the far more dangerous distilled drinks. The proper course, the anti-prohibitionists urged, was a license system that removed restrictions for milder liquors while heavily taxing more potent drinks and so replaced demand for the stronger stuff with light German beer. Even the Board of Health of Massachusetts in an 1879 report called for laws to encourage the replacement of stronger liquors with beer: “[W]henever this policy has been pursued, drunkenness has been sensibly diminished,” whether in Switzerland or the United States. Moreover, taxes from license fees paid for many essential services. St. Louis in 1886 received from 1,618 dram shops over \$760,000 in license fees—enough to cover the costs of all police, courts, and prisons for a year.<sup>46</sup>

The pamphlet continued to argue that all attempts to ban alcohol consumption only increased it and cut off a valuable source of state income: license fees. When the British Parliament sought to squelch the gin panic of the early eighteenth century by

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<sup>45</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 6.

<sup>46</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 6.

oppressively high license fees for drinks, it only encouraged a thriving illicit trade in cheap gin. Prohibitionists stressed that the present time was worse than any other for drunkenness, yet the pamphlet assured the reader that drunkenness posed the gravest problems not in the United States, but in Mexico City—or perhaps in Portland, the capital of the state of Maine, which experimented on and off with prohibition since 1851. Northern states such as Maine owed their habits of heavy drinking to their historic abundance of strong spirits through corn surpluses, their key position on trade routes, or the dearth of malt liquors that could quench the thirst without encouraging drunkenness. People in dry areas, forbidden to drink a few glasses with their friends, would seek out alcohol in bulk at stores and drink in private at home, which would both tend towards drunkenness and set a terrible example for his children. The initial attempt at alcohol prohibition throughout Maine confronted failure after failure, forcing ever more stringent laws to crack down on the production and sale of intoxicating beverages, but without an overall change in drinking habits. Prohibition only succeeded in rural locales that already had supported it, and failed in cities that opposed it, thus demonstrating the futility of statewide prohibition.<sup>47</sup>

The anti-prohibition pamphlet also claimed that prohibition undermined the demographic health of states by linking it to unnatural sexual norms. The pamphlet declared that prohibition caused a relative stagnation of population growth in various northern states, as contrasted with the robust growth of anti-prohibition states such as Missouri. This analysis conflated correlation with causation and ignored the complexities of human migration, but went even further by suggesting prohibition was a by-product of

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<sup>47</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 3, 6—16.

unnatural roles for women connected with prohibition. Maine's decline sprang from "the more vigorous of her people... leaving her to her isms and her old maids," who ascend "the rostrum shrieking for 'free love,' 'woman's rights,' and 'prohibition,' instead of fulfilling the order of nature by becoming centres of domestic circles." Despite the attempts of prohibitionists to accommodate southern gender norms by sidelining women in the 1887 campaign, wets successfully deployed the rhetoric of sexual conservatism and strict gender roles against prohibition. The suggestion of sexual disorder among prohibitionists continued in further analysis of Maine's stagnation: "she lies under the curse and blight of paternal legislation, and the incubus is too much for her energies."<sup>48</sup> Anti-prohibitionists thus imagined Maine's prohibitionist government as an incubus, a demon sexually assaulting and draining the life of a woman who represented the people of the state. This remarkably aggressive metaphor at once expressed Anglo Texans' latent fears of strong government and contrasted the immoral, even satanic notion of prohibition with the Christian values of Texas.

Among those Christian values opposed to prohibition was, presumably, low taxes and low crime. From 1860 to 1880 in Maine, the loss of license fees from alcohol sellers resulted in an increased tax burden to the people from "*three dollars and fifty cents*" per capita to "*seven dollars and ninety-eight cents*" per capita, more than double what it had been two decades earlier [emphases original].<sup>49</sup> The crime rate likewise had increased beyond the rate of population growth, and a doubled prison population since 1860 partly explained the need for increased taxes. The rate of insanity also more than doubled in that

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<sup>48</sup> All quotes *Drink and the Drink Question*, 17.

<sup>49</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 18.

period, and pauperism in Maine was considerably higher than in neighboring states.<sup>50</sup> By all appearances, prohibition had not brought heaven on earth to Maine, so why should it deliver the Christian people of Texas?

The pamphlet closed with the platform of the Anti-Prohibition State Convention of Texas as articulated at their meeting in Dallas on May 4, 1887, which summarized the movement's principles in a series of objections to prohibition. Unsurprisingly, one of the objections was that prohibition would suppress the use of milder beverages such as beer and wine, which would undermine "the advancement of true temperance," defined as moderate use. Rather than being celebrated as heroes in the cause of temperance, producers of these healthful beverages would be transformed into criminals while drug stores would become "dram shops" and doctors would become "autocrats over our appetites." Moreover, prohibitory laws would put drinks out of the reach of poor men while allowing the rich to circumvent the law and buy illegal liquor at higher black market prices. Rather than solving the problem of intemperance, prohibition would strip affordable beverages from the poor, turn people with a natural impulse for alcohol from cheaper, healthier beverages like beer and wine to the more dangerous distilled liquors, and transform doctors from health professionals to tyrants micromanaging people's consumptive choices.<sup>51</sup>

Other objections touched at the very foundations of liberty and the proper limits of government. One claimed that prohibition changed the state form of government from "a free republic of sovereign and independent citizens" into a state of "fanaticism hateful

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<sup>50</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 18—20.

<sup>51</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 26.

to our people” that would deny citizens “their most sacred and inalienable rights” and increase government power in a manner at once “undemocratic and anti-republican.” This charge echoed the Declaration of Independence while also denouncing strong government, an echo of the limited-government ideology that animated the former Confederacy. The charge also appealed to members of both parties, which proved important for their success: the Democratic majority was deeply divided on the issue, but Republicans overwhelmingly rejected prohibition and helped provide a strong majority for the wets.<sup>52</sup> Other objections likewise denounced the growth of government power in various forms: interventions into the individual’s right to consume what he wants; the necessity of a “system of spies and informers” and radical legislation to enforce compliance; the tyranny of the majority of citizens from some parts of the state imposing their will on moral and social upon other self-governing local areas; and seizing property without compensation. These objections echoed particularly southern grievances over regional and personal self-governance, Radical Reconstruction, and the loss of slaves without compensation.<sup>53</sup>

The argument for liberty resonated among whites, as testified by the arguments in an open letter to Texas by the former leader of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, mentioned above. Even Alexander Watkins Terrell, a state senator who later became a chief architect of the state’s poll tax law, denounced Prohibition by associating it with the decaying Ottoman Empire and justified moderate alcohol use by citing Jesus’ turning

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<sup>52</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 97—98.

<sup>53</sup> *Drink and the Drink Question*, 26.

water into wine.<sup>54</sup> Based on the decisive election results, many Texans apparently bought arguments that Prohibition came more from Islam than true Christianity and stunted the free choice needed to make morally responsible citizens.

*By the Numbers: The Votes in 1887*

All scholars agree that the 1887 Prohibition amendment was defeated 220,627 votes against to 129,270 for,<sup>55</sup> yet some controversy exists over how important racial minority votes were in the election. The notable Texan historian Gregg Cantrell (1991) argues that native-born white Democrats were nearly evenly split on the issue while blacks and foreign-born voters decisively rejected prohibition. James Endersby (2012) goes even further, apparently interpreting Cantrell as claiming that *all* whites were evenly split on the issue and black Republicans cast decisive votes against prohibition. Cantrell, however, had merely claimed that native-born whites were split on the issue, not all whites, such as some foreign-born voters (including thousands of foreign-born whites as well as mixed-race Mexicans).<sup>56</sup> Cantrell, however, skirts the issue of exactly how many

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<sup>54</sup> Terrell's comments were from a speech on a floor of the Texas State Senate in 1879 but republished in Galveston *Daily News*, September 10, 1885; see also Austin *Statesman*, September 22, 1886, and Lewis L. Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, American Diplomat* (Austin, 2004), 75–76, 78, 112.

<sup>55</sup> James W. Endersby, "Prohibition and Repeal: Voting on Statewide Liquor Referenda in Texas," *Social Science Journal* 49 (December 2012): 506; Gregg Cantrell, "'Dark Tactics': Black Politics in the 1887 Texas Prohibition Campaign," *Journal of American Studies* 25 (Apr. 1991), 91; Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas."

<sup>56</sup> The mistake is understandable but significant. Endersby, "Prohibition and Repeal," 505, cites Cantrell, "Dark Tactics," 91, to support the claim: "Cantrell (1991) argues that the 1887 referendum provided an opportunity for black Republicans to exert political power by voting as a bloc to determine the electoral outcome between the divided Democrats. He estimates that **white voters were divided equally** on the issue but that 74 percent of black voters opposed prohibition (p. 91) [emphasis mine]." The relevant section of Cantrell's article makes clear it is only native whites who were evenly divided on the issue: "**Native whites were divided evenly**, but a large majority of the blacks (seventy-four percent) voted against prohibition [emphasis mine]." Cantrell's footnote 23 on the same page makes the issue even clearer, distinguishing between blacks, "native-born whites," and "foreign-born voters." Cantrell estimates that native-born whites voted 33 percent for and 33 percent against prohibition while 34 percent abstained, and

blacks, native-born whites, and foreign-born voters cast ballots in the 1887 election, and no exact number for votes from these groups for the election has survived.

James Ivy has made the most thorough attempt to provide specific numbers for racial and ethnic groups in the 1887 election, yet he has confessed the model is imperfect. Ivy tallied the black vote total much lower at 71,338 while placing their opposition to Prohibition at over 83 percent, even a higher rate than in Cantrell's model, which rounds to just under 80 percent voting wet. But, to his credit, Ivy granted that his model was inaccurate when calculating the percentage of wet foreign-born voters. In the foreign-born projections, Ivy admitted that his projection "yielded an impossible result" of 122.3 percent voting against Prohibition, and he made adjustments accordingly (to 91.3 percent wet). Given the weaknesses of his model regarding foreign-born voters, it seems likely that the African American vote also needs adjustment, especially when considering sources of the time. A dry AME newspaper, *The Star of Zion*, conceded that out of approximately 80,000 African Americans casting ballots, sixty percent of them voted wet. While the dry newspaper may have overestimated dry support, its contemporary reporting and willingness to give the wets a clear majority support its veracity. Lowering Ivy's African American wet vote percentage downward by the same proportion as the foreign-born adjustment (about  $\frac{1}{4}$ ), results come to about sixty-two percent of African Americans voting wet, a number approximating the sixty percent given by the *Star of*

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64 percent of foreign-born voters voted no while the rest abstained. While Cantrell's numbers are challenged below, it is clear that he did not state that whites as such were cleanly divided on the issue, as Endersby claims. It is possible that by "whites" Endersby simply meant native-born whites, yet such an omission is so great as to alter the clear meaning of the term, which includes pale-skinned immigrants from Europe. Also, Endersby cited Cantrell as stating that black Republicans voted "as a bloc," whereas Cantrell's article discusses at length how black Republicans were divided on the issue, with Rayner taking a leading role supporting prohibition while Akers and Wade opposed it.

Zion AME newspaper but also adjusting the wet vote upward to account for bias in rounding by the dry paper. If the 62 percent wet vote estimate is accurate, African Americans in 1887 voted mostly wet but comparably to white voters (when including both native-born and foreign born voters). Despite fears among some whites in both the dry and wet camps that defeat for their camp would imperil white supremacy, race was not a decisive dividing line for the vote in 1887.<sup>57</sup>

### *Conclusion: The Aftermath of 1887*

Prohibitionists did not go quietly into the night after their failure, but they did take time to regroup. The 1892 BGCT temperance report repeated verbatim that of 1886, suggesting a lack of fresh approaches, and reports in following years bewailed the staggering evils and seemingly infinite powers of the liquor traffic.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps the most devastating admission was in the 1894 report, which confessed that “the attitude Baptists *should* occupy” did not match “the attitude Baptists *do* occupy on this important subject” [emphases original].<sup>59</sup> “It is a sad confession,” the committee continued, “but truth compels us to make it, that the attitude of Baptists toward the liquor traffic is one of

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<sup>57</sup> James Ivy, *No Saloon*, 142 fn 13 (quotation); estimated vote totals, 93; comparison with white vote, 92—96; explanation of the weaknesses of his model, 142—43 fn 13. *The Star of Zion: Organ of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in America* (Salisbury, N.C.: Aug. 25, 1911), 2. Ivy’s estimate is also suspect because his vote total for dries in the 1911 statewide vote mixed up two of the numbers: the actual number was 231,096 for Prohibition, but Ivy marked it down as 213,096, a difference of 18,000 votes. That computational error nearly quadrupled the margin of victory from under 1.4 percent to “over five percent” of the total vote. Ivy, *No Saloon in the Valley*, 117. For true numbers, see Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas.”

<sup>58</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Dallas, TX: John F. Worley, 1892), 50–52.

<sup>59</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Waco, TX: Baptist Standard Printing House, 1894), 52.

general apathy.”<sup>60</sup> This seems to contradict the evidence that Baptists were as active on the issue as any other denomination: their pastors were largely united on the issue, and laypeople had made great progress in warming to prohibition. Nevertheless, too many Baptists supported the enemy. Habitual drinkers were found in “many of our churches,” while “hundreds of our people” consistently voted against prohibition.<sup>61</sup> Unequivocal language against liquor aside, the committee affirmed the right of Baptists to think differently on the issue: “It is not competent for this Convention to dictate to any Baptist the attitude he should occupy on any question of conscience, but your committee announces its own position,” and it prayed God would “help the Baptists of this Convention and of Texas to be loyal and brave and true on this question.”<sup>62</sup> While technically permitting disagreement on the issue, the closing prayer of that report indicated that those who thought differently were disloyal, cowardly, and false. The Anglo Baptist disunity over prohibition that manifested in the 1887 election continued a decade later.<sup>63</sup>

In an official Baptist history written in 1923, J. M. Carroll recalled the 1887 fight as a military affair which “affected the life and Christian standing of every denomination, of every church, of every preacher and of every individual within the State of Texas.” More than impacting all peoples in the state, the campaign proved “a mighty revealer of men and things,” not only who were “the real men” and who the “imitating manikins,”

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<sup>60</sup> *Ninth Annual Session*, 52.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

but also “it revealed Satan, the one supreme personality back of the whole nefarious business.”<sup>64</sup> Baptist ministers told to stay out of the political issue of prohibition remained convinced that they were merely expressing their right and duty to speak out against evil, and would rather endure privation and slander as real men than fail to resist Satan.

The perceived demonic threat posed by saloons and the alcohol lobby threat remained in 1893, when the BGCT temperance report gave the grimmest picture yet of the power of the liquor traffic. “Never before in the history of America,” they declared, “has there been greater aggression or more compact organization on the part of the liquor sellers than now.” Particularly in Texas, the “secret organization among saloon keepers has been perfected and has permeated every nook and corner of our state.” The evil network “is to our state what the mafia was to New Orleans and what the nihilists are to Russia”; its “emissaries of evil are always at work and exercise more power in the state... than all the preachers in Texas.”<sup>65</sup> The next year the committee “doubted whether there is in all the world a greater impediment to the spread of the gospel of Jesus than the saloon.”<sup>66</sup> To fail to stand against the traffic “is like asking our mothers and their little ones to march in to the valley of the shadow of death and to the gate of hell,” and accordingly the committee recommended “intolerance toward dram-drinking in our members” and living out total abstinence as “a chief aim” to assert the church’s moral

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<sup>64</sup> J. M. Carroll, *A History of Texas Baptists, Comprising a Detailed Account of their Activities, Their Progress and their Achievements* (Dallas: Baptist Standard Book Pub. Co., 1923), 663.

<sup>65</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Waco, TX: Baptist Standard Book Pub. Co., 1893), 63.

<sup>66</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Waco, TX: Baptist Standard Print, 1895), 47.

influence.<sup>67</sup> This shift towards putting their own house in order continued over the next several years, strengthened prohibition sentiment among Anglo Baptists, and laid the foundation of a new generation of prohibitionists who would make a much more effective challenge to the alcohol industry.<sup>68</sup>

By the early twentieth century, Anglo-evangelicals had essentially overcome that objection to prohibition agitation within their ranks, in part by blaming blacks for their losses. In a 1909 letter, B. H. Carroll, who had pushed for interracial cooperation in the 1887 campaign, confessed that in that election “it was the almost solid Negro vote that defeated State Prohibition.”<sup>69</sup> By playing the race card against African Americans, dry Protestants hoped to unify a broad coalition of white denominations against the liquor traffic and impact the political arena.

Denominational differences continued to play a role not only in deciding how political a minister should be, but how to look at wine and other alcoholic beverages. Controversies over the necessity of alcohol abstinence for members, whether or not wine or grape juice should fill the communion cup, and how church tradition shaped the interpretation of the Bible all affected and underpinned Christian conversations about alcohol in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For some, wine was a poisoned chalice, while for others it was the cup of salvation.

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<sup>67</sup> *Tenth Annual Session*, 48.

<sup>68</sup> Texas Baptist Publishing House, *Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Session of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (Houston, TX: Dispatch Printing House, 1896), 65–67.

<sup>69</sup> Benajah Harvey Carroll to Benjamin Franklin Riley, 3 May 1909, Benajah Harvey Carroll Collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives. See also Joseph Locke, “Making the Bible Belt: Preachers, Prohibition, and the Politicization of Southern Religion, 1877-1918” (Ph.D. Thesis, Rice University, 2012), 260.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Cup of Salvation: Scriptural Interpretations and Communion Wine in the Prohibition Debate<sup>1</sup>

On Christmas Day, 1838, in the Masonic Lodge of Matagorda, the first recorded Episcopalian Eucharist in the Republic of Texas was celebrated with holy wine. The priest, Fr. Caleb Smith Ives, in the prayer of oblation asked God “to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine.” Then, after singing a hymn, the congregants knelt before the priest, who served them the bread and then the cup, saying, “The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.” Through participation in the mystery of Holy Communion, also called the Lord’s Supper or the Eucharist, those Episcopalian Texans believed that in drinking from the cup of consecrated wine they received an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of fellowship with Christ and all faithful Christians, as well as assurance of salvation.<sup>2</sup> Their use of sacramental wine was deeply rooted in the ancient traditions of their faith and followed the example of Jesus himself as recorded in the Gospel accounts of the Bible.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Part of this chapter appears in Brendan Payne, “Protecting Black Suffrage: Poll Taxes, Preachers, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1916,” *Journal of Southern History* 83 (Nov. 2017), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> Quote from the standard order of worship in that church for most of the nineteenth century: Episcopal Church, *Book of Common Prayer* (Isaiah Thomas and E.T. Andrews, 1789), 58–61. Lawrence L. Brown, “Protestant Episcopal Church,” June 15, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/iep01>.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 26:20-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-22.

Yet as the nineteenth century drew to its conclusion, more American Christians came to believe that personal experience, common sense, and modern science were incompatible with the doctrine that alcoholic beverages could and should be used in the sacred setting of the Lord's Supper. Methodists had promoted total abstinence from alcohol as early as the eighteenth century, while other groups grew drier over time or remained overwhelmingly wet. These divides and differing rates of assimilation of the prohibitionist message suggested that the historical peculiarities of denominations and theological traditions affected their approach to the issue of wine.

This chapter provides an analysis of evolving theological stances towards alcoholic beverages within major denominations in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Texas that mirrored broader changes in the United States. In particular, it examines the transformation of views on alcohol in two areas: communion wine and biblical interpretations of alcohol use.

First, this transformation in views and practice was facilitated by a remarkable shift in theology, particularly how many American Christians derived their spiritual authority from a Common Sense, republican, individualist reading of the Bible. As changing social circumstances revealed new threats from alcohol abuse, many American Christians grew convinced that the Bible had rejected alcohol use all along and used Scripture to defend their totalistic rejection of alcohol use. They argued for abstinence on the grounds of expediency, experience, wise counsel, and proper application of general Christian principles, though even some prohibitionists admitted that the Bible did not forbid drinking as such. Other Christians deployed the Bible to defend a more traditional

view that alcohol was not evil in itself, but was a gift from God to be enjoyed in moderation.

The use of Christian Scripture by not one but both sides in the prohibition struggle seems to challenge one of Mark Noll's observations towards the end of *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis*. In that book, he concludes that popular recourse to theology and particularly to the Bible as authoritative Scripture in resolving major U.S. political debates occurred for the last time in the Civil War. Leading up to that conflict, Christians used the Bible as the centerpiece of a theological and moral debate over slavery. The dominant approach was a commonsense hermeneutic that valued common individuals' interpretations of the Bible over and against church tradition and priestly hierarchy.<sup>4</sup> Following the conflict, ordinary people in the United States displaced that Bible from the public discourse because, without recourse to an outside authority like church tradition, it proved open to conflicting interpretations and so failed to provide the means to resolve the issue of slavery apart from devastating Civil War.<sup>5</sup> When it came to prohibition, however, both its advocates and its detractors did not shy away from wielding the Bible to support their position, though religious prohibitionists have received far more scholarly attention.

Second, while Christian tradition had long celebrated their holy Eucharist with wine and usually shared this drink with all faithful believers, the late nineteenth century

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<sup>4</sup> This construction of this hermeneutic is explained by Mark Noll, *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), especially 40—50, 157—162. Noll explains an essentially identical approach under a different name, the “Reformed, literal hermeneutic,” in his earlier work *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 367—385.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Noll, *Civil War*, 161—162.

brought a fateful combination of theological and technological innovations that made it possible and preferable for most Protestants to celebrate communion with non-alcoholic wine. Thanks to a new form of pasteurization and refrigeration, non-fermented grape juice became commercially accessible across the nation, and increasingly dry denominations now debated whether virgin grape juice should replace the traditional wine in the Eucharist. Even reputable scholars debated if the good “wine” used by Jesus and other praiseworthy figures in the Bible was fermented and proposed the “two wine thesis” that all the Bible’s references to drunkenness and other evils in relation to wine referred to fermented juice, while all the good references to wine referred to juice that was unfermented. By the early twentieth century, most Protestants viewed wine as mere poison, even in a sacred chalice. Some Protestants and most Catholics, however, hewed to traditional Christian teachings and held communion wine to be both holy and healthy.

Church structure mattered in these debates: top-down Methodists tended to be more united, better organized, and earlier on prohibition activism than bottom-up Baptists, but Baptists were a larger group in Texas and were much more visible when they turned dry.<sup>6</sup> Theology also mattered: High-Church groups such as Catholics, Episcopalians, and Lutherans tended to defer to traditional readings favoring wine in communion and at home, while relatively Low-Church denominations such as Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians employed more common-sense individualist readings that were more likely to unmoor church practice from tradition and thereby encouraged theological innovations such as prohibition. In addition to denominations, the following

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<sup>6</sup> For an excellent treatment of the shift towards communion wine within the Methodist tradition, see Jennifer Lynn Woodruff Tait, *The Poisoned Chalice: Eucharistic Grape Juice and Common-Sense Realism in Victorian Methodism* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

analysis will include non-denominational prohibitionist groups, particularly the Anti-Saloon League and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), to examine broader cultural uses of the Bible against alcohol.

### *The Bottle and the Bible*

Drinking became a serious problem for many churches in both South and North after the Civil War, but most Southern Baptists did not immediately call for prohibition, even if they did recommend abstinence from alcohol. The official newspaper of the Baptist General Association of Virginia recommended in October of 1865 that only total teetotalism could prevent drunkenness, but five years later admitted that such behavior was not demanded by the Bible: "Total abstinence from intoxicating liquors, with certain limitations, is commended by expediency, the experience of multitudes, the opinion of many wise and good men, and by a fair application of certain scriptural principles." Still, they admitted "the Bible contains no prohibition of the use of wine and strong drink, and all attempts to draw such a prohibition from it is a perversion of Scripture, and injurious to the cause which it is intended to subserve."<sup>7</sup> As of the 1870s, Southern Baptists as a whole had not yet turned the Bible as such into a direct support for alcohol abstinence, much less prohibition.

Skepticism about the ability to use the Bible to insist on the rightness of prohibition persisted among Southern Baptists until the 1880s. A few voices in major Baptist periodicals argued for moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages, including

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<sup>7</sup> Quote from Richmond *Religious Herald*, August 18, 1870, p. 2; see also October 19, 1865. See also Rufus B. Spain, *At East in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press: 2003; first edition Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 177—178.

hard liquor, as late as 1884. After a consensus emerged that distilled liquors were unacceptable drinks for serious Christians, some Baptists continued to suggest that the best antidote for intemperance was moderate consumption of wine, beer, cider, and other malt drinks that occurred naturally and featured less alcoholic content. Even these modest allowances were frequently countered by observations that excessive drinking of any alcoholic beverage could easily lead to drunkenness.<sup>8</sup>

The hardest drink habit for Southern Baptists to kick, however, was wine. Many southerners considered wine the most innocuous of alcoholic beverages, and moderate use of the drink spread across the wide South. Farm columns in Baptist journals included wine recipes and encouragement to produce diversified crops for the manufacture of wines from various fruits: not only grapes but also blackberries, strawberries, and scuppernongs.<sup>9</sup> Baptist writers also acknowledged the undeniable fact that wine was encouraged in the Bible. St. Paul had told his disciple Timothy to “take a little wine” for health reasons, and Jesus had famously turned water into wine in a wedding at Cana. “We fully believe,” wrote one contributor to the *Religious Herald* in 1879, “that the wine made by Christ at the marriage in Cana was intoxicating, if drunk to excess.” Another stated, “That Christ drank wine during His stay on earth, no one can doubt.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Richmond *Religious Herald*, November 21, 1872, p. 1; October 27, 1881; November and December, 1882; March 18, 1886, p. 2; April 19, 1888, p. 1; Raleigh, NC *Biblical Recorder*, September 13, 1876, p. 2; Louisville *Western Recorder*, February 14, 1884, p. 3; Meridian, MS *Baptist Record*, April 29, 1886, p. 6. See also Spain, *At East in Zion*, 178—179.

<sup>9</sup> Atlanta *Christian Index*, May 24, 1866, p. 88; December 6, 1883, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> First quote Richmond *Religious Herald*, July 3, 1879, p. 2; second quote November 21, 1872, p. 1.

Nonetheless, many Southern Baptists insisted upon shunning wine despite the examples in the Bible because they interpreted their faith according to a common-sense understanding of the new realities of their own times. The great Baptist scholar John A. Broadus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary granted that Jesus used wine in the first century, but claimed that the Christ only drank it because customs of the day demanded it. Had Jesus lived in the present day, Broadus insisted, he would have shunned wine due to its association with sin and preferred the more respectable modern drinks of tea or coffee. One editor as late as 1888 urged: “Now if our temperance men could be persuaded to put their advocacy of total abstinence on the ground of present facts and present dangers” and “abandon all attempts to find an explicit Bible command, what a relief it would be to them and to the cause!”<sup>11</sup> By the 1890s, Southern Baptists across the South had solidified their views against alcohol as the greatest of all vices, though this observation sprang from simple observation of the drink’s evils rather than any appeal to the Bible. They called alcohol the most “destructive curse of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, imperiling our homes, hostile to our churches, a constant menace to society, the prolific mother of vice and crime, the corrupter of politics, a breeder of anarchy in our government, and in all its dark record the offspring of the devil.”<sup>12</sup> For prominent Southern Baptist prohibitionists in the late nineteenth century, appeals to common sense and present realities trumped clear Biblical examples condoning alcohol consumption.

Methodists were far ahead of their Baptist brethren in combatting alcohol consumption in their faith community, though experience and reason had more to do with

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<sup>11</sup> Quotes from Richmond *Religious Herald*, April 26, 1888, p. 1; Broadus in April 8, 1875, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Florida Baptist Convention, *Minutes*, 1895, p. 69. See also Spain, *At East in Zion*, 178.

the proscription than Scripture or tradition. After John Wesley established the rule forbidding “Drunkenness, or drinking spirituous liquors unless in cases of necessity” for his followers in the eighteenth century, all major branches of Methodism followed this rule throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the first major black denomination in the United States, had since the 1830s taught abstinence from all kinds of alcohol and since the 1850s backed Prohibition laws to purify society at large.<sup>14</sup> By 1883, the dominant white Methodist group in Texas and across the South, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), began treating not only drinking but also the production and sale of alcohol – and soon even renting property to those in the alcohol trade – as an evil worthy of church discipline.<sup>15</sup> By the 1910s, a governor of Texas, Oscar Branch Colquitt, openly campaigned against

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<sup>13</sup> *The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1878), quote 29; details of Wesley’s involvement in these rules, 28. Likewise in *Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1864), 30. However, there is some reason to doubt whether American Methodists held to the restriction on drinking in the eighteenth century. A 1900 reprint of the 1787 edition of the Book of Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church omitted any mention of refraining from drinking. This edition claims after the title page that only one copy of the original *Form of Discipline* had survived, which was the basis for this edition. It is possible that this version was incomplete, defective, or partially fraudulent, which could explain the omission of drinking, though it is more plausible that American Methodists did not think drinking alcohol was worth mentioning alongside more serious offenses, such as talking before church, which merited banishment from church if not corrected after three months, *A Reprint of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church for 1787* (Cleveland: W. A. Ingham, 1900), 40. For comparison, the British Methodist denomination of the eighteenth century, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, arranged for the dismissal of members for “dram drinking” as early as 1795, reflecting the nineteenth-century concern of Methodists with drinking among the members of his society. Wesleyan Methodist Association, *The Constitution of Wesleyan Methodism as settled in 1795 and 1797* (London: Egerton Smith and Co., 1835), 10.

<sup>14</sup> H. Paul Thompson, *A Most Stirring and Significant Episode: Religion and the Rise and Fall of Prohibition in Black Atlanta, 1865-1887* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013), 35.

<sup>15</sup> The 1883 version of the MECS *Doctrines and Disciplines* added a new chapter addressing “the extirpation of the great evil of intemperance” which called on all members to “abstain from the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors to be used as a beverage” and threatened discipline against offenders “as in cases of immorality.” *The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1886), first quote 123, second and third quote 124.

prohibition and had difficulty finding a Methodist congregation to call home, even though his political stance did not break any official Methodist discipline.<sup>16</sup> These standards, however, stemmed more from evolving understandings of the dangers of alcohol rather than from the teachings of Scripture.

Ironically, the wet layman governor Colquitt used the Bible more persuasively than most prohibitionists, as when he cited Matthew 15:11 while declaiming against prohibition. In that passage, Jesus declared that a man is defiled not by what goes into him (such as unclean food or, perhaps, alcoholic drinks), but one is defiled by what comes out of the mouth and comes from the heart.<sup>17</sup> Colquitt thus did not merely reach for a proof-text to justify alcohol consumption on the grounds that some people drank alcohol back in Bible times, but demonstrated a sophisticated Scriptural understanding that also got to the heart of the matter: if Jesus says food and drink as such do not defile people in principle, why should the church insist that drinking one drop of alcohol is evil or, much more so, insist upon the prohibition of a certain kind of drink? Anti-prohibitionist Methodists could use Scripture at least as ably, if not more so, in defense of their position as prohibitionists.

Rather than joining Methodists and Baptists against alcohol, Catholic clergy tended to reject prohibition, though they did so quietly. Agents of Texan brewers secretly consulted with Catholic priests and even referred once to meeting with an archbishop,

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<sup>16</sup> For his anti-prohibition statements, see Oscar Branch Colquitt, "Opening Speech of Campaign of 1910," page 9, folder Literary Productions, box 2E177, Oscar Branch Colquitt Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. For his difficulty finding a church home, see *The Temple Daily Telegram* (Temple, TX), October 31, 1912, p. 8. See also Joseph Locke, "Making the Bible Belt: Preacher, Prohibition, and the Politicization of Southern Religion, 1877-1918" (Ph.D. Thesis, Rice University, 2012), p. 308.

<sup>17</sup> Colquitt, "Opening Speech of Campaign of 1910," p. 14.

though their names were not mentioned even in the secretive correspondence.<sup>18</sup> The reason for this discretion seems more obvious when one considers Father Zell, whose “own town has repudiated him” after he came out publicly against statewide prohibition in 1910 – at least, according to a prohibitionist pamphlet put out by Robert “Fighting Bob” Shuler, then a Methodist minister in Temple, Texas.<sup>19</sup> Occasionally, however, a Catholic priest would speak up for prohibition, such as Patrick J. Murphy from Dalhart, Texas. Rather than appeal to Scripture, he simplified the issue: it was “4,000 saloons against 650,000 homes.” The same Fr. Murphy also addressed the 1913 national Anti-Saloon League (ASL) convention on “Why Should We Do Away with the Saloon Business.”<sup>20</sup> In general, Catholic clergy who engaged the prohibition issue tended to be wet, discreet, and averse to injecting the Bible into their advocacy.

Episcopalian clergy likewise stayed away from Scriptural invocations but tended to oppose prohibition more publicly than Catholics. The presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, Daniel Tuttle, spoke out in 1911 against statewide prohibition in Texas, attracting the critical attention of a Methodist minister in Temple, Texas: Bob Shuler.<sup>21</sup> Likewise George Herbert Kinsolving, Bishop of the Diocese of Texas, in April

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<sup>18</sup> B. F. Looney, *The Brewers and Texas Politics* (San Antonio, self-published, 1916), 447, 668. While the source itself also contains an alternate title, *Breweries and Texas Politics*, the shorter name is used throughout the dissertation for clarity.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Pierce Shuler, *The new issue, or, Local booze government: being a collection of articles on "Prohibition,"* (Temple, TX: Temple Printing and Office Appliance Co., 1911), no page numbers.

<sup>20</sup> 1911 quotes from *The Houston Post*, April 26, 1911, cited in Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 185–186; 1913 quotes from Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 24–25. Despite this effort at including a Catholic priests to breach through old arguments, Watson argued that prohibitionists’ failure in the 1911 poll owed much to the inability of Anglo evangelical Protestants to embrace Catholics, blacks, Mexicans, non-Anglos, and non-evangelicals as equals in the contest. Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 185–86; 196.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Pierce Shuler, *The new issue, or, Local booze government: being a collection of articles on "Prohibition,"* (Temple, TX: Temple Printing and Office Appliance Co., 1911), no page numbers.

1911 endorsed strict regulations on saloons but rejected prohibition as counter-productive in producing true temperance.<sup>22</sup> In a rare episode of insubordination, a priest under Kinsolving, J. T. Smith of Jacksonville, TX, wrote an open letter in the *Dallas Morning News* in May chastising his bishop for his stance defending the saloon.<sup>23</sup> Despite Smith's example, most priests in Texas silently supported their anti-prohibition bishops, though neither Smith nor Kinsolving nor Tuttle showed any inclination for injecting Scripture into their reasoning on the subject.

Non-denominational Christian organizations such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), however, could invoke the Bible freely to support their vision of a world free of alcohol. This comes as no surprise since the woman who grew the WCTU to be the largest woman's organization of the nineteenth century and served as its president for nearly twenty years, Frances E. Willard, was a devout evangelical Christian. Following in the footsteps of earlier feminists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who formed the nation's first temperance society by and for women in New York in 1841, the fervent Methodist Willard linked prohibition to the cause of woman's suffrage. Unlike the heterodox Anthony and Stanton, however, Willard was much more orthodox in her theology and championed woman suffrage not merely because it seemed a pragmatic way to advance the rights of women, but because she believed God had revealed to her that woman's vote was an essential for Home Protection. Willard saw the idea of Home Protection as given to her by God while she

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<sup>22</sup> "George H. Kinsolving Says High License and Local Option is the Remedy," Fort Worth *Star Telegram*, April 11, 1911, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> *Dallas Morning News*, May 2, 1911, p. 7.

knelt in prayer: “Upon my knees there was borne in upon my mind from loftier regions, the declaration, you are to speak for the woman’s ballot as a weapon of protection to her home.”<sup>24</sup> For Willard and thousands of likeminded evangelical women in the WCTU, their cause was guided by the God who revealed himself in visions and in the Bible. Even after Willard’s death in 1898, the WCTU continued to grow in numbers and strength, preaching their Gospel of prohibition.<sup>25</sup>

A look at a typical state conference report of the WCTU, the Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the WCTU of Texas in 1909, reveals the organization’s heavy use of a commonsense evangelical approach to the Bible as Scripture in not only rhetoric but in regular official functions. An examination at some length of this standard state chapter’s use of the Bible provides fertile ground for analysis of how WCTU chapters in particular and evangelical women activists in general approached the Bible as Scripture in their lobbying for national prohibition.

Biblical references saturate the Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the WCTU of Texas in 1909. The second page of the minutes provides the “WCTU Benediction,” which is an exact quote of the Aaronic Blessing from Number 6:24-26 in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible: “The Lord bless thee and keep thee//The Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee//The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”<sup>26</sup> These verses’ use as the WCTU Benediction suggests their

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<sup>24</sup> Jean H. Baker, *Sisters: The Lives of America’s Suffragists* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), 164. For the heterodoxy of Stanton and Anthony, see Kathi Kern, *Mrs. Stanton’s Bible* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

<sup>25</sup> Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2010), 37.

<sup>26</sup> Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Texas, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report* (Marlin, TX: N.P., 1909), 2.

regular ritualistic function in concluding all manner of WCTU events by officially invoking God's presence and aid in their work through the unambiguous use of the Bible as Scripture. The regular function of Scripture for the WCTU is made clear in the yearbook at the end of the report included a Bible passage for every month and Bible reading for each week related with that week's work, with the verses taken from books throughout the Bible, from the Pentateuch to psalms to prophets, from the Gospels to epistles.<sup>27</sup> The fourth page of the report lists various "MEMORIAL DAYS," including "Flower Mission Day," with the uncited Bible verse Leviticus 23:4 as apparent justification: "There are Feasts of the Lord, Even holy Convocations, Which ye shall proclaim in their season."<sup>28</sup> Like the use of the Aaronic Blessing in the WCTU Benediction, this usage of a passage from Leviticus shows a total lack of awareness of the cultural and historical context of verses in the Pentateuch composed several millennia earlier, yet shows the continued political vitality of a commonsense evangelical hermeneutic. The women of the WCTU did not approach the text with scholarly rigor, yet they found a way to ground their every event – even "Flower Mission Day" – in a verse from the Bible.

This kind of creative use of the Bible did not merely act as a pretext for their political work, but inspired the women of the WCTU to act boldly with the power of God on their side. The 1909 minutes recorded that the meeting opened with prayer and the reading of Psalm 146, which opens and closes with praise unto the Lord and urges the

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<sup>27</sup> WCTU of Texas, *Annual Report* (Marlin, TX: N.P., 1909), 80—94.

<sup>28</sup> To be fair, even "Flower Mission Day" was not quite as ridiculous as it may sound. It commemorated the "birthday of the Jennie Cassiday, National Superintendent of Flower Mission work" by "taking flowers, with text cards, to prisons, jails, almshouses and to the poor and sick everywhere," certainly noble work. WCTU of Texas, *Annual Report*, 4.

listener to “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help,” but rather in the Lord, who “made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever.” Rather than trusting in men, these women self-consciously derived their power from the Almighty. Psalm 146 also describes God as one who “executeth judgment for the oppressed: ... giveth food to the hungry ... looseth the prisoners ... raiseth them that are bowed down ... loveth the righteous ... relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.” God’s activity in these verses addressed the heart of the WCTU crusade, since they believed with some justification that alcohol abuse by breadwinning fathers resulted in oppression and hunger for wives and children, incited crime, immorality, disease, depression, and death for the drunkard, and made his children fatherless and his wife a widow.<sup>29</sup> The women of the WCTU doubtless believed the God whose character as revealed in Scripture was to perform such acts would surely give them victory in turning upside down the way of the wicked alcohol traffic.

In addition to empowerment, use of the Bible helped WCTU workers to view their crusade against alcohol in the clear contrast of good against evil. In their Resolutions section, the women thanked God for the progress of prohibition principles and opened their prohibition resolution with an allusion to the Ten Commandments: “The only attitude of divine law in dealing with evil is ‘Thou shalt not.’”<sup>30</sup> The resolution further stated that in their “battle for State-wide [sic] prohibition,” they would

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<sup>29</sup> WCTU of Texas, *Annual Report*, 14. Cf. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil*; “A Nation of Drunkards,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick.

<sup>30</sup> WCTU of Texas, *Annual Report*, 26; 25.

“vigorously oppose any legal sanction of the liquor traffic,” depended for success upon “the efforts of all Christians,” and “co-operate[d] with the churches and Anti-Saloon League and all other moral and religious organizations in a united effort . . . for the overthrow of the liquor traffic.”<sup>31</sup> As far as the WCTU was concerned, Christianity, morality, and religion all stood against the self-evident evil of the alcohol lobby.

The state WCTU president’s address showed a similar divide between good and evil when she quoted in a single breath both the organization’s aim “that each man’s habits of life shall be an example safe and beneficial for every other man to follow,” and the text of John 3:16.<sup>32</sup> That prohibition was part of the Gospel message was a self-evident truth as plain as the Bible itself, and needed no explanation. She continued with even more unambiguous language. The WCTU women “rely upon the promise of the One who is able to rescue us from the great curse of the liquor traffic,” and now wage even more “pitiless and relentless warfare” against saloons than Texas patriots had waged in the battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto. This great battle for prohibition pits “the forces of righteousness against unrighteousness; the children of the living God against those who put material prosperity above the success and happiness of the sons and daughters of the land.”<sup>33</sup> She concluded with a poem that began with a paraphrase of the prophet Jahaziel’s words to an outnumbered army of Israel in 2 Chronicles 20:15: “Be not dismayed by reason of the great multitude arrayed against you.” For the WCTU and

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<sup>31</sup> WCTU of Texas, *Annual Report*, 26.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 34—35.

likeminded evangelical prohibitionists, the Bible gave them moral clarity to crusade against the evil of the liquor traffic.

The WCTU slogan, “For God and Home and Native Land,” though not itself a reference to Scripture, illuminates much about the WCTU’s theology which in turn influences how it read the Bible.<sup>34</sup> The slogan indicates the WCTU’s implicit connection of prohibition to service of God and of protection of two sacred domains of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: the distinctively female-dominated domestic sphere and the “Native Land,” which in turn alludes to the connection between prohibition and nativist nationalism. This strong connection between God, home, and the nation on one level suggests a great expansion of woman’s domestic sphere into the public sphere, a considerable expansion of woman’s range of activism in the time period, especially in Southern states such as Texas, where most ministers strongly opposed woman’s suffrage.<sup>35</sup>

This rhetoric gained popularity among otherwise anti-suffragist women in Texas after the defeat of statewide prohibition in the July 1911 election. This shift of sentiment was most clearly seen in Mrs. S. J. Sweeny of Waco, seventy-three years of age, who displayed a flourish of biblical rhetoric when she wrote the paper on Sept. 13, 1911. Though she had “never advocated woman’s suffrage,” she was driven to the position by narrow defeat of statewide prohibition in the election, and despite her age vowed to become a militant “W.C.T.U. evangelist.” She compared the contest to stories in the

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<sup>34</sup> Motto cited in WCTU of Texas, *Annual Report*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2007).

Bible: “Is there no David to meet this Goliath? No Elijah to call down fire from heaven?” Since the men had failed to halt the liquor traffic, she called for women to complete God’s work even as “When men’s hearts failed, there arose a ‘Deborah who judged Israel for forty years,’ and the land had peace,” a reference to Judges 4:1-5:31. Mrs. Sweeny then paraphrased Jeremiah 6:14 against the anti-prohibitionists, who “cry peace, but there can be no peace under the saloon reign,” a reference to God’s judgment when Israel’s leaders failed to follow God. Mrs. Sweeny finished with a voluble plea for the woman’s suffrage attained by “Christian courage... being careful never to bring reproach upon the Church we love or the Christ we serve,” doing it all for the children and “for God and home and native land.”<sup>36</sup> For prohibitionist women like Mrs. Sweeny, the Bible did not apply to a distant people or place, but was lived out and re-enacted in the present.

The Bible was not only employed by those for prohibition, but by some who were against it. One Edward R. Emerson, an apparently pious “maker of wines,” wrote up *A Lay Thesis on Bible Wines* in 1902 that argued that prohibition was not true temperance but rather asceticism, and grounded his argument in the plain teachings of the Bible as commonly interpreted over the years.<sup>37</sup> His first defense of wine according to the Bible is its use in communion, in which he notes that “the Bible in unmistakable language commended wine” in communion, “the most sacred and solemn act that a human being can perform,” yet the advent of anti-alcohol asceticism produced the two wine argument.<sup>38</sup> This two wine argument stated that the Bible in the original languages

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<sup>36</sup> Mrs. S. J. Sweeny, “The Negro and Mexican vs. Woman,” *The Home and State* (Dallas, TX: September 13, 1911), 5.

<sup>37</sup> Edward R. Emerson, *A Lay Thesis on Bible Wines* (New York: Merrill & Baker, 1902), 3.

<sup>38</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 5—6.

referred two kinds of wine: one a non-alcoholic wine for all positive biblical references, such as that which Christ commanded people to drink for communion, and the other an alcoholic wine to which all the Bible's negative references apply. Emerson claims that in making this artificial distinction, "Reason, science, and the teachings of two thousand years were to fall apart as if cut with knives." In place of reason and tradition, "Linguistic legerdemain has been indulged in to such an extent that even many of the most watchful have failed to see the glaring absurdity and utter ridiculousness of the name they have chosen for their wine," namely "unfermented wine."<sup>39</sup>

Emerson cited the Rev. Edward Hurtt Jewett's 1888 work on "Communion Wines" which explained from references to the original Hebrew and Greek that "the term *unfermented* wine, in Scripture phraseology, is a misnomer and self-contradictory," since wine was always presumed to be fermented, even as the use of "wine" in common speech at the time and since has signified an alcoholic beverage.<sup>40</sup> He explained at length throughout the book why the laws of fermentation, ancient authors, leading lexicons, and the best modern scholars give no support to the two wine thesis, displaying considerable erudition and mastery of ancient texts, especially for a layperson. Emerson thus interpreted the Bible through philology and history, yet he also argued from a plain reading of the Bible according to church tradition and common sense. Ascetic

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<sup>39</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 7.

<sup>40</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 7—8. Cf. Edward H. Jewett, *The Two-Wine Theory Discussed by Two Hundred and Eighty-Six Clergymen on the Basis of "Communion Wine"* (New York: E. Steiger & Co., 1888), 126—27, emphasis his. As the title suggests, Jewett was supported in his argument by nearly three hundred clergymen, each of whom wrote a positive review printed in a massive review section in the back. At least among Southern Baptists, but likely among other Protestant denominations as well, this two-wine argument raged especially between 1887 and 1890 and then abruptly ceased to attract significant debate, either because prohibitionists had won, or more likely because Baptists agreed to disagree and focus on more important matter. Spain, *At Ease in Zion*, 177—182.

prohibitionists also appealed (much less convincingly) to philology and history to reinterpret the Bible, but the argument only mattered because both sides viewed the Bible as Scripture.

He continued his reasoning with reference to many other Bible passages that in their plain meaning referred to wine in a positive sense. Though the ascetics rejected wine, “the Bible plainly said that Christ made wine” in John 2.<sup>41</sup> He further argued against those who interpreted Jesus’ parable of new wine into old bottles as a parable against fermented wine, pointing out that there is no basis in the text for such an interpretation, and the parable only makes sense if the wine in question is fermented.<sup>42</sup> Jesus himself was derided by his detractors as having come “drinking wine” in Luke 7:33-34, a fact to which Emerson attached great theological importance: “Jesus was no ascetic. He gave no countenance to asceticism. By drinking wine—freely using the blessings of God’s providence—He testified against the error, afterward called Gnostic and Manichean, which would attach impurity to that which enters the mouth.” Furthermore, Jesus thus “vindicated the liberty of His followers to use ‘every creature of God’ as good and fit for food, and to be received with thanksgiving by them as those who ‘believe and know the truth,’” a direct reference to I Timothy 4:3-4.<sup>43</sup> Rather than merely arguing that the Bible allows and at times blesses the use of alcoholic beverages,

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<sup>41</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 7. He states it was in “(St. John xi. 9),” but the correct reference is to John 2:9, in which Christ turns water into wine at a wedding in Cana; the reference to 11:9 was undoubtedly a typo, especially since he later references Christ turning water to win in “John ii,” on page 52.

<sup>42</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 22—26. The passages in question are Matthew 9:14-17, Mark 2:21-22, and Luke 5:33-39. While most translations in the mid-twentieth century and after have “wineskins” per the Greek, “bottles” is used in the KJV, the most popular version of the Bible in the early twentieth century.

<sup>43</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 52.

Emerson contended that prohibition was a kind of asceticism that went against the essence of Christian liberty as articulated in the Bible and Christian tradition from the beginning. Emerson and likeminded anti-prohibitionists avoided the extreme of prohibition not merely because they professed fidelity to the plain meaning of the text, but because they—unlike prohibitionist Christians—refused to separate their interpretation of the Bible from the church’s rule of faith, its tradition and ethics.<sup>44</sup>

Drinking fermented wine, Emerson noted, was ubiquitous among the ancient Israelites and their neighboring nations, and drinking it “was forbidden to the Nazarites alone” in Numbers 6, “and that only while under their vow.”<sup>45</sup> He also noted that throughout the Bible, the typical Hebrew and Greek words for wine (*yayin* and *oinos*) are always spoken of as “a blessing sent by God for the use of man” and “to be used in the service of God,” such as in Isaiah 55:1-2, where the word functions “as a symbol of the highest spiritual blessing.”<sup>46</sup> Other Hebrew and Greek words for wine, such as *’asis* (Isaiah 49:26), *tirosh* (Hosea 4:11), and *gleukos* (Acts 2:13), all imply intoxication, and no word for wine in the Bible ever refers to a non-alcoholic beverage. Supplementing this philological support against the two wine thesis came historical testimony. Various reputable and long-serving missionaries in Syria declared that neither they nor any

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<sup>44</sup> A view of the interdependence of canon and creed and the need to see both in the context of the rule of faith is articulated in Robert Jenson, *Canon and Creed*, Interpretation: Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010).

<sup>45</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 52. The text of Numbers 6:3-4 in the KJV: “He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk.” Yet in v. 20, the Nazarite may drink wine when the days of his being set apart for the Lord have been completed by a certain ceremony by a priest.

<sup>46</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 52.

natives of Syria and the Holy Land have ever heard of any tradition of non-alcoholic wine existing in those countries, whether among Jews, Christians, or Muslims, the latter of whom forbade alcohol consumption.<sup>47</sup> Among a multitude of scholarly sources, Emerson cited an article in prominent theological periodical *Bibliotheca Sacra* that “fairly meets the scientific, philological, and moral aspects of the ‘wine question,’ suggesting not only a philological and historical but also a pedagogical approach to the Bible.<sup>48</sup> Emerson pointed out that the Apostle Paul explicitly prescribed wine drinking to Timothy in I Timothy 5:23, showing the absurdity of opposing alcohol on the grounds of the Bible’s moral teaching.<sup>49</sup> These philological, historical, and moral debates about the meaning of wine in the Bible signaled the continuing viability of the Bible as Scripture in debates over public policy, particularly prohibition.

This same arguments continued to apply in the late 1920s when national prohibition had been the law of the land for nearly a decade and was encountering increasing pushback from the public. Another and perhaps even more articulate voice than Emerson against prohibition came from the Columbia University professor John Erskine in *Prohibition and Christianity: and Other Paradoxes of the American Spirit*, originally published in 1920 but republished every year thereafter until at least 1927, showing his book’s continued popularity. Like Emerson, Erskine argued that prohibition went against many teachings of Christian tradition, starting with the life and example of Christ, in particular his turning the water into wine at a wedding in Cana. Erskine laughed

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<sup>47</sup> Emerson, *A Lay Thesis*, 54.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

off the two wine theory as the product of “ingenious enthusiasts” since even if the “wine that Christ drank were as weak as water, yet there were prohibitionists at hand then, as now, to tell Him not to drink it.”<sup>50</sup> In an uncited reference to Luke 7:33-34, he points out that “they called John the Baptist eccentric because he ate no bread and drank no wine, yet when Christ came, who did eat bread and did drink wine, they called Him gluttonous, a wine-bibber, the companion of sinners.”<sup>51</sup> By this practice Jesus “showed that He did not believe in prohibition, even when it was sincere; and by His words He implied that prohibition and humbug are not necessarily dissociated.”<sup>52</sup> While Erskine noted that his arguments apply “only to those who take their Bible and their church seriously,” namely those who treat the Bible as Scripture, so non-Christians “have the advantage, if they wish it, of being able to endorse prohibition without an inner conflict of their supposed ideals.”<sup>53</sup>

Of course, some prohibitionists in fact did reject or ignore the Bible. At least one leading early prohibitionist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, came out against the Bible as Scripture as the nineteenth century came to a close. Stanton, who co-founded the first female temperance society in New York with Susan B. Anthony in 1841, was a religious skeptic who turned away from the evangelical Christianity of her early youth before reaching adulthood. By the 1890s, Stanton grew convinced that Christianity in general and the Bible in particular were inimical to gender equality and had to be confronted

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<sup>50</sup> John Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity, And Other Paradoxes of the American Spirit* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1927), 13—14.

<sup>51</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 14.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

directly. She initiated the *Woman's Bible*, a collaborative project in which she and various other women offered commentary on Bible passages that dealt directly with women, especially those used by opponents of gender equality to keep women in a socially subordinate position to men. As a consequence of her radical stance, she and other vocal religious radicals were marginalized from both the suffrage and temperance movements by the end of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, the fact that such women played key roles in the earlier temperance movement in the previous century hinted at their influence for the movement in years to come.<sup>54</sup>

The temperance movement's return to a broader theological spectrum in the early twentieth century is evident in the ecumenical tolerance of the Anti-Saloon League (ASL), the most powerful political pressure groups that contributed to national prohibition. This non-ideological streak complimented the ASL's myopic and virulent focus on the issue of prohibition. To be fair, the ASL's ecumenism was limited: even a sympathetic biographer of the ASL admitted that it received "no appreciable support from the Catholics or Jews" and "Episcopal and Lutheran church[es] do not as a rule admit the League [ASL] speakers," seemingly "justify[ing] the statement that it is a league of Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches." Still, he pointed out that ASL support "is not, by any means, limited to these denominations"; the New Jersey league alone boasted the support of fifteen denominations, and "in most states there are more than the four last mentioned."<sup>55</sup> The ASL was still ecumenical to a considerable degree, putting moral reform above doctrinal purity and welcoming support

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<sup>54</sup> Kathi Kern, *Mrs. Stanton's Bible*.

<sup>55</sup> Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 18.

from all denominations. The Federal Council of Christian Churches, which consisted of some 30 mostly mainline Protestant denominations and eventually changed its name to the National Council of Churches, supported prohibition and the ASL from its founding in 1908.<sup>56</sup> The national ASL's founding in 1895 even included participation from the Roman Catholic Archbishop John Ireland, and the League actively sought out Catholic support when it could get it.<sup>57</sup> An official ASL history in 1913 chastised those “whose denominationally prejudiced eyes looked upon the followers of other creeds as the direct emissaries of Satan” instead of focusing on the common enemy of demon rum.<sup>58</sup> Though dogmatic in its opposition to alcohol, the ASL was theologically open to negotiation on everything else.

In addition to its ecumenical outlook, the ASL was also modern in its ruthlessly effective organization. Essentially modeled on the modern corporation, the ASL had its own national headquarters, dozens of full-time paid staff overseeing thousands of

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<sup>56</sup> Atticus Webb, *Face the Facts Relating to the Wet and Dry Issues* (Dallas: Anti-Saloon League of Texas, 1927), 92. The Federal Council of Christian Churches was the forerunner of the National Council of Churches (NCC).

<sup>57</sup> Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 1928; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 18. A Catholic priest, Patrick J. Murphy from Dalhart, Texas, spoke to 1,500 prohibitionists at their statewide convention at Waco's Cotton Palace on April 21, 1911. The speaker expressed his hope that his appearance at the event would inspire no less than a thousand Catholics to switch to the “true side” of the prohibition question. The same Fr. Murphy also addressed the 1913 national ASL convention on “Why Should We Do Away with the Saloon Business” and “copies of his speech were widely distributed,” showing not only Murphy's personal commitment to prohibition, but the persistent desire of prohibitionists in the 1910s to line up as much Catholic support for their cause as they could. 1911 quotes from *The Houston Post*, April 26, 1911, cited in Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 185—186; 1913 quotes from Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 24—25. Despite this effort at including a Catholic priests to breach through old arguments, Watson argued that prohibitionists' failure in the 1911 poll owed much to the inability of Anglo evangelical Protestants to embrace Catholics, blacks, Mexicans, non-Anglos, and non-evangelicals as equals in the contest. Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 185—86; 196.

<sup>58</sup> Ernest H. Cherrington, *History of the Anti-Saloon League* (Westerville, OH: American Issue Publishing Company, 1913), 8.

volunteers, millions of dollars in annual revenue, and a printing plant in Westerville, OH that churned out hundreds of tons of propaganda every month. The ASL battled in the name of the Lord, but operated like a machine. Howard Russell, the ASL's founder gave credit to God for establishing the organization but also declared, "The Anti-Saloon League was formed for the purpose of administering political retribution."<sup>59</sup> The man chiefly responsible for overseeing the retribution was Wayne B. Wheeler, who became famous for his ruthless tactics. After destroying at the polls one popular Republican governor who dared oppose the ASL, he pronounced, "Never again will any political party ignore the protests of the church and the moral forces of the state."<sup>60</sup> In the likely hyperbolic language of one ASL associate, the power of the League and the prohibition movement generally boiled down to Wheeler: he "controlled six Congresses, dictated to two Presidents... directed legislation for the most elective state and federal offices, held the balance of power in both Republican and Democratic parties, distributed more patronage than any dozen other men," and in general was "recognized by friend and foe alike as the most masterful and powerful single individual in the United States."<sup>61</sup> Overstatements aside, the ASL was a most efficient lobbying group for prohibition and was joined at the hip to Protestant Christian churches, though it was not committed to the Bible or any creed but a truce-less war on alcohol.

The Bible could and did play on both sides of the prohibition divide, though prohibitionists often treated it as peripheral or non-essential to their cause while anti-

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<sup>59</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 36. Cf. "A Nation of Drunkards," *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick.

<sup>60</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 40.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

prohibitionists at times proved more adept at using the Bible to defend their views. Even anti-alcohol Baptists at times admitted that one could not reasonably argue for prohibition from the Bible alone, but had to admit that Bible characters such as Jesus and the Apostle Paul drank alcoholic wine. Only by applying reason and contemporary experiences of alcohol's evils could Christians conclude that alcohol must be shunned. Christians on both sides of the issue often resorted to extra-Biblical arguments rather than trusting Scripture alone as a sufficient means to resolve the issue. Whether supported by the Bible or not, once prohibitionists viewed other forms of alcoholic beverages as evil, the struggle expanded beyond prohibition outside the church to question the use of wine in communion itself.

### *The Battle over Communion Wine*

Despite contemporary associations of conservative Christianity with shunning wine in communion and sipping grape juice from miniature plastic cups, it was not so in the beginning. The Christian tradition of sacred bread and wine in the Lord's Supper derived from the ancient Jewish custom of Seder dinner, with its four cups of wine and unleavened bread.<sup>62</sup> Since at least the first century, ancient Christians began the custom of meeting together to eat bread and drink wine, though over the centuries the custom lost its Jewish flavor. The Lord's Supper transitioned from a "love feast" meal shared by a marginalized and maligned minority in the Roman Empire to a highly structured ritual in which a priest of the state religion distributed wafers and sips of wine that transformed

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<sup>62</sup> According to Christian tradition, Jesus inaugurated the custom at a Seder meal with his disciples when he proclaimed the bread and wine to be his body and blood and commanded his disciples to partake of it in remembrance of him.

into the actual body and blood of Christ. Though few aspects of the Eucharist of the High Medieval period would have been recognizable to a first-century Christian, two constants remained: the bread and the wine.

For most medieval peasants, communion wine remained in sight but out of reach, reserved for priests and the privileged few who could arrange for a confessor to provide them Eucharist on a weekly or even daily basis, but the Protestant Reformation moved that cup within reach of ordinary people. The English Reformation's shifting practices were crystalized in the Book of Common Prayer, which (as its name suggests) made worship more accessible in many ways: services were in the English vernacular, the altar became a mere table closer to the people, and everyone was encouraged to partake of both bread and wine weekly. Ironically, even as Protestant doctrine made the Eucharist more accessible to the common people, Protestant anxiety about taking the Eucharist improperly and the desire to undo veneration of the communion elements led to communion becoming less frequent and less important in most Protestant worship services. The irony deepened since the Council of Trent, the Catholic response to Protestant heresy, ordered every faithful Catholic to partake in communion at each mass.<sup>63</sup>

The centuries-old assumptions that communion should feature fermented wine came under attack in innovative America. In 1869, a British-born Wesleyan Methodist

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<sup>63</sup> The Council of Trent wished "that at each Mass the faithful who are present, should communicate" (Sess. XXII, chap. vi). The Catechism from the Council of Trent likewise states: "Let not the faithful deem it enough to receive the Body of the Lord once a year only; but let them judge that Communion ought to be more frequent; but whether it be more expedient that it should be monthly, weekly, or daily, can be decided by no fixed universal rule" (pt. II, c. iv, n. 58). See also Thomas Scannell, "Frequent Communion," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 6 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909); and Kevin Knight, *New Advent*, "Frequent Communion," accessed 28 Oct. 2016 <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06278a.htm>>.

named Thomas Bramwell Welch invented a pasteurization method to prevent the fermentation of grape juice. Though other methods previously existed to create non-alcoholic grape juice, and Welch's own Wesleyan Methodist denomination had explicitly required non-alcoholic wine for communion since 1843, Welch's method could produce higher-quality juice in larger quantities than other techniques. Welch encouraged churches within and without his denomination to use his "unfermented wine," and his product sales increased commensurately with the growing popularity of prohibitionist sentiment around the nation. Most Methodists soon jumped at the chance to use non-alcoholic wine for communion.<sup>64</sup>

Some Baptists preferred to keep alcoholic spirits in their sacred wine, however. From about 1887 to 1890, the main argument among Baptists had shifted from whether or not alcoholic beverages were permissible for believers (they were not) to the question of whether wine should be used in communion. Though Baptists viewed communion as an ordinance, or command of Christ to be followed, rather than a sacrament, or a means of God's grace being transferred to the believer, they took ordinances very seriously. The very name "Baptist" referred to their only other ordinance, baptism, on which they staked their denominational identity. Since Baptists insisted upon the Biblical model of baptism – full immersion for believing adults only – how could they use semantics and appeals to historical change to justify using anything other than wine for the communion meal? "If we must have real water for baptism and not some substitute for it," one editor queried,

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<sup>64</sup> Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 151.

“why not have real wine for the supper?”<sup>65</sup> Another insisted that replacing communion wine with grape juice was just as absurd as “substitut[ing] sprinkling for baptism.” For many Baptists, the thought of sprinkling instead of immersing in water for baptism was anathema.<sup>66</sup>

The great communion wine debate grew stranger still, since those who contended most firmly for baptism by immersion in one ordinance also tended to be those who insisted upon replacing wine with grape juice in the other ordinance. In order to hold their view with any consistency, more “literalist” prohibitionists fiercely advocated the “two wine” thesis. As noted above, this theory essentially argued that all the Bible’s positive references to wine, including Jesus’ ministry and Paul’s injunction for Timothy to drink, referred to non-alcoholic grape juice, while all the negative references referred to alcoholic wine. Other Baptist prohibitionists, less willing to resort to exegetical gymnastics, took the more “liberal” view on Bible wines. They admitted that all wine in the Bible was alcoholic, but used reason and experience to conclude that Biblical authors and figures only indulged because doing so was necessary in their culture, but would never partake in modern times, when such beverages were linked with vice. For this reason, and because communion was merely symbolic and using wine would cause total abstainers to stumble in their faith, grape juice could and should substitute for wine in communion. In this “liberal” camp resided prominent Baptists such as the scholar John Broadus.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Florida Baptist Convention, *Minutes, 1895*, p. 69. See also Spain, *At East in Zion*, 178.

<sup>66</sup> First quote Atlanta *Christian Index*, October 13, 1887, p. 1; second quote Selma *Alabama Baptist*, April 2, 1885, p. 1. See also Spain, *At Ease in Zion*, 181.

<sup>67</sup> For examples of the “two wine” thesis see Columbia, SC *Working Christian*, April 12, 1877, p. 3; Meridian, MS *Baptist Record*, September 18, 1884, p. 1; Selma *Alabama Baptist*, February 19, 1885, p.

After 1890, the argument over communion wine ceased to occupy much attention of most Southern Baptists, who largely “agreed to disagree” on the matter. A motion to insist on unfermented grape juice in communion at the 1891 convention of Tennessee Baptists was tabled. Various articles in Baptist journals in 1900 likewise failed to evoke responses or rejoinders. Baptists’ voluntary form of government allowed autonomy to local churches and prevented denominational leaders from dictating uniformity on issues such as communion wine. Social sanctions and persuasion turned most Baptist ministers to grape juice in the Lord’s Supper by the turn of the century, yet some celebrated their freedom by persisting with wine. Rather than consuming their energy on sacred wine, Baptist leaders instead focused their attention on taking action against the liquor business generally.<sup>68</sup>

African American Baptists also divided on the issue of communion wine and embraced alcohol-free wine more slowly than their white co-religionists. Remarks in the minutes of the National Baptist Convention (NBC), the largest black denomination in the nation (and for a time larger than the Southern Baptist Convention), proved that many of its churches continued to use alcoholic wine in communion. In their 1908 and 1909 reports, the NBC woman’s auxiliary asked for the use of only unfermented wine in communion.<sup>69</sup> While most white Baptists had by this time either adopted grape juice in

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1. For more on the “liberal” position, see Richmond *Religious Herald*, April 8, 1875, p. 1; *Alabama Baptist*, April 2, 1885, p. 1; *Baptist Record*, July 9, 1885; and Memphis *The Baptist*, May 19, 1888, p. 8. See also Spain, *At Ease in Zion*, 181.

<sup>68</sup> Spain, *At Ease in Zion*, 181—182.

<sup>69</sup> *Twenty-Eighth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention, Eighth [sic] Annual Assembly of the Woman’s Convention, Auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention, September 16-21, 1908*, 308. *Twenty-Ninth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention*, 317.

communion or made peace with those who persisted with wine, African-American Baptists continued to fight it out, perhaps because they had a less hierarchical denominational system when it came to prohibition.

While Baptists officially gave autonomy to local churches, the issue of prohibition led various white Baptist state conventions and even the larger Southern Baptist Convention to take disciplinary action against individual churches that would not expel members enmeshed in the liquor traffic. While Baptist churches had long since punished saloon operators and drunkards, the late nineteenth century saw Baptist churches using social sanctions against those involved in the alcohol industry more generally: brewers, distillers, liquor wholesalers, or even property owners who rented land to sellers of the same. Though state conventions had never before exercised authority over local congregations, according to Rufus Spain, in the 1870s various conventions began threatening to cut off churches who did not properly discipline their members to avoid involvement in the alcohol trade. Florida passed such a resolution in 1872, followed by Georgia in 1873, Texas in 1876, and Mississippi in 1878. These resolutions carried teeth. A member of the First Baptist Church of Athens, Georgia, who managed a local whiskey dispensary owned by the state, was initially defended by his congregation against the objections of the local Baptist Association, but after several months was dismissed by his church. Such events had a chilling effect on those involved in the alcohol trade throughout the SBC and either forced compliance or drove members to remain silent about their less savory business dealings.

By 1900, every state convention save North Carolina had passed similar resolutions, and by 1896 the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole had concluded years of debate on the subject with a resolution of its own. It declared:

We announce it as the sense of this body that no person should be retained in the fellowship of a Baptist church who engages in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic liquors, either at wholesale or retail, who invests his money in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic [sic] liquors, or who rents his property to be used for distilleries, wholesale liquor houses or saloon. Nor do we believe that any church should retain in its fellowship any member who drinks intoxicating liquors as a beverage, or visits saloons or drinking places for the purpose of such indulgence.

Though the SBC had no official mechanism to force compliance on this point, the power of state conventions to bar individual churches from their fellowship and social pressure to comply with shared Baptist norms likely worked to pressure Baptist churches across the South to accept this new order. With this official declaration, prohibition advocacy had become a defining issue of Baptist identity. It is fitting that the only nineteenth-century social issue on which Southern Baptists demanded new government regulations would also be the issue which led state organs of the SBC to exert more direct hierarchical control over their member churches.<sup>70</sup>

Ironically, perhaps the most hierarchical of American Christian denominations, the Roman Catholic Church, gave some of the broadest latitude when it came to alcohol. Because Catholic doctrine held that alcohol was not inherently sinful, Catholic temperance advocates generally rejected legal bans on alcohol and preferred abstinence to be voluntary, an extraordinary act of piety or necessity rather than a universal

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<sup>70</sup> Quote from Southern Baptist Convention, *Proceedings, 1896*, p. 45. Spain, *At East in Zion*, 184—185. See also Florida Baptist Convention, *Minutes, 1872*, p. 16; Georgia Baptist Convention, *Minutes, 1873*, p. 22.

obligation. Such was the norm in the largest Catholic temperance group in the nation, the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America (CTAU), founded in 1872.<sup>71</sup> The official records of the CTAU frequently recall priests insisting that one can abstain from alcohol only by obtaining Divine assistance by acts of piety and regular use of the sacraments. J.B. Purcell, the first U.S. bishop personally committed to total abstinence, ironically emphasized that one could only remain abstinent by “the frequent use of the Sacraments”—including the wine-bearing Holy Eucharist.<sup>72</sup> For Catholics such as Purcell, who believed that the substance of the Eucharistic wine was transformed into the blood of Christ, communion wine was more than just wine; it was the lifeblood of God in the flesh poured out to the believer. For such High-Church Catholics, the thought of doing away with wine in communion did not help but rather hindered the cause of abstinence from alcohol, because that wine was an essential part of their connection with God in Christ, and that connection was necessary for their sobriety.

Erskine expressed an objection to non-alcoholic communion wine typical of High-Church traditions exemplified by the Episcopal and Catholic churches: if the Eucharist with real bread and real wine was a central practice of the Christian faith, then taking away the wine diminished that practice. The essence of Christian faith for Erskine was expressed in the “beautiful metaphors” of Christ from the Gospel of John – “I am the Bread of Life” and “I am the true Vine” – and there was no better way to express that

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<sup>71</sup> Joseph C. Gibbs, *History of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* (Philadelphia: Penn Printing House, 1907), 20. Cf. Sister Joan Bland, *Hibernian Crusade: The Story of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1951), 8.

<sup>72</sup> Gibbs, *History*, 28, 19.

truth than in communion with real bread and real wine.<sup>73</sup> Erskine claimed that “prohibition by professed Christians would be impossible if their faith were still warm in the heart or clear in the head, and that it has come now only because that faith is dead.”<sup>74</sup> Ministers, he continued, “still read out in the churches that Christ celebrated the Passover with His disciples, with the bread and wine of the ancient sacrifice,” and he then quoted the related Bible passage.<sup>75</sup> By objecting “to the wine as improper, as a temptation and a snare,” they are “giving up, logically if unconsciously, any further concern with the mythical or metaphysical aspects of His nature, or with that inner sustenance of which the bread and wine were to be outward or visible signs.”<sup>76</sup> Such an approach simplifies Christian faith such that “perhaps nothing will remain of it but an ecclesiastical system or a body of ethical doctrine for such as still revere the life spent in Galilee.”<sup>77</sup> If the mystical and spiritual union of the believer with Christ in communion was the essence of the Christian faith, then prohibitionists were gutting the heart of Christianity. If Christians could select their communion elements at will, Erskine implied, then Christians denied that those elements had any meaning apart from what the church today felt like ascribing to them. Such a faith was no longer bound by the meaning assigned by tradition, but could pick and choose its practices and doctrines at will. By removing wine from the

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<sup>73</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 27; cf. 24—27.

<sup>74</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 15.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. The passages are Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22, and Luke 24:30.

<sup>76</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 15.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. For Erskine, “faith in Christ, the vital use of the sacrament, must have been abandoned before prohibition could be supported.” After all, one “can not [sic] persuade a prohibitionist, any more than an atheist, by citing the authority of Christ in the Sacrament.” Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 16.

Eucharist, prohibition proved itself not to be a form of conservative Christianity, but a dangerous and thoroughly modern innovation.

Erskine further suggests, as Emerson did, that prohibition contradicts the essence of Christian responsibility. The Apostle Paul's teaching in Ephesians 5:18 to "Be not *drunk* with wine" implies moderation rather than avoid drink entirely. Erskine closes by citing Luke 7:33-34: "John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; ... The Son of man is come eating and drinking."<sup>78</sup> Rather than fostering the temperance taught by Christ and the Apostle Paul in the Bible, prohibitionists were denying individuals their moral responsibility to choose between good and evil and thereby denying them the chance to make moral decisions at all. In short, Erskine wondered "whether the Eighteenth Amendment is an amendment to the Constitution or to the New Testament."<sup>79</sup> For Erskine as for Emerson, prohibitionists misinterpreted not only the Bible, but the teaching of the church. The catechisms for Anglicans, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Catholics alike explicitly mentioned wine as one of the elements to be received in communion, so prohibitionists should insist upon reforming their catechisms before supporting prohibition.<sup>80</sup> Only by divorcing themselves from the traditional teachings of the church could Christians devote themselves so wholeheartedly to the innovation of prohibition.

Intriguingly, one of the first major Christian movements in the nineteenth-century United States to move away from wine in communion was widely derided as a cult: the

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<sup>78</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 19, emphasis his.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 22—24.

Latter Day Saints, more commonly known as Mormons. “We Latter-day Saints are Methodists, as far as they have gone,” Joseph Smith stated to the Methodist preacher Peter Cartwright, “only we have advanced further.”<sup>81</sup> This statement was certainly true regarding Mormon approaches to alcoholic drinks. While maintaining only a modest presence in Texas in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Mormons illustrate the theological and social dynamics that contributed to the shift of various churches away from the traditional Jewish and Christian doctrine of wine’s inherent goodness for soul and body to the view that all alcoholic beverages were by nature evil and poisonous. Mormons illustrated perhaps better than any other Protestant group how unmooring the faith from its traditional ecclesiastical structures and radically democratizing the faith produced peculiar innovations regarding communion wine.

If Methodists took an early cautious approach to alcohol in general, Mormons similarly moved towards abstinence, at least in official teaching. In 1833, Joseph Smith first issued the “Word of Wisdom,” which listed several substances to avoid consuming, including wine, strong drink, and “hot drinks,” though the revelation specifically allows “pure wine of your own make” for the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. Though Brigham Young encouraged settlers in the Dixie area of Utah between 1851 and 1861 to make grapes and wine for trading and drinking, the abundance of the fruit of the vine led to the

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<sup>81</sup> Joseph Smith, “History—1839,” in *The Papers of Joseph Smith: Volume 1, Autobiographical and Historical Writings*, ed. Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 270. Joseph Smith himself heard the (in)famous Methodist preacher Lorenzo Dow, and some estimates have as many as one third of early Mormon converts coming from Methodism, including his most famous successor to the Presidency, Brigham Young. For more on Methodist converts to early Mormonism, see Christopher C. Jones, “‘We Latter-day Saints are Methodists’: The Influence of Methodism on Early Mormon Religiosity” (MA Thesis, Brigham Young University, 2009). See also Christopher Jones, “‘It’s like Methodism, Only More’: Mormon Conversion and Narratives of the Great Apostasy,” *Peculiar People*, accessed April 24, 2015, <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/peculiarpeople/2013/02/its-like-methodism-only-more-mormon-conversion-and-narratives-of-the-great-apostasy/>.

proliferation of drinking, which then led to abuses by members of the community for drunkenness in the 1870s, including one bishop. An 1884 circular addressed the faithful to the effect that neither the “habitual drunkard” nor one “who for gain, or otherwise, puts the cup to his weak brothers lips [sic].” The circular not only forbade selling or giving alcoholic drinks “to those who are weak,” but stated the church officials would either “not sell wine or strong drink” or “tender their resignation as Church officials,” and threatened that continued disobedience would result Church hierarchy “disfellowshipping persons” and action by the High Council.<sup>82</sup> Nonetheless, some Mormons in Dixie believed that drinking wine was a matter of personal liberty, and a year after the circular was issued a Brother Gray told the High Council that, since he made and drank his own wine, “no person is injured or wronged but myself.”<sup>83</sup> Such drinkers, however, became friendly with non-Mormons, called “Gentiles” by the faithful, and often neglected their duties to Church and family, which made an intolerable situation for the hierarchy. Only once many Dixie people, including church officials and members of the High Council, had become drunkards did preachers and judicial authorities tightly tied to the Mormon Church alike begin to condemn moderate drinking. By the end of the century, most of the vineyards of the area had been torn up, wine went from a good regularly tithed to the church to an illicit item, and drinking transitioned from common practice to taboo.<sup>84</sup>

Use of wine in sacramental services was a prime reason Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders had first encouraged wine cultivation in the Dixie area, but that

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<sup>82</sup> Dennis R. Lancaster, “Dixie Wine” (M.A. Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), 117–118; cf. 10–11.

<sup>83</sup> Lancaster, “Dixie Wine,” 119.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 120–123.

position had changed dramatically by the end of the century. Dixie residents scoffed at the idea of using unfermented wine in the Lord's Supper: "Isn't wine unless its fermented. Nobody would drink new wine! Ugh! Just as well drink dish water."<sup>85</sup> (This statement helps explain the popularity of Welch's palatable grape juice and its importance for shifting churches to non-alcoholic wine in communion.) Yet some were so fond of aged wine in the services that they would drain nearly entire goblet of wine when it came to them, or would reseal themselves several times during the serving of wine so that they would be served about four times. Reacting to such abuses, the High Council of the area passed a resolution in 1892 that water was to replace wine in the Dixie services. Some wards held out for six years, but by the turn of the century water had permanently replaced wine as the sacramental drink.<sup>86</sup>

While Mormons were a marginal group nationally and in Texas particularly, their transition away from communion wine to water paralleled suggested a connection between changing the elements of communion and an openness to theological innovation in general. Voices opposed to abandoning wine in communion frequently connected preservation of the element of wine with steadfastness to other traditional doctrines. While some Baptists insisted upon following the original Bible-based form for communion and baptism alike, scholars such as Erskine contended that the Christian faith would unravel if Christians neglected the traditional teachings about communion's meaning and took it upon themselves to meddle with its carefully thought-out and deeply meaningful elements.

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<sup>85</sup> Lancaster, "Dixie Wine," 129.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 129.

### *Conclusion*

Prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists proved equally adept at interpreting the Bible to support their respective political positions, though anti-prohibitionist Christians seemed more willing to view the Bible in the context of church tradition whereas prohibitionist Christians, both fundamentalists and modernists, seemed eager to depart from both literal exegesis and church tradition to endorse their vision of morality. The anti-prohibitionist exegesis, though seemingly more literal, was just as scholarly (if not more so) than the exegesis of prohibitionists, and took greater account of leading philological and historical studies that illumined the Bible's ancient contexts. Though they may have had to engage in some exegetical and moral gymnastics to do so, prohibitionist theologians continued to defend their position with the Bible as Scripture, and some of their opponents likewise carried on their anti-prohibitionist arguments from that same Bible.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of all is the attention both sides in this debate apparently paid to the Bible as Scripture. While some notable supporters of prohibition did not cling tightly to the Bible, it still played a significant role for partisans in this major political debate of the early twentieth century. This finding challenges Mark Noll's musings at the end of *The Civil War as Theological Crisis* that the Bible ceased to feature prominently in politics after the late nineteenth century. In addition, evangelicals for prohibition continued to approach the Bible the same way most U.S. citizens did up to the Civil War, with an individualist, republican, common-sense hermeneutic. This hermeneutic democratized interpretation of the Bible and gave readers a sense of the certainty of their readings directly with the text apart from the traditional teachings and

practices of the church.<sup>87</sup> Such a self-confident populist approach to the Bible enabled the widespread triumph of a prohibitionist interpretation among most evangelicals despite convincing arguments from scholarship, church tradition, and even common-sense literal readings of the Bible to the contrary.

Though some evangelicals continue to point to the Bible to support their views on various issues, the prominence of such arguments has declined considerably in the aftermath of prohibition's repeal on largely secular grounds, the cultural retreat of fundamentalists, and the ascendancy of modernists in the 1930s.<sup>88</sup> These findings likewise move the timeline for popular rejection of the Bible and embrace of the Cultural Bible into the mid-twentieth century, if not later. Nonetheless, one's position on the Bible as such did not determine one's stance on the divisive culture war issue of the day. Non-Christians like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and modernist Protestants could reject the Bible as Scripture while embracing prohibition, while pious lay people such as Edward R. Emerson could affirm the Bible as Scripture and show how both commonsense readings of the Bible, church tradition, and scholarly analysis could support opposition to prohibition. Like in the early twentieth century, the Bible's honored place in U.S. culture seemed secure, but its status as Scripture for political debates still seemed publicly contested in the early twenty-first century. Many still read the Bible as speaking to contemporary political debates, and even as it was during the days of prohibition, both sides in many political debates can quote Scripture for their own purposes.

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<sup>87</sup> Mark Noll, *Civil War*, especially 40—50, 157—162; and *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 367—385.

<sup>88</sup> For the secular arguments contributing to prohibition's decline, see Kenneth D. Rose, *American Women and the Repeal of Prohibition* (New York: NYU Press, 1996).

The communion wine question continues to separate Christians today, with millions every Sunday imbibing alcohol-free grape juice at communion without considering how truly modern that drink is. Given the fierce debates within Baptist churches over the issue and Methodist acquiescence to grape juice, it is remarkable that during national prohibition neither federal nor state governments sought to prevent the production or consumption of sacred wine either for Jews or Christians. Though breaking with Christian tradition themselves, teetotalers saw fit to allow believers who saw the issue differently to worship in accordance with the practices handed down over centuries and millennia. It remains an open question how much of their Christian past prohibitionists left behind when they chose the cup of Dr. Welch over the cup of their spiritual forbearers. Yet to this day, Episcopalians across the state of Texas every Sunday can partake of the wine as they hear the words, “The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.”

While some saw the cup of salvation as the Eucharist itself, many African Americans saw saving grace in the opportunities for political alliances presented by the prohibition question. While black Texans worked pragmatically to advance themselves and their communities, they cast decisive votes in various local option elections and especially in the 1911 statewide vote. The next chapter addresses how African Americans in Texas navigated a shifting landscape of changing attitudes over prohibition, interracial politics, poll taxes, and the alcohol industry.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Politics Dark and Peculiar: African Americans, Religion, and Prohibition<sup>1</sup>

When Dr. B. H. Carroll, leader of Texan drys, decided against using race as a wedge issue in the 1887 statewide election on prohibition, his fellow Baptist minister John B. Rayner wrote Carroll a confidential letter on 17 March 1887 offering his unsolicited assistance in mobilizing African American voters. Rayner, a self-professed “Prohibitionist by deep religious principle,” warned Carroll that “the negro vote is quite an item and will play an important part in the coming election,” but that he, as an African American man himself, knew “the eccentricities of the negro.” Rayner advised Carroll how best to win the African American vote: enlist as many African American ministers and newspapers as possible from the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), and Baptist churches.<sup>2</sup> Carroll apparently took his advice. Prominent African American ministers, including the national leader of the AME, Bishop Henry M. Turner of Georgia, soon thereafter campaigned in the state for Prohibition, and Rayner himself campaigned heavily in Robertson and the surrounding counties.<sup>3</sup> Interracial cooperation seemed to be working well for the drys until early June,

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<sup>1</sup> Significant parts of this chapter appears in Brendan Payne, “Protecting Black Suffrage: Poll Taxes, Preachers, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1916,” *Journal of Southern History* 83 (Nov. 2017), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. R. to B. H. Carroll, *San Antonio Express*, July 27, 1887; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 193.

<sup>3</sup> For more on Turner, see Paul Harvey, *Through the Storm, through the Night: A History of African American Christianity* (Lanham, MD, 2011), 78–83.

when wets obtained Rayner's secret letter and published it, injecting race into the election by claiming that African Americans like Rayner were the brains behind the dry campaign. One wet editor accused, "That Rayner letter and the presence of Bishop Turner needs, nay, demands explanation," and concluded, "Politics which mix up religions [sic] like that are dark and peculiar, and Dr. Carroll ought not to be in the business."<sup>4</sup>

This episode raises two issues regarding race, religion, and prohibition in Texas. The first issue is how whites interacted with African Americans and racial norms either to support or undermine prohibition. Whereas Carroll worked across racial lines with Rayner and Turner to advance prohibition on the grounds of evangelical religious collaboration, anti-prohibitionists invoked racial fears to weaken the influence of religious leaders upon any political issue. Yet over time dries abandoned much of Carroll's racial inclusivity and invoked white supremacy in their quest to cleanse the land of the blight of demon rum. In addition to African Americans, Mexican Americans and recent immigrant groups are considered in this discussion of racial purity. The second issue is how African American ministers addressed prohibition to advance themselves and their race. Rayner and Turner sought to better their world by aligning with prominent whites like Carroll, yet Rayner in later years became an agent of the brewers, in part to support the enfranchisement of his people against pressure from poll taxes and declining liberties in an age of Jim Crow.

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<sup>4</sup> San Antonio *Express*, July 7, 1887; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*; 196; 193–98; Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 27–28.

This chapter explores in turn both of these aspects of the complicated relationship between race, religion, and prohibition in Texas. The first section addresses the changing attitudes of prohibitionist whites towards race, particularly African Americans. White dries increasingly used the language of racial hierarchy and respectability to support prohibition. As this tactic begat success for prohibitionists, especially after the imposition of a statewide poll tax in 1902, brewers and distillers sought any votes they could scrounge and did more than any other white industry to finance and organize African American enfranchisement. The second section of the chapter turns to African Americans' changing engagement on the issue of prohibition. African Americans were divided on the issue but tended to oppose prohibition as a reaction against prohibitionists' racist rhetoric and out of political necessity. African Americans have been remarkably overlooked in the historiography on prohibition, yet they played a critical role in the contest in Texas. This section focuses largely upon John Rayner, who campaigned for prohibition in the 1880s before he campaigned against it in the 1900s and embodied the pragmatic calculation that typified politically engaged African American ministers and laypeople.

*White on Black: Prohibition and Racial Hierarchy*

Perhaps no recent scholarly work addresses white attitudes on race and prohibition better than Joe Coker's *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause*. Among other points, Coker argues that prohibition gained momentum throughout the South in large part due to its advocates' ability to harness the norms of racial hierarchy—particularly the subjugation of African Americans to whites—for their cause. While Coker persuasively argued that that dynamic existed in the eastern South states of Georgia, Tennessee, and

Alabama where he focuses his study, the thesis remains untested for states in the western South. An excellent way to test Coker's thesis in a different state, a different time frame, and a broader religious context is through a brief study of the Texas Anti-Saloon League (TASL), the statewide branch of the aforementioned Anti-Saloon League (ASL).

Texas is the Southern state furthest from Coker's case studies (Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama), and its population in 1900 consisted mostly of Anglo-American immigrants from other Southern states, growing to over three million from around just two hundred thousand in 1850.<sup>5</sup> In terms of time, the TASL's years of effective operation (1907–1935) overlap with the last few years of Coker's years of study (1880–1915) and go on to cover the entire period of federal and state prohibition in Texas. Regarding religion, the TASL was a leading religious advocate for prohibition and took particular leadership from Methodists and Baptists, as further data will demonstrate. Accordingly, the TASL, particularly its periodical *The Home and State*, provide a valuable test case to judge the extent to which Texan dries focused on racial hierarchy.

#### *From Republic of Texas to TASL*

Texas had flirted with prohibition long before the TASL came around, and in many ways was a pioneer in prohibition. In 1843, the Republic of Texas (then an independent nation) had passed the first local-option law in North America, allowing cities and counties to vote to ban alcohol for themselves. An 1845 law banned saloons, but was never enforced and was repealed by 1856. Texan temperance groups formed throughout the post-Civil War period – including the United Friends of Temperance in

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<sup>5</sup> "Population," *Texas Almanac*, Texas State Historical Association (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/population>), accessed November 29, 2012.

1870 and a state chapter of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union in 1883 – and the 1876 Texas Constitution required local-option laws, finding first success when Jasper County voted to go dry in December of that year. Yet the 1887 referendum on statewide prohibition was crushed by over ninety thousand votes out of some three hundred fifty thousand cast, 37 percent dry to 63 percent wet. Even Jefferson Davis, the beloved former President of the Confederate States of America, had vocally opposed the proposed statewide prohibition referendum. After this drubbing by wets, dries focused on local option elections until the founding of the ASL decades later.<sup>6</sup>

After a false start in 1902, the TASL was firmly founded around 1907, the same year the first Southern state (Georgia) adopted statewide prohibition.<sup>7</sup> The TASL boasted some early successes in 1907-08 local option elections to ban alcohol from individual cities and counties, yet encountered difficulty in supporting statewide prohibition. A 1908 election narrowly approved submission of a vote on statewide prohibition, yet nothing came of it until the 1911 referendum on statewide prohibition almost succeeded, losing by just six thousand votes out of nearly four hundred seventy thousand cast, a margin of just over one percent of the vote. Rather than being discouraged by this defeat, dries redoubled their efforts and dried up over two hundred Texan counties, leaving forty-three

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas,” *Texas Almanac* (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>7</sup> The details of the founding are uncertain; presumably the national ASL sought to create a state branch, but could not find sufficient support for a new organization, since older ones had long been established. Sources obliquely state that it was founded in 1902 “without success,” such as H. A. Ivy, *Rum on the Run in Texas, a Brief History of Prohibition in the Lone Star State*, introd. by George C. Rankin (Dallas, TX: Temperance Pub. Co., 1910), 61. Cf. K. Austin Kerr, "ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE OF TEXAS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vaa02>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

partially wet and only ten completely wet by 1918. By March of that year, the legislature passed and the governor signed into law a statewide ban on alcohol that went into effect in June. Federal Prohibition was ratified by three-fourths of the state legislatures by January 1919, and Texan voters in May of that year followed suit by approving state prohibition by a comfortable margin of almost exactly twenty thousand votes, about seven percent out of nearly three hundred thousand cast. Texas had in the span of a generation jumped from solidly anti-prohibition to comfortably pro-prohibition, and the TASL had no little hand in the change.<sup>8</sup>

Much of the evidence from the TASL confirms Coker's analysis that Anglo evangelicals used prohibition to support an Anglo-dominant racial hierarchy. A letter to the editor of the *Home and State* by H. C. Park put the issue baldly in commentary about the 1912 U.S. Senate race between a wet and a dry: everyone is "agreed on one issue, and that is for the people to rule; but the question arises, which or what people?" The wet, Col. Jake, "wanted the lower class of negroes and Mexicans to rule ... but now he ... wants the white Americans to rule, and I think they will to his sorrow."<sup>9</sup> The association of voting dry with "white" rule and voting wet with rule of the "other," however defined, was a major part of prohibition sentiment in Texas.

This sentiment goes back at least as far as the election of 1887, when B. H. Carroll went out of his way to avoid any divisions along the lines of race or religion and

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<sup>8</sup> Kerr, "ANTI-SALOON"; *Anti-Saloon League Year Book*, (Westerville, OH: American Issue Press, 1918), 207.

<sup>9</sup> H. C. Park, "Let the People Rule," *Home and State* (July 6, 1912), 5.

embraced interracial cooperation to achieve prohibition.<sup>10</sup> A major stumbling block to attempts at courting non-whites came not only from wets, as noted above, but also from a prominent dry in the campaign, Carroll's fellow white Baptist minister James B. Cranfill. While Carroll was a Democrat and widely palatable to Texan voters, Cranfill joined with the radical Prohibition Party, so it is perhaps unsurprising that Cranfill also took a harder line on race than Carroll. Cranfill undermined Carroll's irenic strategy with his scorched-earth approach when he published the racist editorial, "The Native White Man." The article sought to rally "the native, white, Anglo-Saxon elements of the South" around prohibition against the "bo-dutch", "nigger," and "low-bred foreigners."<sup>11</sup> This appeal may have aroused some whites to vote dry but probably lost at least as many African Americans and recent immigrant groups. Even after an official apology by Carroll that distanced the dry campaign from such rhetoric, this kind of race-baiting continued to shadow the campaign and contributed to a crushing defeat for the prohibitionists, including the majority of the old stock Protestant vote.<sup>12</sup> Even while the dries' leader in 1887 insisted on leading a racially inclusive campaign, some prominent dries could not resist publicly resorting to racist tropes.

Perhaps the most infamous bit of racism associated with prohibition was the specter of a drunken African American man raping an Anglo American woman. References to this fear are sadly widespread in the *Home and State*. As early as 1905 the paper's editor, G. C. Rankin, in his column "Progress of Reform" refused to condemn the

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas J. Brian, *The Prohibition Crusade in Texas* (M.A. Thesis: Baylor University, 1972), 17—18, 25.

<sup>11</sup> Editorial, *Waco Daily Examiner*, 27 May 1887.

<sup>12</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 89—101.

lynching of a “negro brute” who allegedly “committed an outrage upon a white woman” and was convicted for rape, yet granted a new trial “on a mere technicality.” Rankin stated that the lynched man’s guilt was “beyond doubt,” but mob action was a “disgrace” for which he blamed the “careless” court for creating “the feeling of uncertainty produced by the granting of the new trial.”<sup>13</sup> If the mere chance that a “negro brute” accused of rape might be acquitted all but forced whites to lynch him, what were the chances that the whites enforcing prohibition laws would treat him with equal charity and fairness?

As it turns out, dries gave disproportionate attention to African American drinking, especially when connected to rape, murder, or both. A few sensational episodes reinforced the widespread idea among southern white Americans that alcohol turned otherwise docile African into rapacious, murderous monsters that threatened the lives and virtue of white women everywhere. “WHISKEY MAKES BLACK SLAYER THIRST FOR BLOOD” reads the headline concerning Clarence Cooley, who murdered Johannes Hansen and Louis Teten after drinking two bottles of beer and a pint of whiskey. The article began with a saloon that “soaked Clarence Cooley’s black flesh with whiskey, fired his docile brain with the fumes of alcohol, and sent him forth to slay.” The article ends with words of warning from Cooley, the moral of the story: “Let booze alone. It made me kill.”<sup>14</sup> The article at once removes Cooley’s responsibility for his actions and prompts the reader to prevent such actions by removing the real killer: the saloon and its alcohol. The article makes this explicit when it states the price of Cooley’s drink and

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<sup>13</sup> Dr. G. C. Rankin, *Progress of Reform*, “Mob Spirit in Texas,” *Home and State* (Sept. 1905), 13.

<sup>14</sup> *Home and State* (September 15, 1916), 1.

adds: “That was the price of three human lives.”<sup>15</sup> The story inspires the reader to take responsibility for the poor “negroes” who cannot help but kill once they have a few drinks. African Americans were no longer seen as three-dimensional people, but as objects of scorn and pity to be protected from the murderous effects of booze.

That Texan story parallels an incident in Shreveport, Louisiana, where Charles Coleman, an African American man, was convicted and punctiliously hanged (legally) for raping and murdering a fourteen-year-old Anglo American girl, Margaret Lear. Coleman had been drunk. A reporter speculated (apparently without proof) that Coleman’s drink had been “Black Cock Vigor Gin,” one actual brand of many cheap gins sold to African Americans that featured a scantily clad white woman.<sup>16</sup> According to a prohibitionist mindset, the alcohol was to blame, especially an alcohol so explicitly provocative as Coleman’s drink. By the same token, southern dries argued that taking away alcohol would improve African American behavior and therefore reduce lynchings. In February 1928, the *Home and State* printed a clipping stating that lynchings decreased due to prohibition, showing that the logic was true: proper legislation keeps alcohol out of the hands of “negroes,” which keeps them docile, as Cooley’s brain was before alcohol fired it and made him kill.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>16</sup> This is true. Apparently another drunk African American man convicted of rape in Birmingham actually was carrying Black Cock Liquor Gin in his pocket on his arrest. Okrent, *Last Call*, 45—6. Cf. Paul E. Isaac, *Prohibition and Politics: Turbulent decades in Tennessee, 1885-1920* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1965), 148; Michael James Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874-1947* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 142—143; various articles in *Colliers* (May 16 and August 15, 1908; May 2, 1925); *U.S. v. Lee Levy and Adolph S. Asher*, Eastern District of Missouri, 1908, Grand Jury indictment and sentence rendered.

<sup>17</sup> “Decreased Lynchings Under Prohibition,” *Home and State* (Feb 1928), 5.

Many drys also linked prohibition to the rule of more respectable social classes. This perspective echoes the interpretation of Joseph R. Gusfield, who argues that prohibition was primarily a middle class battle to safeguard declining social status through a symbolic crusade against the richer and poorer classes.<sup>18</sup> The racial order articulated by Texan drys in the *Home and State* assumed at least as much cultural and class superiority as racial superiority. Various articles in the paper argued against “the low negro and Mexican vote”; the “Mexican and ignorant negro”; and the like.<sup>19</sup> However, many drys distinguish between “low” and “better” minorities, especially regarding Mexicans and “negroes.” In the TASL’s official newspaper, a 1912 article by S. M. Lesesne entitled “Our Mexican ‘Citizens’” focuses on “the ignorant and unpatriotic Mexicans known as the ‘Greaser Class.’” Lesesne recognized that “among our Mexican citizenship there are many first-class men and women who are educated, intelligent, and loyal to our government and its situations,” but in the rest of the article “no reference whatever is made to that [first] class.”<sup>20</sup> In the context of an explicitly prohibitionist paper, such terms as “educated, intelligent, and loyal” were synonymous with endorsing prohibition, while “ignorant and unpatriotic” signified opposing it. Tejanos may have been generally regarded with contempt by Anglo Texans, but some dry Anglos saw middle-class dry Tejanos as respectable and set apart from the majority.

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963),

<sup>19</sup> J. B. Gambrell and G. C. Rankin, “The Preacher and the Pending Issue,” *Home and State* (June 29, 1912), 3;

<sup>20</sup> S. M. Lesesne, “A Study of Our Mexican ‘Citizens,’” *Home and State* (July 20, 1912), 1.

A similar phenomenon is evident among African American clergy who gained white favor by expressing their support for prohibition. In the 1911 contest over statewide prohibition, some black clergy replied to a request to support the dry cause in the affirmative: “We stand today on this question just where we stand each day in the year around in keeping with the word of God and church laws against the use of liquor by those composing our churches.” In addition, they did “not want the public to wonder about our position,” so they “most emphatically declare[d] that we favor prohibition.”<sup>21</sup> There is no reason to doubt the veracity or sincerity of this declaration, since African American Baptists and Methodists shared many of the same beliefs and practices with their Anglo co-religionists, and drunkenness was just as much a blight and burden on black families as on white. All the same, declaring in favor of prohibition was also a sure way for black preachers to demonstrate common cause with their wealthier and more powerful white neighbors and to express their common commitment to peaceable relations between the races.

Likewise, an editor of the *Home and State* once introduced a letter by Rev. J. W. Bailey, corresponding secretary of the Texas Negro Baptist Convention, “one of the strongest and best men of his race... a noble man... well informed, reliable, aggressive for the best things in Texas, and is always in harmony with the best people ... against saloons, because they are against the best things in Texas.”<sup>22</sup> While Bailey’s stance endeared him to “the best people” – that is, Anglo evangelical dries – Bailey’s claim that

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<sup>21</sup> Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America’s Most Powerful Bible-Belt State* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), 171; see also “Communication from Negro Ministers,” *Beaumont Journal*, June 26, 1911.

<sup>22</sup> Unsigned editorial, “A Negro Preacher’s View,” *Home and State* (Aug 31, 1912), 3.

the “negroes of Texas will be with you [drys] when the time comes” was at best wishful thinking and at worst disingenuous.<sup>23</sup> The typical complaints in the *Home and State* against “the low negro” sprang in part from widespread dry white frustration that most black Texans voted the “wrong” way on the issue.<sup>24</sup> Whether overly optimistic or sly like a fox, Bailey followed in the tradition of Booker T. Washington, who tried to advance his race by deferring to the southern racial order while seeking advancement through gradually expanding economic and educational opportunities. While later commentators have criticized Washington for failing to speak out loudly enough against the injustices of his time, he was nevertheless very influential and widely respected among both African and white Americans.<sup>25</sup> In a similar vein, Bailey and other African Americans likely went dry to align themselves with “the best people” to help advance their ambitions and, one hopes, their people. The then-common language of racial uplift appealed both to paternalistic Anglos and African Americans. White paternalists took up the “white man’s burden” to civilize and Christianize their racial “inferiors” at home and abroad while African Americans sought to empower their race through economic progress, educational attainment, and increased respectability. Racial uplift thus simultaneously served the causes of white domination and black advancement.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> “A Negro Preacher’s View,” *Home and State* (Aug 31, 1912), 3.

<sup>24</sup> Jared Paul Sutton, “Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1919” (M.A., University of North Texas, 2006).

<sup>25</sup> Noll, *History*, 342—344. See also Robert J. Norrell, *Up from History: The Life of Booker T. Washington* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).

<sup>26</sup> Wuthnow, *Rough Country*, 171.

In addition to African and Mexican Americans, recent immigrants from Europe could also hope to advance their social status by becoming dry. Carl Froman of El Campo, a Swedish immigrant, wrote a long letter to the *Home and State* on “The Swedes and Prohibition,” which responded to many drys who claimed “foreigners and their votes” swung the 1911 prohibition election and who called for disenfranchising recent immigrants. He first asks that Swedes not be lumped together with the Germans as wets. “[Swedes] are closely related in both speech and racial characteristics with the great German nation, and they are proud of the fact,” he wrote, “but they differ with them concerning the liquor question.”<sup>27</sup> Froman explains, “All foreigners are blamed by the natives, that they are clannish, not easily Americanized, and especially so when a political question comes up and they vote according to their own viewpoint, with the other crowd.” However, he asserts that some eighty percent of Texan Swedes voted dry, and the only Swedish paper in the state, *Texas Posten* of Austin, supported prohibition.<sup>28</sup> Given their dry credentials, Froman reasoned, Swedes deserved to keep their vote.

Froman also disagreed with those (presumably in the TASL) who think immigrants should not get citizenship and the right to vote too soon: “Personally, I believe that it is better for a country, in the long run,” for a foreigner to “get his citizenship papers... in a reasonable time, as it is here,” and “I don’t care in what country he is born, or what color he has.” Still, he agreed that a voter should be educated enough to “spell his own name” – perhaps suggesting support for literacy tests used elsewhere in

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<sup>27</sup> Carl Froman, “The Swedes and Prohibition,” *The Home and State* (Dallas, TX: October 21, 1911), 2, 8.

<sup>28</sup> Froman, “The Swedes and Prohibition,” 8.

the South. Froman argued for the equality of people of all nations and even races in theory, though not always in practice. Swedes were “not much to be blamed for being clannish, for they have to be so, more or less, for their own protection,” due to language barriers and prejudices by “native” Americans, who treat them “as of an inferior race.” Froman recalled a conversation he recently overheard: “‘Is it white folks living over there?’ ‘No, they are Germans.’” The Swede was indignant at Swedes and Germans alike being denied the coveted status of “white” and politely explained the obvious: “Everybody likes to meet with those who treat them as equals.” However, Froman was reluctant to extend that pleasantry to African Americans. Swedes initially “considered any negro to be equal with any white man, ... [but] some ridiculous and awful experiences have taught us otherwise”; likewise Swedes were initially Republican, but “you will not find many Swedes in this State voting a Republican ticket now.” On the one hand, Froman seemingly blasted American exceptionalism: “Good ideas, or bad ideas, are not the property of any nation, party or sect.” On the other hand, Froman asserted that Swedes loved America and thought “Texas the best State in the world,” noting that Swedes were virtuous and their children spoke English fluently and excelled in their studies.<sup>29</sup> Froman’s article indicated that Swedes were shedding their foreign identity – and with it solidarity with other minorities – and aspiring to equality with other “white” Texans.

Froman was particularly touchy about the language question, since even an “Irishman, speaking his brogue fluently, is considered a fullfledged American as soon as he sets his feet on the American soil, and does not even need to take out his citizenship

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 8.

papers,” much “like the Mexicans in Southwestern Texas, but not so for us Swedes.” One senses a bit of bitterness that an Irishman was treated better than a Swede for no other advantage than language skills. Froman waxed lyrical in defending immigrants’ use of their native tongue:

You cannot expect a people to quit a language spoken by their forefathers for ages, a language associated with all that to them is lovable, pure and great, filled with pleasant memories and beautiful in thought and diction, a language into which they can put their inmost thoughts and express their deepest feelings; you can not [sic] expect a civilized people to forsake in their own generation that language for a strange tongue, which they seldom can learn to correctly pronounce and which they more or less will hesitate to use.<sup>30</sup>

With all the difficulties of learning a new language and acclimating to a hard new way of life from poverty, Campo argued, a recent immigrant “can not [sic] be expected to be so-called Americanized in a year or two, and sometimes it is better he is not.” The author also attacked the idea of the saloon as a foreign entity, as “some people speak about the American saloon, and others about the foreign saloon,” but “I am glad that the saloon only belongs to those who shelter it, and it is a parasite that will soon be operated away at least in Texas.”<sup>31</sup> Froman’s article complicates an Anglo-centric approach to studies of the dry movement in Texas, and suggests how some immigrant groups such as Swedes used the prohibition as a way to assert their all-American “whiteness,” their distinctness from wet immigrant groups (like Germans), and their frustration with Anglo Americans who still saw some of their dry allies as wet foreigners who could not assimilate fast enough.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

Hard data gives a precise idea of the proportion of most ethnic minorities to the general population and the extent of their support for the wets. The ASL Year Book of 1918, a fairly reliable record on the numbers that depended upon census data, recorded African American population of Texas on the eve of statewide prohibition at just under eighteen percent of the general population. The foreign-born population was over six percent, and those with at least one foreign-born parent at over nine percent – fifteen and a half percent of recently foreign ancestry, likely Germans, Poles, Swedes, and the like.<sup>32</sup> How many of the fifteen and a half percent were German, how many Swedes, how many other groups? How did those other groups vote on the wet issue? Froman’s article states some eighty percent of Swedes voted dry, but that’s anecdotal evidence in a letter to a dry newspaper, so is likely far off the true figure. Jared Paul Sutton’s exhaustive evaluation of the Mexican, African, and German American votes in fifteen Texas counties statistically proves these minorities overwhelmingly and consistently supported the wet cause. However, Sutton’s decision not to (or inability to) cover the Swedes and other immigrant minorities leaves a notable hole in the research and perhaps a missed opportunity to upset the stereotype of minority ethnic groups in Texas monolithically supporting the wet cause.<sup>33</sup>

The TASL often treated immigrants well in the pages of the *Home and State*, as in the case of Froman, but not always. A November 1915 article on a wet parade in Chicago that month called the participants, among other things, “a crowd of undesirable

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<sup>32</sup> Ernest H. Cherrington, *Anti-Saloon League Year Book, 1918* (Westerville, OH: American Issue Press Co., 1918) 305.

<sup>33</sup> Jared Paul Sutton, “Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1919” (MA thesis, University of North Texas, 2006).

hyphenated Americans, whose hyphen is bigger than their Americanism,” who “have no respect for the law that requires their conformity to American customs and ... American ideas.” In sum, “Such people are in no sense Americans,” since they are “nearly all of foreign birth, speaking a language that few Americans can understand.”<sup>34</sup> On the one hand, the TASL gave voice to the immigrant Froman; on the other, it gave voice to frustrated nativists.

Even more tolerant dries were liable to resort to racist rhetoric to advance their cause. While dries such as J. Frank Norris, pastor of First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, fiercely attacked Democratic presidential candidate Al Smith for being Catholic, the *Home and State* assiduously avoided the common anti-Catholic rhetoric and scarcely mentioned Al Smith’s religion in the campaign, despite running anti-Smith articles as early as 1927.<sup>35</sup> However, the *Home and State* hammered Smith for openly rejecting prohibition and working in government with “negroes.”<sup>36</sup>

Dry whites had dramatically shifted their tactics when it came to race. In the early phases of Texas prohibition movement, the relationship between prohibition and racial hierarchy was more ambiguous. In the 1887 the prohibitionist official line invited people of every religious and racial group to join their crusade and cooperate, perhaps not as equals, but as partners. After the dramatic failure of this attempt at interracial cooperation, dries increasingly tended towards the exclusion of racial minorities from

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<sup>34</sup> “The Liquor Crowd Showing Their Hand,” *Home and State* (Nov 30, 1915), 4.

<sup>35</sup> Hofstadter, *Reform*, 298—301; Hankins, *Jesus*, 187—212. For more on Norris, see Barry Hankins, *God’s Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), esp. 45—73. *Home and State* (Sept 1928), 1; (July 1928), 1; (Jan 1928), 5.

<sup>36</sup> *Home and State* (Sept 1928), 5.

politics for the promotion of prohibition. Unabashed race-baiting grew increasingly effective in advancing prohibition in the 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s, reaching a crescendo in the 1928 presidential campaign, as seen below.

*Black on White: Anti-Prohibition and Racial Realignment*

The racial tension grew so great that some black ministers left the dry fold to join the brewers, yet even there the terms of cooperation proved unsatisfactory. On July 9, 1912, the African American Baptist preacher John B. Rayner penned an irate letter to a prominent agent of the Texas Brewers Association (TBA) demanding more compensation for his work on their behalf.<sup>37</sup> The TBA bankrolled and coordinated anti-prohibition activities for brewers and distillers throughout Texas to the tune of over a million dollars for more than a decade, but this minister did not write to condemn the brewers for their iniquitous enterprise. Instead, he admonished them for failing to adequately compensate him for his unstinting labors on their behalf. A self-described “protagonist in the cause of anti-prohibition,” Rayner listed his sacrifices for the cause over the previous seven years. He had “wet a score of dry counties in Texas or kept them from drying”; exercised “Machiavellian diplomacy” against African American “religious, educational and business gatherings” to mute prohibition advocacy; strove to “make the colored pastors of [San Antonio] political friends” of the brewers; “stood undaunted before the frowns of religious women”; and “endured the imprecations of mad prohibitionists.” By his unstinting efforts, Rayner claimed to have mobilized tens of thousands of voters over the

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<sup>37</sup> Gregg Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner and the Limits of Southern Dissent* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 188–192; Gregg Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf: John B. Rayner and the Politics of Race, 1850-1918* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2001), 1–24; *Twenty-Fifth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention* (Nashville, 1905), 156–157.

previous several years, including “the colored farmers” who “saved the State from the blighting hand of the prohibitionists” in the narrowly decided 1911 election, which kept alcohol legal in Texas for the better part of a decade.<sup>38</sup> Rather than profiteering from his anti-prohibition activism, Rayner had “been forced to lose personal property and mortgage the best of [his] property . . . , and [his] endurance and suffering has been [the brewers’] material progress.” Despite his losses, he claimed he could forgive or ignore the brewers’ slights “when the liberty of man is in danger.”<sup>39</sup>

John Rayner was perhaps the most influential of many African American Protestants who played significant yet largely overlooked roles in the contest over Prohibition in Texas. Rayner and others like him exemplified the crucial, complex, and shifting relationship between African Americans and anti-Prohibition. This cause joined together Republicans and Democrats, African American Methodist and Baptist preachers, and Anglo Episcopalians, German Lutherans, Jews, skeptics, and Catholics of various ethnicities to form a potent interfaith, bipartisan, and interracial anti-Prohibition coalition deeply informed by religious cultures and ideas. State and national brewers and distillers poured millions of dollars into the state over several decades, in part to organize the payment of poll taxes for thousands of voters, including these ethnic minorities.

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<sup>38</sup> B. F. Looney, *The Brewers and Texas Politics* (San Antonio, TX: Passing Show Printing Co, 1916), 68–69; Rayner’s full name given by Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 178; see also Jack Abramowitz, “John B. Rayner—A Grass—Roots Leader,” *The Journal of Negro History* 36, no. 2 (April 1951): 160–93; Gregg Cantrell, “RAYNER, JOHN BAPTIS,” *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 15, 2010), <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fra52>. Rayner started working for the brewers in 1905, according to Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 104; Looney described Rayner as “a negro preacher” who had “been in the employment of the breweries for many years,” Looney, *Brewers*, 602. In 1908, Rayner had promised to mobilize “at least 50,000 negroes in Texas to pay their poll tax in time” for an upcoming prohibition election, Rayner to Zane Cetti, November 14, 1908, in Looney, *Brewers*, 263; two weeks later an internal brewers’ report admitted, “we need him in three counties holding elections this next year,” in Looney, *Brewers*, 264.

<sup>39</sup> Rayner to Wahrmond, July 9, 1912, in Looney, *Brewers*, 69.

Especially in the closely fought statewide election of 1911 and various local option elections, these minorities helped keep the state wet until 1919—longer than any in the South save Louisiana.<sup>40</sup>

African American Protestants in Texas composed one of several racial, ethnic, and religious groups enlisted into the state's anti-Prohibition coalition. From the 1850s until the end of the nineteenth century, Germans made up about five percent of the total population of Texas, or roughly 150,000 by 1900, the largest such population by proportion or absolute numbers anywhere in the former Confederacy. Like German Americans nationally, they were fond of their beer-drinking culture and dominated the brewing industry that funded two-thirds of the anti-Prohibition campaigns. With roots in the state since it was an independent republic, German Texans leaned Republican and were predominantly wet Catholics or Lutherans, though thousands were Jews, teetotaling Methodists, or freethinking atheists.<sup>41</sup> South Texas had a sizeable population of Mexican

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<sup>40</sup> A 1915 map of the wet and dry states explains that Florida had near-prohibition with very strict laws on selling only pre-sealed alcohol, outlawing traditional saloons, but only Texas and Louisiana were effectively wet states, Dallas *Home and State*, Sept. 30, 1915, p. 3. Unlike Texas, Louisiana did not go dry apart from national Prohibition, which did not hit Louisiana until the Wartime Prohibition Act took effect on July 1, 1919, and the national Prohibition amendment did not go into effect until January 17, 1920. Joy Jackson, "Prohibition in New Orleans: The Unlikeliest Crusade," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 19.3 (Summer 1978), 261—284. Since Texas amended its state constitution in May 1919 to go dry before those laws took effect, Louisiana effectively went dry later than Texas. Robert Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas," *Texas Almanac* (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>41</sup> Thousands of Germans settled in Texas since the 1830s, but by the turn of the century most were recent immigrants from the old world. Today roughly 18% of Texans claim German heritage. Terry G. Jordan, "GERMANS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 15, 2010), <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/png02>. Brewers' correspondence shows that Texan Germans widely trended Republican, letter from Ormund Paget to Otto Wahrmond, December 6, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 291–92; such correspondence also showed the vitality and wide geographic distribution of German-speaking groups by their plans to send employees "who can speak German ... along the Southern Pacific R.R. into the German settlements and urge upon the people to pay their poll taxes," particularly in southwest Texas, letter from Paget to San Antonio Brewing Association (SABA), January 19, 1909 in

descent, overwhelmingly Catholics with a handful converted to Protestantism, which likewise embraced drinking as a natural part of its culture and resisted Prohibition, though their votes expressed more the will of political bosses than ethnic autonomy.<sup>42</sup>

The big-business brewers also collaborated with white labor unions, including the Texas State Federation of Labor.<sup>43</sup> The coalition also mobilized Italians, Poles, Jews, and other modestly sized ethnic populations against Prohibition.<sup>44</sup>

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Looney, *Brewers*, 272; Two-thirds of the TBA budget came from brewers and one-third from the distillers, Looney, *Brewers*, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 49–50. One saloon operator, Pedro Velasquez of Encinal, who stated “next month will be the month to get the poll tax receipt and I am asking you if you are willing to give me help with something to make up a good amount of poll tax receipts for my customers [sic],” Velasquez to SABA, Dec. 19, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 300. Brewer organizer on La Salle County election: “some of your friends in Cotulla... tell me that they cannot induce the Mexicans to pay their poll tax, claiming that they have not the money to do it,” Paget to Otto Wahrmond, Dec. 11, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 236. “[V]ery few Mexicans pay their poll taxes,” Paget to M. Andrew, beer dealer, Dec. 13, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 236; cf. 238. “[T]he Mexican population... will not pay their poll taxes. This is a very serious matter for all concerned and especially for your interest,” Paget to SABA, Dec. 13, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 237. One brewer confessed that in Cameron County, “All our votes are Mexicans, but we need money to work it. Very near all are good votes, but they do not pay their poll taxes unless someone does it,” C. Schunior, to Houston Ice and Brewing Association, Dec. 26, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 650; cf. Looney, *Brewers*, 685, 709, 715, 719. For Protestant converts, see Joshua Grijalva, *A History of Mexican Baptists in Texas 1881-1981: Comprising an Account of the Genesis, the Progress, and the Accomplishments of the People Called “Los Bautistas de Texas”* (Dallas, 1982); Paul Barton, *Hispanic Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists in Texas*, 1st ed, Jack and Doris Smothers Series in Texas History, Life, and Culture, no. 18 (Austin, 2006). For more on racial tensions between whites and Mexican Americans, see Edward Lonnie Langston, “The Impact of Prohibition on the Mexican-United States Border: The El Paso-Ciudad Juarez Case” (M.A. Thesis, Texas Tech University, 1974); Robin Espy Robinson, “Monte Carlo of the Southwest: A Reinterpretation of U.S. Prohibition’s Impact on Ciudad Juarez” (M.A. Thesis: University of Texas at Arlington, 1997); and Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*, 1st ed (Austin, 1983).

<sup>43</sup> In November 1909 Paget promised his office would bring out “the colored voters, and if permitted, the laboring vote”; his office had “done so previously and [was] now better prepared to do so than before.” Looney, *Brewers*, 47. Paget’s general reports to the brewers repeatedly mentioned in 1909 and 1910 the importance of bringing out the full strength of the African American vote, followed immediately by calls to bring out the labor vote, suggesting that the two were linked in his mind. Perhaps he was referring to 1905, when he advised a “beer dealer”: “[I]f there are any labor unions in your city we can have one or two of the leading labor men in the State go down there and make speeches and otherwise arouse interest in the payment of poll taxes.” Looney, *Brewers*, 236. Brewers even worked with the Texas State Federation of Labor to pay their poll taxes. Looney, *Brewers*, 47–48, 482–83.

<sup>44</sup> One agent of the brewers refers to the “population in Lavernia, Wilson County,” which is possibly “Polish instead of German, but not understanding either language, I class them, as is usually done, as Germans. Whatever they are, they seem to be very nice people and I would be very sorry to see them in the dry column.” O. Paget to Otto Wahrmond, November 9, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 1128. Such evidence

Yet of all the ethnic and religious groups that reliably resisted Prohibition, African Americans were by far the largest. While Texas's African American population slipped from 31 percent of the total in 1870 to just 20 percent in 1900, it had one of the largest populations by absolute numbers of any state, and African Americans there enjoyed relatively more leverage than in most other formerly Confederate states.<sup>45</sup> African Americans' declining proportion of the population and slipping voter turnout, combined with a substantial in-state presence of recent European immigrants and Mexican Americans, ironically improved their position relative to other southern states by complicating racial politics and reducing their potential threat to white dominance.<sup>46</sup> Nonetheless, through their still-significant numbers of eligible voters and the determination of key figures, African American voters and activists played a critical part in the diverse anti-Prohibition coalition.

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suggests that other European immigrant groups such as the proudly wet Czechs of West, Texas, were likely subsumed under "Germans" in much of the brewers' correspondence. The brewers in 1909 explicitly mentioned encouraging "Germans, Italians, and Jews" to vote, suggesting that all three groups were expected, like the Germans, to vote overwhelmingly wet. S. T. Morgan to O. Paget, January 19, 1909, in Looney, *Brewers*, 274. In addition to this evidence, one can infer Jewish support for the wet cause in Texas because American distillers (who contributed roughly one third of the brewers' coalition's advocacy revenue) were generally associated with Jews, much as Germans led the American brewing industry and highly correlated with voting wet. Okrent, *Last Call*, 44, mentions various that liquor industry leaders like Steinberg, Schaumberg, and Hirschmaum attracted attacks just as nativist and racist as those against African and German Americans.

<sup>45</sup> Chandler Davidson, "AFRICAN AMERICANS AND POLITICS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 9, 2010), <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/wmafr>.

<sup>46</sup> "In a paradoxical way the pervasiveness of racism in Texas and the relatively small size of the African American population kept the question out of most political campaigns," Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 49. According to the meticulous calculations of the Anti-Saloon League (biased yet in census data statistically accurate), the African American population of Texas in 1917 was 17.7 percent of the total population, considerably below the numbers for most Southern states. Ernest Hurst Cherrington and Anti-Saloon League, eds., *The Anti-Saloon League Year Book: An Encyclopedia of Facts and Figures Dealing with the Liquor Traffic and the Temperance Reform* (Columbus, OH, 1917), 227.

African Americans apparently joined the coalition out of mixed motivations that changed by degrees over time. One obvious reason to join the brewers was to protect individual liberty, including the right to drink, which became particularly pressing as African Americans watched their rights contract further with the rise of the Jim Crow laws. Joining the coalition also meant resurrecting the African American political activism rendered moribund by post-Reconstruction intimidation, fraud, and poll taxes. This miracle of reviving a meaningful voice in politics came with the enticing prospect of earning respect and material gain from powerful whites. John Rayner, the most influential of various African American preachers who worked with the brewers, embodied the pragmatic calculation that inspired various African American pastors and leaders to join the brewers' coalition.

Given his previous experience as a liquor seller in North Carolina and his later activism as a protagonist for anti-Prohibition, it may seem surprising that John Rayner orchestrated the African American turnout for the dries in the 1887 contest. As mentioned above, Rayner gave valuable campaign advice to Carroll on how to gain the black vote through working with ministers of African Methodist and more respectable Baptist churches.<sup>47</sup> Whatever his religious principles, Rayner's reasons for joining the dries likely included his lifelong appetite for political activism, ambition for personal prestige, and desire to keep the African American vote mobilized in the South since the so-called Redemption from Republican rule.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> J. B. R. to B. H. Carroll, *San Antonio Express*, July 27, 1887; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 193.

<sup>48</sup> Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 23–25.

Rayner's work as a prohibitionist with Carroll came at a time when he was angling to become the leading black populist in Texas. When the third-party Populists offered the best chance for political and economic progress for African Americans since Reconstruction, Rayner seized the opportunity to become the leading African American "orator, organizer, and political strategist" for the Texas Populists in 1892-1898.<sup>49</sup> As Charles Postel put it in *The Populist Vision*, Rayner was not only a leading figure in Texas but "the most prominent" African American in the movement nationally.<sup>50</sup>

Rayner in the 1890s worked for negligible pay planting African American Populist organizations and delivering powerful speeches for their cause throughout East Texas. As during the 1887 Prohibition contest, he openly offered political advice to white comrades and attracted respect from white crowds. He also helped shift most African Americans' support from the Republicans to the Populists. Though just twenty percent of African Americans supported the Populists in 1892, fifty percent backed them four years later. For his efforts, Rayner was elected as the only African American delegate to the party's state executive committee in 1896. That same year, however, spelled defeat for the multiracial Populist coalition. The national party, called the People's Party, supported the same presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan, as the Democrats that Rayner so hated. Many white Populists placed white supremacy above their economic interests and voted Democrat, and African Americans split their vote between the Populists and the

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., viii, 73. For more accounts of the relationship between Populism and race, see Gerald H. Gaither, *Blacks and the Populist Revolt: Ballots and Bigotry in the "New South"* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 1977); Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*, 83-84; Norman Pollack, *The Populist Response to Industrial America; Midwestern Populist Thought* (Cambridge, 1962); Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York, 1976).

<sup>50</sup> Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 189; see also 157, 173-76, 188-195, 199-203, 255, 267, 274, 284-85, 323-30, 341-47.

Republicans. That year also signaled the return of white supremacy in Rayner's Robertson County by fraud, intimidation, and violence. As in the 1894 elections, Democrats committed massive fraud, buying votes outright from Mexican Americans and deceiving illiterate African Americans to vote for the wrong ticket. By 1898, the Texan Populist party was effectively dead, and with it the dream of a multiracial coalition overthrowing white-only rule in Texas. After one last brief flirtation in 1902 with a Populist campaign that never materialized, Rayner and most other African Americans were finished with Populist politics.<sup>51</sup>

As a new century dawned, so did new restrictive voting measures to suppress turnout from the supposedly unworthy citizens – whether African, Mexican, German, or Anglo American – who could be easily bought by corrupt interests like the alcohol lobby. Progressives, temporarily in the ascendance and hoping to purify politics permanently, pushed for a poll tax, which voters approved in 1902 by a two-to-one margin.<sup>52</sup> The brewers opposed the poll tax because the vast majority of Texans disenfranchised by the tax, particularly Mexican and African Americans, were wets.<sup>53</sup> While wet turnout shrank over the next decade and a half, drys gained momentum among old stock whites,

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<sup>51</sup> Davidson, “AFRICAN AMERICANS AND POLITICS”; Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 200–33, 247–48; Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 32–82.

<sup>52</sup> “Brewers” includes national and state brewers. The seven Texan brewers were: San Antonio Brewing Association and Lone Star Brewing Company (San Antonio); Houston Ice and Brewing Company and American Brewing Association (Houston); Galveston Brewing Company; Dallas Brewery; and Texas Brewing Company (Fort Worth). Looney, *Brewers*, 1; the brewers’ vigorous opposition to the Poll Tax provision in the Texas constitution is attested in 214–15.

<sup>53</sup> A majority of Mexican, African, and German American voters in Texas consistently voted against Prohibition in the 1887, 1911, and 1919 statewide Prohibition elections, Sutton, “Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition,” 1–3. Overall turnout – likely much higher than African American turnout – slumped from 68.8% in 1887 to 45.4% in 1911, then down to a mere 23.7% in 1919. Voter suppression hurt not only African Americans, but apparently all minority groups as well. Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas.”

especially through the advocacy of white evangelical preachers who presided over an exploding population of white Baptists and Methodists.<sup>54</sup> An agent of the brewers confided to a Corpus Christi beer dealer in 1905, “We know the Methodist and baptist [sic] members of your community are being very quietly worked by their preachers, local and foreign, to pay their poll taxes, as it is part of the prohibition propaganda.”<sup>55</sup> After losing a “hopeless” September 1909 election in bone-dry Shelby County, the same agent sighed, “Darkest Russia is not any more under the domination of the Czar than is Shelby under the rule of the Baptist and Methodist Churches.”<sup>56</sup> By 1911, even Alexander Terrell, who wrote the 1902 poll tax laws while an anti-Prohibitionist, reversed himself and denounced alcohol as a child-devouring demon.<sup>57</sup> Brewers knew it was only a matter of time before the double pressure of suppressing wet votes and converting the white vote would quickly dry up most of Texas county-by-county through local option votes and then the whole state.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> In 1890 Texas had the second smallest percentage of Baptists and Methodists of all of southern states, including African American believers, though that number grew rapidly in the early twentieth century. Noll, *God and Race in American Politics*, 88–89.

<sup>55</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 237.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>57</sup> He called alcohol “the brazen Moloch of our civilization which stands with extended arms to receive our children as sacrifices in his burning furnace,” *Austin Statesman*, June 29, 1911. See also Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell*, 163.

<sup>58</sup> The 1876 Texas Constitution required local-option laws, finding first success when Jasper County voted to go dry in December of that year. After Pros’ resounding defeat in the 1887 statewide election, they focused on local option elections until the founding of the ASL decades later in the 1900s. Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas.”

Once the poll tax became law in 1902, the brewers shifted their tactics to secretly mobilize the voters they could.<sup>59</sup> They formed the Texas Brewers' Association (TBA) to secure their collective interests and from 1903-1911 hired a former cavalry officer and veteran of the Spanish-American War, Captain Ormund Paget, to manage campaigns and elections.<sup>60</sup> He oversaw the payment of poll taxes, opposed the constitutionality of the poll tax, disseminated literature, managed many operatives around the state, prevented or swayed elections, spread wet literature, influenced police officers, local officials, and Democratic conventions, and generally advanced the wet cause however possible.<sup>61</sup> Opposing Prohibition was intensive and expensive, and they sought all the help they could acquire.

Some of this help came from African American preachers. Brewers' correspondence reports that some African American preachers were not only personally wet but were paid by brewers to mobilize the African American vote, and they did their work well. One such preacher, D. R. Stokes, according to the brewers' correspondence, single-handedly saved at least two counties from going dry: Henderson County in 1908 and Leon County in 1909.<sup>62</sup> Captain Paget personally oversaw the latter contest, which he described as a "royal scrap" that wets had "very little hope of winning," but despite being

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<sup>59</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 216.

<sup>60</sup> Paget, letter to TBA, December 7, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 296.

<sup>61</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 33—36. Captain Paget served as leader of Troop B, 1st Squadron, 1st Battalion, Cavalry, Dallas Rough Riders from at least September 1900 to May 1904, and probably until September that year, though the record is unclear on what year he completed his service. His full name was found in Adjutant General's Department Texas Volunteer Guard military rolls, 1880-1903. Archives and Information Services Division, *Texas State Library and Archives Commission*. Undated. <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/tslac/30079/30079-P.html>. Accessed 24 April 2013.

<sup>62</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 39, 42.

there himself gave the glory to his African American comrade: “[T]he credit of the victory is largely due to D. R. Stokes, our colored preacher.”<sup>63</sup> Stokes was one of four African American preachers employed by the brewers in 1910 to travel the state full-time turning out the wet vote in crucial local elections, and he alone was entrusted to work all the territory west of Dallas. The brewers supplied their African American agents with poll tax cards, Lincoln posters, powers of attorney, African American voters' addresses, daily report sheets, envelopes, night telegraph, and sundry hand-outs. Paget praised these four African American preachers as “men” who “will, I believe, do the work and do it satisfactorily.”<sup>64</sup>

Another preacher backed by the brewers was the independent Baptist Dr. John L. Griffin, one of Texas’ best-known preachers as well as a gifted songwriter who often set his sermons to poetry and music.<sup>65</sup> Popularly called “Sin-killer” Griffin or simply “the

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 296.

<sup>65</sup> Griffin was born in Shreveport in 1863 and moved to Dallas in 1884. In 1889 he pastored an independent African American Baptist church in Denison (the second source cited has it Denton) and urged parishioners to travel back to Africa, but the building burned down under suspicious circumstances in 1890. Thereafter he became a traveling revivalist often speaking to thousands in mixed-race crowds, for example to some 3,000 in Tyler in June 1897. The Fort Worth Gazette described him in 1890 as a “well-fed and sleek specimen ... He has a commanding stature, having some six foot and more of perpendicular measurement. He sports a mustache and is dressed in faultless ministerial garb.” By 1911, a Houston newspaper reported that Griffin had “visited every large city in the state a dozen times ... Sinkiller’s voice is as soft as musical as the hum of the water mill, but it has the volume of power of the thunder’s sullen roar.” However, one of his revivals in March 1904 was interrupted by gunfire; though no one was hurt, the disruption was likely in retaliation for his efforts even at that early date to register African Americans to vote. In the 1930s and 1940s Griffin served as a chaplain in the Texas prison system, and in 1934 John Lomax, a Library of Congress song collector, recorded his song “Wasn't That a Mighty Storm,” which commemorated the devastating Galveston hurricane of 1900. It seems noteworthy that this powerful song of devastation came in 1915, the same year the anti-Prohibition coalition began to unravel in earnest. Van Craddock, “Bullets bedeviled Sinkiller’s revival,” Longview, TX *New-Journal*, 10 April 2011, [http://www.news-journal.com/opinion/columnists/van\\_craddock/bullets-bedeviled-sinkiller-s-revival/article\\_167eb552-7427-5700-8a9d-8c04a646e879.html](http://www.news-journal.com/opinion/columnists/van_craddock/bullets-bedeviled-sinkiller-s-revival/article_167eb552-7427-5700-8a9d-8c04a646e879.html), accessed 24 March 2014. A second, though perhaps less reliable, source describes accounts of Griffin as “a well-known preacher, with a mesmerizing delivery and full confidence in the name he had given himself.” David Hinckley, “Singing up a 'Mighty Storm' in Galveston,” *New York Daily News*, 12 September 2008,

evangelist,” he was not without blemish: before 1910 he ingeniously founded the Rescue Association of the United States of America and Africa, an organization supposedly dedicated to “rescuing... fallen women” that in fact functioned as a front to “secure the payment of poll taxes by negroes” in order for them to vote in Prohibition elections.<sup>66</sup> The organization was “endorsed by 125,000 members of Texas” and sometimes received aid from the brewers.<sup>67</sup> By November 1910, Griffin had led vigorous rallies in at least fifteen cities throughout the state, including four meetings in San Antonio, and often preached to crowds with both African Americans and whites. He was so powerful in his speech that the national secretary of the brewers wrote, “we can't find a better man than Dr. Griffin to handle the people, both white and colored. ‘Hear him.’”<sup>68</sup> African American preachers like Griffin who worked with brewers had various opportunities to speak to crowds of African Americans and whites alike, openly courting voters of every race.

Though the brewers only left evidence of paying a few preachers to spread the anti-Prohibition gospel, just one dynamic African American apostle working for the brewers could quickly multiply allies in the African American churches across the state. Lectures by the Reverend Jim H. McKimil “urging the race to pay their poll tax” at St. Paul’s African Methodist Episcopal Church in Beaumont, which had some four hundred “alive and energetic” members, prompted the church’s prominent pastor Phillip C. Hunt

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<http://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/music-arts/singing-mighty-storm-galveston-article-1.325120>, accessed 24 March 2014.

<sup>66</sup> C. C. Garrett to Otto Koehler, Nov. 26, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 78.

<sup>67</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 78–9.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

to write a letter to the brewers who bankrolled McKimil. Hunt pledged the brewers in a December 1910 letter, “Now anything that I can do to aid the work” of registering African American voters “I will gladly do.”<sup>69</sup> By all indications, his power to aid the brewers was considerable. Having earned his D.D. from Paul Quinn College in Waco—the hub of late nineteenth century Prohibition sentiment in Texas—he had served as a licensed AME preacher in Texas since 1883 and personally brought in more than 1,500 members into the denomination, some 1,250 of whom he baptized. By 1916 Hunt had twice been a candidate for bishop, served over a dozen churches well by paying off their debt and organizing the construction of their church buildings, and was a politically engaged Republican. With an influential race man like Hunt offering his services to the brewers, many other pastors in the AME doubtless would follow his lead.<sup>70</sup>

Since McKimil spent several days lecturing and distributing literature at various African American churches in Beaumont, his assignment seems to have been to move from city to city, church to church, discreetly mobilizing parishioners to pay their poll taxes and vote against Prohibition. According to Hunt, McKimil gave such “convincing” and “forcible” argument for paying the poll tax that “[n]o better man could have been found” for the job. Notwithstanding McKimil's ties to the brewers, Hunt directly “endorse[d] what [McKimil] said because he was right” and lauded him for doing “much good” in the city.<sup>71</sup> Support for the brewers’ coalition among African American

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<sup>69</sup> P. C. Hunt to Ormund Paget, 21 Dec., 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 63.

<sup>70</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 63; Richard R. Wright and John R. Hawkins, *Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1916), 120.

<sup>71</sup> Hunt to Paget, 21 Dec., 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 63.

preachers—including Republicans like Hunt—spread well beyond those apostles the brewers sent forth to spread their gospel of liberty because many preachers saw African American political empowerment as a righteous cause, even if that meant allying themselves with a morally dubious industry. Such religion was neither merely otherworldly nor solely political but hopefully pragmatic, seeking the best for one’s community in a world without ideal options.<sup>72</sup>

In addition to pastors, the brewers also worked with newspaper editors, teachers, and other African American leaders to advance their agenda.<sup>73</sup> Paget revealed in a January 1910 general report that the brewers’ African American “friends” had infiltrated “every meeting of colored educational bodies” and “kept down with considerable trouble all resolutions opposed to your [the brewers’] interests.”<sup>74</sup> Even given earnest cooperation from some quarters, many African Americans were apparently wary of cooperating with the brewers, but upon vigorous discussion they seemed to believe their interests and the brewers’ were sufficiently compatible to do business with each other. Paget also declared in January 1910 that “meetings will be held in all communities where colored people are numerous, urging the payment of poll taxes.”<sup>75</sup> Though pastors took the most prominent role in mobilizing the African American vote, leaders from every sector of the broadly

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<sup>72</sup> This approach testified to the blend of Christian optimism and realism that characterized African Americans around the turn of the century, including father of civil rights leader Fanny Lou Hamer, who was at the same time a Baptist minister and a bootlegger. Chana Kai Lee, *For Freedom’s Sake: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (Urbana, 1999), 1–2.

<sup>73</sup> Theodore Baughman to Lone Star Brewery, Dec. 11, 1912, in Looney, *Brewers*, 310; Adoue to TBA, Nov. 27, 1908, in Looney, *Brewers*, 264; S. T. Morgan, Dallas Brewery, to F. G. Cook, Texarkana, April 23, 1912, in Looney, *Brewers*, 622.

<sup>74</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 48.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

evangelical African American community were involved in cooperating with the brewers to get out the African American vote.

In time, the TBA also won over two of the most influential African Americans in the state: E. L. Blackshear and John Rayner. Both men had supported Prohibition in 1877, reversed themselves by the next major election in 1911, and were likely influenced by their ties to powerful whites. Of the two, Rayner had suffered more disillusionment from his unsuccessful former political activism, and he joined the brewers first.

Disappointed by the fickle whites and divided African Americans who doomed Populism, Rayner vocally supported the 1902 poll tax just a month after voters approved it and took an accommodationist stance to white hegemony in the early twentieth century.<sup>76</sup> He seems to have reasoned that paternalistic conservative whites were friendlier to African Americans than harshly racist progressives, including former Populists. In 1904, Rayner became the financial agent of Conroe College, a Texan African American school modeled after Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute, and collected money for the college by ingratiating himself with rich, powerful, conservative, and paternalistic whites, including prominent wets, the same kind of conservative “patricians” he had assailed as a Populist.<sup>77</sup> While Washington was a reliable dry in Alabama, the equally pragmatic Rayner lived in the far wetter state of Texas, and by 1905, Rayner abandoned his previous dry stance and became a wet, as described below. Their divergent stances

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<sup>76</sup> Rayner claimed the poll tax “virtually eliminate[d] the worthless negro from politics and the ballot box; but its adoption will not disfranchise [sic] the negro who respects his citizenship, but will awaken to patriotic activity every negro in Texas whose spark of manhood is still alive.” Dallas *Southern Mercury*, December 18, 1902. See also Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 48–49, 327 fn 12; Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 89.

<sup>77</sup> Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 88–102.

suggested that pragmatic African Americans in the South could behave in radically different and even opposite ways depending upon the circumstances in which they found themselves.<sup>78</sup>

Rayner's flexibility was reflected in his religious affiliation as well. Though baptized and raised an Episcopalian like his father, a prominent white and Whig-turned-Republican politician in North Carolina, John Rayner was rebaptized and became a Baptist minister shortly before starting a new life by journeying to Texas in 1880. While he was losing faith in the dying Populist movement he helped lead, Rayner broke his connections with Baptist churches in 1898 and joined the local convention of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) that December. Unsurprisingly, the MEC's official organ in the South, the *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, praised him as "an able orator, a strong writer and a man of no mean ability," and over the next five years Rayner published several articles in that African American-run paper.<sup>79</sup> By 1903, Rayner disappeared from the paper, and by 1905 had apparently left the MEC and so repaired his ties with African American Baptists that he gave the Temperance Committee report to the annual convention of the National Baptist Convention (NBC). One likely motivation for Rayner's shift back into Baptist ranks was to protect himself from censure before his later

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<sup>78</sup> Washington's dry position in Okrent, *Last Call*, 43, 74. For a favorable treatment of a similar kind of flexibility by Washington, see Robert J Norrell, *Up from History: The Life of Booker T. Washington* (Cambridge, MA, 2009). Gregg Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 188–192; Gregg Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 1–24; L. B. Scott, "Hon. J. B. Rayner," *Dallas Southwestern Christian Advocate*, September 1, 1898; for Rayner's writings, see J. B. Rayner, "The Worth of Character," *Dallas Southwestern Christian Advocate*, December 29, 1898; J. B. Rayner, "Does History Repeat Itself?," *Dallas Southwestern Christian Advocate*, May 8, 1902; *Twenty-Fifth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention* (Nashville, TN: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1905), 156–157.

<sup>79</sup> A small sampling of Rayner's writings is J. B. Rayner, "The Worth of Character," *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, December 29, 1898; and J. B. Rayner, "Does History Repeat Itself?," *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, May 8, 1902.

turn against Prohibition. While the MEC's hierarchical structure made dissent from the church's support for Prohibition nearly impossible for a minister, the decentralized government of Baptist churches gave Rayner greater freedom to express himself on controversial issues. The explosive content of Rayner's Temperance Committee report at the 1905 NBC supports this suspicion. In that report, Rayner articulated ambivalence about prohibitory laws while praising temperance that is truly Christian, which must come by persuasion through example rather than by force.<sup>80</sup> While he never served on the Temperance Committee again, Rayner had used his shift in denominational identification to earn himself latitude to speak as a religious leader against Prohibition on a national stage. As Rayner publicly reversed himself from his previous stance as a dry in the campaign of 1887, he shrewdly deployed the rhetoric of temperance against Prohibition and turned it towards voluntary rather than legal avenues.

The same year Rayner issued his nuanced Temperance Committee report for the NBC, he took up a busy schedule lobbying against Prohibition throughout the Lone Star state. Though the Texas Brewers' Association paid for his traveling expenses, Rayner insisted that he not receive a regular salary from the TBA, but rather whatever they thought him worth in a given situation, which gave him a reputation among the brewers as "patriotic" rather than a mere mercenary.<sup>81</sup> His alliance with the brewers promised Rayner opportunities for limited personal profit, vengeance against the white progressives who had betrayed Populism to racist politics, and the mobilization of

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<sup>80</sup> *Twenty-Fifth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention*, 156–157.

<sup>81</sup> "J. B. Rayner is here helping us, and he is patriotic enough not to make any specific charges for his labors; he leaves his wages to us." Letter from L. R. Callaway, Corsicana, Texas, to S. T. Morgan, Dallas Brewery, June 13, 1907, in Looney, *Brewers*, 658.

African Americans for political action. Perhaps the brewers' ethnic heritage gave Rayner a further reason to trust them: Adoue was a French immigrant and former resident of New Orleans, and Wahrmund was of German descent, highlighting the non-Anglo leadership of the brewers' coalition. While society still considered them white and him African American, the lighter-skinned Rayner had grown accustomed to navigating the manifold gradations of racial identity and may have seen these brewers as struggling, like him, to attain full acceptance as men and as American citizens.<sup>82</sup>

Another influential African American to change his stance on Prohibition in time for the pivotal election of 1911 was E. L. Blackshear, president of perhaps the most prominent black college in the state, Prairie View Industrial College (now Prairie View A&M University). Blackshear claimed that he reversed himself on the issue due to “the frequent denunciation of negroes by Prohibition orators.” While this likely played a role, pressure from the outspoken wet Oscar Colquitt, who as governor could have arranged for his dismissal from the presidency of a state-funded university, likely played a role. A dry newspaper editor claimed Blackshear’s defection to the wets “did more to mislead and confuse his race than any other one negro in Texas.”<sup>83</sup> Their flexible stances provided opportunities for limited personal profit and meaningful political mobilization

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<sup>82</sup> For a masterful handling of how white ethnic minorities in Texas came to be regarded as fully Anglo by the mid-Twentieth Century, see Marian Jean Barber, “How the Irish, Germans, and Czechs Became Anglo: Race and Identity in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands” (Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin, 2010).

<sup>83</sup> All quotes from Dallas *Texas Christian Advocate*, August 17, 1911, p. 1. When Blackshear reversed himself again and spoke out for Prohibition in 1914, he lost his position as head of the school a year later due to pressure from another wet governor, Jim Ferguson. This pressure suggests that he might have lost his position in 1911 if he had not declared himself against Prohibition. Watson, “Evangelical Protestants and the Prohibition Movement in Texas,” 141. For a critical take on Colquitt’s stance as a wet, see Robert Pierce Shuler, *The new issue, or, Local booze government: being a collection of articles on “Prohibition,”* (Temple, TX, 1911), no page numbers.

for thousands of African Americans. Rayner, Blackshear, and other leaders exemplified many African Americans' accommodationist stance to white hegemony in the early twentieth century while remaining pragmatically committed to seeking the best for themselves and their people—even if that meant flip-flopping on Prohibition.

No definitive counting of African American votes in the 1911 election has survived, though modest estimates conclude that black votes provided several times the margin of victory for wets. The most prolific number-cruncher for Prohibition in that period, Ernest Cherrington of the Anti-Saloon League, did not provide even a rough estimate for African American voters in the 1911 contest but noted that there were 126,000 eligible black voters in the state. Regardless of the turnout rate, Cherrington's self-proclaimed conservative estimate had eighty percent of those African Americans who cast votes siding against Prohibition, though some contemporary figures considered eighty-five percent of the black vote wet.<sup>84</sup> Szymanski's calculation of 48.9 percent overall voter turnout for the 1911 election means that black turnout was likely much lower than half (due to poll taxes). Three years earlier, John Rayner had promised to mobilize "at least 50,000 negroes in Texas to pay their poll tax in time" for the next statewide election, or forty percent turnout, and the brewers never doubted his figure even in internal reports assessing his value.<sup>85</sup> A more modest estimate of black turnout at 32 percent fits the high-end scholarly estimate of 40,000 black voters annually in the

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<sup>84</sup> Cherrington, *The Anti-Saloon League Year Book* (1912), 188. On the same page, Cherrington also attributed the loss to the 7,000 Mexican voters who "were practically as a unit against the amendment." Eighty-five percent number from *Austin Statesman*, July 24, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Rayner to Zane Cetti, November 14, 1908, in Looney, *Brewers*, 263; two weeks later an internal brewers' report admitted, "we need him in three counties holding elections this next year," but expressed no skepticism about his 50,000 estimate, in Looney, *Brewers*, 264.

early poll tax period and is the most likely number. Granting 32 percent turnout and Cherrington's conservative estimate of a 4-to-1 wet-to-dry ratio, African Americans cast more than 24,000 net votes against Prohibition, four times the deciding margin. One extremely conservative estimate of black turnout comes from Alwyn Barr, who argued that only 50,000 black voters held poll taxes in 1911 (less than half of Cherrington's contemporary number of black eligible voters) and only one third of those likely voted in the election. From these numbers, Barr suggests they did not impact the outcome. Yet even if this is accurate and fewer than 17,000 African Americans voted at a 4-to-1 wet-to-dry ratio, their votes would still have determined the outcome.<sup>86</sup> By all calculations, black votes carried the day.

Despite success in many local option elections and in 1911, fissures broke out between the brewers and agitated activists who did not feel they were receiving appropriate respect for their work on the brewers' behalf. The brewers paid the price for failing to adequately support their African American allies. In Limestone County on August 5, 1909, an unnamed operative of the brewers thought the county would surely stay wet in a local option election and would win ninety percent of the African American vote, but regretted spending money to "play with the negro saloonkeeper."<sup>87</sup> By August

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<sup>86</sup> Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition*, 15. The 40,000 number is the high-end estimate in Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 48—49; Cantrell, *Kenneth*, 272. Barr gave the estimate of one-third black turnout and stated: "The small turnout undercut any immediate hope of reestablishing the significance of black political power." Yet a black vote of 12,800 wet to 3,200 dry, a turnout of just 16,000 votes, would provide a wet majority of 9,600 votes, well above the 6,000-vote margin of victory. Alwyn Barr, *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas, 1528-1995* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 113. Joseph Locke cites Barr's assessment when stating that black political activism was largely muted by 1908 in "Making the Bible Belt: Preachers, Prohibition, and the Politicization of Southern Religion, 1877-1918" (Ph.D. Thesis, Rice University, 2012), 260—261.

<sup>87</sup> "Your friend" to Wahrmond, August 5, 1909, in Looney, *Brewers*, 70.

11, after the election, the operative had trouble explaining how the election that should have been won with a majority of two hundred was lost by ten votes. “The only way I can account for the result,” he confessed, “is that the negroes took their money and retaliated by voting the pro ticket to even up for the treatment received by the negro Dave Johnson that Luedde put out of business after putting him in business.”<sup>88</sup> The brewers learned the hard way that African American men could not be simply bought off; they wanted to be treated as men.

By the summer of 1912 Rayner himself felt that he was being used. “You say ‘you will have to excuse me [from giving more financial support],’” he wrote to the brewers that July, “but when you need a colored vote and call on me I shall need tell you to excuse me.”<sup>89</sup> The brewers' bewildered response to his request for compensation demonstrates their incomprehension of the value of their African American allies, and the lack of additional correspondence from Rayner in the records indicates that he followed through on his threat.<sup>90</sup> Later that year, Rayner wrote an essay in a white newspaper in which he openly despaired, “Politics has nothing to offer the negro.” Since some of their race aspired to become “protagonist[s] in politics,” he bemoaned, African Americans generally were deceived by “utopian promises” and plunged into political activism, only to find their “political opportunities circumscribed” and “manhood proscribed.” The word choice of “protagonist” fit his political record and echoed his irate letter to the brewers

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<sup>88</sup> “Your friend” to Wahrmund, August 11, 1909, in Looney, *Brewers*, 71.

<sup>89</sup> Rayner to Wahrmund, July 9, 1912, in Looney, *Brewers*, 68–9.

<sup>90</sup> Wahrmund to Rayner, July 12, 1912, in Looney, *Brewers*, 69. The only further evidence of Rayner’s interaction with the brewers was a 90-day loan for \$75 on March 26, 1914, perhaps as a reward out of pity for his extensive past services in his hour of need. Looney, *Brewers*, 211.

earlier that year, indicating that he saw himself as a naïf whose political activism against Prohibition did not elevate his race, but rather saw it further degraded through white backlash.<sup>91</sup>

Making matters worse, dries blamed African Americans for their political failure in 1911 and doubled down on winning over the white vote while suppressing the vote of racial minorities. Statements criticizing the foul influence of “the low negro and Mexican vote,” the “Mexican and ignorant negro,” and the like peppered the Texas Anti-Saloon League’s newspaper, especially after the dries’ loss in the 1911 vote. One cartoon in that paper right after the 1911 election had Lady Justice peeking out of her blindfold, weighing votes on uneven scales tilting against Prohibition, and receiving votes from a dark-skinned man who said, “Here is some perfectly fresh ones mam” and wore a pack of suspicious “poll tax receipts.” In other words, African American votes corrupted justice by tipping the election, and someone else had paid their poll taxes.<sup>92</sup> James B. Cranfill, whose racist editorial had hurt the dries in 1887, continued a similar line of argument with far greater success in 1912. He openly pined for “the kindly influence of the Christian slave-holder” upon a newly rebellious generation of African Americans so they might not vote wrongly. J. B. Gambrell, a Baptist minister slightly more moderate than Cranfill on racial issues, still argued that by voting wet “negroes degrade citizenship” and called upon whites to “look this matter straight in the face and meet it like the Anglo-Saxon race has met every great issue.”<sup>93</sup> A letter to the editor of the *Home and State* by H. C. Park

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<sup>91</sup> *Houston Chronicle*, October 20, 1912. See also Cantrell, *Kenneth*, 271.

<sup>92</sup> J. B. Gambrell and G. C. Rankin, “The Preacher and the Pending Issue,” *Home and State*, June 29, 1912, p. 3; cartoon from *Home and State*, August 5, 1911, p. 3.

<sup>93</sup> *Baptist Standard*, August 24 and October 19, 1911. See also Ivy, *No Saloon*, 117—118.

put the issue baldly in commentary about the 1912 U.S. Senate race between a wet and a dry: the wet candidate “wanted the lower class of negroes and Mexicans to rule” but “the white Americans” would support his opponent, Morris Sheppard, soon to become Prohibition’s champion in the U.S. Senate.<sup>94</sup>

These attacks were not merely rhetorical, but corresponded to increasing intimidation that reduced turnout. Whereas the Populist movement brought out about eighty-five percent of the African American vote in 1896, the African American vote had plummeted to just twenty-three percent turnout in 1902, even before the poll tax was implemented. By the time voters approved statewide Prohibition in 1919, their share was smaller still.<sup>95</sup> Voter suppression by dries against ethnic minorities proved ruthlessly effective.

Public pressure to suppress the participation of African Americans and Mexican Americans in politics contributed to the court case that doomed the anti-Prohibition coalition in Texas. A suit filed in January 1915 by the office of Texas Attorney General B. F. Looney demanded the brewers pay over twenty-one million dollars for violating the state constitution and various laws, both anti-trust laws and laws limiting the use of corporate money to influence politics and elections. The *Abilene Daily Reporter* in 1915 highlighted the sensational claim that the brewers paid poll taxes for wet voters, “especially negroes.”<sup>96</sup> In a January 1916 court settlement, the seven Texas brewers admitted to the charges, paid fines of about two hundred ninety thousand dollars (far less

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<sup>94</sup> H. C. Park, “Let the People Rule,” *Home and State*, July 6, 1912, 5.

<sup>95</sup> Cantrell, *Kenneth*, 248, 327 fn 10; Plocheck, “Elections in Texas,” *Texas Almanac*.

<sup>96</sup> *Abilene Daily Reporter*, January 10, 1915, p. 1.

than the initial sum), and forfeited their business charters for two years.<sup>97</sup> With that stroke, the anti-Prohibition coalition was finished in Texas. The wets' fate was sealed when the state legislature voted all of Texas dry in 1918 and the voters added Prohibition to the Texas state constitution by referendum in 1919.<sup>98</sup> Without a powerful white interest group to protect them in the late 1910s, African Americans' influence on Prohibition elections shrank to near insignificance.<sup>99</sup>

The brewers in Texas proved a powerful ally of African American enfranchisement, particularly after the poll tax of 1902, but the alliance was strictly self-interested for brewers and African Americans alike and short-lived due to internal divisions and outside pressures. As Barry Hankins has aptly stated, "Culture wars create odd bedfellows and ever-shifting alliances," and preachers like Rayner lived out these shifting alliances.<sup>100</sup>

By joining the brewers' coalition, African American preachers aided their former political enemies, anti-Prohibitionist conservative whites (especially those in the German-dominated brewing industry), in order to secure their liberties to vote and to drink against the campaigns of their former Populist allies, Prohibitionist progressive whites (usually

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<sup>97</sup> In Looney's words, "This volume [sic; there were two volumes] contains practically all of the evidence introduced." B. F. Looney, ed., *The Brewers and Texas Politics*, vol. 1 (San Antonio, 1916), 1—2. For further discussion of this and related lawsuits by Attorney General Looney, see Kevin C. Motl's delightfully titled "Under the Influence: The Texas Business Men's Association and the Campaign against Reform, 1906-1915," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 109 (April 2006), 494—529.

<sup>98</sup> Ernest Cherrington, ed., *The Anti-Saloon Year Book, 1926* (Westerville, OH: American Issue Press, 1926), 151—152. See also Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas."

<sup>99</sup> For percentages, see Cantrell, *Kenneth*, 248, 327 fn 10; Plocheck, "Elections in Texas." For absolute numbers, see Cantrell, *Kenneth*, 272; Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 48—49; J. Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 240—246.

<sup>100</sup> Hankins, *Jesus and Gin*, 187.

white evangelicals). African American votes, especially in the 1911 contest, proved vital in forestalling a successful vote for statewide Prohibition until it was a moot point in May 1919, a full four months after the Eighteenth Amendment had been ratified.<sup>101</sup> The diverse coalition demonstrated the potential power of interracial politics and briefly rekindled allegedly moribund African American political activism for a decade and a half after the imposition of poll taxes.

### *Conclusion*

The racial dynamics of prohibition were complex and sometimes ironic. White prohibitionists increasingly sought to affirm a racial hierarchy, particularly keeping African Americans in their place, while embattled and desperate brewers, in order to save themselves, politically empowered those same ethnic minorities who were being oppressed. While some immigrants like Germans overwhelmingly embraced the wet cause, other immigrants like Swedes found cultural opportunities by joining the dries. African Americans, supposedly at the cultural bottom of the heap, chose from a variety of responses to advance their individual and collective fortunes, switching from dry to wet according to the shifting circumstances, and significantly impacted prohibition elections by their actions, particularly in 1911. While peculiar, such politics was anything but dark for those who found opportunity through them.

Many who opposed prohibition not only sought opportunity but saw themselves as defenders of liberty. Some articulated their position in terms of the classical Christian doctrine of temperance, or moderation between the extremes of overuse and abstinence,

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<sup>101</sup> Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas."

which required meeting and overcoming real temptation for moral growth. Since prohibitionists sought to deny the opportunity for moderate use for fear of excess and demanded total abstinence from a God-given good (alcohol), wets argued that prohibition was itself a vice that stunted moral development. Wets also contended that prohibition violated political liberties, taking upon the state the task of purifying hearts and minds—a task traditionally given to the individual, the church, and to God. Whether articulating classical Christian morality against modern innovations or contending with a progressive movement that aggrandized new and terrible powers to the state, anti-prohibitionists fought out of fidelity to liberty.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Fidelity to That Liberty: Christian Freedom, Self-Government, and Anti-Prohibition<sup>1</sup>

While the very name “Baptist” had grown synonymous with prohibitionist sentiment around the nation by the early 1900s, the 1905 Temperance Committee report of the largest Baptist convention in the United States, the National Baptist Convention (NBC), implicitly denounced prohibition. With over two million members in 1906, the NBC was also the largest black-led denomination in the nation and by 1910 its leadership would embrace prohibition wholeheartedly, but in 1905 the NBC’s Temperance Committee was headed by a Texan, John B. Rayner. Though he had prominently backed prohibition in Texas’s 1887 statewide referendum, Rayner had a change of heart by 1905. In that year’s Temperance Committee report, he claimed that any temperance “not from above” was “not Christian temperance,” effectively insinuating that abstinence from alcohol came from changed hearts and rather than changed laws.<sup>2</sup> The true cure for drink was the Church Covenant, a reference to J. Newton Brown’s 1853 Covenant, which was widely shared among white and black Baptists alike and endorsed by the NBC in 1900. The covenant explicitly called for members “to abstain from the sale and use of

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<sup>1</sup> Part of this chapter appears in Brendan Payne, “Protecting Black Suffrage: Poll Taxes, Preachers, and Anti-Prohibition in Texas, 1887-1916,” *Journal of Southern History* 83 (Nov. 2017), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> *Twenty-Fifth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention*, 156–157. NBC membership in 1906 bested the Southern Baptist Convention by 2.2 million to 1.9 million, while the Northern Baptists held only 0.9 million. In Texas, however, Southern Baptists outnumbered National Baptists almost 2-to-1. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies, 1906: Part 1—Summary and General Tables*, ed. E. Dana Durand (Washington, D.C., 1910), 30, 272.

intoxicating drinks as a beverage” but said nothing about prohibition.<sup>3</sup> He further articulated ambivalence about prohibitory laws that made men “more anxious to procure strong drink, and they buy it in larger quantities.” While implying that prohibitory laws were counter-productive for reducing drunkenness, he advocated strongly for temperance that is truly Christian, which “can only be enforced by example, persuasion and dissuasion, expressed in personal Christian service.”<sup>4</sup> Rayner thus affirmed the Baptist conviction that drinking was sinful while suggesting that Baptist churches had no need for state laws against drinking if they would simply apply church discipline to their members. Only upright Christian lives and education, not government power, he maintained, could make men sober. As Rayner described in a letter seven years later, he fought prohibition out of “fidelity to that liberty which gives every man a right to buy and use refreshing cool drinks.”<sup>5</sup> Whether or not drinking was moral was beside the point. For Rayner, regulating such morality was the role of the church, not the state, and the church must not try to use the government to remove a man’s liberty to choose, even if he chose sin.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles W. Deweese, *Baptist Church Covenants* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990), 71. That covenant, a modification of the 1833 New Hampshire Covenant, was still very popular with Baptist churches as of the 1990s, though some have excised the phrase about abstaining from alcoholic beverages; see pp. 65—76. Proving beyond a doubt that this is the covenant to which Rayner refers, the 1909 Temperance Committee report quotes a “covenant” with the exact same wording, though the order is slightly changed by swapping the words “use” and “sale.” *Twenty-Ninth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention*, 192. Thanks to Bill Summers and Taffey Hall at the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives for bringing my attention to their resources on Church Covenants.

<sup>4</sup> *Twenty-Fifth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention*, 156–157.

<sup>5</sup> John B. Rayner to Otto Wahrmond, July 9, 1912, in B. F. Looney, *The Brewers and Texas Politics* (San Antonio, self-published, 1916), 69. The context of this letter and more on Rayner’s relationship with the brewers is discussed at length in chapter 3, “Politics Dark and Peculiar.”

Of all the religious ideas that mobilized opposition to prohibition, none enjoyed more invocation from all kinds of clergy and lay people than Christian liberty. White Methodist and Baptist laypeople, particularly popularly elected politicians, wielded the language of freedom to demonstrate that prohibition bore more in common with Islamic teaching than historic Christian doctrine. More traditional Christians objected to a totalistic opposition to alcohol since it implied that men could only be made good by force of law, which threatened the cherished virtue of moderation achieved by self-control and proposed new and terrifying powers for the state to regulate good Christians' lives.

This chapter addresses several ways that liberty became a rallying cry for anti-prohibitionists. First, wets claimed that totalistic opposition to alcohol consumption undermined traditional Christian teaching that moderate drinking promoted morality better than total abstinence. Prohibitionists responded to concerns over heavy drinking by contesting the definition of liberty, which they defined as the ability to do good, including total freedom from the degrading effects of drugs such as alcohol. For them, individual consumptive choice and local liberty took a subordinate role to social good and human progress. Anti-prohibitionists, on the other hand, appealed to classical Christian theology and the Bible to argue that alcoholic beverages were God-given, so to insist upon complete abstinence from them was no virtue but rather a vice. Perspectives on prohibition depended greatly upon one's denomination, with most Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Catholics, among others, taking noted exception to the pull of prohibition.

Second, anti-prohibitionists championed limited government. This view included a Jeffersonian sense that deeply divisive issues such as alcohol consumption were best

left to individuals, families, communities, and local governments rather than the state or, even worse, federal government. This localist critique had roots in the American Revolution and carried particular weight in the South, which had fought the Civil War to protect their regional practice of slavery and long after the war invoked the rights of each state and locale to determine contentious moral issues for themselves. The notion also had roots in historic Christian theology, which taught that individuals grew morally through self-control, Christian community, and divine assistance rather than the imposition of righteousness and abolition of vice by government control. This voluntarist critique implied that prohibitionists attempted to use the state to accomplish a perfection in unwilling men that only God through the church and willing hearts could attain, prompting some anti-prohibitionists to claim that prohibition fit better with the legalism of Islam than the freedom of Christianity. Prohibitionists' dedication to defeating a particularly destructive vice drove otherwise conservative evangelical Christians to embrace progressive innovations in government regulation that greatly expanded the power of the state over individuals in the quest to make men good. While the increasingly dominant white evangelical population sought to use the democratic state as a tool to reshape the morals of society into their image, religious and ethnic minorities such as Catholics and African American Protestants generally sought a less intrusive government so they could work out their salvation within their communities.

Before delving into these ways that liberty informed the discussion over prohibition, an evaluation of Robert Wuthnow's scholarship on religious liberty in Texas is in order. In *Rough Country*, Robert Wuthnow argues that churches in Texas were for most of the nineteenth century too focused on bringing order to a wild frontier by

building institutions and instilling moral character to invest themselves much in politics, but by the early twentieth century the landscape had changed. Fostered especially by dominant Baptists and Methodists, the notion of liberty of conscience became a major part of Texan civil religion, and believers on both sides of the prohibition issue claimed to uphold the rights of the individual. Wets argued that each person should have free reign over whether or not to drink, but the church had no place demanding new laws to force compliance with religious teaching. Drys, on the other hand, defended the right of individuals to live upright lives free from the chains of alcohol addiction and the moral degradation of saloon culture. Prohibitionists also argued that saloons corrupted politics through their collusion with political machines, that brewers and distillers were dominated by “foreigners” who did not appreciate American liberty, and that the leading dry organizations were not churches but rather nonpartisan, nonsectarian groups such as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and Anti-Saloon League (ASL).<sup>6</sup>

### *Liberty as Moderate Use*

Part of the argument that prohibition hindered moral development related to the notion that Christian virtue came through moderation. “Temperance” had throughout Christian history been understood not as abstinence from drink but as the moderate use of pleasure. Only in modern times did temperance take on a particular connection with alcoholic beverages. Following Aristotle’s notion of finding virtue by following a middle between two extremes, ancient and Medieval Christian theologians developed articulations of Christian virtue that rested between the extremes of two vices, one of

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America’s Most Powerful Bible Belt State* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2014), 88—90, 103—110.

excess and the other of deficiency. For Aristotle, the virtue of temperance lay between the excess of self-indulgence, which was by far the most common and dangerous vice, and the deficiency of shunning pleasure, which in Aristotle's time was so rare that he had to invent a name for it: insensibility. The great Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas explicitly tackled the issue of whether shunning pleasure could be considered a vice and concluded that abstinence could be praiseworthy or necessary in certain circumstances for the sake of physical or spiritual health, but even so pleasure ought not to be shunned altogether.<sup>7</sup> Translating the virtue to alcohol use meant that self-indulgence corresponded to drunkenness, insensibility to abstinence, and temperance to moderate drinking.

Given this long-standing classical understanding of temperance, prohibition would have seemed absurd to North Americans before the eighteenth century. Alcohol was virtually unknown among North American Indians before the arrival of European traders and settlers. Even the exacting New England Puritans of the seventeenth century had no problem with "hot water," as they called fermented spirits, and the Mayflower was well-stocked with it. One Reverend Francis Higginson sailed for Massachusetts Bay in 1629 with forty-five casks of beer and twenty gallons of brandy for his Puritan relatives and community, and Jonathan Edwards's father enjoyed an ordination party in 1698 provisioned with four quarts of rum and eight quarts of wine. Increase Mather preached that "wine is from God" but "the drunkard is from the Devil."<sup>8</sup> Early Puritans in

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<sup>7</sup> John Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity: And Other Paradoxes of the American Spirit* (Indianapolis: Bobb-Merrill Company, 1927), 16—19; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.7—8, trans. W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), The Internet Classics Archive, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.2.ii.html>; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 2.142.1.

<sup>8</sup> Norman H. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1976), 9. Mark Noll notes that some historians think Increase's son Cotton Mather coined the phrase, but if so he was echoing Increase's words from 1673: "Drink is in itself a

colonial New England could and did distinguish alcohol's good and evil uses, and called it temperance.

This notion of temperance enjoyed widespread acceptance by American Christians until the early nineteenth century, when alcoholism in the United States reached epidemic proportions and drinking became synonymous with drunkenness. Advances in distilling technology, the profitability of converting grain crops into alcoholic beverages, the replacement of milder beverages like beer and cider with stronger drinks like whiskey, and social acceptance of heavier drinking may have been turning the US after the Revolutionary War into "The Alcohol Republic," to borrow the title of W. J. Rorabaugh's book. By 1830, an average American over fifteen years old drank eighty-eight bottles of whiskey a year, nearly three times as much as the average American today. These excesses prompted social reformers like the Rev. Lyman Beecher in 1826 to form the American Temperance Society and spearhead a national temperance movement against the destructive influences of alcohol. While most temperance advocates initially preferred moral suasion to combat the evils of demon rum, prohibitionists insisted upon wielding the moral force of the state to eliminate the very temptation to drink by outlawing the production and sale of alcohol, and throughout the nineteenth century they became an increasingly dominant part of the movement.<sup>9</sup>

Prohibitionists' understanding of morality represented a marked departure from the classical Christian teaching, which focused on building righteous character by

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creature from God, and to be received with thankfulness." Mark Noll, *One Nation Under God? Christian Faith and Political Action in America* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988), 129.

<sup>9</sup> W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcohol Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Mark Noll, *One Nation Under God? Christian Faith and Political Action in America* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988), 130—133.

overcoming real temptation, to a more modern emphasis on preventing sin by removing temptation entirely. Rather than merely exhorting parishioners to overcome bondage to drunkenness by either moderate drinking or voluntary abstention, more ministers saw the scourge of demon rum as inexorable, requiring not merely individual willpower or empowerment but divinely sanctioned intervention on a broader social level. The locus of this godly social reform also shifted from the church as such to the state, with the church playing a crucial but ultimately secondary role as a pressure group to ensure the progressive advancement of human morality not so much by the regeneration of souls by the power of the Holy Spirit in individual hearts as by coercion from a Christian government.

Why did Prohibitionists break with Christian tradition by adopting such an apparently radical approach to alcohol? The answer lies in part in the American Revolution. Between then and at least the Civil War, most Protestants in the United States based their faith off of commonsense readings of the Bible, individualism, and embrace of republicanism. Mark Noll, Nathan Hatch, and others have observed that this alliance between representative government and Christianity – even of the Protestant variety – was by no means obvious or natural but was remarkably innovative for a faith that elsewhere had been expressed and defined through hierarchical relationships and community consensus. In short, most American Protestants had already broken dramatically with Christian tradition by linking it with individualism and republicanism. Moreover, the move towards individualistic and commonsense bases for theology made it

more likely for American Christians to adopt new ideas that were unconnected or even opposed to classical Christian teachings.<sup>10</sup>

Various learned laymen took up the pen to expose prohibition as an innovation opposed to classic Christian teaching. Alexander Watkins Terrell, a Texas state senator who later became a chief architect of the state's dry poll tax law, denounced Prohibition as early as 1879. On the one hand, he claimed that centuries of the Islamic Prohibition on alcohol led to the gradual "physical and moral decay" of the Turks. On the other hand, he objected to banning wine, "which the Savior himself once made by his miraculous power, to cheer the heart of a bridegroom and his guests, and against the temperate use of which He never uttered a word during all his pilgrimage on earth." For Terrell and the constituents he represented in the Texas Senate, Jesus was on the side of temperate use of alcohol, while prohibitionists were on the side of Islam.<sup>11</sup>

Terrell was neither the first nor last politician to link prohibition to Islam. In 1867 one John A. Andrew disagreed with "those who would rest the hopes of humanity on the commandments of men" such as prohibition and pointed instead to "the promises of Gospel Grace" as the effective means to live truly temperate lives. He also pointed to the positive reforms of England in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, citing the people's "[r]eligious faith, Christian charity, philanthropic benevolence," and other virtues in all levels of society,

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<sup>10</sup> Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> Terrell's comments were from a speech on a floor of the Texas State Senate in 1879 but republished in *Galveston Daily News*, September 10, 1885; see also *Austin Statesman*, September 22, 1886, and Lewis L. Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, American Diplomat* (Austin, 2004), 75–76, 78, 112. Incredibly, given his comments about the degradation of the Turks, Terrell later became the U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1893 to 1897.

which “now battle effectually against the vices of society, and the evil inclinations of human nature.” “This progress,” he claimed, “was not Jewish, nor Mohammedan, but it was Christian. It was not due to law, but to liberty.” Andrew believed the most effective way of combating vice among all classes was Christian faith and virtue stemming from liberty, not the legalism he saw in other religions.

Others also linked prohibition to legalistic Islam, which they contrasted with true Christianity. On the eve of the 1911 statewide vote on prohibition, Oscar Colquitt gave a speech in which he denounced radical prohibitionists as “fanatics” and “Mohammedans,” apparently because he thought they inappropriately mixed religion and politics in a legalistic way.<sup>12</sup> In 1920, John Erskine, a professor at Columbia University, wrote in favor of “the Christian virtue of temperance to the Mohammedan discipline of prohibition,” preferring Christian temperance as classically understood—drinking in moderation—to a religion that he saw as restricting one’s freedom. For certain Christians taking the classical perspective of temperance, Prohibition came from a religion of legalism, not true Christianity, and the true cure for the moral decline from alcohol abuse was the liberty of Christian temperance.<sup>13</sup>

Erskine followed a similar line of thought. He suggested that prohibition contradicts the essence of Christian liberty and responsibility. Without a real choice between good and evil, he reasoned, there is no virtue in an action at all, yet

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<sup>12</sup> Oscar Branch Colquitt, “Speech at Palestine, July 13, 1911,” first quote p. 10, second and third quotes 13, folder Literary Productions, box 2E177, Oscar Branch Colquitt Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Texas’s two Senators at the time were Charles Allen Culberson and Joseph Weldon Bailey, Sr.

<sup>13</sup> John A. Andrew, *The Errors of Prohibition: An Argument delivered in the Representatives’ Hall, Boston, April 3, 1867, before a Joint Special Committee of the General Court of Massachusetts* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1867), 48, 65—66; Erskine, *Prohibition*, 32.

prohibitionists sought to make men good by removing the temptation to sin, and they claimed all who “would permit the opportunity to get drunk must be an advocate of drunkenness.”<sup>14</sup> Yet Erskine contended that “drunkenness has never been more thoroughly condemned or more successfully combatted [sic] than when the ideal of freedom with self-control has been sincerely followed.”<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, he located the “viciousness of prohibition” in its “resemblance to drunkenness, in that it also takes away the sovereignty of the mind and deprives character of moral responsibility,” an affront to both Aristotelian Greeks and early Christians alike.<sup>16</sup> This virtue of Christian temperance he derived not only from the early church in general, but from the Apostle Paul’s teaching in Ephesians 5:18 to “Be not *drunk* with wine,” rather than avoid drink entirely. He closed by citing Luke 7:33-34: “John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; ... The Son of man is come eating and drinking.”<sup>17</sup> Rather than fostering the temperance taught by Christ and the Apostle Paul in the Bible, prohibitionists were denying individuals their moral responsibility to choose between good and evil and thereby denying them the chance to make moral decisions at all. In short, Erskine wondered “whether the Eighteenth Amendment is an amendment to the Constitution or to the New Testament.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 17.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, emphasis his.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

For Erskine as for Emerson, prohibitionists misinterpreted not only the Bible but also the teaching of the church. The catechisms for Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Lutherans alike explicitly mentioned the wine as one of the elements received in communion, so Erskine argued prohibitionists should reform their catechisms before supporting prohibition.<sup>19</sup> Only by divorcing themselves from the traditional teachings of the church could Christians devote themselves so wholeheartedly to the innovation of prohibition. As noted in chapter 2, he observed that those who did not bind themselves to the Bible or Christian tradition were free to ignore its teachings on alcohol, a position neatly embodied by the iconoclast and prohibitionist Elizabeth Cady Stanton.<sup>20</sup>

Given this fact, it is not surprising that significant support for the ASL coalition came from liberal Protestant clergy who drew their spiritual power not from a conservative reading of Scripture but from a spiritually baptized vision of cultural progress. Various liberal Protestant newspapers saw the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God in 1919 with the twin victories of prohibition and the U.S. victory in World War I. The *Congregationalist and Advance* newspaper predicted the imminent and peaceful diffusion of “Christianity and civilization throughout the world” like that seen in “the sober part of the community.” Another editorial sums up the delirious optimism of the post-war period with its opening line, “The only word for nineteen hundred and nineteen is forward. Forward into the great, new day of Jesus Christ.”<sup>21</sup> “The achievement of the hour for Prohibition is the greatest glory of the century,” wrote the jubilant *Universalist*

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<sup>19</sup> Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 22—24.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>21</sup> “Editorial,” Boston *Congregationalist and Advance* (Jan. 2, 1919), page 3-5.

*Leader* for New Year's 1919, while creatively applying a Bible verse from the second day of creation: "And God said, 'Let the dry land appear,' ... for it means, as of old, the beginning of a new and better life for the world."<sup>22</sup> Whether or not this creative usage of Genesis 1 may have been intended to treat the passage as Scripture, the liberal Protestant author effectively converted the creation story from a divine miracle to one chapter in the story of human progress in which the new and modern continually supplants the old. "No such charter of freedom and fulfilment to women and children has ever been written," the *Leader* declared about prohibition's success in late January 1919; "we should recognize it as one of the very greatest and most inspiring events in history, and one that may well mark the beginning of a new order of accelerated spiritual evolution."<sup>23</sup> It seemed that a heavenly order had come to earth, but one based more upon the spiritual evolution and elevation of pure human culture than upon the Bible as Scripture.

The divided stance of prohibitionists on the Bible can also be seen in whether they thought the drunkard was in danger of hell. Temperance literature in the nineteenth century often contained a variant of the phrase, "No drunkard... shall inherit the kingdom of God," from 1 Corinthians 6:10,<sup>24</sup> and a few leading prohibitionists repeated this claim in the twentieth century. In 1919, Ferdinand Iglehart dedicated *King Alcohol Dethroned* to the salvation of souls: "This book goes out with the hope that it may reclaim some

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<sup>22</sup> Editorial, "God said, 'Let the dry land appear,' and it was so," Boston *Universalist Leader* (January 1, 1919), page 94.

<sup>23</sup> Robert A. Woods, Title Page, Boston *Universalist Leader* (January 30, 1919), p. 129.

<sup>24</sup> See Amos D. McCoy, "The Effects of Intemperance on Woman," *A Series of Temperance Sermons, Delivered in the City Hall, Lowell, by the Several Clergymen of the City* (Lowell, MA: Leonard Huntress, E. A. Rice & Co., 1841), 214 and Rev. James B. Dunn, ed., *Moody's Talks on Temperance with Anecdotes and Incidents in Connection with the Tabernacle Temperance Work in Boston* (New York: National Temperance Society and Publication House, 1877), 122.

drunkard... that some soul may be saved for time and eternity.”<sup>25</sup> However, this fear of hell was not shared by liberal prohibitionists such as the modernist Presbyterian Charles Stelzle, who took a leading role in the Social Gospel movement to reform society according to Christian principles and modern scientific management. In his 1919 defense of prohibition, *Why Prohibition!*, Stelzle mocked the idea of people going to hell as something the fundamentalist revival preacher “Billy Sunday says.”<sup>26</sup> Thus Christian prohibitionists were divided between fundamentalists like Sunday and Inglehart, whose concern to save souls through prohibition was rooted in a commonsense evangelical interpretation of the Bible, and modernists like Stelzle, who mocked their concern and shunned such a literal reading of Scripture.

Anti-prohibitionist Christians, on the other hand, tended to believe in more old-time religion. Traditional Lutherans regarded with wariness the tendencies of prohibitionists to advance the Kingdom of God through political reform, though more pietistic Lutherans sought more radical reform and were more open to prohibition. The German Lutheran churches of Texas largely avoided discussion of the alcohol question and took a tolerant stance towards beer consumption. While Swedish Lutherans in the United States tended to support prohibition due to their pietist leanings, German Lutherans—the overwhelming majority of Lutherans in Texas—tended to view prohibition as “puritan legalism” (though New England Puritans would have pointed out that they drank copiously). The issue of prohibition was serious enough to help prevent

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<sup>25</sup> Ferdinand Cowle Inglehart, *King Alcohol Dethroned* (Westerville, OH: The American Issue Publishing Company, 1919), vii-viii.

<sup>26</sup> Charles Stelzle, *Why Prohibition!* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1918), 85.

church union between Missouri Synod Lutherans, who opposed it, and Augustana Lutherans, who supported it. The Missouri Synod group also refused union with the Augustana faction due to the latter's untoward fraternization with modernists, state-church unionists, and members of secret societies.<sup>27</sup> For traditional Lutherans, prohibition was tainted with modernism.

Members of the Lutheran association that later became the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), known today as more conservative and separatist than the Missouri Synod, also took a firm stance against prohibition as antithetical to Christian freedom. Before 1919, WELS was an association of various state synods bearing the unwieldy name "Joint Evangelical Lutheran Synod Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Other States," and the Michigan group took the lead in opposing prohibition as contrary to Christian liberty.<sup>28</sup> The Michigan Synod, which had in 1909 healed a brief but intense internal split, took on the issue of prohibition directly at their annual conventions in 1911 and 1912, suggesting it was an issue that united rather than divided conservative Lutherans at a relatively sensitive time.<sup>29</sup> Under such circumstances, Director O. J. Hoenecke's report on prohibition in 1911, "Prohibition in the Light of Holy Scripture,"

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<sup>27</sup> Quote in Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1964), 205; see also 352-353.

<sup>28</sup> In 1917 the arrangement shifted from an association of autonomous synods to a single synod with various districts. In 1919 the synod changed its name to the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, or "Wisconsin Synod" for shorthand, and in 1959 was renamed the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, with the tidy acronym WELS. Erwin L. Lueker, Luther Poellot, and Paul Jackson, eds., "Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod," *Christian Cyclopaedia* (Concordia Publishing House, 2000), <http://cyclopedia.lcms.org/display.asp?t1=w&word=WISCONSINEVANGELICALLUTHERANSYNOD>. The Michigan group had joined the association in 1890, experienced the split in 1896, but the rise of new leaders led to more friendly relations from 1904 on, culminating in the reunification in 1909.

<sup>29</sup> Edward C. Fredrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans: A History of the Single Synod, Federation, and Merger*, Second printing (Milwaukee: Northwestern Pub. House, 2000), 123.

gave an excellent indication of the widespread view of his church body. “Correctly considered,” he stated, “prohibition is basically nothing else but a renewed onslaught on the glorious liberty of the Christian, in that thereby the attempt is made to impose a yoke, similar to the old one from which he has been freed, once again on his neck and thereby put him in danger of losing entirely his freedom.” Hoenecke took up all of his time allotted at the conference speaking to this one point, and still had much to say about prohibition at the next annual convention. There, he argued that good Lutherans “dare not” allow “the precious blessing of Christian freedom be curtailed,” and “therefore dare not and cannot make common cause with the advocates of prohibition, [but] must all the more oppose their dangerous error with the weapon of the Word in the areas assigned to us by God.” While he denounced prohibition as a grave error, he also urged compliance with prohibition laws. When “prohibition agitation” pressures the state to make “laws forbidding the use, sale, etc., of potable spirits, then we for the sake of God [must] conduct ourselves as obedient Christians... in this matter” just as “in all things that do not conflict with God’s Word.” Obedience to the state did not preclude seeking to overturn bad laws, however. He urged Christians to “continue our testimony against prohibition in so far as it presents itself as a moral demand.”<sup>30</sup> Michigan Synod Lutherans did not stay quiet about prohibition, but took an active stance against it.

The peculiar theological and social circumstances of the Michigan Synod explain some of its strong anti-prohibition sentiment in 1911, but by the end of that decade the Michigan Synod had become one of several districts in the Wisconsin Synod, and churches throughout this more tightly organized denomination echoed the Michigan

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<sup>30</sup> Fredrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*, 124.

views. A historian of the WELS notes that Lutherans in Michigan tended to oppose prohibition so forcefully because they feared that Reformed thought, which had so much influence in Michigan, seemed to them a threat to Christian liberty, whereas in Wisconsin the larger Catholic and Lutheran populations reduced Reformed influence to the point that it seemed unthreatening to them. After prohibition entered the U.S. Constitution, however, opposition to prohibition did not shrink within the Wisconsin Synod; according to the Lutheran historian Hoenecke: “Quite the contrary! They represented, by and large, most of the synodical thinking and speaking and writing on the subject during the decades of enactment and enforcement of prohibition.”<sup>31</sup> While most conservative Lutherans around the nation opposed prohibition, many did not speak out forcefully against it until it became law.

Catholics doubted prohibition in part because they preferred to work out their sobriety within their church rather than letting a democratic government run by Protestants advance the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The most prominent Catholic apostle of abstinence from alcohol (hereafter “abstinence”) in the mid-nineteenth century, Father Theobald Mathew of Ireland, got into trouble with the Catholic hierarchy for his ecumenical fervor. A Capuchin friar known for his charismatic style and love of the poor, Fr. Mathew dedicated himself fully to the cause of abstinence in 1838 by joining the Quaker-founded Cork Total Abstinence Union with the fateful words, “Here goes, in the name of God.” Within three years, he had coaxed 4,647,000 people, including many Protestants, to take his nonsectarian total abstinence pledge through ecumenical crusades in the British Isles. Despite or perhaps because of his success, Fr. Mathew displeased his

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<sup>31</sup> Fredrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*, 124.

superiors. He received a letter from a friend in 1840 that some in the Irish hierarchy had complained that his sermons “appear[ed] to entertain sentiments too liberal towards Protestants in matters of religion” when Catholics “should let them know that there is but one true Church, and that they are strayed sheep from the fold.”<sup>32</sup>

Fr. Mathew then launched a temperance crusade in the United States from 1849-51 that further aggravated the Catholic hierarchy. Like his earlier work in Ireland and in Britain, the crusade was ecumenical and was very successful numerically: he had administered his pledge to over six hundred thousand souls.<sup>33</sup> Yet if Fr. Mathew enjoyed popular success, he lacked wholehearted support from the Catholic hierarchy both before and during his American tour. The Bishop of Philadelphia grew uneasy about Mathew’s stress on the pledge alone apart from religion, while the Bishop of Boston publicly disapproved of Mathew speaking at the same stage with Protestant clergy, radical activists, and civic leaders. Near the end of his life, Mathew became disillusioned with voluntary temperance and advocated legal prohibition of alcohol. Father Mathew’s willingness to put temperance ahead of the interests of the church hampered his long-term success in the United States.<sup>34</sup>

As Father Mathew’s focus on abstinence led him to the edge of Catholic orthodoxy, other clergy found limits in Catholic theology on how far to push temperance. Because Catholic doctrine held that alcohol was not inherently sinful, Catholic

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<sup>32</sup> Bland, *Hibernian*, 30-31.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-24, 32-33, 40.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 32-42. The Bishop of Boston went so far as to say, “The appearance of fellowship between a Catholic priest and such men can hardly be without evil results.” *Memoranda*, July 24, 1849, of the Boston Archdiocesan Archives, as quoted in Robert H. Lord, John E. Sexton, Edward Harrington, *History of the Archdiocese of Boston* (New York, 1944), II, 644, as quoted in Bland, *Hibernian*, 38.

temperance advocates generally rejected legal bans on alcohol. Abstinence sentiment among Catholics had grown enough by 1872 that clergy from around the nation found the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America (CTAU), which by the early 1900s had enlisted over a hundred thousand Catholics to take an abstinence pledge. Abstinence for the CTAU was voluntary, an extraordinary act of piety or necessity rather than a universal obligation. The opening convention of the CTAU in 1872 issued an “Address to the Catholics of America” insisting upon the motto of “Moral Suasion” while shunning “Prohibitory laws, restrictive license systems, and special legislation against drunkenness.”<sup>35</sup> At that same convention, Rev. James McDevitt of the District of Columbia argued that Catholics must work for abstinence “on a strictly Catholic basis, discard all political considerations or means, and labor for the amelioration of the victims of intemperance through religious principles only.”<sup>36</sup> Catholic religion alone, not political activism, would guide Catholic temperance.

Another peculiar Catholic doctrine embedded in the CTAU’s abstinence pledge was the thirst of Christ on the Cross. The pledge began: “I promise, with the Divine assistance and in honor of the Sacred Thirst and Agony of Our Savior, to abstain from all intoxicating drinks.”<sup>37</sup> Biblical accounts of Christ’s crucifixion report someone offered Christ bitter wine to drink, which he rejected, yet the emphasis on Christ’s thirst and agony marked the pledge as distinctively Catholic. The pledge also implied that by the agonies of abstaining from drink even in moments of weakness, pledge-takers relied upon

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<sup>35</sup> Joseph C. Gibbs, *History of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* (Philadelphia: Penn Printing House, 1907), 20. Cf. Bland, *Hibernian*, 8.

<sup>36</sup> Gibbs, *History*, 16.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 25, cf. 27.

Christ's help as they identified with his sufferings on the cross.<sup>38</sup> Not only was abstinence the mark of a particularly pious Catholic, some priests emphasized, but Catholics could only hope to remain abstinent by the grace of God. The official records of the CTAU frequently recall priests insisting that one can abstain from alcohol only by obtaining Divine assistance by acts of piety and regular use of the sacraments. J.B. Purcell, the first U.S. bishop personally committed to total abstinence, ironically emphasized that one could only remain abstinent by "the frequent use of the Sacraments"—including the wine-bearing Holy Eucharist.<sup>39</sup> Whereas Fr. Mathew's pledge was ecumenical, the CTAU's pledge and practices emphasized their Catholic distinctives.

Catholics in Texas, however, were even more unlikely to embrace abstinence, much less prohibition, than Catholics around the nation. The CTAU in 1907 had chapters in Louisiana, Missouri, and Alabama, but not Texas, a remarkable fact given that Texas had over 300,000 Catholics, more than any other southern state save majority-Catholic Louisiana.<sup>40</sup> One reason for Texan Catholics' lack of support for abstinence is ethnic: the CTAU was dominated by Irish Catholics, but Texan Catholics were overwhelmingly German and Mexican Americans. A second reason is linguistic: having lived under English rule in Ireland for centuries, the Irish spoke English fluently in their temperance meetings, whereas Catholics from Mexico, Germany, and other nations often lacked mastery of English and preferred their mother tongues. A third reason is cultural: having immigrated earlier and oftener than most Catholic ethnic groups, the Irish were more

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<sup>38</sup> Bland, *Hibernian*, 8.

<sup>39</sup> Gibbs, *History*, 28, 19.

<sup>40</sup> Bland, *Hibernian*, 4, 238. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies, 1906: Part 1—Summary and General Tables*, ed. E. Dana Durand (Washington, D.C., 1910), 272.

“Americanized” than latecomer Catholics, while other ethnic groups struggled to gain cultural footholds on new soil. While assimilation into U.S. culture was a generation or two out of reach for more recent Catholic immigrants, Irish Americans could hope for full recognition as Americans, if only Protestants would see them as respectable. Mexican Americans, however, had little hope of achieving full equality with Anglos, while German Americans were also proud of their heritage and in no rush to assimilate. Instead, they preferred to work out their salvation in their own communities.

### *Liberty as Limited Government*

Prohibitionists, on the other hand, insisted that an enlarged government played a necessary part in attaining salvation from demon rum. Many scholars have noted how prohibition contributed to the rise of a modern American state that touches its citizens’ lives more than people living in the nineteenth century could have imagined. Richard Hamm, Ann-Marie Szymanski, and most recently Lisa McGirr have made clear how in various ways prohibitionists contributed to the development of a more powerful federal government. Szymanski focuses on movement strategy, in particularly pivoting from radical to incremental measures, as a reason for their ultimate success in the Eighteenth Amendment, which banned the alcohol trade, and the Volstead Act, which enforced it. Hamm similarly observes how dries initially tried to fight alcohol by an all-or-nothing Mosaic view of law but found greater success by the early twentieth century by adopting more flexible, pragmatic approaches that resulted in the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment. However, Hamm also notes that the odd mix of pragmatism and radicalism contributed to dries’ ultimate failure. Their insistence upon concurrent enforcement by state and federal governments rather than a unified national system to uphold prohibition

hampered implementation of the law, and their innovative approaches to law greatly contributed to the rise of the federal government as de-facto police power. In the effort to enforce the prohibition Amendment, the federal government redefined Fourth Amendment law to allow wiretapping and draconian search and seizure techniques that later played prominently on the War on Drugs. The excessive numbers of violators of the law taxed the justice system across the nation as never before, feeding a growing federal prison system and beginning a cherished tradition of habitual plea-bargaining to clear clogged judicial dockets. Even after prohibition was repealed, the federal government's power to police and surveil its citizenry in newly intrusive ways persisted.<sup>41</sup>

Prohibition also profoundly changed the South's perception of progressive, interventionist government. Though having a reputation for localism, various scholars have pointed out how the prohibition in the South was profoundly linked to the progressive movement. As Szymanski has observed, the South grew more progressive through embracing prohibition, but she rejects the claim that the South's turn to progressivism came from chiefly northern influence, as William A. Link, Paul L. Harvey, and others have contended. Instead, she argues persuasively, southern progressives' approach to prohibition by gradual, local measures often were more effective than northern approaches, inspired some anti-saloon advocates in the North to emulate their tactics, and resulted in prohibition laws that lasted much longer than in most of the rest of the nation. Whether or not progressivism in the South was mostly indigenous or

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<sup>41</sup> Howard Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Richard F. Hamm, *Shaping the Eighteenth Amendment: Temperance Reform, Legal Culture, and the Polity, 1880-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Ann-Marie E. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition: Radicals, Moderates, and Social Movement Outcomes* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* (New York: Norton, 2015).

imported, it was profoundly linked to radical changes in how southerners looked to government from child labor laws to taxation reform. Thomas R. Pegram sums up a consensus among prohibition scholarship by putting the reform at the forefront of a dramatic change for the Jeffersonian South: “[P]rohibition was a doorway to a host of reforms that entailed expanded state regulation over personal liberty.”<sup>42</sup>

While the impact of prohibition on the South has been well-noted, less scholarly attention has gone to Christians who linked their faith to anti-prohibition in the name of limited government. One reason for this uneven treatment is the overtly religious nature of the leading prohibitionist organizations, the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League (ASL), the latter having the motto, “The Church in Action Against the Saloon.” The ASL also enjoyed heavy funding from Protestant denominations, particularly Methodists, and most clergy that exercised themselves over the issue strongly supported prohibition. Anti-prohibitionists, on the other hand, lacked comparable support from overtly religious groups and, at least before the Eighteenth Amendment closed down legitimate brewers and distillers, at times received monetary support from one of the most powerful and morally suspect industries in U.S. history: the alcohol lobby.

Nevertheless, many religious leaders, some genuine in their convictions and often using Christian arguments, did come out against prohibition in Texas on the grounds that

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<sup>42</sup> Quote from Thomas R. Pegram, “Temperance Politics and Regional Political Culture: The Anti-Saloon League in Maryland and the South, 1907-1915,” *Journal of Southern History*, 63 (February 1997), 64. Ann-Marie Szymanski, “Beyond Parochialism: Southern Progressivism, Prohibition, and State-Building,” *The Journal of Southern History* 69.1 (Feb 2003), 107-136; see also William A. Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism*, George Harrison Gilliam, “Making Virginia Progressive: Courts and Parties, Railroads and Regulators, 1890-1910,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 107 (Spring 1999), 189-222; Paul L. Harvey, “Southern Baptists and the Social Gospel: White Religious Progressivism in the South, 1900-1925,” *Fides et Historia*, 27 (Summer/Fall 1995), 59-77.

government ought not to interfere in matters of personal faith. These souls included a few prominent clergy, ranging from African American Baptist preachers to Anglo Episcopalian bishops to Roman Catholic priests. Most of them, however, were laity who could quote Scripture against one of the most deeply religiously backed reform movements of the twentieth century. The most prominent of these figures in early twentieth century Texas was a governor and a Methodist.

Oscar Branch Colquitt was an unusual Methodist. Elected governor of the great state of Texas in 1910, Colquitt claimed membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), which had proscribed drunkenness or drinking alcohol except in extreme cases by at least the 1870s, a rule that seems to have originated among Methodists in the late eighteenth century.<sup>43</sup> Since then, Methodists' anti-alcohol stance had stiffened considerably. A Methodist northerner, Frances Willard, led her WCTU to organize tens of thousands of Protestant women against demon rum in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, including a Texas chapter of the WCTU she founded in 1883. That same year Colquitt's MECS began treating not only drinking but also the production and sale of alcohol as an evil worthy of church discipline. Four years later Methodist Texans pushed for a statewide referendum on alcohol prohibition, joined by Texas Baptists such as Benajah Harvey Carroll and African Methodist Episcopal (AME) clergy such as Bishop Henry M. Turner of Georgia. Despite the defeat of statewide prohibition by a 2-to-1 vote, Texan Methodists used pulpits and newspapers such as the minister George Clark Rankin's *Texas Christian Advocate* to continue advocating for a dry Texas. By Colquitt's

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<sup>43</sup> See pg. 72n13 of this dissertation for discussion of how old this Methodist doctrine was. *The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1878), 28-39.

successful run for governor in 1910, most of Texas's territory had gone dry through local option elections.<sup>44</sup> Within three years of Colquitt's ascension to the governorship, another Texan Methodist layman, Morris Sheppard, entered the U.S. Senate as that body's champion of prohibition. While most other Texan Methodists increasingly championed legal bans on alcohol in the early twentieth century, Colquitt pledged in the opening speech of his 1910 campaign to "do what was within my power, honorably," to defeat efforts for statewide prohibition.<sup>45</sup>

How did Colquitt justify his opposition to prohibition, the leading culture war issue of his day and one spearheaded by most Protestant churches? Like a good Methodist, he appealed to reason, experience, tradition, and scripture. "Man is a free moral agent," he reasoned, "endowed by his Creator with a knowledge of good and evil, with power to choose between the two. No statute law can rise to a higher level than the rule prescribed by the Divine law."<sup>46</sup> This very freedom to choose between right and wrong was the foundation of Christian liberty, while prohibitionists sought to limit that liberty. Since man is a free moral agent, "statutes can not cleanse his heart [sic]; this is the work of Christian grace."<sup>47</sup> Indeed, a "doctrine of force," using the might of law to

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<sup>44</sup> The 1883 version of the MECS *Doctrines and Disciplines* added a new chapter addressing "the extirpation of the great evil of intemperance" which called on all members to "abstain from the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors to be used as a beverage" and threatened discipline against offenders "as in cases of immorality." *The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Nashville: Southern Methodist Publishing House, 1886), first quote 123, second and third quote 124.

<sup>45</sup> Oscar Branch Colquitt, "Opening Speech of Campaign of 1910," page 9, folder Literary Productions, box 2E177, Oscar Branch Colquitt Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

<sup>46</sup> Colquitt, "Opening Speech of Campaign of 1910," p. 14.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

make men good, was “wrong in principle; it is intemperance; it is injustice,” since “the application of political force tends to retard rather than to develop [the] growth” of “Christian grace.”<sup>48</sup> “We cannot make men good by law,” he insisted. “It is only through education, [C]hristian and charitable influences and growth of intelligent consciousness and responsibility in the individual man himself that this can be done.”<sup>49</sup> Colquitt argued that Christian doctrine opposed prohibition because it retarded his spiritual development into a responsible Christian adult who resists temptation rather than outlawing it.

Colquitt’s trump card, naturally, was Jesus. Quoting the King James Version of Matthew 15:11, Colquitt declared, “The Nazarine said ‘not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man’; and the Pharasees [sic] were offended after they heard this saying, and He explained that ‘those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man’.”<sup>50</sup> In Colquitt’s interpretation, Jesus was opposed to prohibition because he saw evil as a condition of one’s heart and words, not what one ate or drank. Prohibitionists, on the other hand, were like the Pharisees who rejected Jesus due to their focus on ceremonial righteousness. “Therefore,” he deduced from Jesus’ words, “I am opposed to the application of force [against alcohol] and believe that the correct doctrine is to preach temperance and to persuade men into the paths of soberness, honest and correct living.”<sup>51</sup> Colquitt concluded his religious discourse with a reference to Jesus’ best known parable:

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<sup>48</sup> Colquitt, “Opening Speech of Campaign of 1910,” 13-14.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

“The best prohibition law the world has ever known is the spirit of brotherly love and the best example of helping the fallen is the action of the Good Samaritan.”<sup>52</sup> Persuasion by acts of love, not prohibition by force, was the path of Jesus.

Not all Methodists agreed with the governor. As Colquitt spoke against prohibition in the months leading up to the July 1911 statewide election on the issue, he aroused the ire of many, including the rising star Methodist preacher, Robert “Fighting Bob” Shuler. That year Bob Shuler issued a 60-page pamphlet, *“The New Issue, or, Local Booze Government,”* in which he lampooned the governor for his selective use of religion to support anti-prohibition. “Hon. O. B. Colquitt, the moist statesman,” had “spasms like unto hydrophobia every time he thought about a preacher ‘mixing in politics,’” yet “just hallelujahed” when on Fr. Zell, a Catholic priest at Muenster, Texas, “made a political speech in the interest of Colquitt’s candidacy” in 1910.<sup>53</sup> “In the estimation of the moist statesmen,” Shuler continued, “it is terrible for preachers to ‘meddle in politics’ unless it is liquor politics, and then it is just heavenly.”<sup>54</sup>

Shuler had a point: Colquitt did denounce preachers’ involvement in politics, except when it benefitted his campaign. On the eve of the 1911 statewide vote on prohibition, the governor gave a speech in which he denounced radical prohibitionists as “fanatics,” then he turned around and praised “the Bishops and clergy of the Episcopal and Catholic churches” in a list of anti-prohibition luminaries that included George

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>53</sup> Robert P. Shuler, *The New Issue, Or, Local Booze Government: Being a Collection of Articles on “Prohibition”* (Temple, TX: Temple Printing and Office Appliance Co, 1911), n.p., section “The Antis and the Preachers.”

<sup>54</sup> Shuler, *The New Issue*.

Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and both of the state's U.S. Senators.<sup>55</sup> While Shuler rightly called out the governor's double standard on religion and politics, he also revealed an inconvenient truth for dries: politically active clergy were not all on the side of prohibition.

Even within the officially prohibitionist Methodist church, clergy differed a great deal on how much politics they put in their preaching. On one extreme was Bob Shuler, who issued pamphlets and gave stump speeches for prohibition, meddled in various kinds of local elections, and whose appointment to the pulpit of University Methodist Church in Austin drew a formal complaint from the church's board, which insisted their minister stick to the Gospel rather than indulge in politics. On another extreme was D. E. Hawk, Shuler's predecessor at University Methodist who stuck to strictly spiritual topics and earned the quiet approval of the wet members of the church board. Somewhere in the middle and likely representative of most Methodist clergy in Texas was Dr. W. D. Bradfield, pastor of First Methodist Church in Austin.

Dr. Bradfield had prominent anti-prohibitionists in the congregation, particularly Governor Colquitt, and largely shunned political topics from the pulpit. Dr. Bradfield refrained from denouncing his most famous Wet congregant even during the fierce 1911 statewide prohibition election, and a grateful Colquitt appointed him a trustee of the state's school for the blind. In 1912, the Southern Methodist bishop Edwin DuBose Mouzon called for an aggressive campaign for prohibition across Texas, partly

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<sup>55</sup> Oscar Branch Colquitt, "Speech at Palistine, July 13, 1911," first quote p. 10, second and third quotes 13, folder Literary Productions, box 2E177, Oscar Branch Colquitt Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Texas's two Senators at the time were Charles Allen Culberson and Joseph Weldon Bailey, Sr.

encouraging a challenge to a sitting governor in the Democratic primary that year from a prominent Dry, William Ramsey.<sup>56</sup> Leading up to that election, likely under pressure from his Bishop Mouzon, Dr. Bradfield spoke out against the governor for his wet stance. When Colquitt won the race, he fired Dr. Bradfield from the school's board of trustees, formally left the congregation by requesting his membership letter be returned, and had difficulty finding a welcoming Methodist church for a wet politician.<sup>57</sup> The episode demonstrated not only the divide between powerful anti-prohibition laity and ardently dry clergy in the Southern Methodist church, but also the power of the Methodist hierarchy to convince otherwise apolitical clergy to speak out on a divisive political issue even when they obviously did not want to do so.

While Baptists officially gave autonomy to local churches, the issue of prohibition led various state conventions and even the larger Southern Baptist Convention to take disciplinary action against individual churches that would not expel members enmeshed in the liquor traffic. While Baptist churches had long since punished saloon operators and drunkards, the late nineteenth century saw Baptist churches using social sanctions against those involved in the alcohol industry more generally: brewers, distillers, liquor wholesalers, or even property owners who rented land to sellers of the same. Though state conventions had never before exercised authority over local congregations, according to Rufus Spain, in the 1870s various conventions began threatening to cut off churches who did not properly discipline their members to avoid involvement in the

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<sup>56</sup> *Texas Christian Advocate*, January 11, 1912.

<sup>57</sup> *The Temple Daily Telegram* (Temple, TX), October 31, 1912, p. 8. See also Joseph Locke, "Making the Bible Belt: Preacher, Prohibition, and the Politicization of Southern Religion, 1877-1918" (Ph.D. Thesis, Rice University, 2012), p. 308.

alcohol trade. Florida passed such a resolution in 1872, followed by Georgia in 1873, Texas in 1876, and Mississippi in 1878. These resolutions carried teeth. A member of the First Baptist Church of Athens, Georgia, who managed a local whiskey dispensary owned by the state, was initially defended by his congregation against the objections of the local Sarepta Baptist Association, but after several months was dismissed by his church. Such events had a chilling effect on those involved in the alcohol trade throughout the SBC and either forced compliance or drove members to remain silent about their less savory business dealings.

By 1900, every state convention save North Carolina had passed similar resolutions, and by 1896 the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole had concluded years of debate on the subject with a resolution of its own. It declared: “We announce it as the sense of this body that no person should be retained in the fellowship of a Baptist church who engages in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic liquors, either at wholesale or retail, who invests his money in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic [sic] liquors, or who rents his property to be used for distilleries, wholesale liquor houses or saloon. Nor do we believe that any church should retain in its fellowship any member who drinks intoxicating liquors as a beverage, or visits saloons or drinking places for the purpose of such indulgence.”<sup>58</sup> Though the SBC had no official mechanism to force compliance on this point, the power of state conventions to bar individual churches from the their fellowship and social pressure to comply with shared Baptist norms likely worked to

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<sup>58</sup> Southern Baptist Convention, *Proceedings, 1896*, p. 45. Rufus B. Spain, *At East in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press: 2003; first edition Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 184-185. See also Florida Baptist Convention, *Minutes, 1872*, p. 16; Georgia Baptist Convention, *Minutes, 1873*, p. 22.

pressure Baptist churches across the South to accept this new order. With this official declaration, prohibition advocacy had become a defining issue of Baptist identity. It is fitting that the only nineteenth-century social issue on which Southern Baptists demanded new government regulations would also be the issue which led state organs of the SBC to exert more direct hierarchical control over their member churches.

The power of the top-down church structure to quell dissent and demand political uniformity on prohibition for their clergy held parallels for African American ministers as well. The Northern white-led denomination, simply called the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), encompassed many African American congregations and ministers in the South, including for a time John Rayner. While a Baptist minister for most of his adult life, Rayner briefly joined the MEC from 1898 to at least 1903, yet unsurprisingly he left the MEC and rejoined the less hierarchical National Baptist Convention soon before he began openly questioning the wisdom of prohibition.<sup>59</sup>

In a speech during Colquitt's 1910 run for governor, Rayner praised Colquitt for "guarding manhood's inalienable rights, and man's divine privileges" with "the faith and fortitude of a martyr."<sup>60</sup> While Rayner classed distilled beverages with "morphine, cocaine, bangué, and absinthe" and advocated for their restriction, he defended beer and

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<sup>59</sup> Gregg Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner*, 188–192; Gregg Cantrell, *Feeding the Wolf*, 1–24; L. B. Scott, "Hon. J. B. Rayner," *Dallas Southwestern Christian Advocate*, September 1, 1898; for Rayner's writings, see J. B. Rayner, "The Worth of Character," *Dallas Southwestern Christian Advocate*, December 29, 1898; J. B. Rayner, "Does History Repeat Itself?," *Dallas Southwestern Christian Advocate*, May 8, 1902; *Twenty-Fifth Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention* (Nashville, TN: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1905), 156–157.

<sup>60</sup> John B. Rayner, "Political Ingratitude," p. 4, folder Literary Productions, J. B. Rayner Papers (one box), Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. The context and format of the paper, with frequent scratch marks, addendums, and typos, best fit the format of a speech manuscript used several times. While undated, it was undoubtedly given in the summer or fall of 1910 because it addressed Colquitt as a primary candidate who had not yet won the Democratic nomination against Cone Johnson.

wine as “very wholesome and refreshing” and denounced prohibitory laws against them as “immoral in principle, and unrighteous in legislation.”<sup>61</sup> This claim signaled a significant shift from his 1905 speech at the NBC, when he essentially agreed that drinking was sinful for Baptists who had taken the pledge; now he was affirming the essential goodness of fermented beverages while still denouncing distilled alcohol and other drugs. Rather than bringing about a more just and Christian world, Rayner argued that prohibition would ruin a thriving industry and increase immorality by encouraging casual drinkers to “make their own intoxicants, and a bacchanal revelry nightly will appear in too many homes.”<sup>62</sup> While Rayner sympathized with many prohibitionists’ dire to achieve “the final triumph of the Christian religion, and the transcendental perfection of humanity,” he disagreed with legal measures to impose such a result: “God does not need the help of the ballot box in the furtherance and completion of his redemptive purposes.”<sup>63</sup> Rayner had not always spoken so – he had been a prohibitionist during the 1887 vote – but he had served as an agent of the brewers since 1905, just three years after the new poll tax law had silenced most African American voters in the state. By 1912 he called himself, with some justification, “a protagonist in the cause of anti-prohibition.”<sup>64</sup> While inconsistent with his former views that all drinking was wrong, he still insisted that only mild fermented beverages were acceptable alcoholic drinks and trusted in God to work salvation by means far greater than political activism.

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<sup>61</sup> John B. Rayner, “Political Ingratitude,” p. 8.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Rayner to Wahrmond, July 9, 1912, in B. F. Looney, ed., *The Brewers and Texas Politics*, vol. 1 (San Antonio: self-published, 1916), 68.

While many African American Methodists in the South joined the MEC, even more affiliated with the oldest black Methodist denomination in the nation, the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). AME leaders had promoted prohibition at least since Bishop Henry M. Turner of Georgia stumped for prohibition in Atlanta in 1885 and around Texas in 1887, and the denomination worked just as vigorously for prohibition as their white brethren in the Southern and Northern Methodist denominations. A few ministers even within Methodist denominations still sought to work outside the orthodoxy of prohibition, however. Phillip C. Hunt, pastor of St. Paul's African Methodist Episcopal Church in Beaumont, Texas, had enough clout within his denomination to write fearlessly to the Texas brewers directly offering his services for their help in registering African American voters. His willingness to work even with brewers to politically mobilize his race may have limited his career, however; by 1916 Hunt had twice been nominated for the office of bishop of Texas but never attained the coveted position. For some African American ministers, political empowerment of their race was a more righteous cause than prohibition and a natural outflowing of their Christian liberty.<sup>65</sup>

Though traditionally skeptical towards alcohol abstinence and prohibition, Episcopalians avoided the issue in their official meetings. The Journal for the 1910 annual convention for the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas did not reference any

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<sup>65</sup> See also Chapter 3, Politics Dark and Peculiar. P. C. Hunt to Ormund Paget, 21 Dec. 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 63. Hunt had served as a licensed AME preacher in Texas since 1883, had personally brought in more than 1,500 members into the denomination, some 1,250 of whom he baptized, had served over a dozen churches well by paying off their debt and organizing the construction of their church buildings, and was a politically engaged Republican. Richard R. Wright and John R. Hawkins, *Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1916), 120.

prohibition committee, nor did it once mention prohibition, temperance, or the coming statewide vote. Instead of prohibition, Bishop James Steptoe Johnston spoke of overcoming the divisions from the Civil War, issues long since settled on the battlefield, and focus on uniting the churches of the nation to bring forth the millennial reign of Christ.<sup>66</sup> Healing sectional tensions, not establishing prohibition, was the priority of leading Texan Episcopalians. The next year's conference in May, just three months before the monumental 1911 prohibition election, did not so much as touch upon church political and social activism, much less prohibition advocacy. Though stressing church and national unity, Episcopalians who avoided the prohibition issue seemed to revere the doctrine of the spirituality of the church more than unity with their Methodist and Baptist fellow Protestants to win a battle in the culture war.<sup>67</sup>

Nonetheless, several other Episcopal bishops spoke out against prohibition leading up to the 1911 statewide election on the question. The most prominent bishop in the state, George Herbert Kinsolving of the Diocese of Texas, made clear his opposition to statewide prohibition in a nuanced articulation of his position in April 1911. While he supported high license fees for saloon operators, local option elections to dry up some cities and counties, and strict enforcement of the law, he doubted the wisdom or expediency of statewide prohibition and believed there were better ways to control

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<sup>66</sup> "Bishop's Address," *Journal of the Sixth Annual Session of the West Texas Conference of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, 1910, 85-86. On page 87 the bishop urged his Episcopal clergy to cooperate with other Christian denominations "in every good work that has for its purpose the betterment of social and civic conditions," though he failed to explicitly include prohibition in his purview.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 82-87; *Journal of the Seventh Annual Session of the West Texas Conference of the Protestant Episcopal Church, South*, 1911, 29-31.

liquor.<sup>68</sup> The bishop's statement drew the notice of Governor Colquitt, a noted wet. In a major speech just days before the statewide prohibition election on July 10, Colquitt mentioned Kinsolving by name as an example of the nobler kind of clergy who focused on holier matters than the bickerings and dissensions of politics.<sup>69</sup> Not all the attention Kinsolving received was positive, however. In a rare episode of a priest reprimanding his bishop, the Episcopal minister J. T. Smith of Jacksonville, TX, wrote an open letter in the *Dallas Morning News* in May chastising his bishop for his stance defending the saloon, "the sum of all villainies," against the view of ninety-nine percent of Protestant ministers in the state.<sup>70</sup> Despite Smith's declamations, Bishop Kinsolving remained in his role until 1928, indicating that his measured stance against prohibition did him no harm in the Episcopal Church even well after prohibition had entered both the U.S. and Texas constitutions in 1919.

The most powerful bishop in the Episcopal Church joined Kinsolving in speaking out against statewide prohibition in Texas in 1911. When Bishop Daniel Tuttle, head of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri and Presiding Bishop (head) of his denomination for twenty years (1903-1923), spoke out against prohibition, the lightning rod Methodist minister Robert "Fighting Bob" Shuler castigated him. When a Christian minister refuses to back prohibition, he inveighed, even non-Christian decent men would hold their noses and hide their faces at his approach.<sup>71</sup> Though Shuler's words had little influence on

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<sup>68</sup> "George H. Kinsolving Says High License and Local Option is the Remedy," Fort Worth *Star Telegram*, April 11, 1911, p. 7.

<sup>69</sup> *Dallas Morning News*, July 5, 1911, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> *Dallas Morning News*, May 2, 1911, p. 7.

<sup>71</sup> Shuler, *The New Issue*, in a section titled "Tut! Tut! Bishop Tuttle!"

Tuttle's standing, the very fact that the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church would speak his mind on another state's prohibition statutes strongly suggests the stance of his denomination as a whole. Those Texan clergymen who declined to express their view on the volatile political issue likely agreed with their Presiding Bishop and the Bishop of Texas, but, like Bishop Johnson of West Texas, they simply preferred to invest their words elsewhere. In 1887, Episcopal clergy stayed mostly silent on prohibition while Episcopal laymen such as Jefferson Davis and Texas's ex-governor Richard Coke had played prominent roles in defeating statewide prohibition, and Governor Colquitt cited their names with reverence in the heat of the 1911 rematch.<sup>72</sup> By 1911, however, several prominent Episcopalian bishops dared to speak out against it, and virtually all Episcopal clergy in the state declined to support it. While Methodist and Baptist ministers frequently denounced anti-prohibitionists as necessarily insane and immoral, Episcopalian bishops spoke in more measured terms, took moderated positions, and critiqued outright prohibition as unnecessarily extreme.

Even hardened prohibitionists mentioned that wets bore the mantle of temperance to advance their cause and admitted that their argument held a certain attraction if one could take their rhetoric seriously—but they just laughed. “The cry of the liquor forces is now for temperance, temperance!” exclaimed the editor of the Texas Anti-Saloon League's official newspaper. “Prohibition is held up as un-American, fanatical, unreasonable,” while temperance, meaning moderate drinking, signified “the road to freedom, the ladder to achievement, the light of life, the measure of a man, the essence of charity, the soul of religion and the touchstone of true patriotism. This all sounds

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<sup>72</sup> Oscar Branch Colquitt, “Speech at Palistine,” 13.

splendid, it's charming—it is almost SUBLIME.”<sup>73</sup> Rather than engaging these claims, however, the *Home and State* dismissed them as so much smoke and mirrors, since only voting against the saloons could stop intemperance. The persistent lack of nuance is evident earlier on the same page: “The idea that a man can be a Christian and support a death trap of any kind in his community is monstrous.”<sup>74</sup> While able to articulate wet arguments about liberty, dries preferred mocking them to seriously considering them.

Secular newspapers in Texas, most of which received ad money from saloons or brewers, gave voice to anti-prohibitionists who claimed the banner of liberty. In April 1911 in the *Dallas Morning News*, one wet from Amarillo claimed in a letter to the editor, “They say all the Church wants is legislation.... Well, that is the dangerous part of it to a man [who] wants his liberty or one who does not happen to belong to the Church that is in power.” He further warned of “Church rule,” where ministers “want to make it against the law to do anything the Church objects to.” For many Texans, the greater fear was not the saloon, but the union of church and state. While Kansas had instituted prohibition, the writer stated with not a little state pride, Texans cared more for religious liberty: “I hope to never see the day that Texas will be Kansasized.”<sup>75</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Votes demonstrated the effectiveness of such anti-prohibition arguments: a few months later in July 1911, the same election in which Governor Colquitt, the Episcopalian

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<sup>73</sup> *Home and State*, December 15, 1915, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> “Saloon Not Real Issue,” *Dallas Morning News*, April 22, 1911. See also Wuthnow, *Rough Country*, 106-107.

bishops, John Rayner, and many others wets championed the right to drink as an extension of the principle of liberty, just a few thousand votes out of hundreds of thousands cast decided the issue against statewide prohibition. Men such as Colquitt, Tuttle, and Rayner proved that anti-prohibitionist Protestants—clergy and laity, black and white—could and did wield potent religious arguments against a reform movement that found its strongest support from Protestant churches.

In 1919, however, these appeals to liberty did not prevent prohibitionists from inaugurating the dawning of a dry millennium with the ratification of prohibition amendments to the constitutions of the United States and Texas. How that dry millennium arose is the subject of the next chapter. While the unceasing labors of prohibitionists had gradually been drying up the state, a series of armed conflicts in the 1910s radically changed the political atmosphere, incited fear and hatred against Mexican and German Americans, and shifted the banner of patriotism decidedly into the dry camp. The new dawn of statewide prohibition in Texas in 1919 rose blood-red, shrouded by the smoke of wars and rumors of wars.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Wars and Rumors of Wars: Patriotic Prohibition against Mexican and German Americans

Activists on both sides issue of Prohibition dripped with martial language. Proponents of the reform saw themselves as battling the powers of hell while opponents proclaimed that they fought for the freedom of individuals to enjoy beverages that God made to gladden the heart of man.<sup>1</sup> Especially after the narrow defeat of a statewide prohibition ban in the July 1911 election, prohibitionists in Texas regained the offensive and charged to victory in a newfound nationalism forged by wars.

The proclaimed war over prohibition reached its apex throughout the United States due in large part to a very real conflict, the First World War. The Great War that erupted in Europe in 1914 had grown to envelop the United States with belligerency by April 1917, largely sparked by the German Empire's decrypted Zimmerman Telegram, an offer of a secret alliance with Mexico against the United States. The United States's entry into the "war to end all wars" sparked a xenophobic crusade at home against so-called hyphenated Americans, particularly those descended from German "Huns." The national rejection of all things German combined with German dominance of the beer brewing industry provided prohibitionists a singular opportunity to prove that alcohol was the enemy of all things American. The conflagration coincided with a new openness to the complementary reforms of woman's suffrage and prohibition, both of which were

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 104:15.

ratified to the U.S. Constitution in the wake of the United States's entrance into World War I.

In Texas more than in most states, the triumph of statewide prohibition in 1919 was aided by racial tensions between Mexican Americans and Anglos, which expressed themselves most violently during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and the Bandit War (1910-1917). Mexican Americans had earned the ire of dries by casting decisive votes in the defeat of statewide prohibition in 1911, and escalating clashes on the border increased Anglo-Mexican tensions. The United States at first sought to avoid direct involvement in the Revolution, yet the bloodshed spilled over into Texas in a conflict dubbed the Bandit War, which raged from 1910 to 1917 and particularly in 1915 and 1916 claimed hundreds, perhaps thousands of lives. The Mexican Revolution generally and the Bandit War in particular exacerbated tensions between Anglo and Mexican Texans and abetted the rise of prohibition by tying it ever more tightly to "law and order" imposed by the right sort of whites upon supposedly dangerous racial minorities.

This chapter examines how alcohol had become intimately joined to perceptions and realities of Mexican and German American culture in Texas by the 1910s and how prohibitionists exploited the war spirit of the 1910s to re-construe these connections as indictment against their opponents' lack of patriotism. Two sections, the former focusing on Tejanos and the latter on German Americans, provide historical background for the groups' diverging fortunes while giving reasons for their shared opposition to prohibition from the Texas Revolution to the perilous 1910s. Before diving into the wars of the 1910s and how they transformed the struggle over prohibition in Texas, we explore the

increasing economic and political marginalization of people of Mexican descent in Texas, or Tejanos, over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### *Tejanos and Prohibition*

The movement to outlaw alcohol in the United States was dominated by Anglo Protestants, some of whom to advance their agenda unabashedly indulged in racist rhetoric and supported voting restrictions on ethnic minorities. In Texas, Mexican Americans played a major part in the contest over prohibition, both in their political participation and in how prohibitionists perceived them. Since Texas had a larger population of Mexican Americans than any other state, a study of the interplay between Tejanos and prohibition represents the broader relationship between the ethnic group and the reform nationally. Tejano uses of and attitudes towards alcoholic beverages and prohibitionist attitudes towards Tejanos cannot be properly understood without placing them in the broader context of Tejanos' declining economic and political influence vis-à-vis Anglos in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These broader socio-economic concerns played an instrumental role in fomenting the violence that erupted in Texas during the Mexican Revolution and cemented Anglo supremacy in Texas for decades to come.

Before looking at attitudes towards prohibition, one must consider the item prohibited. Tejanos had consumed alcoholic beverages for centuries, though the drink of choice changed over the nineteenth century from traditional *pulque* to the more modern beer. Mesoamerican farmers had crafted pulque, the traditional Mexican beer from which tequila was distilled, for centuries before the Spanish Conquest. Originally a sacred beverage, the Spanish Conquest secularized pulque production and consumption soared.

Throughout the nineteenth century, common folk in Mexico quenched their thirst for the drink at *pulquerias*, which were more popular in Mexico than beer-centered saloons. Rural Tejano families in South Texas frequently made pulque from the wild maguey plants in the area throughout the nineteenth century. However, pulque fell out of official favor in Mexico in the latter half of the century, when middle- and upper-class liberal reformers viewed pulque as a vile drink representing Mexico's backwardness, poverty, and filth and sought to improve the populace by taxation, regulations, and social sanctions.

Beer, by contrast, began to replace pulque as the drink of choice for many Mexicans and Tejanos by the turn of the century, inspired both by the rapid growth of the German-dominated brewing industry and notions that beer symbolized modern sensibilities.<sup>2</sup> Beer also provided opportunities for advancement. Some Tejanos had become saloon operators, linking their ethnic group to beer and serving as integral cogs in the anti-prohibition machine.<sup>3</sup> Though beer in Texas at the turn of the century was usually crafted by Germans Americans, who dominated the beer industry at the state and national levels,<sup>4</sup> a few Tejanos apparently entered the brewing business themselves as

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<sup>2</sup> Long before the Spanish conquest of Mexico, farmers had created pulque by cutting out the center of the wild maguey plant (also called agave or century plant), covering the hole, waiting overnight, and extracting its white milky sap. After fermentation, the milky substance acquired the smell of liquor. Only mature plants (at least eight years old) produced the beverage, yielding some 360 gallons of pulque in five months of the year. Andrés Sáenz, *Early Tejano Ranching: Daily Life at Ranchos San José and El Fresnillo*, ed. and intro. Andrés Tijerina (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2001), 62; William H. Beezley, *Judas at the Jockey Club: and Other Episodes of Porfirian Mexico*, 2nd ed. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 80-82; Maria Aurea Toxqui Garay, "El Recreo de los Amigos, Mexico City's Pulquerias During the Liberal Republic (1856-1911)" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Arizona, 2008), esp. 130-194; 318.

<sup>3</sup> Some saloon operators worked as middlemen for the brewers, receiving funds from them to pay the poll taxes of their patrons. Velasquez to SABA, Dec. 19, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 300.

<sup>4</sup> Evidence for the dominance of beer over other drinks in Texas is plain in following the money: beer was cheaper to produce than most other alcoholic drinks, yet brewers funded two-thirds of the anti-

early as 1860, when a few breweries cropped up in majority-Tejano El Paso and Nacogdoches.<sup>5</sup>

As the nineteenth century progressed, Tejanos gained ever more sorrows to drown with hard drink. Arnoldo León has argued persuasively that Anglos assumed racist attitudes against Tejanos from 1821 to 1836 that persisted throughout the century, intensified and institutionalized by the victorious Anglo leadership of the Texas Revolution and their successors over the U.S. state of Texas.<sup>6</sup> While Tejanos and Anglos coexisted uneasily before and during the Republic of Texas, the situation was not bad enough to drive many Tejanos to heavy drinking. Even Stephen F. Austin, who claimed in 1831 that Mexicans indulged in “[a]lmost every species of dissipation,” added the addendum: “except drinking.”<sup>7</sup> Presumably the vice of overdrinking was then confined to Anglos, only later to be extended to Mexicans when Anglos increasingly agreed that prohibition was a good idea. Texas’s annexation to the United States in 1845 marked a turn for the worse for Tejanos. After the Mexican-American War concluded in 1848, the U.S. refused to recognize many Tejanos’ claims to land they had owned for generations,

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prohibition effort in Texas while distillers funded only one-third, in proportion to their relative income. B. F. Looney, *The Brewers and Texas Politics* (San Antonio, TX: Passing Show Printing Co, 1916), 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Michael C. Hennech and Tracé Etienne-Gray, "Brewing Industry," accessed March 16, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/dib01>.

<sup>6</sup> Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers*, 1-23; for a focus on how the Texas Revolution ossified racist treatment of Mexican Americans in Texas, see Paul D. Lack, “Occupied Texas: Bexar and Goliad, 1835-1836,” in *Mexican Americans in Texas History*, ed. Emilio Zamora, Cythia Orozco, and Rodolfo Rocha (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2000), 35-49.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen F. Austin to Thomas F. Learning, July 23, 1831, 1831, in *The Austin Papers*, ed. Eugene C. Barker (Washington: Government Printing Office for Fifteenth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1924), 2:678, cited in Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 8.

creating the sentiment they had been unjustly robbed of their lands.<sup>8</sup> Still, the situation was not yet disastrous for many Tejanos. The years between 1848 and 1904 offered power sharing between old-timer Anglos and Tejanos in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, a relationship that David Montejano has labeled a peace structure.<sup>9</sup>

Anglos literally fenced many Tejanos out of ranching by bounding newly acquired lands with the new invention of barbed wire, first made commercially available in the 1870s. The use of barbed wire enriched ranchers with large holdings and protected water tanks but drove out of business many smaller ranchers, including many Tejanos, who under Mexican law and tradition had much greater access to public resources like water. Some Tejano and Anglo small ranchers resorted to violence to defend their livelihood, but struggled futilely against laws that were stacked against them: illegally using barbed wire to deny other ranches access to water was a misdemeanor, but cutting those wires brought a felony charge vigorously enforced by Texas Rangers. Texas Rangers' duties in the latter half of the nineteenth century shifted from primarily fighting Indians to chasing those who violated barbed wire boundaries and policing the Mexican border. Texas Rangers had a long history of ignoring Mexican sovereignty and pursuing cattle thieves into Mexico, at one point in 1875 even killing a Mexican mayor and former general. Some Rangers, unable to tell the difference between cattle thieves from Mexico and local Tejanos, began a long history of racial harassment against Mexican peoples in general. In early years of the Mexican Revolution, Texas Rangers routinely performed

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<sup>8</sup> Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920," M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001, 21-41.

<sup>9</sup> Trinidad Gonzales, "The Mexican Revolution, *Revolución de Texas*, and *Matanza de 1915*," *War Along the Border*, ed. Arnoldo De León, 110.

illegal searches and seizures of arms to enforce the United States' neutrality laws against arming Mexican rebels, inflaming ethnic tensions between the Anglo-dominated Rangers and Mexicans in Texas.<sup>10</sup>

Anglo immigrants to the Lower Rio Grande Valley also changed Tejanos' status. Recently laid railroad lines invited a large wave of new Anglo immigrants from the US Midwest and South into the lower Rio Grande valley of South Texas, particularly after 1904. These immigrants transformed cattle ranges into productive farmland through intensive irrigation. The conversion of Tejano rangeland to Anglo-owned farms in various regions of South Texas further reduced thousands of Tejanos from semi-autonomous cattlemen to subservient low-wage agricultural workers more susceptible to boss rule. Though these economic changes brought prosperity to Anglo newcomers and the few others who managed to control the water supply, they also economically displaced many Tejanos, fueling resentment that built up racial tension and that contributed to the outbreaks of violence in the 1910s.<sup>11</sup> Decades of economic marginalization and high-handed policing cemented a racial hierarchy in which Tejanos were last and Anglos first.

Prohibitionist Anglos largely regarded Tejanos with a distrust that intensified during the fight for prohibition. Evan Anders in his 1982 work, *Boss Rule in South Texas*, attributes Texan Anglo attitudes towards Tejanos in the late nineteenth century to various

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<sup>10</sup> Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920," M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001, 20-23, 46-47; James A. Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan of San Diego, 1904-1923* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 104; José A. Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>11</sup> Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920," M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001, 21-41; Gonzales, "The Mexican Revolution," 110.

factors: “distrust of Catholicism, the popular stereotype of the indolent subservient Mexican peon, the corruption of the Hispanic vote, the periodic outbreaks of banditry along the border, and the Mexican American opposition to prohibition.”<sup>12</sup> While Andes’s characterization is generally accurate, opposition to prohibition was not a fault line between Tejanos and most Anglos until the twentieth century: at least fifty-five percent of native-born whites voted against statewide prohibition in 1887.<sup>13</sup> Only in the early twentieth century did prohibition grow popular among Anglos as Texas transitioned from rough country to churched country with an increasingly influential and activist clergy.<sup>14</sup>

Tejanos also suffered due to their conspicuous support of the notorious alcohol industry. A statistical study of fifteen counties in Texas empirically verified that Tejano voters overwhelmingly and consistently voted against prohibition from 1887 to 1919, with Mexican-dominated counties giving higher vote percentages against prohibition than almost all other counties across the state, with percentiles from the high-80s and mid-90s.<sup>15</sup> Some items mentioned above are worth revisiting again here. Progressives, hoping to purify politics, pushed for restrictive voting measures to suppress turnout from the supposedly unworthy citizens—whether African, Mexican, German, or Anglo Americans—who could be easily bought by corrupt interests like the alcohol lobby.

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<sup>12</sup> Evan Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era* (Austin: UT Press, 1982), 66.

<sup>13</sup> James D. Ivy, *No Saloon in the Valley* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2003), 92-94.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America’s Most Powerful Bible-Belt State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 50-87, particularly 103-120.

<sup>15</sup> Jared Paul Sutton, “Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887 - 1919” (MA thesis, University of North Texas, 2006), 39-40.

Texan voters approved a poll tax to this effect in 1902 by a two-to-one margin.<sup>16</sup> The brewers opposed the poll tax because the vast majority of Texans disenfranchised by the tax were wets.<sup>17</sup> While wet turnout shrank over the next decade and a half, dries gained momentum among old stock whites, especially through the advocacy of white evangelical preachers who presided over an exploding population of white Baptists and Methodists.<sup>18</sup>

After the poll tax became law, brewers intensified their work with ethnic minorities such as Tejanos.<sup>19</sup> Brewers organized and frequently funded the payment of Tejanos' poll taxes, at times paying Tejano saloon operators to pay for their customers' poll taxes. One such saloon operator, Pedro Velasquez of Encinal, wrote the brewers and baldly asked for money to cover his patrons' poll taxes.<sup>20</sup> The brewers also distributed

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<sup>16</sup> "Brewers" includes national and state brewers. The seven Texan brewers were: San Antonio Brewing Association and Lone Star Brewing Company (San Antonio); Houston Ice and Brewing Company and American Brewing Association (Houston); Galveston Brewing Company; Dallas Brewery; and Texas Brewing Company (Fort Worth). Looney, *Brewers*, 1; the brewers' vigorous opposition to the Poll Tax provision in the Texas constitution is attested in 214–15.

<sup>17</sup> A majority of Mexican, African, and German American voters in Texas consistently voted against Prohibition in the 1887, 1911, and 1919 statewide Prohibition elections, Sutton, "Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition," 1-3. Overall turnout – likely much higher than African American turnout – slumped from 68.8% in 1887 to 45.4% in 1911, then down to a mere 23.7% in 1919. Voter suppression hurt not only African Americans, but apparently all minority groups as well. Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas."

<sup>18</sup> In 1890 Texas had the second smallest percentage of Baptists and Methodists of all of southern states, including African American believers, though that number grew rapidly in the early twentieth century. Noll, *God and Race in American Politics*, 88–89. An agent of the brewers confided to a Corpus Christi beer dealer in 1905, "We know the Methodist and baptist [sic] members of your community are being very quietly worked by their preachers, local and foreign, to pay their poll taxes, as it is part of the prohibition propaganda." Looney, *Brewers*, 237. An agent of the brewers confided to a Corpus Christi beer dealer in 1905, "We know the Methodist and baptist [sic] members of your community are being very quietly worked by their preachers, local and foreign, to pay their poll taxes, as it is part of the prohibition propaganda." Looney, *Brewers*, 237.

<sup>19</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 216.

<sup>20</sup> He stated: "next month will be the month to get the poll tax receipt and I am asking you if you are willing to give me help with something to make up a good amount of poll tax receipts for my customers [sic]." Velasquez to SABA, Dec. 19, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 300. Brewer organizer on La Salle County election: "some of your friends in Cotulla... tell me that they cannot induce the Mexicans to pay their poll tax, claiming that they have not the money to do it," Paget to Otto Wahrmund, Dec. 11, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 236. "[V]ery few Mexicans pay their poll taxes," Paget to M. Andrew, beer dealer, Dec. 13, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 236; cf 238. "[T]he Mexican population... will not pay their poll taxes. This is a very

Spanish-language poll tax cards and employed reliable Spanish-speaking agents to get out the vote.<sup>21</sup> Brewers also encouraged Tejanos to participate in the Democratic primary, since they (unlike African Americans) were not always excluded from it, and the inevitable victory of the Democratic candidate made primaries function like the general election.<sup>22</sup> In certain areas of South Texas brewers relied heavily or exclusively on the Tejano vote. One brewer confessed that in Cameron County, “All our votes are Mexicans, but we need money to work it. Very near all are good votes, but they do not pay their poll taxes unless someone does it.”<sup>23</sup> While the brewers had funds to mobilize Tejano voters, it was an expensive process. One prominent anti-prohibitionist, Colonel Mac Anderson, confessed in 1887 that, “it takes a great deal of money to work up sufficient patriotism among Mexicans to get them to vote *en masse*.”<sup>24</sup> Anglo prohibitionists shared this stereotype of Tejanos, yet one dry paper made clear that the money to buy Tejano votes went mostly to alcohol. The *Texas Baptist Standard* in 1887 claimed saloon operators along the Mexican border worked according to a set plan “to have a ball the night before the election, to get the Mexicans drunk; stay with them all night and march with them to the polls with tickets in their hands and vote for

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serious matter for all concerned and especially for your interest,” Paget to SABA, Dec. 13, 1905, in Looney, *Brewers*, 237.

<sup>21</sup> Spanish-language poll tax cards mentioned letter by Paget to SABA, Dec. 9, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 292; cf. Looney, *Brewers*, 283. For Spanish speakers see Looney, *Brewers*, 651.

<sup>22</sup> “[T]he result at the [Democratic] primary is for a purpose final,” Looney, *Breweries*, 21. Mexicans encouraged to participate in Democratic primary, George W. Littlefield to Ormund Paget, Austin, Jan. 15, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 287.

<sup>23</sup> C. Schunior, to Houston Ice and Brewing Association, Dec. 26, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 650; cf. Looney, *Brewers*, 685, 709, 715, 719.

<sup>24</sup> San Antonio *Daily Express*, July 7, 1887. See also Ivy, *No Saloon*, 64.

whiskey.”<sup>25</sup> Such testimony fits with wets’ own testimony of plying votes by getting their supporters drunk. Despite many reports of brewers expending considerable sums to mobilize the Tejano vote, the anti-prohibitionist Galveston *Daily News* suggested most of this payment went to alcohol, not payoffs. “Few if any of the Mexicans were paid money for their votes. They were filled up with beer.”<sup>26</sup> Similar tactics mobilized poor white voters in urban areas throughout the United States as well, though over-reporting the drunkenness of racial minorities conveniently fit contemporary narratives of white supremacy.

Many saloons served political machines, and most Tejano votes after the 1870s were controlled by boss rule. Despite reaching nearly a quarter million in population by 1900, most Tejanos were concentrated in South Texas and uninterested in Anglo politics. Their votes were effectively orchestrated by political bosses who, in a manner analogous to political machines in northern cities, handed out services and then “delivered docile legions on election day.”<sup>27</sup> Much of South Texas, where the vast majority of Tejanos lived at the time, endured boss rule after men such as Stephen Powers and James B. Wells, Jr., established their machines for the Democratic Party in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Texas Baptist and Herald*, July 27, 1887. See also Ivy, *No Saloon*, 64.

<sup>26</sup> *Galveston Daily News*, August 5, 1887. See also Ivy, *No Saloon*, 89.

<sup>27</sup> Lewis L. Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists* (Austin: UT Press, 1973), 50.

<sup>28</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Evan Anders, "Boss Rule," accessed February 22, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/wmb01>. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.-

The brewers were close allies of these machines, and fittingly so, since both groups sought to advance their own interests with little concern for moral qualms.<sup>29</sup>

Yet Tejanos did not oppose prohibition as a unit simply because the bosses told them to do so. Many resisted prohibition because they embraced drinking as a part of their culture.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the partaking in the old habit of pulque and the newer habit of beer, many celebrated holy feast days that included activities scandalous to their Anglo Protestant neighbors: dancing, gambling, cockfighting, horseracing, and imbibing alcohol.<sup>31</sup> Despite visiting church infrequently, most Tejanos took the rituals of their Catholic faith very seriously, including feast days (particularly Christmastime), baptisms, worship at the home altar (*altercito*), and especially devotion to Mexico's patron saint, Our Lady of Guadalupe.<sup>32</sup> Well-to-do parents celebrated the fifteenth birthday of their daughter by holding a *quinceañera*, a ceremony no less elaborate than a wedding, which began with a Eucharistic service and ended with celebrations, frequently with music,

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<sup>29</sup> Jared Paul Sutton, "Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887 - 1919" (MA thesis, University of North Texas, 2006), 37-38.

<sup>30</sup> See Miguel Antonio, *Militarizing the Border: When Mexicans Became the Enemy* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012); Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920" (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001); Edward Lonnie Langston, "The Impact of Prohibition on the Mexican-United States Border: The El Paso-Ciudad Juarez Case" (M.A. Thesis, Texas Tech University, 1974); Arnoldo De León, "Cuando Vino la Mexicanada: Authority, Race, and Conflict in West Texas, 1895-1924" (Th.D. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 2007); Arnoldo De León, *War Along the Border: The Mexican Revolution and Tejano Communities* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2011); Robin Espy Robinson, "Monte Carlo of the Southwest: A Reinterpretation of U.S. Prohibition's Impact on Ciudad Juarez" (M.A. thesis: University of Texas at Arlington, 1997).

<sup>31</sup> Arnoldo De León, *The Tejano Community, 1836-1900*, 1st Southern Methodist University Press ed (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1997), 137-154.

<sup>32</sup> On racial, religious, and other Anglo prejudices against Mexican Texans, see Arnoldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

dance, and champagne.<sup>33</sup> Some folk healers, or *curanderos*, even connected alcohol with healing. In 1861, West Texans (Anglos included) flocked to see a 65-year-old curandero called Tatita who claimed to replicate some of the miracles associated with Jesus of Nazareth and applied whiskey (*agua ardiente*) to heal afflicted skin.<sup>34</sup> Whether communion wine, party drinks, or healing salves, alcohol flowed during the most sacred activities of Tejanos. For Tejanos who saw alcohol as linked not only to their political bosses' interests but also to their communal and spiritual life, prohibition was an intolerable imposition of Protestant Anglo morality and not a serious political option.

A few Tejanos, however, embraced prohibition. Mexican Americans converted by Protestant missionaries formed Baptist and Methodist congregations that opposed alcohol. By the time these denominations had grown large enough to sustain published conference minutes, they articulated the same desires they and their missionary sponsors had shared all along: advancing alcohol prohibition. When the Methodist Mexican Mission of the West (Mision Mexicana del Occidente) met in El Paso in October 1921, their Spanish-language minutes included a report of the Temperance and Social Service Committee. The committee recommended that all pastors and workers work together to advance the cause of temperance, expose the ravages caused by alcohol, and warmly assist the work of the authorities to strengthen prohibition laws.<sup>35</sup> Unlike the majority of

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<sup>33</sup> Roberto R. Treviño, *The Church in the Barrio: Mexican American Ethno-Catholicism in Houston* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 51. This author emphasizes (pp. 5-7 esp.) that popular ethno-Catholicism was not inferior to formal Catholicism and does much to undo what he describes as a false dichotomy between the two by focusing on the social and material implications of “lived religion.”

<sup>34</sup> Arnoldo De León, *The Tejano Community*, 149-150.

<sup>35</sup> *Actas del Cuarto Periodo de Sesiones de la Mision Mexicana del Occidente* (Palmore, Chihuahua: 1921), 23-24.

Tejanos who held to their traditional Catholic faith and scorned prohibition, Tejano converts to Protestant churches identified more closely with Anglo fellow-Protestants by endorsing prohibition yet still showed pride in their heritage by keeping their denominational minutes in Spanish.

Perhaps the most influential Tejano voice for prohibition in the 1910s was José Tomás Canales. Though born and raised in Texas' Nueces County as a Catholic, Canales converted to Presbyterianism as he finished high school in Kansas in the 1890s. A successful lawyer, he joined the Cameron County Democratic party machine in South Texas operated by James B. Wells, Jr., and served in the state legislature from 1905 to 1910, but fell out of favor with Wells after he endorsed prohibition in 1909. This clash was only natural: bosses and saloons in early twentieth century Texas were natural allies against progressives and prohibitionists.<sup>36</sup> Canales recovered politically and served several causes that gained him allies with Anglos. While serving as superintendent of Cameron County's public schools from 1912 to 1914, he stressed English language use in the classroom. As a member of the Texas House of Representatives again from 1917 to 1920, he promoted public irrigation districts that disproportionately helped Anglo farmers and also worked to stop Mexican workers from fleeing to Mexico to avoid the draft and a rising cost of living during World War I. He proved his credentials as a progressive once more when he publicly supported prohibition and woman suffrage in 1919.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> See Lewis L. Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), esp. 49-53.

<sup>37</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Evan Anders, "Canales, Jose Tomas," accessed March 20, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcaag>. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Despite the stances of Protestant Tejanos such as Canales, most Anglos saw them as outliers and the majority of Tejanos as unkempt “greasers.” Several 1912 articles in the *Home and State*, the official newspaper of the Anti-Saloon of Texas, exemplify how many prohibitionist Anglos held most Tejanos in contempt. One article blamed the poverty of Mexico on its lazy, scantily clad, and gambling-prone people, but encouraged Anglos to get rich off the land with virtually no work by using local peons, who “make splendid laborers” when properly managed.<sup>38</sup> Another article, entitled “Our Mexican ‘Citizens,’” recognized that some Tejanos were “first-class men and women who are educated, intelligent, and loyal to our government and its situations.” The rest of the article, however, focused on “the ignorant and unpatriotic Mexicans known as the ‘Greaser Class,’” who allegedly embodied immorality, laziness, and corruption.<sup>39</sup> To white prohibitionist Texans, most Mexicans could be useful in helping make white men rich, but only if treated as laborers and kept clearly beneath whites in matter social, economic, and political.

Prohibitionists’ denigration of Tejanos took on the added dimension of gender, especially after the defeat of prohibition in July 1911. The aforementioned Sept. 13, 1911 letter of Mrs. S. J. Sweeny of Waco printed in the Texas Anti-Saloon League’s newspaper, in which she argued for woman suffrage, also expressed anger that “Mexican and ignorant negro votes pitted against the intelligent and tax-paying American woman’s [lack of] votes.” Her new stance for women’s votes was sparked by the narrow loss of

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<sup>38</sup> “Conditions in Mexico,” Dallas *Home and State* (Feb. 10, 1912), 8.

<sup>39</sup> S. M. Lesesne, “A Study of Our Mexican ‘Citizens,’” *The Home and State* (Dallas, TX: July 20, 1912), 1.

statewide prohibition in the 1911 election.<sup>40</sup> While woman's suffrage was a radical position for most Texans in 1911, many Anglo women saw it as a disgrace that they could not vote against the saloon but the "Mexican and ignorant negro" could vote to keep the saloons in business. In the name of God and their Anglo families, these women sought to vote so they could gain political power at the expense of supposedly unworthy racial minorities. The involvement of a few Tejano politicians such as Canales in favor of both woman suffrage and prohibition did not assuage the thinking of women such as Mrs. Sweeney in the slightest, if he was even noticed at all. Simply put, race trumped gender for prohibitionists.

The association of voting dry with "white" rule and voting wet with rule of racial minorities had grown to a major part of prohibition sentiment in Texas by the decade of its initial triumph, the 1910s. A letter to the editor of the *Home and State* by H. C. Park put the issue baldly in commentary about the 1912 U.S. Senate race between a wet and a dry: everyone is "agreed on one issue, and that is for the people to rule; but the question arises, which or what people?" The wet, Col. Jake, "wanted the lower class of negroes and Mexicans to rule ... but now he ... wants the white Americans to rule, and I think they will to his sorrow."<sup>41</sup> Repeated defeats led prohibitionists to blame "unworthy" citizens for their woes and support poll taxes to exclude those undesirables from the voting body through poll taxes and voter suppression. Though Tejanos and other ethnic groups proved critical in the razor-thin margin of victory for brewers in the 1911

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<sup>40</sup> Mrs. S. J. Sweeny, "The Negro and Mexican vs. Woman," *Home and State* (September 13, 1911), 5. "For God and home and native land" was the motto of the national Women's Christian Temperance Union.

<sup>41</sup> H. C. Park, "Let the People Rule," *Home and State* (July 6, 1912), 5.

statewide prohibition vote, turnout for these groups was down dramatically from 1887, and by the time Texan voters approved statewide prohibition in 1919 their share was smaller still.<sup>42</sup> Voter suppression by drys against ethnic minorities proved ruthlessly effective and a logical conclusion to a long history of appealing to Anglo supremacy.

### *The Bandit War*

The concomitant ascendancy of prohibition and nadir of Tejano political status in the 1910s did not occur in a vacuum. Anglo responses to the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and particularly Texas' so-called Bandit War (1910-1917) cemented Anglo supremacy in South Texas and marginalized Tejanos to the point of political near-obliteration. The Mexican Revolution destabilized Texas's border with Mexico, sparked an influx of thousands of poor Mexican refugees into the Lone Star state, and strengthened the impression among Texan Anglos that Mexicans could not properly govern themselves and needed intervention from whites to put their house in order. The violence south of the border prompted U.S. invasions of Mexico on two separate occasions, first occupying the port of Tampico in 1914 and then sending a punitive expedition to capture Pancho Villa from 1916-1917, which considerably soured Anglo-Tejano relations. Revolutionary violence and racial tensions exploded in Texas during the so-called Bandit War, a conflict in South Texas which displaced thousands of Mexicans and resulted in the deaths of hundreds or thousands, overwhelmingly Mexicans and Tejanos dying at the hands of white vigilantes and Texas Rangers.

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<sup>42</sup> Cantrell, *Kenneth*, 248, 327 fn 10; Plocheck, "Elections in Texas," *Texas Almanac*.

In a way, the Mexican Revolution began in Texas. After thirty-three years of rule, the dictatorial Porfirio Díaz won another suspicious re-election to the presidency in 1910, but his opponent, Francisco I. Madero, regrouped with fellow dissidents in San Antonio to compose a response. There they forged the Plan of San Luis Potosi, a declaration of the crimes of Díaz's rule, the *Porfiriato*, and an announcement of their plan to launch a revolution on November 20, 1910. Within a year of the insurrection Diaz had stepped down and Madero was president, yet the uprising had let loose the hopes and ambitions of regional leaders throughout Mexico, particularly Francisco "Pancho" Villa, Emiliano Zapata, Pascual Orozco, and Venustiano Carranza. By 1913 President Madero had been murdered and rule of Mexico seized by one of his generals, Victoriano Huerta. Widespread opposition to Huerta further factionalized Mexico and plunged the nation into years of internecine fighting that only accelerated when Huerta was deposed and Carranza made the new president in 1914.<sup>43</sup>

The only enemy that unified Mexican forces more than Huerta was the United States. In an effort to halt the shipment of arms to Huerta, the United States occupied the major Mexican port of Veracruz from April to November 1914, incurring the universal anger of Mexicans for violating their national sovereignty. The occupation failed to prevent the arms shipment from reaching Huerta at another port but soured Mexican-U.S. relations for years to come, even after Huerta was deposed in 1914 and replaced by Carranza. After the U.S. officially recognized Carranza in 1915, Pancho Villa, one of Carranza's main rivals, initiated a series of border raids against the United States. Villa's

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<sup>43</sup> Arnoldo De León, ed., *War Along the Border: The Mexican Revolution and Tejano Communities* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012), 1-2.

raid on Columbus, New Mexico in March 1916 resulted in dozens of casualties for both Villa's forces and the United States Army and prompted the largest U.S. invasion of Mexico during the Revolution, the Pancho Villa Expedition. Numbering as many as ten thousand troops composed of both infantry and cavalry, the expedition sought and failed to capture Villa, but clashed with troops of Villa and Carranza alike before finally withdrawing in February of 1917.

In the midst of this violence along the border, Texas witnessed massive human rights abuses amid heightened racial tensions between and among Anglos and Tejanos in 1915-1917, a period marked by an intermittent racial war sparked by a small Tejano-Mexican uprising that historian Trinidad Gonzales calls the *revolución de Texas* and most other historians associate with the Plan of San Diego (PSD). Human rights abuses by Tejanos involved in the PSD were responses to real and perceived violations of economic rights, socio-political rights, and the right to life itself, often creating a vicious cycle of violence that made these rights less stable than before, particularly for Mexicans and Tejanos on the border. The decline in Tejano status during the conflict doubtless contributed to the suppression of the Tejano vote in the later 1910s, which in turn contributed to the success of prohibition.<sup>44</sup>

The Plan of San Diego, named after the Texas town in which it was drafted, bears a superficial resemblance to Madero's Plan of San Luis Potosi for its name, its birth in Texas, and its dreams of revolution, but the similarities end there. Rather than calling for the institution of a legitimately elected leader and the dethronement of a corrupt usurper,

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<sup>44</sup> The title "*revolución de Texas*" comes from Gonzales, "The Mexican Revolution," 108-126. Though capitalized in the title, Gonzales uses the lower-case *revolución* throughout the text. Given his relatively persuasive and recent (2012) argument, this author prefers Gonzales's term for the conflict.

as Madero's plan did, the PSD called for a racial war of Tejanos against Anglos resulting in the murder of every Anglo male over the age of 16 and the recapture of lost territories for Mexico: Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. This improbable plot was uncovered by Texan law enforcement in January 1915 before it could be launched and its promoter, Basilio Ramos Jr., was arrested.<sup>45</sup> Hundreds of Anglo families in the Lower Rio Grande Valley towns of Brownsville, San Benito, Mercedes, Mission, Harlingen, and Kingville reportedly armed themselves and prepared for a revolution, but nothing happened on February 20, 1915, the date when the original PSD was supposed to go into effect.<sup>46</sup> On or around that date, however, discontented Tejanos issued a revised version of the PSD manifesto entitled "To the Oppressed Peoples of America" to similar effect.

By August 12, Anglo newspapers such as the *Dallas Morning News* attributed border raids to PSD partisans and printed more of its details sure to shock its Anglo readers. Not only did the plan call for the death of every Anglo male over the age of 16, but for the institution of "a Republic for Mexicans, negroes, Japanese and Chinese." The paper cited statistics that seemed to make this nightmare a possible reality: of the nearly 150,000 inhabitants of the Rio Grande Valley, some 80 percent were illiterate Mexicans. Of those, at least 3000 were allegedly pledged to the Plan of San Diego, encouraged by refugees from Mexico who spread their lodges "in every Mexican community where the colony numbers more than a handful," and many were considered to be Magonistas, an anarchist group. U.S. Army General Frederick N. Funston, who had previously celebrated

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<sup>45</sup> Steven Mintz, ed., *Mexican American Voices: A Documentary Reader*, second edition (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

<sup>46</sup> "Plan of San Diego' Fails," *Dallas Morning News*, Feb. 21, 1915, page 10.

personally lynching dozens of Filipino insurgents and publicly suggested lynching all who opposed U.S. imperialism in the Philippines, now recommended turning South Texas into a police state. He called for the posting of Army troops in “every town, village and hamlet” while Rangers and vigilantes enforced their version of justice in the wilder areas.<sup>47</sup> In a few months Funston, who was stationed at the border, had wired the War Department for permission to invade Mexico to bring an end to border skirmishes.<sup>48</sup> South Texas was now on the edge of a race war.

Those fears seemed to come true on the night of October 18, 1915. A band of Tejano and Mexican revolutionaries led by one Luis De la Rosa launched a sophisticated military operation that robbed Anglos on a train outside Brownsville, Texas, killed three, and derailed the train. Initial newspaper reports connected this attack and following violence by Tejanos militants with the PSD, sparking a panic. Anglo civilians and local law enforcement killed nine Tejanos in retaliation for the attack, most of whom were more than twenty miles from the incident and almost certainly innocent.<sup>49</sup> Alleged PSD partisans, called *sediciosos* by Tejanos, later that year robbed a store in Sebastian, burned various buildings, and stole livestock, effectively ruining four prominent families of the city, two of whom had German names. Cattle stealing had existed in Texas for decades

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<sup>47</sup> “‘Plan of San Diego’ Back of Border Raids,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 12, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> *San Antonio Express*, November 3, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Trinidad Gonzales has argued in his recent revisionist account that the first PSD had little continuity with the second and neither of the first two were closely related to the violence that erupted in October of that year. That honor goes to the signers of a third manifesto, *To Our Compatriots, the Mexicans in Texas*, on August 26, 1915, who were conflated with the Plan of San Diego by Texas newspapers but distinguished themselves from those groups by actually taking up arms against Anglo Texans. Historian Trinidad Gonzales dubs the revolutionary incident the start of the *revolución de Texas* and the initial Anglo responses the *matanza de 1915* (massacre of 1915). James A. Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands: Anarchism and the Plan of San Diego, 1904-1923* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 83; Gonzales, “*The Mexican Revolution*,” 107-110.

but multiplied during the early years of the Mexican Revolution as Mexican bandits, warring Mexican factions, Texas Rangers, and U.S. officials alike stole cattle on both sides of the border, creating a vicious cycle of theft and counter-theft. In addition to cattle, the *sediciosos*' targets were carefully chosen to reflect dispossessed Tejanos' economic grievances from Anglo dominance: railroad lines cut, trains robbed, ranches raided, stores pillaged, cars, telegraph and telephone lines, irrigation systems, and water pumping plants.<sup>50</sup> These attacks, combined with the vicious reprisals by Texas Rangers and Anglo vigilantes against any Tejanos that seemed threatening, sparked off and on from 1915 to 1917 and took the violence of the Bandit War to new heights.

What really motivated De la Rosa and his band to attack on October 18? Mainstream scholarship up to 1972 viewed his forces as followers of the deposed Mexican president, General Victoriano Huerta, who launched the Plan to aid his return to power.<sup>51</sup> Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, however, convincingly argued that the plan was not made up by Huertistas, but by agents of the Carranza government, and that the story of Huertista influence was made up by Basilio Ramos when arrested by Texan

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<sup>50</sup> The four families were the Austins, Alexanders, Schultzes and Wagners. Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920," M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001, 55-60; Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands*, 88-103; Darren L. Ivey, *The Texas Rangers: A Registry and History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010), 177.

<sup>51</sup> Others agreeing with the influence of Huerta are: Michael C. Meyer, "The Mexican-German Conspiracy of 1915," *The Americas*, 23 (July 1966), 76-89; *Mexican Rebel: Pascual Orozco and the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1915* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 121, and *Huerta: A Political Portrait* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 218; Allen Gerlach, "Conditions Along the Border—1915: The Plan of San Diego," *New Mexico Historical Review*, 43 (July 1968), 195-212; William M. Hager, "The Plan of San Diego: Unrest on the Texas Border in 1915," *Arizona and the West*, 5 (Winter 1963), 327-336; Charles C. Cumberland, "Border Raids in the Lower Rio Grande Valley—1915," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 57 (Jan. 1954), 285-311. Cited in Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, "The Plan of San Diego and the Mexican–United States War Crisis of 1916: A Reexamination," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 58 (Aug. 1978), 382-83 fn 5. As a testament to their thorough scholarship, Harris and Sadler also note studies of Huerta that exclude any mention of the Plan.

law enforcement with a copy of the PSD manifesto in his pocket. Most historians have agreed that a Mexican faction in the Revolution took a leading role in instigating *revolución de Texas*-related violence. Recent scholarship has reached a consensus that Carranza was the principle Mexican actor behind it, though Gonzales (2012) raises reasonable doubts to this hypothesis. In Gonzales's reading, opposition to oppressive Anglo rule of Tejanos and Mexicans brought together a disparate group of Huertistas, Carranzistas, and otherwise aligned actors into the *revolución de Texas*, but the movement originated from and for Tejanos.<sup>52</sup> While the exact facts of the case may never be known, the PSD raids were made possible by the escalation of conflict raging across the border.

Another necessary ingredient in creating the apex of violence during the Bandit War was real resentment from Tejanos over their loss of economic and political power at the hands of Anglo immigrants. The choice of a train for the target of the October 18 attack indicated opposition to Anglo-dominated railway companies and the new

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<sup>52</sup> Their persuasive evidence includes the warm welcome received by Ramos by Carranza's Constitutionalist forces when he returned to Mexico on bail, exaggerated reports of the success of the *revolución de Texas* forces in the Mexican newspapers controlled by Carranza, and reports from the head of the U.S. Army forces in Texas, Major General Frederick Funston, that one of Carranza's generals was coordinating the PSD forces. Most scholars since have agreed that Carranza was largely behind the *revolución de Texas*, including Rosenbaum, Vanderwood and Samponaro, and Coerver. Even Sandos, stressed the PSD as an indigenous movement among Mexicans in the United States, wrote that the *sediciosos* included army officers loyal to Carranza, claimed authorization from Carranza for their actions, and viewed their actions as an act of war rather than mere brigandage. James A. Sandos, "The Plan of San Diego: War and Diplomacy on the Texas Border, 1915-1916," *Arizona and the West*, 14 (Spring 1972), 5-24; Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920," M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001, 64; Harris and Sadler, "The Plan of San Diego," 383-88; Robert J. Rosenbaum, *Mexicano Resistance in the Southwest: "The Sacred Right of Self-Preservation"* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Paul J. Vanderwood and Frank N. Samponaro, *Border Fury: A Picture Postcard Record of Mexico's Revolution and U.S. War Preparedness, 1910-1917* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 121; and Don M. Coerver, "PLAN OF SAN DIEGO," Handbook of Texas Online <<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ngp04>>, accessed May 04, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association; (2013); Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands*, 89-90; Gonzales, "Matanza de 1915," 107-133.

immigrants that those railroads brought to South Texas. It also signaled antagonism to racial segregation on trains. Darker-skinned Mexicans had endured segregation before 1915 in restaurants and other public places in Texas and almost certainly suffered segregation on trains as well. This did not apply to all Mexicans, however: some, apparently those with lighter skin, were permitted in first-class cars with Anglos.<sup>53</sup> Whether or not every claim of Anglo harassment was true, they had ample legitimate examples of Anglo repression motivating their rebellion.<sup>54</sup>

Many leading Tejanos in South Texas had by 1915 been politically displaced by newly arrived Anglo immigrants. These white immigrants joined with progressives to challenge the power of the South Texas Anglo political bosses, and by connection the Tejano voters under their charge. Encouraged by reaction to the chaos of the Bandit War, by 1920 new immigrant Anglos had ousted most of the political bosses that had long served as the protectors (if also exploiters) of Mexican residents.<sup>55</sup> The ascendancy of progressive whites in South Texas aided the rise of prohibition in Texas signaled the political marginalization of Tejanos for decades to come.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands*, 104.

<sup>54</sup> Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 7.

<sup>55</sup> Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands*, 64-77.

<sup>56</sup> Cannon argues that Tejanos were being treated much better after the Bandit War ended, citing as evidence the formation of the Great Mexican League for Benefits and Protection to secure the political rights of Mexicans under U.S. law in September 1911. The mere formation of a society, however, is insufficient evidence for asserting that Mexicans were more secure after the PSD than before. The fact that the League was founded in 1911, before the PSD even occurred, suggests that one cannot use such evidence to determine the state of Mexicans after the PSD, and in any case the continued need for a league for “protection” suggests Mexicans did not feel protected, just as recurring laws against human rights abuses indicates the continued presence of those abuses. Cumberland, meanwhile, argues that the PSD heightened racial prejudice. Cannon, “Bordering on Trouble,” 59-60; Charles C. Cumberland, “Border Raids in the Lower Rio Grande Valley 1915” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 57 (Jan 1954), 285.

After the Bandit War subsided somewhat by the end of 1915, organized violence by Tejanos against Anglos erupted again in May 1916, apparently prompted by the U.S. invasion of Mexico after Francisco “Pancho” Villa’s March 1916 attack on Columbus, New Mexico. Carranza strongly objected to this U.S. intervention despite the fact that the U.S. forces were going after his political rival; for Carranza the U.S. invasion was a violation of Mexican sovereignty. Harris and Sadler describe how Carranza carefully prepared to re-launch the PSD as part of a full-scale war effort against the United States, but fortunately recalled the plan before entering into a war that almost certainly would have ended disastrously for Mexico.<sup>57</sup> The re-escalation of violence in South Texas, however, continued until 1917, when the nation’s concerns turned towards their newly declared war with Germany.

At the height of the Bandit War in 1915, disaster struck on all sides. Many Anglos fled the violence to the cities or left Texas for their original homes in the East or Midwest. Meanwhile, some 7,000 Mexicans, about 40 percent of the Mexican population from Cameron and Hidalgo counties, moved to escape the violence, at times leaving behind unharvested crops to indicate their extreme haste. The total economic damage to all parties stood at several million dollars. In short, the economy of much of South Texas essentially shut down for a year after the instigation of hostilities in 1915.<sup>58</sup> The total death toll from the PSD and reactions against it remains a matter of dispute among

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<sup>57</sup> Coerver, Don M. “PLAN OF SAN DIEGO.” *Handbook of Texas Online* <<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ngp04>>, accessed May 04, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association; Harris and Sadler, “The Plan of San Diego,” 392-402.

<sup>58</sup> Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands*, 109-10; Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 11-12; Coerver, “PLAN OF SAN DIEGO.” *Handbook of Texas Online* <<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ngp04>>, accessed May 04, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association; Vanderwood and Samponaro, *Border Fury*, 122.

historians, but all agree the number of Mexican casualties is much higher than that for Anglos. A 2009 documentary reader edited by Steven Mintz provides the range of scholarly estimates of the total death toll of Tejanos: somewhere from 300 to 5,000. Scarcely more than a score of Anglos died.<sup>59</sup>

The Bandit War ended by political negotiation and reform of law enforcement, though some human rights abuses and grievances that caused the insurrection remained unresolved. Peace required reigning in the Rangers and Anglo vigilantes on the one hand and cutting off international support for the *sediciosos* on the other. Tejanos and Anglos worked together to restrain the rangers. J. T. Canales, a state representative from Brownsville in South Texas, led a 1919 investigation by the Texas state legislature against the Texas Rangers, heavily supported by Brownsville's Anglo political boss, James Wells, Jr. The investigation resulted in dramatically reducing the Rangers in size from over 1,000 to less than seventy men, provided for official complaints against the Rangers, and prompted several senior Rangers to retire after the investigation. However, no Rangers were so much as reprimanded by the legislative committee, much less put on

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<sup>59</sup> On the low end, Ivey estimates that more than 20 Anglos were killed, compared with 100 to 300 Mexicans. Vanderwood and Samponaro argue that some 25 Anglos and 150 or more Mexicans were killed in raids, but hundreds or perhaps thousands more Mexicans were killed by Rangers. Ramírez states that while official records have not corroborated more than 100 Mexican deaths in the repression after the PSD violence, the true number is likely close to 5,000 due to the continued emergence of skulls with bullet holes in the area. Johnson estimates based on skeleton findings and incomplete records that the total number of Mexicans killed was probably two or three thousand out of some forty thousand in Cameron and Hidalgo counties, or several percentage points of the total population being killed, mostly within a one-year period. Johnson notes ominously that even if the death count is relatively low, in the hundreds, then the percentage of people killed – or “evaporated,” as was common to say then – during the PSD period is substantially greater than the proportion of people that were “disappeared” in Argentina during the Dirty War in the 1970s. Darren L. Ivey, *The Texas Rangers: A Registry and History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010), 178; Paul J. Vanderwood and Frank N. Samponaro, *Border Fury: A Picture Postcard Record of Mexico's Revolution and U.S. War Preparedness, 1910-1917* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 122; Steven Mintz, ed., *Mexican American Voices: A Documentary Reader*, second edition (Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 121; José A. Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 11; Johnson, 120.

trial for murdering and harassing citizens. Harassment against the Mexican community in Texas continued for decades, albeit on smaller scale.<sup>60</sup>

International support for the *sediciosos* was cut off when the United States granted the political rights and privileges demanded by Carranza's Mexican faction, whose participation kept the violence going. Harris and Sadler convincingly argue that Carranza and his Constitutionalist followers used insurrection in Texas as a bartering chip for U.S. recognition of their government. Their supporting evidence is compelling: not only was this the perspective of U.S. Army personnel on the border, but the *sediciosos* ceased their raiding within a week after the United States extended de facto recognition to Carranza on October 19, 1915. Though Sandos (1992) disagrees with the majority of scholarship and maintains that the PSD was a peculiarly Mexican and North American anarchist movement, he acknowledges that the plan was finally ended by concerted action from the United States government and Carranza in Mexico. It seems that the United States's de facto recognition of Carranza's perceived political rights as heir apparent to the Mexican government led to a suspension of their support for *sediciosos*' raids.<sup>61</sup>

Beyond factional interests in the Mexican Revolution, some scholars have suggested involvement by Germany and even Japan in the PSD. Sandos argues that while Mexicans in the United States instigated the violence, Germany and even Japan played

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<sup>60</sup> Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble: Conflict Between Tejanos and Anglos in South Texas, 1880-1920," M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2001, 83-93; Benjamin Heber Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 174-77.

<sup>61</sup> Harris and Sadler, "The Plan of San Diego," 386-90; Coerver, "PLAN OF SAN DIEGO"; Sandos, *Rebellion in the Borderlands*, 154-172.

important roles in the uprising. Harris and Sadler acknowledge that Germans played a role in promoting the rebellion, though they denied that Germans took over the movement at any point, insisting that Carranza and his men maintained firm control over the plan. While Barbara Tuchmann does not even mention the PSD, she does explain the complex diplomatic history among Japan, Mexico, Germany, and the United States in the early twentieth century, which she had researched nearly exhaustively. Tuchmann provides compelling evidence that Germany tried to provoke Mexico into war with the United States, most explicitly through the Zimmermann Telegram in 1917, which promised a three-way alliance with Japan, while Japan was seeking its own separate alliance with Mexico. Katz argues that, while Germany had friendly relations with Carranza, it did not have a great impact on his policies, much less his support for a small rebel group working in South Texas.<sup>62</sup> Germany and perhaps Japan played minor roles in assisting the *sediciosos*, though Mexican forces under Carranza seemed to have the upper hand. German scheming with Mexico later had tremendous repercussions for the prohibition movement in Texas, as described below.

The end of the Bandit War did not resolve the problems of socio-political inequality, however, but tended to result in even stronger Anglo dominance in South Texas after the Mexican Revolution than before. The political situation for Tejanos was mixed after 1920: a flood of new Anglo commercial farmers swept away the dominance of Tejanos and their Anglo bosses in some counties, but in other places the bosses and the ranching system held sway, and in urban settings Anglos and some Tejanos enjoyed

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<sup>62</sup> Harris and Sadler, "The Plan of San Diego," 402-405; Barbara Tuchmann, *The Zimmerman Telegram* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979), 23-114; Friedrich Katz, *The Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 562.

success together. Canales's 1919 investigation against the Texas Rangers and the activism of the Primer Congreso Mexicano helped inspire Tejano independence from political bosses and greater Tejano political activism through mutual aid societies that sought to show Anglos their assimilation into the new Texan society. While in some ways Tejanos' lives improved after 1920, Canales's decision not to run again for the state legislature that year marked the last Tejano member of the Texas legislature until the 1950s and suggested that the decline of the political bosses was not a step forward for Tejanos, but a sign of their marginalization as Anglos took near-total control of politics in South Texas. Nonetheless, mutual aid societies like the Order of the Sons of America (OSA) and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) cultivated U.S. citizenship for Tejanos in an Anglo-dominated society, and especially LULAC (which Canales helped found) gave Tejanos mechanisms for political activism apart from paternalistic bosses.

The arrival of peace after the Bandit War's conclusion brought economic prosperity to some Anglos and Tejanos, but not to all. The unrest brought by the PSD made it easier for newcomer Anglos to expel old settlers and seize more land for themselves. For some, the arrival of peace and mutual aid societies helped Tejanos gain a solid economic footing and partially assimilate into the newly Anglo-dominant Texan society after the late 1910s. Benjamin Heber Johnson, however, has argued persuasively that peace brought economic prosperity for the Anglo commercial farmers who continued to enter South Texas by the railroad, though Latinos did not much benefit from the new wealth. Johnson sees Tejanos immediately after 1920 as locked into an economic caste system against which they made slow progress throughout the twentieth century. David

Montejano believes that the position of most Mexican laborers in the 1920s was in a state of labor repression organized by Anglos, but was still fluid depending upon local conditions. While the economic position of many Anglos was secure after 1920, the stability of Tejanos was uncertain.<sup>63</sup>

What of prohibition? In this context, the triumph of prohibition statewide in 1919 constituted a victory for dry Tejanos such as Canales, but a defeat for Tejanos generally. Legal action by the Texas Attorney General against German brewers, described below, had by 1917 crippled the brewers and thus stripped Tejanos of a key source of their poll tax payments. Without legal saloons after 1919, political bosses found it harder to mobilize Tejano voters. Prohibitionists worked hand in glove with the progressive reformers that undermined Tejanos' main vehicle to political representation: political machines.<sup>64</sup> Though Canales was an exception in this regard – he was supported by a political machine while also supporting prohibition – the end of his tenure in the state legislature following the success of statewide prohibition remains a symbol of the concomitant collapse of Tejano political power and the twilight of saloon-backed boss rule in South Texas.

The triumph of prohibition in 1910s Texas was advanced by fears that racial minorities could and did threaten white rule, the Plan of San Diego heightened those fears to an unprecedented level. Even in 1912, when the Mexican Revolution had just begun to spark serious border clashes and the PSD had not yet been conceived, white

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<sup>63</sup> Vanderwood and Samponaro, *Border Fury*, 122; Tina N. Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble," 94-99; David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 197-254; Johnson, 169-205.

<sup>64</sup> Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas*, 90-307; Cannon, "Bordering on Trouble," 93-107; Johnson, 176-80; Ramírez, *To the Line of Fire*, 122-27.

prohibitionists framed their struggle as a political replay of racial violence harkening back to the Texas Revolution. William Burnett wrote for the *Home and State* in June 1912 to complain about fraudulent and ignorant Tejano voters that in 1911 had decided the statewide election. Not only did nefarious Tejano votes undermine white-only rule by overriding the will of the majority of white voters, but Burnett implied that pandering to Tejanos could threaten innocent white citizens, as when Governor Colquitt pardoned twenty-five Tejanos on September 16, the anniversary of Mexican independence. Burnett supposed the governor released guilty criminals with a knife in one hand and a bottle of mescal in the other: a sure recipe for criminality, perhaps the rape of white women. For Burnett, Anglo conflict with Tejanos over prohibition harkened back to the 1830s: white “native-born Texans” were called upon to defend their community from “the same Mexican element which butchered them” at the Alamo. He concluded his front-page article with battle cries that recalled massacres of Anglos at the hand of Mexicans: “Remember the Alamo—Remember Goliad!”<sup>65</sup>

For whites like Burnett, dries had to bar Tejanos from the electoral process not simply to advance prohibition but out of a sacred duty to honor the memory of Texan martyrs, who fought to advance white-only rule against Mexicans. Since such thinking received front-page billing in the Anti-Saloon League of Texas’s flagship newspaper as early as 1912, the escalation of violence and fear during the Bandit War provided plentiful ammunition for dries hoping to win over white votes and suppress racial minorities in prohibition elections. Sure enough, minority voter turnout in the statewide

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<sup>65</sup> S. M. Lesesne, “A Study of Our Mexican ‘Citizens,’” *The Home and State* (Dallas, TX: July 20, 1912), 1.

1919 election plummeted to all-time lows, allowing prohibitionists to claim a comfortable victory for statewide prohibition.

In sum, Tejanos played a significant if somewhat forced role in delaying Texas's turn to prohibition, particularly in 1911, but aided its rise by the end of the decade both through the decline of their political participation and white prohibitionists' successful appeal to racial solidarity against wet racial minorities. Aside from the pressures of boss rule, they had serious cultural and religious reasons to reject prohibition. Anglo prohibitionists, meanwhile, increasingly deployed racist arguments to advance their cause. The growing acceptance and success of white supremacy as a motivator for prohibitionists, particularly after the imposition of poll taxes put political involvement outside the price tag of most Tejanos, demonstrated both the persistence of racial hierarchy and the potential for noble-minded reformers to exacerbate racially incendiary rhetoric. The actions of militant Tejanos in South Texas during the Bandit War may have sought to address legitimate political and economic grievances but exacerbated the plight of ordinary Tejanos, resulted in hundreds of deaths, and stoked racial fears that undermined what little political clout Tejanos had in South Texas. Against such chaos, the law and order message of prohibitionists triumphed while Tejanos suffered. Amidst the rumors of war between Mexican and the United States, a full-scale war with Germany provided prohibitionists a singular opportunity to win their war against alcohol once and for all by exposing the unpatriotic nature of their mortal enemy: the German brewers.

### *Germans and Prohibition*

German domination of the brewing industry in the United States had never been a secret, yet the fact gained newfound significance when Germans became the enemy. The

decisive victory of prohibition was intimately linked to the involvement of the United States in the Great War, now called World War I (WWI). While prohibition had been linked to ardent Americanism since its inception, WWI propaganda turned patriotic Americans against all things German, and few industries were as closely related to German ethnicity as the brewing of beer. In Texas, brewers had been hard-pressed by the state attorney general in a lawsuit filed in 1916, before the United States had become an official belligerent against Germany yet while the nation drifted towards war. The suit against Texas brewers foreshadowed a Congressional investigation against the United States Brewing Association that paved the way for national prohibition and the implementation of statewide prohibition in Texas as a wartime measure.

German-speaking peoples from Europe immigrated to Texas in substantial numbers beginning in the early 1840s when Texas functioned as an independent republic. Most of them settled on the then-frontier near Comanche and other Indian tribes and sought their livelihood through small-scale farming. Aside from their language and culture, the majority of German Texans distinguished themselves from their white neighbors by shunning slavery, siding with the Union during the Civil War, and embracing the Republican Party even after Reconstruction. Unlike African Americans and Tejanos, German Americans endured less racial scorn from their Anglo neighbors, though they were not fully accepted into the top tier of the racial hierarchy until the mid-twentieth century.<sup>66</sup> Beer production and consumption was interwoven into German culture and identity in Texas. In 1840, in the Republic of Texas, German immigrants

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<sup>66</sup> Marian Jean Barber, "How the Irish, Germans, and Czechs Became Anglo: Race and Identity in the Texas-Mexico Borderlands" (Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin, 2010).

began to produce lager beer in cool months and consumed it throughout the year. Famous for their industry and definitively white, Anglos could more easily forgive Germans their love of drink than Tejanos and African Americans, to whom Anglos had increasingly ascribed stereotypes of laziness and poverty.<sup>67</sup>

From the 1850s until the end of the nineteenth century, Germans made up about five percent of the total population of Texas, or roughly 150,000 by 1900, the largest such population by proportion or absolute numbers anywhere in the former Confederacy. Like German Americans nationally, they were fond of their beer-drinking culture and dominated the brewing industry that funded two-thirds of the anti-Prohibition campaigns. With roots in the state since it was an independent republic, German Texans leaned Republican and were predominantly wet Catholics or Lutherans, though thousands were Jews, teetotaling Methodists, or freethinking atheists.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Glen E. Lich, *The German Texans* (San Antonio: University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures, 1981), 104-105; *Handbook of Texas Online*, Michael C. Hennech and Tracé Etienne-Gray, "Brewing Industry," accessed March 16, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/dib01>. See also Stanley Baron, *Brewed in America: A History of Beer and Ale in the United States* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962); *Brewers and Texas Politics* (2 vols., San Antonio: Passing Show Printing Company, 1916); Donald Bull et al., *American Breweries* (Trumbull, CT: Bullworks, 1984); Mike Hennech, *Encyclopedia of Texas Breweries: Pre-Prohibition (1836–1918)* (Irving, TX: Ale Publishing, 1990); Linda Johnson and Sally Ross, *Historic Texas Hotels and Country Inns* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1983); Joseph Pluta, "Regional Change in the United States Brewing Industry," *Bureau of Business Research* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); and Moritz Tiling, *History of the German Element in Texas* (Houston: Rein and Sons, 1913).

<sup>68</sup> Thousands of Germans settled in Texas since the 1830s, but by the turn of the century most were recent immigrants from the old world. Today roughly 18% of Texans claim German heritage. Terry G. Jordan, "GERMANS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 15, 2010), <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/png02>. Brewers' correspondence shows that Texan Germans widely trended Republican, letter from Ormund Paget to Otto Wahrmond, December 6, 1910, in Looney, *Brewers*, 291–92; such correspondence also showed the vitality and wide geographic distribution of German-speaking groups by their plans to send employees "who can speak German ... along the Southern Pacific R.R. into the German settlements and urge upon the people to pay their poll taxes," particularly in southwest Texas, letter from Paget to San Antonio Brewing Association (SABA), January 19, 1909 in Looney, *Brewers*, 272; Two-thirds of the TBA budget came from brewers and one-third from the distillers, Looney, *Brewers*, 1.

Beer played a notable role in German Texans' celebration of their identity as both Texans and Americans. For an all-American success story, one need look no further than William Menger. A native of Hanau in the small German state of Hesse, Menger arrived in Texas in 1847 and by 1855 had established a San Antonio brewery next door to Texas's greatest shrine: the Alamo. When that soon grew to be the largest brewery in Texas, Menger used the profits of this venture to build around the brewery the Menger Hotel in 1859. As economic success brought continued expansions and renovations, the Menger Hotel gained status as a Texas landmark in its own right for its opulence, treating military officers in San Antonio to its fine cuisine and acclaimed bar. The bar dazzled visitors with solid cherry on the counter and ceiling, French mirrors, and gold-plated spittoons. Beyond décor, the bar won renown for its fine drinks: "mint juleps served in solid silver tumblers," hot rum toddies, and the signature Menger Beer "chilled by the Alamo Madre ditch" passing through the hotel courtyard.<sup>69</sup> Perhaps the most famous military officer to visit the Menger Bar was Teddy Roosevelt, who enjoyed his most effective recruiting for the Rough Rider brigade there and returned for a banquet as President of the United States in 1905. The hotel that William Menger's brewery made possible remains a San Antonio landmark in the early twenty-first century.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Eleanor Stuck, "Menger Hotel," accessed March 16, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/dgm02>.

<sup>70</sup> While Roosevelt had served as governor of New York, he recruited his Rough Riders from Southwestern areas: Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, and New Mexico. In addition to Roosevelt, the bar has allegedly hosted United States presidents from Ulysses S. Grant to Bill Clinton. Glen E. Lich, *The German Texans* (San Antonio: University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures, 1981), 105; *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German American Business Biographies*, "William Achatius Menger (1827-1871)," Julia Brookins (published June 8, 2011; updated May 21, 2013), <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=29>; Stuck, "Menger Hotel."

Religious feast days provided abundant justification for German drinking, but no holiday attracted a better excuse for naturalized immigrants to imbibe in celebration than the United States's birthday. Fourth of July festivities in Texas were loud, raucous events in which German and American identity were simultaneously lauded. The German Lutheran churches of Texas largely avoided discussion of the alcohol question and took a tolerant stance towards beer consumption. While Swedish Lutherans in the United States tended to support prohibition due to their pietist leanings, German Lutherans – who formed the overwhelming majority of Lutherans in Texas – fiercely defended moderate alcohol use against prohibition.<sup>71</sup>

Mexican Americans were not the only ethnic group in Texas who endured doubts of their patriotism in the 1910s due to their distinctive culture and language, but German Americans shared a similar predicament. With openly warm feelings for their mother country in Europe and free use of their mother tongue, most German Texans were regarded with suspicion when the Great War erupted in 1914 and all “hyphenated Americans” were regarded as less than entirely loyal to Old Glory. Nonetheless, Germans in some ways had distinct advantages over their Latino co-belligerents in the anti-prohibition coalition. Germans shared the light skin tones of their Anglo neighbors, giving them an advantage over darker-skinned Mexicans in a national and international milieu that privileged paleness. As linguistic divisions between Anglos and Germans progressively faded leading up to the First World War, this similarity of complexion allowed Germans – along with other European immigrant groups like the Irish and

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<sup>71</sup> Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1964), 205, 352-353.

Czechs – to become regarded as “Anglo” by the end of the Second World War.<sup>72</sup> Texan Germans, especially the immigrants after 1848, also tended to be even better educated than most Anglos, while Mexican Texans had relatively little formal training. While some of these highly educated Germans were freethinkers, most were very religious, and this religiosity – especially when Protestant and similar in style to Anglo forms of worship – gave Germans more respectability than most Tejanos, who tended to visit church infrequently and held to traditions from peasant folk religion that Anglos dismissed as un-Christian superstitions.<sup>73</sup> Perhaps most significantly of all, Tejanos with darker skin were often banned from white-only primaries and had too much trouble paying their poll taxes to make much of an impact in the primaries. While traditionally Republican, German Americans could freely participate in the Democratic primary and sometimes did, as when the Texas branch of the German American Alliance passed a resolution in July 1910 endorsing Democrat Oscar B. Colquitt for governor due to one issue: he was the strongest anti-prohibitionist in the race.<sup>74</sup>

Dry papers like the *Home and State* showed prohibitionists’ sentiment against all who were not old-stock whites. As noted above, a November 1915 article in the *Home and State* on a wet parade in Chicago that month called the participants, among other

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<sup>72</sup> Barber, “Became Anglo.”

<sup>73</sup> On racial, religious, and other Anglo prejudices against Mexican Texans, see Arnaldo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983). German churches often used translated versions of English Anglo hymns, while Anglos borrowed many songs from the original German, from “A Mighty Fortress” to “Silent Night.” Gilbert John Jordan, *German Texana: A Bilingual Collection of Traditional Materials*, 1st ed (Burnet, TX: Eakin Press, 1980), 43-44.

<sup>74</sup> *San Antonio Daily Express*, July 5, 1910, p. 8. Even the state president of the GAA, Edgar Schramm Sr., signed the pro-Colquitt petition though he personally supported another anti-prohibitionist, R. V. Davidson.

things, “a crowd of undesirable hyphenated Americans, whose hyphen is bigger than their Americanism,” who “have no respect for the law that requires their conformity to American customs and ... American ideas.” In sum, “Such people are in no sense Americans,” the author insisted, since they are “nearly all of foreign birth, speaking a language that few Americans can understand.”<sup>75</sup> At that time, the United States remained neutral in WWI, which had already created millions of casualties in little over a year. Those who saw themselves as Americans first worried that recent immigrants’ loyalties to other nations and tongues could plunge their nation into a needless war with countless deaths. By giving voice to these frustrated nativists, who felt that anything but 100 percent Americanism was a threat to the United States’s identity and security, the paper exposed a mixture of nationalism and racism in prohibitionists’ official rhetoric.

Most newspapers in Texas opposed Germany during the war but did not clamor for U.S. involvement in the conflict at first. Anti-German sentiment grew with German attacks on American shipping, particularly through unrestricted submarine warfare. The sinking of the *Lusitania* by a German U-boat, which had fired without warning, resulted in over 100 American deaths and prompted outrage from the U.S. public and government. Germany avoided a break of diplomatic ties by apologizing for the event and promising to end unrestricted submarine warfare against neutral shipping. Though Germany kept this promise through 1916, military leaders renewed indiscriminate attacks on shipping in enemy territory on February 1, 1917 and incurred U.S. wrath with the sinking of the RMS *Laconia* on February 25. Twelve people died in the sinking, including two American women, Mrs. Mary Hoy and her daughter Elizabeth Hoy, and Texan newspapers

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<sup>75</sup> “The Liquor Crowd Showing Their Hand,” *Home and State* (Nov 30, 1915), 4.

explicitly called the incident “Another Lusitania.”<sup>76</sup> Public sentiment inched ever closer to war.

The emergence of the Zimmerman Telegram to public knowledge in late February 1917 and the attendant resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare helped turn U.S. public opinion decisively for war with Germany. Issued in code in January, the telegram from the German foreign secretary to the Mexican government offered an alliance with Mexico and Japan against the United States after Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare in hopes of knocking Britain out of the war. Germany hoped that Japan and Mexico might sufficiently distract the United States from sending needed supplies to Britain and France and would turn the European war decisively in Germany’s favor. Instead, the note led many Americans to seriously contemplate military action against Germany. The telegram’s revelation did not, however, stop President Wilson from reaffirming the nation’s commitment to armed neutrality on his second inauguration on March 5.<sup>77</sup>

Continued attacks on U.S. shipping and the loss of U.S. lives tipped the scales in favor of war. News of the sinking of a U.S. ship, the *Algonquin*, emerged on March 14, the same day newspapers reported rumors that German diplomats were controlling Mexico’s “every move.”<sup>78</sup> Five days later word emerged that three unarmed U.S.

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<sup>76</sup> *Austin Statesman*, February 27, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>77</sup> *Austin Statesman*, March 1 and March 6, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>78</sup> *Austin Statesman*, March 14, 1917, p. 1.

merchant ships had been sunk by U-boats, and by March 25 the Wilson Administration was taking every step short of war to prepare the nation for war against Germany.<sup>79</sup>

The shift against Germany in public opinion coincided with political successes for dries. On March 1, 1917, when the *Austin Statesman*'s banner headline announced, "Exposure of German Plot is Confirmed," other articles hailed the passage of the "Reed Bone Dry Amendment" to make the District of Columbia alcohol-free, as well as the government of Denmark's decision to temporarily prohibit the sale of alcohol. By March 3, news of the German foreign minister admitting the genuineness of the Zimmermann Telegram emerged the same day that President Wilson signed the "Bone Dry" bill. A speech by William Jennings Bryan to the Texas legislature on March 17, 1917 made explicit the growing link between international events and prohibition. While limiting himself to only a few issues, three-time Democratic nominee for president and former Secretary of State Bryan mentioned his fierce opposition to U.S. entry into war with Germany alongside two of his favorite progressive issues: woman's suffrage and prohibition. Bryan likewise expressed his support for the re-election of Morris Sheppard, Texas's junior senator and the champion of prohibition in the U.S. Senate. The Great Commoner also expressed belief that more than any other state, Texas had always stood with him and with his principles.<sup>80</sup> Though Texas had not yet gone dry by the end of March, the U.S.'s entry into the war ironically helped shift Texans' attitudes to side with Bryan against alcohol even as they—and Bryan himself—abandoned their earlier reticence about going to war.

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<sup>79</sup> *Austin Statesman*, March 19 and 25, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>80</sup> *Austin Statesman*, March 1, 3, and 17, 1917, p. 1.

On Monday, April 2, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war, and paranoia over German infiltration and sabotage abounded.<sup>81</sup> Just three days after the declaration of war, the press reported on April 6 that a score of German U-boats roamed the Gulf of Mexico, and President Wilson's declaration that day of new regulations against "alien enemies" took a decidedly anti-German flavor. News of "GERMAN RAIDERS OFF AMERICAN COAST" and U-boats "Lurk in the Atlantic" appeared the next day, while Americans around the nation celebrated "Loyalty Day" on April 9, insinuating disloyalty for all who disagreed with the war.<sup>82</sup> Texas newspapers reported that newspapers in Germany and the Vatican condemned Wilson's move to war, tightening the public perception that foreign powers sought to keep America out of the war. By that time even the ageing William Jennings Bryan, the near pacifist, volunteered for duty in the U.S. Army and former anti-war advocates either changed their tune or were drowned out by a war-friendly press.<sup>83</sup>

By August of 1917 newspapers declared the war against Germany to be a struggle of good against evil that no good American could oppose, yet also admitted that many citizens still doubted the necessity of entering the conflict. An editorial that month by the San Antonio *Express* explained that opposition to entering the war was still "fairly widespread" not only among pacifists and socialists but also a "large number of good people" who preferred negotiation to conflict and suspected the war was more about helping other nations than securing American interests. The article then explained that

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<sup>81</sup> Austin *Statesman*, April 2, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> Austin *Statesman*, April 6, 7, and 9, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>83</sup> Austin *Statesman*, April 5, 1917, p. 1.

America had to enter the war in order to protect its rights as a sovereign nation against the aggressions of Germany's military autocracy, whose very existence "was a menace to freedom and democracy" and whose victory in the war would have "threatened our National life." Until such freedom was made secure by Germany's defeat, any "peace talk and compromise talk [was] unAmerican."<sup>84</sup> Under such logic, half-measures and nuance were left at the door, an atmosphere in which totalistic solutions such as prohibition seemed ever more reasonable.

One Methodist minister famous for his absolutist rhetoric, Robert "Fighting Bob" Shuler, linked former governor Jim Ferguson to German brewers in his independent newspaper, the *Free Lance*. Recalling in October 1917 that the governor had recently been saved from bankruptcy by a "loan" of \$150,000 from an unknown source, Shuler argued that Ferguson "had easily been worth that amount to those German booze makers" for serving them with "zeal and earnestness" while governor.<sup>85</sup> Emphasizing the German nature of brewers when the United States had been at war with Germany for half a year proved an effective strategy for prohibitionists, though Schuler extended this logic to brand all who supported the brewers with the stigma of unfaithfulness to Old Glory in wartime.

Prohibitionists had been taking advantage of fears of German invasion to advance prohibition since the inception of U.S. involvement in the conflict. In April 1917, former Lieutenant Richmond Pearson Hobson, who used his famous exploits from the Spanish-

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<sup>84</sup> San Antonio *Express*, "WHY WE ARE FIGHTING," August 12, 1917, p. 22.

<sup>85</sup> Bob Shuler, "WAS IT BREWERY MONEY?" *Bob Shuler's Free Lance*, Paris, Texas (October 1917), 269.

American War to launch a political career as an Alabama Congressman from 1903 to 1915, combined his advocacy for American military supremacy and prohibition. While stumping throughout North Texas as a paid agent of the Anti-Saloon League, Hobson implicitly evoked the Zimmerman Telegram's threat of a German-Japanese-Mexican alliance by warning that German or Japanese troops might at any moment land in Mexico or Central America and from there attack the United States. To prevent this, he advocated a long-term occupation of the Latin American littoral north of Panama, with or without the consent of Latin American governments. In addition to such extreme proposals, Hobson advanced the increasingly mainstream view of adopting prohibition as a wartime measure to avoid waste of national resources and to ensure U.S. troops sober and ready for battle.<sup>86</sup> Hobson's dire predictions of an imminent foreign invasion fit into a larger strategy of prohibitionists taking advantage of wartime fear of the other, particularly Germans, to push their case against the German-dominated alcohol industry.

As the war dragged on into 1918, the rhetoric against Germans at home and abroad intensified, and prohibitionists took full advantage of the popular shift to link King Alcohol to the Kaiser. Popular Texas papers such as the *El Paso Morning Times* regularly referred to the German enemy in Europe as "Huns" and peddled stories of high-profile Germans suspected to be spies.<sup>87</sup> In March of 1918 that paper explicitly connected the growing anti-German sentiment to the prohibition crusade, invoking the language of war: dyes had assailed the "positions of King Alcohol since Prussia involved the world in

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<sup>86</sup> Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*, April 7, 1917, p. 1-2.

<sup>87</sup> Paranoia towards Germans, both justified and imagined, paralleled violent frustration of American patriots against all who opposed the war effort. A cartoon entitled "NO SPEED LIMIT TO THIS" depicted a speeding car labeled "War Work" running over two characters, "Obstructionist" and "Slacker," while a "Pacifist" rabbit runs for cover. *El Paso Morning News*, March 19, 1918, p. 1.

war” and it appeared “the final battle” would soon arrive with “a complete victory for the dry army.” Peacetime, the paper recounted, had fostered a materialism that “shook its head” at the notion of prohibition and ignored the greater good of the community in favor of the “so-called imperative demands of business,” particularly the profitable and tax-producing saloon. The demands of war, however, led many to believe that alcohol produced inefficient soldiers who “could not be depended upon to carry the flag of liberty to victory” and thereby put the war effort at risk. In short, the foe of alcohol “must be strangled if we were to strangle the Prussian enemy.” In both cases they were, “possibly unconsciously,” undermining America’s war effort against Germany and aligned with German sympathizers.<sup>88</sup>

Serial stories in the newspapers translated generic warnings against alcohol for soldiers into vivid cautionary tales. Released in March 1918, Chapter 20 of the serial “Over the Top: An American Soldier Who Went” details how two German officers wandered near the American trenches on a drunken bet and paid with their lives for the mistake. Hit by dynamite and bleeding out on the field, one of the Germans recounted how access to plentiful and free champagne led to their demise. The moral of the story was plain: alcohol rendered a soldier unfit for duty, perhaps leading to his death, and Americans did well not to follow the Germans in plying their soldiers with liquor.<sup>89</sup>

Even secular papers began using religious imagery in favor of prohibition and rejected the possibility of spiritual considerations by wets. For the El Paso *Morning News*, those against the statewide prohibition imposed by the Texas legislature, which

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<sup>88</sup> El Paso *Morning News*, March 19, 1918, p. 6.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

took effect on June 26, 1918, should not “kick against the pricks,” a reference to the Apostle Paul (then Saul) fighting against Christ before his sudden conversion. The paper then compared prohibition to the God of ancient Israel: “As a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, [prohibition] will lead our soldiers through the Red Sea and the desert of war and finally—and at no distant day—unfurl its white, unstained banner to the breezes in the Promised Land.” The American people then assume the liberating role assigned by the Bible to God, arriving in God’s Promised Land after “free[ing] ourselves from captivity” and “liberat[ing] the peoples of the world from the red menace of militarism.” Anti-prohibitionists, on the other hand, were caricatured as holding one of two motives – appetite for drink or cupidity for personal profit – and received no metaphors from the Bible to justify their position.<sup>90</sup> For the El Paso *Morning News*, prohibition and the American war effort against Germany alike served the cause of God.

If the war effort was just, however, some Texan newspapers declared the United States outshone not only their enemies but also their allies because it supported prohibition. America’s allies and enemies alike received criticism for spreading the view that alcohol was innocuous: German justification of beer as a sustaining beverage drew condemnation alongside the French adulation of wine over water and English praise of whiskey. English-speaking countries nonetheless merited some praise for their relative progress on prohibition: England had begun “seriously” discussing the liquor question since the royal family supported regulations limiting public drunkenness, while Canada

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<sup>90</sup> “Kick against the pricks” is a quote from Acts 9:5 in the Authorized [King James] Version of the Bible. *El Paso Morning News*, March 19, 1918, p. 6.

was by then effectively dry.<sup>91</sup> More than merely anti-German sentiment, a more general anti-foreign sentiment with hints of Anglo-Saxon superiority motivated some Texan prohibitionists.

Patriotic politicians not only denounced Germans for the ties to the alcohol industry, but also Jews. They did not control the liquor industry as firmly as Germans did beer brewing in the United States, but that did not prevent anti-prohibitionists from exploiting the slim connection that existed. Representative John Tillman of Arkansas in 1917 charged most owners of saloons, breweries, and distillers with the crime of bearing foreign-sounding names: “Steinberg, Schaumberg, Diffenderfer, and Hirschmaum. So,” he clarified, “I am not attacking an American enterprise. I am attacking mainly a foreign enterprise.” Perhaps just as ominously, he concluded with a call to carry “the burning cross of this [prohibition] crusade to every home in our great Republic,” a tradition that he attributed to his Scottish “clansman” descendants, but which also bore a remarkable similarity to the cross-burning practices of a different kind of klansman.<sup>92</sup> The 1915 film *Birth of a Nation* had sparked the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan, which had taken on the new emphasis of not only enforcing white supremacy but also suppressing white minorities such as Catholics, recent immigrants, and Jews. Such statements by Tillman foreshadowed the Klan’s militant activism for strict prohibition enforcement in the 1920s.

Drys did not simply view prohibition’s enemies as “over there,” but used rising anti-foreign sentiment to turn old-stock Americans against the perceived foreigners in

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<sup>91</sup> March 19, 1918, p. 6.

<sup>92</sup> All quotes from *Congressional Record—House*, December 12, 1917. First two quotes from p. 449; last two quotes from p. 452. See also Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, (New York: Scribner, 2011), 44-46, 86.

their midst, especially Germans. In December 1917, Arkansas Representative John Tillman addressed Congress vividly describing a tyrant greater than any other in history, King John Barleycorn, and his vilest agents, American brewers. Tillman denounced brewers as haughty plutocrats “usually tainted with Teuton sympathies and a damned German conscience.”<sup>93</sup> In February 1918 Wisconsin’s former lieutenant governor John Strange warned that the nation was being undermined from within by foreign merchants of death. He wrote to the *Milwaukee Journal*, “We have German enemies in this country, too, and the worst of all our German enemies, the most treacherous, the most menacing, are Pabst, Schlitz, Blatz, and Miller.”<sup>94</sup>

German dominance of the American brewing industry contributed to these claims. Beer was a traditional German beverage and German immigrants had naturally brought the drink with them to the New World. Definitively Teutonic names such as Schmidt, Ruppert, Pabst, and Hamm had long dominated the brewing industry in the United States, though the most prominent beer baron in the nation was Adolphus Busch. Born in the German Rhineland, Busch immigrated to the United States in 1857 and soon took over his father-in-law’s brewing business. By the turn of the century he had renamed the company Anheuser-Busch and transformed it into a powerhouse by controlling every level of production through vertical integration. By 1901 the business’s seventy-acre factory complex in St. Louis produced over a million barrels of beer annually, mostly a

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<sup>93</sup> *Congressional Record—House*, December 12, 1917, p. 448.

<sup>94</sup> Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2011), 85, 100, 102-3. See also Maureen Ogle, *Ambitious Brew: The Story of American Beer*, (Orlando: Mariner Books, 2007), 173; “A Nation of Drunkards,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick.

light lager called Budweiser named after a Bohemian town.<sup>95</sup> While at one level an all-American success story, brewers such as Busch also bore a German legacy that smacked of foreignness to old-stock Americans.

One of Busch's largest markets for his beer and a major arena of his anti-prohibition organizing was Texas. Operating in the state through the Lone Star Brewing Company, Busch personally spearheaded the effort to organize anti-prohibition activities in Texas in the wake of the 1902 poll tax law. He donated \$100,000 of Anheuser-Busch funds to the cause to inspire other brewers to give generously to their lobbying arm in the state, the Texas Brewers' Association. Busch urged his fellow brewers to be willing to spend millions to advance their businesses through political involvement. Their activities often flouted the law, decency, or both. The TBA organized the payment of poll taxes for African and Mexican Americans, bought the support of newspapers, and engaged in more nefarious activities. Even some of their agents admitted some of their methods were "best not written about."<sup>96</sup> For Busch, though, the anti-prohibition crusade meant more than simply keeping the brewing business afloat. If the dries won, he wrote, brewers like him "would lose our honor and standing of ourselves and our families," a cause worth spending "the majority of our fortunes" to protect.<sup>97</sup> While Busch's words may have been mere posturing, they reveal a motive for anti-prohibitionists transcending mere economic interest: the desire to uphold the honor of their families and culture against

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<sup>95</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 31-33, 85.

<sup>96</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 32.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

nativist dries, who sought to despoil them not only of their livelihoods but also their ethnic distinctives.

A prime target of patriotic prohibitionists during the war was the United States Brewers' Association (USBA) and connected organizations, particularly the National German-American Alliance (GAA). Founded in 1901 to foster unity among Americans of German heritage, by 1914 the GAA had nearly two million members and had been transformed into a virtual publicity arm of the USBA. The USBA had also gained control of the American Association of Foreign-Language Newspapers, which it used both to oppose prohibition across the nation and to oppose war preparedness spending.<sup>98</sup> Congress had been investigating the GAA since at least March of 1918 for its connections to pro-German sentiment, and those investigations received front-page coverage in the Texas press.<sup>99</sup> The Overmann Committee, a U.S. Senate group headed by North Carolina Democrat Lee Slater Overmann, in September 1918 began investigating the complicity of the USBA, GAA, and other groups in spreading pro-German propaganda in the United States before and during the war, which still raged, though was beginning to wind down. The investigation revealed deep ties between German brewers and pro-German sentiment and was eventually published in June of 1919, concluding that these groups had used bribes, boycotts, funding, and coercion to advance the pro-German cause in the press, primaries, and political campaigns.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 102.

<sup>99</sup> *Houston Post*, March 5, 1918, p. 1.

<sup>100</sup> "Overman Report Accuses Brewers," *The New York Times*, June 15, 1919, p. 20.

Prohibitionists had no need to invent connections between brewers and Germany; they presented themselves. Adolphus Busch had been decorated by the Kaiser, two of his daughters were married to German officers, and his son and heir August Busch threw parties every year to honor the Kaiser's birthday.<sup>101</sup> After Adolphus died in 1913 (of cirrhosis of the liver), his widow lived at their estate in Germany, where she tended to wounded German soldiers after the war began and received a \$300,000 transfer from Anheuser-Busch. The Busch family had also purchased a million dollars of German war bonds before the United States entered the war. After the U.S. became a belligerent power in 1917, many German brewers tried to affirm their Americanness. August A. Busch, Adolphus's son, wore an American flag lapel and took down decorative portraits of German heroes from the company's plants. Members of various brewers' families, including Henry Pabst, joined the U.S. Armed Forces. The Busch family bought half a million dollars in Liberty Bonds, while a group of brewers from Milwaukee offered two million.<sup>102</sup>

While the rapid turn of Texas to support statewide and national prohibition happened due to American involvement in the war, German brewers had already taken a blow in 1915 and 1916, when most citizens favored U.S. neutrality in the conflict. A suit filed in January 1915 by the office of Texas Attorney General B. F. Looney demanded the brewers pay over \$21,000,000 dollars for violating the state constitution and various laws, both anti-trust laws and laws limiting the use of corporate money to influence politics and elections. The *Abilene Daily Reporter* in 1915 highlighted the sensational

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<sup>101</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 31-33, 85.

<sup>102</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 103.

claim that the brewers paid poll taxes for wet voters, “especially negroes.”<sup>103</sup> In a January 1916 court settlement, the seven Texas brewers pled guilty to the charges, but instead of paying the millions Looney asked for, they settled for fines of just \$290,000 and forfeited their business charters for two years.<sup>104</sup>

Even before most of these revelations came to light, the Texas legislature in February 1918 ratified the Eighteenth Amendment, which banned the production, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages. Early reports of German brewers’ transgressions of Texas law likely influenced the state legislature to institute statewide prohibition as a wartime emergency measure. A statutory prohibition bill passed both houses of the legislature and received the governor’s signature in March 1918 and took effect June 26.<sup>105</sup> Later reports throughout 1918 and 1919 doubtless influenced ordinary Texan voters, however, fifty-five percent of whom voted in May of 1919 to enshrine prohibition into the state constitution.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> *Abilene Daily Reporter*, January 10, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>104</sup> The evidence from this trial, including hundreds of letters in the brewers' correspondence, was put into the public record as a condition of the legal settlement and the evidence was self-published, presumably by the attorney general, in 1916 as a two-volume work, B. F. Looney, ed., *The Brewers and Texas Politics*, vol. 1 (San Antonio, 1916). The collection provides invaluable insights into the inner thinking and practical operation of the brewers' coalition as well as into the thinking of Pros as to what was particularly scandalous to them about the coalition. In Looney's words, “This volume [sic; there were two volumes] contains practically all of the evidence introduced.” Looney, *Brewers*, 1-2. For further discussion of this and related lawsuits by Attorney General Looney, see Kevin C. Motl, “Under the Influence: The Texas Business Men’s Association and the Campaign against Reform, 1906-1915,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 109 (April 2006), 494-529.

<sup>105</sup> Ernest Hurst Cherrington and Anti-Saloon League, eds., *The Anti-Saloon League Year Book: An Encyclopedia of Facts and Figures Dealing with the Liquor Traffic and the Temperance Reform* (Columbus, Ohio, 1918), 307.

<sup>106</sup> Robert Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas,” *Texas Almanac* (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

## *Conclusion*

Beyond a connection between dry advances and the turn towards war in the timing of events, prohibitionists explicitly exploited anti-German sentiment during the war to attack brewers as pro-German—and therefore anti-American—organizations. Brewers had been largely discredited in Texas by the lawsuit of the state attorney general while the United States remained a neutral power, but U.S. entry into WWI stoked a surge of anti-foreign sentiment that led to the triumph of statewide and national prohibition. To a lesser extent, anti-Mexican sentiment heightened by the Bandit War and the Mexican Revolution likewise played into the hands of prohibitionists who exploited fears about threats to white-only rule to advance their agenda. Exploiting the martial national mood, dries made prohibition a wartime measure to secure the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Prohibition, it seemed, had won the war at last.

The high-water mark of prohibition was yet to come. The presidential election of 1928 pitted a dry Anglo-Protestant candidate, Herbert Hoover, against a wet Catholic of Irish and German extraction, Al Smith, combining the alcohol issue with ethnic tensions in a manner reminiscent of the 1910s. This time, however, the Catholic faith itself became a target for dries to an extent not seen before. Whereas in the 1880s dry Protestant ministers faced charges of “political preaching” for attempting radical reform, in the 1920s they defended established law. Texans had once feared preachers who would impose their morality through politics as a union of church and state, but decades later rallied around these ministers against a lay Catholic, whose religion pledged allegiance to a foreign potentate, the pope. The next chapter chronicles the story of this remarkable revolution in Texas.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Rebels Against Rum and Romanism: Prohibition, Anti-Catholicism, and Political Preaching in Texas<sup>1</sup>

Northern Republicans in the presidential election of 1884 attacked the Democratic Party as the party of “Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion” because of their presumed support of the alcohol lobby, Catholicism, and former Confederates.<sup>2</sup> Yet an increasing number of Democratic “rebels” in the South wrestled with alcohol and Catholicism from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century. By 1926 J. Frank Norris, the pastor of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, was denouncing the presumptive Democratic nominee for president in an article aptly titled “The Conspiracy of Rum and Romanism to Rule This Government.”<sup>3</sup> Two years later, Texans not only did away with rum and denounced Romanism, but apparently rebellion as well, by lining up in the Republican column for the first time in the history of Texas.

This chapter examines the evolution of two ideas related to anti-Catholic sentiment in Texan campaigns for prohibition of the alcohol trade. The first idea is popular perception of a direct connection between fighting alcohol and fighting Catholicism. Prohibitionists tended to be overwhelmingly Protestants while Catholics on

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<sup>1</sup> Small parts of this chapter appear in Brendan Payne, “Southern White Protestant Men, Church-State Relations, and Prohibition in Texas, 1865-1920.” *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 29 (Winter 2015), forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup> Barry Hankins, *God’s Rascal: J. Frank Norris & the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 188 fn 35.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Norris, “The Conspiracy of Rum and Romanism to Rule This Government,” *Searchlight*, 5 February 1926, 6.

the whole opposed prohibition, so for many prohibition went hand in hand with anti-Catholicism, yet the connection between the two grew more specific and more popular over time and only truly fused in 1928 with strong opposition to a presidential candidate who was both wet and Catholic.

The second idea concerns the union of church and state. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, anti-prohibitionists often charged that prohibitionists who were Protestant clergy were guilty of mixing church and state since preachers openly took a position on what was seen as a political issue. Such “political preachers” initially responded tepidly to such accusations—the leading dry Baptist preacher in 1887 improbably claimed that prohibition was not a political issue—but by 1928 one of the leading dry Baptist preachers claimed that the state needed more “political preachers,” and Catholics rather than Protestant ministers received the lion’s share of accusations of proposing a union of church and state.

The bulk of analysis will focus on three major events covering a half-century of prohibition sentiment in Texas that illustrate the links between anti-Catholicism and prohibition: the failed campaigns for statewide prohibition in 1887 and 1911 and the state’s rejection of an anti-prohibition Democratic candidate for president in 1928. Rather than remaining a constant throughout the half-century of prohibition examined here, the perceived connection of anti-Catholicism with prohibition grew dramatically and accusations of uniting church and state increasingly shifted away from dry Protestant ministers and towards wet Catholic politicians.

### *Connecting Rum and Romanism*

Scholars have persistently argued that white Protestants dominated prohibition agitation, but have disagreed on how anti-Catholic the movement was. Most scholars from the 1920s to the 2010s have contended that prohibition generally set dry Anglo Protestants against anti-prohibition wet Catholics, Jews, African-Americans, recent immigrants, and other racial and religious minorities. Jeanette Miller Schmidt (1991) went so far as to suggest that “the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1933 was symbolic of the end of rural Protestantism’s dominance in the United States,” while Mark A. Noll (2002) described prohibition as “the last gasp of Protestant hegemony” in the nation.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, Mark Noll (1992) and Barry Hankins (2010) disagree with Hofstadter’s claim that prohibition was a particularly evangelical phenomenon and point out that conservative and liberal Protestants alike embraced prohibition, if in different ways, and Noll observes that they even gained some support from Roman Catholics.<sup>5</sup> While Protestants dominated the prohibition coalition and Catholics tended to be wet, prohibition as such was not inherently anti-Catholic.

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<sup>4</sup> Jeanette Miller Schmidt, *Souls or the Social Order: The Two-Party System in American Protestantism* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1991), 199; Mark Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 135. See also Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 1928; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 18; Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 295-9; and Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin: Evangelicalism, the Roaring Twenties, and Today’s Culture Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 21-40. See also Timberlake, *Movement*. John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: Norton, 2003). For more on the relationship of Catholics with the late twentieth-century temperance movement, see an unpublished conference paper by this author, “Peculiar Catholics: Catholic American Identity in the U.S. Temperance Movement,” *Southwest Social Sciences Association*, 29-30 March 2013, New Orleans, LA.

Yet for Texas and other Southern states in the 1880s, Catholics generally endured less suspicion than prohibitionists. Many conservative Texans at that time saw prohibition as a liberal Northern reform threatening their cultural traditions or personal liberties.<sup>6</sup> In the 1887 campaign, Texan prohibitionists were fighting against a cultural stream that largely looked askance at a progressive “Northern” reform movement, so they appointed a reliable Southern Baptist minister, B. H. Carroll (mentioned in chapter 2), as their leader. Carroll sought to woo rather than condemn Catholics. With about 18 percent of the population of Texas in 1890, Catholics formed a bloc that the dries could not afford to antagonize, and campaign leaders explicitly shunned overt criticisms of any religious group, including Catholics.<sup>7</sup> To some extent their efforts were rewarded, as the Catholic Church remained silent on the issue, yet prohibition leaders failed to convince many Catholic laypeople from various ethnic groups to support the largely Anglo-Protestant movement.<sup>8</sup> A major stumbling block to attempts at courting Catholics came from the Baptist minister James B. Cranfill in the form of a racist editorial, “The Native White Man,” which sought to rally “the native, white, Anglo-Saxon elements of the South” around prohibition against the “bo-dutch,” “nigger,” and “low-bred foreigners.”<sup>9</sup> Even

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<sup>6</sup> Coker, *Lost Cause*; James D. Ivy, *No Saloon in the Valley: The Southern Strategy of Texas Prohibitionists in the 1880s* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003); Larry Jerome Watson, *Evangelical Protestants and the Prohibition Movement in Texas, 1887-1919* (Ph.D. Dissertation: Texas A&M University, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Texas was less than 18% Catholic in 1890. U.S. Census Bureau, *Religious Bodies, 1916*, ed. William Chamberlin Hunt and Edwin Munsell Bliss (U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC: 1916), 112 (<http://books.google.com/books?id=BvaJUuJ2u-IC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>), accessed December 2, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas J. Brian, *The Prohibition Crusade in Texas* (M.A. Thesis: Baylor University, 1972), 17-18, 25; U.S. Census Bureau, *Religious Bodies, 1916*, 112.

<sup>9</sup> Editorial, *Waco Daily Examiner*, 27 May 1887.

after an official apology by Carroll, this kind of rhetoric led to a crushing defeat for the prohibitionists, including the majority of the old stock Protestant vote.<sup>10</sup>

This brand of anti-Catholicism, though, was not so much religious as ethnic. Texan Catholics were not only Mexican, but from other ethnic groups as well, and almost all of these imbedded alcohol use in their cultural practices. German immigrants were often Lutheran, but many were Catholic, and by 1900 most towns settled by German immigrants enjoyed one or more breweries. While Germans favored beer, heavily-Catholic Italian immigrants preferred wine. Other Catholic groups included the Irish, who initially came to Texas in the 1820s and 1830s, and the Polish, who came mostly after 1890, and these groups tended to enjoy their alcohol and resist assimilation into the increasingly prohibitionist Anglo population.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the anti-Catholicism against these non-Anglo groups may have stemmed from their alleged anti-American character, exemplified by perceived disloyalty during the Civil War. Mexicans in South Texas mostly stayed out of the Civil War fight if they could. Meanwhile Germans, who generally engaged in small-time farming rather than plantations, did not own slaves, so gave little sympathy or support to the Confederate cause. After the war most German Texans became staunch Republicans. Catholic Irish settlers, on the other hand, faithfully supported the Confederacy, and some signed the Texas articles of succession in 1861. Nonetheless, the German population was much

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<sup>10</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 89-101.

<sup>11</sup> Some Italians cultivated grapes of their own, others shipped in grapes from California to make wine at home, and imbibed win generously at weddings and other special events. Terry G. Jordan, "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change in Texas, 1836-1986," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89 (April 1986), 390-397, 408-411; John B. Flannery, *The Irish Texans* (San Antonio, TX: 1980), 97; Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 142—45.

larger than the Irish one in Texas, and Germans and Mexicans by the turn of the century were much more representative of Catholics in the eyes of most Texan Anglos. Feeling pressure from Democratic state government in 1892, a spokesman for the German community argued that Germans would “take an active part in politics not as partisans, but as opponents of intolerance, know-nothingism, and one man power”; they were entitled to their rights “as American citizens.”<sup>12</sup> This declaration shows that German Texans were accused of just the opposite: some Anglos perceived non-Anglo Texans as essentially foreign, neither fully American nor fully Texan, and therefore not to be trusted with full citizenship.

Evangelical Protestants’ theological differences with Catholics and more liturgical Protestants may have also influenced their different views on prohibition. While evangelicals believed in a sudden conversion experience, immediate moral change, a virtually identical code of morality for all people, and the possibility of perfection, Catholics and more liturgical Protestants tended to view salvation as sacramental, saw holiness as the result of slow progress rather than a sudden event, and tended to tolerate heavier drinking habits.<sup>13</sup> Larry J. Watson (1993) argued in his Ph.D. dissertation that the failure of efforts at statewide prohibition in 1887 and 1911 indicated that Texans, unlike the denizens of most Southern states, largely resisted evangelical Protestant norms despite having an outward appearance of evangelical dominance. Old stock Protestants, who led the prohibition campaign, failed to account for the ethnic and religious diversity

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<sup>12</sup> Quote from *The Dallas Morning News*, June 3, 1892, as cited in Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 143; 142-43. Cf. Glen E. Lich, *The German Texans* (San Antonio, TX: 1981), 81, 91, 104-05.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 145-46.

of Texas, not only the substantial Catholic population but also the number of Mexican, German, and black voters who would not find Anglo evangelical rhetoric on Prohibition (or much else) convincing. Despite their seemingly dominant status, Watson argues that evangelicals lacked the unity and the numbers to impose their vision of prohibition upon Texas until national events like World War I inserted a new urgency into the contest.<sup>14</sup> Voter suppression after the imposition of the 1902 poll tax also proved increasingly effective, diminishing the voter turnout for every statewide prohibition election from 1887 to 1919, especially for racial minorities.<sup>15</sup>

The 1911 election featured more determined efforts for dries to align themselves publicly with Catholics to win over their votes. Dries even invited a Catholic priest to speak to 1,500 prohibitionists at their statewide convention at Waco's Cotton Palace on April 21, 1911. The speaker, Patrick J. Murphy from Dalhart, expressed his hope that his appearance at the event would inspire no less than a thousand Catholics to switch to the "true side" of the prohibition question. The real issues was not "prohibition, regulation, or moderation," he argued, but was a simple contest of "4,000 saloons against 650,000 homes." The same Fr. Murphy also addressed the 1913 national ASL convention on

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<sup>14</sup> Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 3—17, 116. Cf. Dewey W. Grantham, *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 20, 163.

<sup>15</sup> An exhaustive study of the vote in fifteen minority-heavy and minority-weak counties in the three statewide prohibition referenda of 1887, 1911, and 1919 is in Jared Paul Sutton, "Ethnic Minorities and Prohibition in Texas, 1887 - 1919" (MA thesis, University of North Texas, 2006). Overall turnout – likely much higher than black turnout – slumped from 68.8% in 1887 to 45.4% in 1911, then down to a mere 23.7% in 1919. Voter suppression hurt not only blacks, but apparently all ethnic groups as well, even whites. Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas," *Texas Almanac*. See also Gregg Cantrell, *Kenneth and John B. Rayner and the Limits of Southern Dissent* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 248, 327 fn 10; Robert Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas," *Texas Almanac* (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed April 24, 2013, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

“Why Should We Do Away with the Saloon Business” and “copies of his speech were widely distributed,” showing not only Murphy’s personal commitment to prohibition, but the persistent desire of prohibitionists in the 1910s to line up as much Catholic support for their cause as they could.<sup>16</sup> The 1911 election presented the last major attempt for Texan prohibitionists to woo Catholics.

Anti-Catholic attacks by prohibitionists in Texas became more blatant nearly a decade after prohibition had been established the US presidential election of 1928. Al Smith, an openly Wet Catholic from drenching-wet New York City and a grandchild of Irish and German immigrants, had been elected four times as governor of New York between 1918 and 1926. When he first ran for the Democratic nomination for president in 1924, Smith loudly denounced the violently nativist and anti-Catholic Ku Klux Klan while Southern delegates and the Klan itself backed Smith’s leading adversary, William Gibbs McAdoo, who refused to renounce the Klan’s endorsement of him. While the irreconcilable and bitter divide between Smith and McAdoo led the convention to settle on a compromise candidate for 1924, Smith contented himself to serving four more years as New York’s popular governor and gearing up for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1928, where he was the overwhelming favorite. Despite being nominated for president in Houston, Texas on the first ballot of the 1928 Democratic Convention, Smith won little favor among Southern Democrats.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> 1911 quotes from *The Houston Post*, April 26, 1911, cited in Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 185-86; 1913 quotes from Odegard, *Pressure Politics*, 24-5. Despite this effort at including a Catholic priests to breach through old arguments, Watson argued that prohibitionists’ failure in the 1911 poll owed much to the inability of Anglo evangelical Protestants to embrace Catholics, blacks, Mexicans, non-Anglos, and non-evangelicals as equals in the contest. Watson, *Evangelical Protestants*, 185-86; 196.

<sup>17</sup> Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 187-211.

The first signs of trouble came from the lack of Southern support for Smith's nomination in Houston. Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Missouri, and Texas had refused to endorse Smith, while Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Kansas split their delegations. Of all the Southern states, only a few delegations from the upper South—Tennessee, Arkansas, and Maryland—had given unequivocal support to Al Smith, despite the fact that Smith surpassed the two-thirds vote threshold for nomination on the first ballot. Some of this remarkable lack of support from the South is explained by the comment of Cone Johnson, one dry Texas delegate to the convention: "I sat by the central aisle while the parade passed following Smith's nomination and the faces I saw in that mile-long procession were not American faces. I wondered where were the Americans."<sup>18</sup> For nativist Texan prohibitionists, anti-Catholicism was a piece of 100 percent Americanism and anti-immigrant sentiment.

Anti-Catholic Texan voices continued to sound against Al Smith, and none more loudly than Fort Worth First Baptist Church's vitriolic pastor, J. Frank Norris. The son of an alcoholic, Norris learned early in life to hate liquor, and by the time Constitutional Prohibition went into effect in 1920 he was a diehard fundamentalist pastor with a booming congregation of 5,000 and a penchant for attacking anyone more theologically liberal than he was. His assaults against supposedly moderate Southern Baptists led to Norris's expulsion from the Texas Baptist General Convention and alienation from the Southern Baptist Convention, yet he saved his worst vitriol for Catholics. As far back as

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<sup>18</sup> Quote from *Dallas Morning News*, July 4, 1928, as cited in Norman D. Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug: Texas Politics, 1921-28* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1984), 9, 440 fn 15. Smith technically did not meet the 2/3 vote threshold until an Ohio delegate made a motion to give all that state's delegates to Smith; for that and other vote information see Slayton, *Empire Statesman*, 257-58.

1922, in a sermon he detailed a slaughter of Huguenot Protestants by Catholics in the French Wars of Religion three and a half centuries earlier, then declared, “This same bloody beast now undertakes to control the politics of this country.”<sup>19</sup> Then when Fort Worth tried to buy property from the Catholic Church in July 1926, Norris claimed that the city’s mayor, H. C. Meacham, and city manager, H. B. Carr, were involved in a conspiracy to profit the Catholic Church. His fight against Catholicism turned lethal that very month when in his office he shot dead an unarmed D. E. Chipps, a Catholic and prominent businessman. Incredibly, Norris was acquitted in the subsequent trial for murder by a jury that apparently bought his story: Norris fired in self-defense, and Chipps was part of a Catholic conspiracy to kill Norris for speaking out against them. Given his history, it is little surprise that Norris was a determined opponent of Smith, the openly Wet Catholic.<sup>20</sup>

If one viewed a Klansman or Norris as a typical dry, one might expect the Texas Anti-Saloon League (TASL) to attack Catholics with strongly nativist rhetoric. Fortunately for the moderates in the TASL, their official newspaper, the *Home and State*, said virtually nothing anti-Catholic throughout its history, even throughout the religiously controversial presidential election of 1928. Catholics entered into the national spotlight that year because the Democratic nominee for president was Al Smith, the first major Catholic candidate for president. Drys around the country set their sights on defeating him because he was the first wet presidential candidate since federal prohibition took effect eight years earlier. Old stock Anglo Protestants around the country opposed Smith

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<sup>19</sup> “Shall Roman Catholicism Rule Tarrant County?” *Searchlight*, 21 July 1922, 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 133-143.

for many reasons—he was a Catholic, wet, urbanite, and child of immigrants with a grating accent of New York’s Fourth Ward—but more recent immigrants and especially Catholics warmly supported him. On election day, Al Smith was crushed by Republican Herbert Hoover, who became the first Republican candidate ever to carry Texas.<sup>21</sup>

Despite its strong Democratic leanings, the TASL and dries throughout Texas vigorously opposed Smith because of his wet stance. Various Texan churches lined up against Smith, including the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Central and North Texas Methodist Conferences – and all the other Southern Methodist conferences did the same. The *Home and State* printed articles by Methodist church leaders as early as 1927, calling on Democrats not to vote for Smith the next year should he be the nominee. By September, nearly the entire issue of *Home and State* was filled with anti-Al Smith rhetoric, and reported that the TASL had formed a “Non-Partisan Hoover League of Texas” to oppose the Democratic nominee.<sup>22</sup>

However, the TASL went out of its way to avoid explicitly criticizing Catholics as such. While dries such as Norris fiercely attacked Smith for being Catholic, the *Home and State* scarcely mentioned Smith’s religion, being more concerned about his being wet and welcoming to “negroes” and recent immigrants. After months of denouncing Smith as a wet, only one article in July 1928 objected to Smith’s candidacy on the grounds of religion, and did so obliquely: “the liquor and religious [i.e., Catholic] issues.”<sup>23</sup> Shortly

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<sup>21</sup> Hofstadter, *Reform*, 298-301; Hankins, *Jesus*, 187-212. For more on Norris, see Barry Hankins, *God’s Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2010), esp. 45-73.

<sup>22</sup> *Home and State* (Sept 1928), 1. *Home and State* (July 1928), 1; (Jan 1928), 5.

<sup>23</sup> *Home and State* (Dec 1927), 4.

after the election, the *Home and State* ran an article titled “Anti-Saloon League Not Opposed to Smith Because of His Religion,” which speaks for itself. Another article on that same page, “WHO ARE THE TOLERANT?” argued that Texan dries love a number of Catholics – especially those who didn’t support Al Smith – and above all the “people of Texas are tired of being called ‘intolerant’ because they are dry.”<sup>24</sup>

Interestingly, the greatest stumbling block about the Smith candidacy for dry white Texans was apparently not his wet or immigrant background, but his prominent support from and for African Americans. The *Home and State* reported in July that “Many Negroes [were] Supporting Al Smith” because he would push for “negro equality.”<sup>25</sup> Then in September, the front page of the paper was full of articles expressing alarm at “negro” support for the wet Catholic: “TEXAS NEGROES TRY TO FORCE THEMSELVES INTO DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY”; “Negroes to Vote for Al Smith”; “TAMMANNY HALL, NEW YORK, LARGELY COMPOSED OF NEGROES”; “Negro Organizations in the West Wire Pledge of Support to Al Smith”; “COLORADO NEGRO VOTERS’ ADVISORY ASSOCIATION, DENVER.”<sup>26</sup> On page five of that issue, Thomas B. Love—then Democratic nominee for Lieutenant Governor of Texas—expressed disgust that Al Smith’s New York welcomed racially integrated schools, integrated dance halls, integrated marriages, “negro” teachers over “white” students, many “negro” voters, “negro” police, a “negro” Civil Service Commissioner, “negro” elected representatives, and “great negro Democratic meetings.” Love vowed no less than

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<sup>24</sup> *Home and State* (Nov 1928), 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Home and State* (July 1928), 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Home and State* (Sept 1928), 5.

six times, “Tammany must pay the price of its negro help.”<sup>27</sup> In the October edition just before the election, the *Home and State* put in another article on “Smith and the Negro” called him “the best friend the negro has” (not a compliment) and once again recalled the state of race relations in New York, where, among other things, “blacks marry whites, mostly of alien orogin [sic].”<sup>28</sup> Based on the pages of the *Home and State*, Texans’ greatest issue with Smith, *more* than being wet, Catholic, urbanite, Northern, or a child of immigrants, was his support from and for “negroes.” The TASL bristled at accusations of anti-Catholicism after the election and did not join in anti-Catholic rhetoric to the same degree as firebrands like Norris, yet engaged in deplorable race-baiting. Also, by failing to denounce virulent anti-Catholicism before the election, TASL showed it placed greater value in electoral victory and washing its hands of blame than in treating Catholics fairly.

### *Joining Church and State*

The prohibition contests in Texas not only changed the perceived connections between rum and Romanism, but also changed perceptions about whether American Catholics or prohibitionists were living out practical separation of church and state. In 1887 Texas prohibitionists were mostly on the defensive about mixing religion and politics, though by 1911 they had begun turning the tables on their opponents. By 1928 Catholics were fully on the defensive against charges that their faith subverted the proper division between religion and the state.

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<sup>27</sup> *Home and State* (Oct 1928), 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Home and State* (Oct 1928), 5.

Many Texans, including the Democratic leadership of the state, believed that Protestant and Southern views of liberty meant that preachers should stay away from politics. As noted in chapter 2, the then-U.S. Senator and the first so-called Redeemer governor of Texas, Richard Coke of Waco, had before the local option vote in Waco in 1885 denounced “prohibition as a movement dangerous to the great principle of personal liberty, one of the pillars on which this government was founded, and could be carried out only by inquisitorial measures that must invade the privacy of the household.”<sup>29</sup> Coke, a Civil War veteran, also attacked prohibition as an eastern invention, likened it with the church interference with politics in the abolition movement that he believed had largely caused the recent war, and declared that prohibitionists sought to undermine Democratic rule in Texas. This was consistent with Jefferson Davis’s open letter to his friend Coke against statewide prohibition.<sup>30</sup> Leading prohibitionist Rev. B. H. Carroll bristled at these accusations, accurately recounting that Democrats had put the local option in the 1876 constitution in the first place and expressing his view that prohibition neither constrained personal liberty nor produced a “union of church and state.”<sup>31</sup> As noted in earlier, to those worried about the union of church and state in the 1887 contest, the dry leader Carroll declared that he wanted neither a union of church and state nor a

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<sup>29</sup> Editorial, *Austin Daily Statesman*, 16 August 1885, cited in H. William Schneider, “Dr. James B. Cranfill’s Prohibition Activities, 1882-1887” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 1971), 40-41.

<sup>30</sup> Ivy, *No Saloon*, 98-99.

<sup>31</sup> B. H. Carroll, *Prohibition: Dr. B. H. Carroll’s Reply to Senator Coke* (Austine: J. B. Link, 1885), 2-16; Schneider, *Prohibition Activities*, 41-42. 7

union of whiskey and state.<sup>32</sup> “Political preachers” like Carroll, not Catholics, were accused of trying to unite church and state in the 1880s.

By 1911, the situation was somewhat better for prohibitionist preachers. As referenced in chapter two, in 1910 a leading Texas dry, H. A. Ivy, laughed away the wet claim that prohibition would lead to “the union of Church and State.” Ivy asked (rhetorically) whether Maine had a union of church and state after fifty-eight years of state prohibition, and suggested that the real problem was “the now-existing unholy union of the saloon and the State,” which prohibition “proposes to dissolve ... just as the founders of the Republic dissolved the union of Church and state a century and a quarter ago.” Ivy was so amused with the charge of church-state union that he felt “tempted to say to these distinguished jokers, ‘Quit yer kiddin’.”<sup>33</sup> Rather than threatening the union of church and state, drys contended prohibition continued the spirit of the separation of church and state by restoring religion and the state to a healthful relationship. It seems fitting, then, that in Texas the Baptists, who had long cherished the separation of church and state, took a greater role than any other denomination in pushing for prohibition in Texas, joined chiefly by Methodists and Presbyterians.<sup>34</sup>

Wets were eager to exploit as much of the Catholic vote as possible. In private, brewers consulted with Catholic priests and even referred once to meeting with an

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<sup>32</sup> Brian, *Prohibition Crusade*, 18.

<sup>33</sup> H. A. Ivy, *Rum on the Run in Texas, a Brief History of Prohibition in the Lone Star State*, introd. by George C. Rankin (Dallas, TX: Temperance Pub. Co., 1910), 68.

<sup>34</sup> Atticus Webb, *Face the Facts Relating to the Wet and Dry Issues* (Dallas: Anti-Saloon League of Texas, 1927), 99-101; *Home and State* (Nov 15, 1915-Jan 31, 1916), especially (Nov. 30, 1915), 2.

archbishop, though their names are not mentioned even in the secretive correspondence.<sup>35</sup> The reason for this discretion seems more obvious when one considers the Father Zell, mentioned in chapter two, who was repudiated by some in his German-Catholic town after he came out publicly against statewide prohibition in 1911 – at least, according to a prohibitionist pamphlet put out by the Methodist minister “Fighting Bob” Shuler that year in Temple, Texas.<sup>36</sup> Official Catholic records tell a very different story of Fr. Zell’s departure. He served in the German town of Muenster, Texas, from 1904 to 1910, and resigned voluntarily out of exasperation at the division between the Knights of Columbus, nicknamed “Catholic Freemasons,” and the pro-German element who feared the knights would “put an end to the ‘Deutsche Muttersprache’ [German mother tongue].”<sup>37</sup> The two accounts of Shuler and the Church, biased and limited in their own ways, may both contain truth.

An analysis of a parish struggle between Fr. Zell and the local Knights of Columbus (K of C) brings the likely reality into sharper focus. Founded by Fr. Michael J. McGivney and other second-generation Irish American Catholics who faced bigotry on account of their ethnic background and their faith, the K of C named their fraternal organization after Christopher Columbus as an unmistakable sign of their American identity. In addition to the three original degrees of membership unity, charity, and fraternity, the secret society in 1900 added the fourth and highest degree, patriotism, and

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<sup>35</sup> Looney, *Brewers*, 447, 668.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Pierce Shuler, *The new issue, or, Local booze government: being a collection of articles on "Prohibition,"* (Temple, TX: Temple Printing and Office Appliance Co., 1911), no page numbers.

<sup>37</sup> A. C. Flusche and Catholic Archives of Texas, *Sketch of the German Catholic Colonies in North Texas Founded by Flusche Brothers* ([No location]: [no publisher], 1900), 5–6.

the members of this most exalted degree wore Columbian garb at public occasions, such as their first public Texan appearance in 1907 in Dallas. The organization was famous in its early days for combatting anti-Catholicism, especially as the KKK's popularity and membership skyrocketed in the years following the release of the pro-Klan *Birth of a Nation* film in 1915. The Texas Knights especially were known for their patriotic causes, from holding visibly patriotic Columbus Day celebrations to supporting the troops to red-baiting. They began a program to give away free supplies to US soldiers guarding the border with Mexico in 1916, and that program expanded into a national effort of the K of C serving soldiers at home and abroad during World War I. When the war gave way to the Red Scare, the Knights around the nation were fiercely anti-Communist. In their zeal to combat prejudice against their beliefs, they at times enflamed prejudice against those with different beliefs.<sup>38</sup>

On the other side, it is likely that Fr. Zell, who visited his birthplace of Wuerttemberg, Germany as recently as 1908, was in greater sympathy with the pro-German group in Meunster, and spoke out against prohibition either to actively support this group or to rally his divided parish together for a common cause. According to the official Catholic records, he “tried his best to reconcile the opposing elements but not with much success.”<sup>39</sup> Catholic priests in general seemed determined to avoid public engagement on the political issue of prohibition, even if most of them shared sympathy

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<sup>38</sup> William H. Dunn, “KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS,” June 15, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vnk02>.

<sup>39</sup> Flusche and Catholic Archives of Texas, *Sketch of the German Catholic Colonies in North Texas*, 6.

with the brewers, but Fr. Zell may have doubted that any good German Catholic would support prohibition.

Yet not a few prominent Catholics urged assimilation into American cultural life and backed prohibition. Archbishop John Ireland, the most prominent Catholic prohibitionist of the age, also believed that his co-religionists would gain respectability and influence in the United States by embracing “the sacred stigmata of patriotism.”<sup>40</sup> US Catholics at the close of the nineteenth century were divided between Ultramontanists, who viewed the Roman pope as an earthly authority above the US state, and “Americanist” Catholics like Archbishop Ireland who saw the US government as supreme in earthly matters: “Church and country work in altogether different spheres.”<sup>41</sup> Ireland’s patriotism embraced American exceptionalism when he declared America “the providential nation” and applied to his favored nation (rather than God) the words of the old hymn: “America, how good, how great, thou art!”<sup>42</sup>

This stridently nationalistic brand of Catholic temperance at times echoed Protestant nativism with a kind of Catholic nativism against hyphenated Americans, as when Ireland labeled an “Irish-American, a German-American, or a French-American” as an “intolerable anomaly.”<sup>43</sup> The Archbishop further “frowned down” any efforts “to concentrate immigrants in social groups” and insisted upon Americanizing Catholic

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<sup>40</sup> John Ireland, “Patriotism,” (1894), in Ireland, *The Church and Modern Society*, (Chicago: Paulist Press, 1905), 161.

<sup>41</sup> Ireland, “American Citizenship,” (1895), in *Church and Modern*, 211. For more on Ultramontanism and Americanism from a contemporary anti-Catholic perspective, see I. K. Funk and D. S. Gregory, eds., *The Homiletic Review* 38 (New York: Funk and Wagnallis, July-Dec 1899), 97.

<sup>42</sup> Ireland, “American Citizenship,” in *Church and Modern*, 192.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 206-7. Cf. McGreevy, *Freedom*, 121.

immigrants.<sup>44</sup> This claim to Americanization justified the dominance of Irish Catholics (like Ireland) in the American hierarchy over more recent immigrants. When international Catholics including the German politician Peter Paul Cahensly expressed concern that recent Catholic immigrants were falling from the faith and urged the hierarchy to appoint more American bishops from foreign backgrounds, Ireland and his friends pounced at the “foreign” attempt to seize American power. Among other distortions, one Ireland ally printed the headline “Foreign Countries Seeking to Rule the Church in America,” and another ally in the U.S. Senate denounced a German Catholic plot to “denationalize American institutions and plant as many nations as there are people of foreign tongues in our midst.”<sup>45</sup> Archbishop Ireland even helped form the powerful Anti-Saloon League (ASL), a Protestant-dominated group that openly exploited anti-German rhetoric during WWI to achieve Constitutional Prohibition.<sup>46</sup> Ireland’s efforts did not dispel fear of Catholics in general at the expense of some. By the 1920s, Catholics once again had to battle charges that they sought to impose their foreign faith upon the good and great United States of America.

The 1928 presidential election in particular empowered Protestant political preachers and put Catholics on the defensive against accusations that they would unite

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<sup>44</sup> Ireland, “American Citizenship,” in *Church and Modern*, 207.

<sup>45</sup> *Catholic Citizen*, May 9, 1891, p.1; *Congressional Record*, April 22, 1892, p. 3532; cf. Colman J. Barry, O.S.B., *The Catholic Church and German Americans* (Milwaukee, 1953), 131-82; Edward Claude Stibili, “The St. Paphael Society for the Protection of Italian Immigrants, 1887-1923” (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dam., 1977), 76-77, 81-89; Scalabrini to Archbishop Michael Corrigan, Aug 10, 1891, in *For the Love of Immigrants: Migration Writings and Letters of Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini (1839-1905)*, ed. Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, C.S. (New York, 2000), 276-78. All sources from McGreevy, *Freedom*, 121. Mark Noll, *A History* also argues that a lack of Italian clergy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, among other factors, contributed to many Italian immigrants leaving the faith.

<sup>46</sup> Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 1928; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 5; Okrent, *Last Call*, 97-106.

the Catholic Church and the American state. One of the most outspoken examples of this attitude was J. Frank Norris, who was notorious for his anti-Catholic comments, and seamlessly combined his religious invective with nativism. By 1924 Norris had denounced Catholicism as “anti-American and unconstitutional” and declared that no Catholic could honestly take the oath of office to become president because Catholics obeyed the Pope above any terrestrial authority, including the United States of America.<sup>47</sup> Norris reiterated this claim in a 1927 speech: “No true consistent Roman Catholic, my friends, who actually believes in the doctrine of papal infallibility, can be true to any other government in the world.”<sup>48</sup> While many respectable Protestants agreed with Norris on that point, he mingled rejection of Catholic theology with denigration of Catholic immigrants, whom he referred to as “low-browed foreigners,” and he further connected biblical Christian (read Protestant) faith with true American patriotism: “As far as we are concerned [in Texas],” he bellowed, “we stand for 100 percent Americanism; for the Bible; for the home, and against every evil and against every foreign influence that seeks to corrupt and undermine our cherished and Christian institutions.”<sup>49</sup> For a Southern Anglo dry Baptist like Norris for whom prohibition embodied protection of the home and “our cherished and Christian institutions,” a German-Irish Catholic wet Yankee like Al Smith running for president of the United States was a threat to everything he and many Texans like him held dear.

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<sup>47</sup> Frank Norris, “Sermon Delivered Sunday Night to Audience of Ten Thousand,” *Searchlight*, 1 August 1924, 1-4.

<sup>48</sup> Frank Norris, “The Boy v. the Bootlegger,” *Searchlight*, 25 March 1927, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Frank Norris, “Robertson vs. Jim Ferguson: Rum, Romanism, Russianism, the Issue,” *Searchlight*, 1 August 1924, 1.

Norris trained his sights directly on Smith as early as 1926, when he was the leading but not yet official nominee of the Democratic Party for president. In an article aptly titled “The Conspiracy of Rum and Romanism to Rule This Government,” Norris argued that Catholics believed their church was supreme in all things, infallible, and unalterable, then pointedly asked, “Are we ready to permit a man to occupy the highest office, the chief magistracy over this Government, who owes his first allegiance to a foreign power which claims these three things?”<sup>50</sup>

Norris was not alone in fearing that a Catholic president could not separate his earthly politics from his spiritual allegiance to a foreign pope. In 1927 jurist Charles C. Marshall of New York wrote “An Open Letter to the Honorable Alfred E. Smith” in the *Atlantic Monthly* which essentially asked the same question Norris was asking (if in a different spirit): how could a Catholic who maintains the supremacy of the Catholic magisterium and particularly the Pope in earthly matters be a fully loyal US citizen, much less president? The open letter prompted Al Smith himself to issue a reply that was in turn published in major newspapers around the country. Norris himself reprinted Marshall’s article, naturally without Smith’s reply.<sup>51</sup> Protestant concerns about a Catholic politician’s ability to separate his duties to church and state had forced Al Smith, rather than Protestant “political preachers” like Norris, on the defensive.

As early as the spring of 1927, Norris had coordinated with R. B. Creager of Brownsville, Texas, a member of the Republican National Committee, on how to defeat

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<sup>50</sup> Frank Norris, “The Conspiracy of Rum and Romanism to Rule This Government,” *Searchlight*, 5 February 1926, 6.

<sup>51</sup> Charles C. Marshall, “An Open Letter to the Honorable Alfred E. Smith,” *Atlantic Monthly* 139 (April 1927), 540; McGreevey, *American Freedom*, 149, 355 fn 128; Norris’s reprint of Charles C. Marshall’s “An Open Letter to the Honorable Alfred E. Smith” in *Fundamentalist*, 22 April 1927, 4-6.

Al Smith at the polls, and in 1928 embarked on a regional tour to ensure the wet Catholic's defeat.<sup>52</sup> Norris's most notorious and perhaps most revealing rant against Catholics in his campaigning for Hoover occurred in August 1928 before a crowd of 6,000 in Dallas when a woman interrupted his speech with swearing. After the woman was removed, Norris roared:

“Now, we are prepared to have order here tonight. We are not surprised at the lowdown whiskey-soaked imps of Hell. The toe-kissing Tammanyites are here for the purpose of creating a disturbance, and I will serve notice on you now that this is Texas and not Mexico. Now, you who are here to disturb this meeting, get up on your hind feet and stand where we can see you.... Now, we will proceed and I call upon all red-blooded white folks here tonight, who love God, who love the flag, and who love order, to exercise your rights as American citizens and see to it that none of this ring-kissing Tammany Hall gang cause any more interference or disturbance.”<sup>53</sup>

For Norris and the thousands listening that night, God was on the side of America, the “order” of prohibition laws, and Protestant “red-blooded white folks” against Mexico, “whiskey-soaked imps of Hell,” and the “ring-kissing Tammany Hall gang” of recent Catholic immigrants. The campaign for Herbert Hoover was for many Texan Protestants a campaign for prohibition against demonic, semi-animal, and Catholic foreigners.

Norris was not the only Protestant pastor who ironically took a side in the campaign yet claimed Catholics posed the real threat to the separation of church and state. Even Norris's erstwhile enemies in the Southern Baptist Convention tended to take a similar view. The president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, L. R.

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<sup>52</sup> Norris to R. B. Craeger [sic], 20 May 1927, Norris Papers.

<sup>53</sup> “Six Thousand Dallasites Enthusiastically Cheer Name of Hoover Monday Night,” *Fundamentalist*, 24 August 1928, 4.

Scarborough, wrote an article in which he began with a careful evaluation of the state-church issues and descended into claims of Smith's alcoholism before announcing his support for a more Christian candidate, the Republican Herbert Hoover.<sup>54</sup> Baptists were joined by clergy in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), who opposed Smith as a bloc: one survey of 8,500 ministers of the MECS found only 4 that openly supported Al Smith for the presidency.<sup>55</sup> The official organ of the ASL in Texas announced that various Texan churches lined up against Smith, including the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Central and North Texas Methodist Conferences – and all the other Southern Methodists conferences did the same.<sup>56</sup> Even Protestant ministers who squabbled with each other at other times formed a united front against the perceived menace of a Catholic takeover of the U.S. government.

Despite their differences, Protestant ministers across the spectrum from TASL editors to Norris defended political preaching in 1928 and denounced their critics as hypocrites. Despite claims that his opposition to the Catholic candidate was driven by concerns about the separation of church and state, Norris not only justified his political activism as a preacher but insisted upon the need for more “political preachers.”<sup>57</sup> When the *Ohio State Journal* declared, “Christ’s religion and practical politics don’t mix,” the *Home and State* rejoined by defining “practical politics” as destroying prohibition and

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<sup>54</sup> L.R. Scarborough, “The Ground of My Opposition to Putting Governor Smith in the White House,” *Fundamentalist*, 5 October 1928, 1-2 and 7.

<sup>55</sup> Slayton, *Empire Statesman*, 310.

<sup>56</sup> *Home and State* (July 1928), 1

<sup>57</sup> “For the Time Is Come That Judgment Must Begin at the House of God,” *Fundamentalist*, 16 November 1928, 1 and 8.

then pronouncing, “SURE THEY DON’T–THEY CLASH.”<sup>58</sup> An October 1928 article of the *Home and State*, “Insulting the Ministers,” claimed that hundreds of the Protestant ministers in Texas had joined the campaign against Smith and called them “heroes of righteousness” who had “laid all upon the altar” to combat the evil of legal liquor that had, among myriad other evils, “blocked the evangelization of countless millions, and peopled Hell with lost souls.”<sup>59</sup> Even for ministers viewing their task as narrowly delivering souls from Hell, many saw support for prohibition as a necessary extension of that mission and a heroic act of martyrdom. The very last *Home and State* article on the pre-election issue was “Preachers in Politics,” a story about how a pro-Smith politician left his church because the pastor preached prohibition, but shows the man’s hypocrisy: if the minister had preached in Smith’s favor, the politician would “doubtless” have been “delighted” with the message.<sup>60</sup> From Norris to the TASL, Protestant ministers throughout Texas in 1928 claimed that their faith compelled them to take a stand in politics and openly criticized those who opposed mixing preaching and politics, when a half-century earlier prohibitionists had been so defensive about their advocacy that some denied prohibition was even political.

### *Conclusion*

A study of the connection between anti-Catholicism and prohibition in Texas focusing on key political contests in 1887, 1911, and 1928 reveals that opposition to

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<sup>58</sup> The Ohio paper had criticized Baptist minister John Roach Straton of New York for calling Al Smith the “deadliest foe in America of the forces of moral progress.” *Home and State* (August 1928), 4.

<sup>59</sup> *Home and State* (October 1928), 8.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* See also “Partisan Politics and the Churches,” *Home and State* (October 1928), 4.

Catholics played an increasing role in prohibitionists' rhetoric over time and suspicion of a union of church and state shifted from Protestant "political preachers" to Catholic politicians. Anti-Catholicism was incidental in the 1887 and 1911 campaigns, expressed mostly indirectly at "foreign" ethnic groups such as Germans and Mexicans, and prohibitionists openly courted Catholics, some of whom dries celebrated when they came out in favor of prohibition. Only in 1928 did Protestants in Texas seriously link Catholic religion as such with anti-prohibition and unleash a full barrage of rhetoric questioning the loyalty and American credentials of all Catholics. A similar story held for shifting accusations of who was mixing church and state. In 1887 and to a lesser extent in 1911, prohibitionist Protestants were the ones defending themselves against charges of wrongly mixing church and state, but by 1928 prohibition was the law of the land, and anti-prohibition Catholics had to respond to that charge.

This conclusion challenges several popular narratives. Contrary to the narrative of increasing religious tolerance throughout American history, Texas's experience with prohibition shows that changing political dynamics may contribute to an increase of religious conflict. Rather than featuring coalitions along more or less static religious and cultural lines, polarizing political moral issues like prohibition can produce evolving cultural and religious alliances that alternately woo and curse people belonging to key swing constituencies. Even accusations of uniting church and state can rebound from advocates of a moral reform to its detractors, particularly when the reform in question has changed from a proposed innovation to an established law. Texas Democrats once accused of supporting "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion" just a few decades later

denounced alcohol, maligned Catholics, and voted for the Republican presidential candidate.

Drys' triumph in 1928, however, proved a pyrrhic victory. Public opinion gradually shifted against prohibition as it failed to live up to its promises of a better world and grew increasingly associated with its most extreme and vitriolic champions. Women had gained the vote in Texas and throughout the United States in 1920, the same year prohibition took effect nationally, and were widely expected to ensure that prohibition would never be repealed. Especially after 1928, however, women voters questioned whether prohibition purified politics or facilitated the growth of organized crime, political hypocrisy, and disregard for the law. Perhaps the earliest signal of shifting women's attitudes on prohibition came from the first elected female governor in the nation, Miriam A. Ferguson of Texas.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Repenting Prohibition: Redefining True Temperance in the Valley of the Shadow of Depression

In the 1932 Texas gubernatorial race, a sitting governor lost the Democratic primary. The temperamental Orville Bullington had not been particularly popular during his two years in Austin, but only once before had a sitting Democratic governor been unseated in a bid for re-election. His loss was more understandable given his opponent—Miriam Amanda Wallace “Ma” Ferguson, wife of former governor James “Jim” Ferguson—was herself the former governor who had been defeated in the primary for governor just six years earlier. The people of Texas had made her the first elected female governor in the nation in 1924 and sent her back in 1932 to do what women at that time were expected to do: clean up politics. True, her husband had been impeached for corruption, and she had campaigned in 1924 on the platform of putting her popular husband back in the seat of power (he had been impeached and so was ineligible to run again). Still, Ma Ferguson campaigned as a respectable woman who ran not for personal glory but to defend the reputation of her wronged husband, and so commanded the respect due to her sex, widely praised for higher moral sense in the early twentieth century United States.

Yet Ma Ferguson did not follow conventional wisdom on how women should act towards the greatest culture war issue of the time, prohibition. Conventional wisdom at the time held that every respectable woman would support it. Frances Willard had popularized the connection between woman’s suffrage and prohibition after becoming

president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1879. It was no coincidence that the Nineteenth Amendment for woman's suffrage was ratified in 1920, just a year after the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment establishing national prohibition: many assumed that women's enfranchisement would guarantee the permanence of alcohol bans. Yet Ma Ferguson drew condemnation in her 1924 campaign for not openly promoting prohibition. To the surprise of many, after being elected she did not seek to repeal statewide prohibition or to gut the harsh Dean Law, Texas's strict law for the enforcement of statewide prohibition. However, she did not support any new legislation to enforce prohibition, and during both her terms as governor, she prolifically pardoned all kinds of crimes, particularly transgressions of bans on alcohol production and distribution. She was not re-elected in 1926, and by the time she took the governor's seat again in 1933, the nation as a whole had turned against prohibition. Its days were numbered in Texas, too.

This chapter details the dramatic shift against prohibition in the 1920s and 1930s in two major movements. First, while prohibition initially reduced drinking in the early 1920s, many came to believe that prohibition had betrayed its millennial hope for social improvement and instead only made society worse by insistence upon draconian laws. Texan Governor Pat Morris Neff, elected in 1920 and serving until 1925, symbolized the initial optimism of prohibitionists in the power of law to make men good. Yet a growing emphasis on strict enforcement of the law marginalized efforts to change hearts and minds. The Ku Klux Klan in Texas in the early 1920s tainted prohibition with its strange mix of law and order rhetoric with extralegal violence, particularly when drys united behind a Klansman, Earle Mayfield, when he ran for and won a U.S. Senate for Texas in

1922. Though the election of Ma Ferguson for governor in 1924 marked a decline in the Klan's influence, the same virulent strain for prohibition continued throughout the decade as represented by Texas's most (in)famous pastor of the era, J. Frank Norris. His advocacy for prohibition at all costs, particularly in the 1928 presidential election, helped give a decisive victory to the dry presidential candidate in Texas (as discussed in chapter 6), but it also created a backlash against prohibition as the original vision of progressive improvement was increasingly replaced by ruthless appeals to law and order. This pugnacious style of prohibitionists drove many moderates to shy away from prohibition advocacy by the late 1920s. Increasing skepticism towards prohibition's ever-more pugilistic champions dovetailed with growing affection for advocates of lax enforcement, such as Ma Ferguson, or even prohibition repeal.

Second, after 1928, respectable women turned from reliably prohibitionist to split on the issue, particularly as certain women used conservative, gendered language against prohibition. The rise of anti-prohibition among reputable women began in earnest in 1929 and contributed greatly to the revolution in attitudes on prohibition. While some women had rejected prohibition from the start, they were often dismissed as flappers with edgy lifestyles depicted in wild Hollywood films such as *Our Dancing Daughters*. These disreputable women could don hip flasks, symbolizing an ethical defiance that skirted or outright violated the standards of common decency, and so never managed to mobilize any significant organization to change public perceptions that all "real" women backed prohibition. Since women were seen as the moral guardians of the Republic—especially after their nation-wide enfranchisement in 1920 allegedly purified politics—many believed that as long as women could vote, prohibition would never fail.

The orthodoxy that women must support rigid enforcement of prohibition was challenged by elite women. The main national figure in this shift was Pauline Morton Sabin, a Republican patrician from New York who in 1929 founded the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR). By wielding the tested and true methods of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) against prohibition and by using new technologies such as radio, the WONPR amassed a larger following than the WCTU ever did. The WONPR thus undermined prohibition by shattering the glass wall of women's unity on the issue and seizing the moral high ground for prohibition's repeal. In Texas, Ma Ferguson challenged views about women blindly supporting prohibition by being elected governor despite many believing that she would not enforce it. While she did not openly campaign against prohibition, she did liberally pardon those convicted of violating prohibition laws and veto bills that would more stringently enforce prohibition.

*From Millennial Vision to Nightmare of Discord*

A new species of triumphalism shone most clearly on the eve of the arrival of national prohibition. Shortly after the Eighteenth Amendment's ratification in 1919 added prohibition to the U.S. Constitution, Ferdinand Cowle Iglehart hailed the event as "perhaps the most important moral event in the history of mankind." Since the days of Noah, alcohol had beguiled and destroyed empires of the earth, and "When the Anglo-Saxon race became the dominant one of the earth," he wrote, "King Alcohol conquered it, ... giving the most Christian and civilized nations of the world the distinction of being the most drunken." Alcohol "was weakening and destroying our race" and had ruled the United States from its founding to the "present revolution" against the "demon king."

While Iglehart acknowledged the contributions of “science, big business, politics, the ballot, the home, womanhood and the church” in accomplishing prohibition, he proclaimed, “It is God through His Church who is dethroning and killing the Devil King Alcohol.”<sup>1</sup> Iglehart’s work, *King Alcohol Dethroned*, was read in states across the nation, including Texas, and perfectly expressed the themes of Anglo supremacy, triumphal Protestant theology, martial imagery, and American nationalism that imbued the dry cause with such religious fervor.

Iglehart’s emphasis on the divine highlights a religious division between his kind of prohibitionist and those who, “[d]ulled by materialism, ... leave out sentiment and God in human calculations.” For Iglehart and other militantly religious dries, prohibition was a means to advance God’s kingdom until “universal democracy, universal prohibition, and universal Christianity” conquered the world.<sup>2</sup> From that perspective, the dethroning of “King Alcohol” was only a success insofar as Jesus claimed the throne again, establishing a new birth of liberty in Christian civilization.

Liberal Protestant clergy in Boston were likewise ecstatic at the rise, so they thought, of a new dry order in the wake of the twin victories of World War I and prohibition. The *Congregationalist and Advance* newspaper predicted the imminent and peaceful diffusion of “Christianity and civilization throughout the world” like that seen in “the sober part of the community.” Another editorial sums up the delirious optimism of the post-war period with its opening line, “The only word for nineteen hundred and

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<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand Cowle Iglehart, *King Alcohol Dethroned* (Westerville, OH: The American Issue Publishing Company, 1919), iii, iv, vii, 363.

<sup>2</sup> He critiqued a religious dry who cited “the cold scientific fact that alcohol is a poison ... the more metallic statement that Big Business [supported prohibition] on the ground of efficiency, of cold dollars with no sentiment or duty about it.” *Dethroned*, 371-2, 373.

nineteen is forward. Forward into the great, new day of Jesus Christ.”<sup>3</sup> “The achievement of the hour for Prohibition is the greatest glory of the century,” wrote the jubilant *Universalist Leader* for New Year’s 1919, while creatively applying the Bible text from the third day of creation: “And God said, ‘Let the dry land appear,’ ... for it means, as of old, the beginning of a new and better life for the world.”<sup>4</sup> “No such charter of freedom and fulfilment to women and children has ever been written,” the *Leader* declared later that month. “[W]e should recognize it as one of the very greatest and most inspiring events in history, and one that way well mark the beginning of a new order of accelerated spiritual evolution.”<sup>5</sup> Prohibitionists’ faith in a religion of God-ordained progress against alcohol took the form of state action enforcing Christian morality, and banning alcohol was just the beginning.

This spirit of optimism for prohibition remained, if in modified form, in the later 1920s. A 1926 book designed for educational purposes in the Methodist Episcopal Church bore the title, *Alcohol and the New Age*. The book stressed the positive changes wrought by Prohibition, particularly the loss of the saloon and its “thousand and one accompanying social ills,” and declared that they have “gone, we believe, forever.”<sup>6</sup> A sermon reprinted two years later in the *Christian Leader* admitted that drinking had gone up in places, yet advocated better enforcement of the law as the solution. The sermon

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<sup>3</sup> “Editorial,” *The Congregationalist and Advance* (Jan. 2, 1919), page 3-5, Boston.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial, “God said, ‘Let the dry land appear,’ and it was so,” *Universalist Leader* (January 1, 1919), page 94, Boston.

<sup>5</sup> Robert A Woods, Title Page, *Universalist Leader* (January 30, 1919), p. 129, Boston.

<sup>6</sup> Deets Pickett, *Alcohol and the New Age: An Elective Course for Young People* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1926), 5.

promised, “If we can produce a genuinely non-alcoholized nation, we can lead civilization into a new era!”<sup>7</sup> In June, the same paper editorialized, “To the Universalist [this] is the best possible world, or on the way to becoming so.”<sup>8</sup> It seemed that with prohibition, a heavenly order had come to earth.

That heavenly order came more slowly to Texas than some anticipated. Even after prohibition was adopted into both the Texan and U.S. constitutions in 1919, it was still a major issue a year later in the race for governor. The Democratic primary, which for all intents and purposes was the general election, chiefly pitted the progressive champion Pat Neff against Joseph Weldon Bailey. Bailey was an anti-prohibition, anti-woman suffrage, anti-labor, anti-foreign-entanglements, and generally anti-progressive candidate representing the fiscally conservative and pro-states’ rights Jeffersonian wing of the Democratic Party in Texas. The lesser major candidates were two progressives, Robert Thomason and Benjamin F. Looney, the very state attorney general who had put Texan brewers out of business for two years by a devastating lawsuit in 1915. Bailey won the first-round primary, but Neff won enough votes to challenge him in a run-off, and the progressive backers of Looney and Thomason coalesced behind Neff, giving him victory by more than 70,000 votes.<sup>9</sup> Bailey’s remarkable performance despite his overt rejection of the prohibition policies that were then constitutionally binding at the state and federal level spoke volumes not only of his ability as a politician, but also of the persistent

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<sup>7</sup> R.W.G., “From Our Western Correspondent,” *The Christian Leader* (January 19, 1928), page 71, Boston.

<sup>8</sup> Editorial, “These Times for Universalists,” *Christian Leader* (June 23, 1928), title page.

<sup>9</sup> Nicholas Graves, “Pat Neff and the Pat Neff Collection: Biography, History, and Interpretation” (M.A. Thesis, Baylor University, 2011).

strength of anti-prohibition sentiment even as the Eighteenth Amendment stood on the edge of ratification.

Nonetheless, Pat Neff's success in the primary signaled how prohibition had conquered the Texan political landscape, though from the beginning a stand of strict enforcement of the law became evident. In the opening speech for his candidacy for governor, Neff declared that he would agree with "every measure that has for its purpose the enforcement of the prohibition amendment."<sup>10</sup> The relevant law for prohibition enforcement was the Dean Law, Texas's version of the national-scale Volstead Act. The Dean Law took effect in October 1919, some four months after voters had approved a state constitutional amendment banning the alcohol trade. The law was stricter than the Volstead Act in some respects, particularly in finding purchasers of alcohol guilty of transgressing the law, yet slightly more lenient in others, such as banning only drinks with more than one percent alcohol content (Volstead banned all drinks with more than half a percent alcohol).<sup>11</sup> On the whole, the Dean Law gave Texas some of the harshest prohibition penalties of any state, though the lack of clear procedures for apprehending and convicting violators made the law relatively ineffective in practice.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Pat Neff, *The Battles of Peace* (Fort Worth: Pioneer Publishing Company, 1925), 275. This book represents a collection of Neff's speeches from various occasions compiled and sold shortly after the end of his second term as governor.

<sup>11</sup> R. V. Nichols and L. C. Sutton, *The Dean Law and the Prohibition Amendment to the Texas Constitution, With Synopsis and Explanations* (Austin: Nichols and Sutton, 1919), 3-5, 21-22; Norman D. Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug: Texas Politics, 1921-1928* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 1984), 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> Jeanne Bozzell McCarty, *The Struggle for Sobriety: Protestants and Prohibition in Texas: 1919-1935* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1980), 12-13.

Neff's zeal for enforcing prohibition stemmed from his sense of responsibility to the Texas Constitution and his long experience denouncing the evils of alcohol. During his first run for governor in 1919, Neff expressed his dedication to the Texas Constitution's definition of the duties of governor, particularly Article 4, Section 10, which states: "He [sic] shall cause all of the laws to be faithfully executed."<sup>13</sup> In addition to executing the laws without partiality, he insisted upon respect for the law. "Whatever tends to weaken respect for the law," he stated, "imperils the nation"—a declaration that, in the context of prohibition, critiqued hypocrisy from legislators who voted dry but personally were wet.<sup>14</sup> Over a decade earlier, as chairman of the Prohibition Campaign Committee of McLennan County, he echoed typical hyperbolic rhetoric about the saloon: it was "the chronic criminal of the centuries" that had "turned more men into brutes, made more homes unhappy, bribed more courts, defied more laws, corrupted more ballots, caused more tears to fall and more blood to run than any other institution ever legalized by man."<sup>15</sup> As such, the issue of prohibition was simple: "saloons or no saloons."<sup>16</sup> Alcohol was poison, a pure evil, and "[n]o wrong should be legalized."<sup>17</sup> With such a Manichean view against alcohol, Neff's push for prohibition included rigid enforcement, though he still believed that changing hearts and minds by positive example was just as important in the battle as jailing offenders.

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<sup>13</sup> Neff, *The Battles of Peace*, 290. Note that the Texas Constitution omits the words "all of"; apparently Neff had added them for emphasis. *Texas Constitution*, Article 4, Section 10.

<sup>14</sup> Neff, *The Battles of Peace*, 290.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 305.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

Some of Neff's concerns about overreliance on enforcement of prohibition laws comes through in a printed speech he kept in his personal library. This speech was given by a fellow Democratic southern governor, Westmoreland Davis of Virginia, in 1922, the middle of Neff's two terms. Davis expressed frustration over confusion arising from concurrent enforcement of prohibition laws by the state and federal government. Davis in 1920 had reduced state funding for prohibition enforcement, since he believed the federal government would provide sufficient forces for that purpose. Yet he baldly declared, "The Federal government so far has failed effectively to enforce prohibition." Davis then concluded that the states must take up the burden of enforcing the law, regardless of the cost, since failing to do so would amount to "a surrender of order to disorder" and chaos for law enforcement generally.<sup>18</sup> He approvingly cited a speaker for the National Law Enforcement Convention who called for governments to "drastically punish" offenders of prohibition laws, even as he agreed that "principally we must educate, and practice what we preach." Rather than blaming the poor and uneducated for law violations, Davis claimed that "low brows" only provided liquor because of demand from "high brows" who bought it. The people, especially impressionable youth, followed "example rather than... precept," and Davis suggested that legislators and police themselves led others astray by their illegal drinking: "*Those who openly and habitually violate the law should not be chosen as law makers or law enforcement officers* [emphasis his]." Without addressing this "degeneracy caused by hypocrisy," he feared "the very foundation of our

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<sup>18</sup> Westmoreland Davis, *Address of Governor Westmoreland Davis Delivered Before the General Assembly of Virginia, January 11, 1922* (Richmond, VA: Davis Bottom, Superintendent Public Printing, 1922), 24. Found in Pat Neff Collection, Baylor University Texas Collection.

civilization [would] be shaken by an accepted disregard of law.”<sup>19</sup> Neff likely agreed with Davis, a fellow southern Democratic governor, that prohibition sorely needed strict enforcement but equally needed good examples from police and lawmakers.

Other prohibitionists were more focused on compliance through law enforcement leagues, which were particularly active in 1921. Atticus Webb, head of the Texas Anti-Saloon League (TASL), promoted such leagues in February of that year as both a carrot and stick for local police. On the one hand, they aimed to “rally the mass of the people to strong moral support of the efforts at law enforcement”; on the other, they would “prod up any officials that are negligent of their duty.” One such “law and order” meeting in Dallas solicited a telegram from Neff, which the crowd of hundreds received with “deafening” applause.<sup>20</sup> Such concern for “law and order” echoed the concerns of another, less savory organization: the Klan.

*The Hood Rises: The Second Ku Klux Klan in Texas*

The rise of the second wave of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in Texas in the early 1920s helped associate prohibition with unsavory characters.<sup>21</sup> Founded by William Joseph Simmons in Atlanta in 1915 months after the blockbuster film *The Birth of a Nation* praised the first Klan, the group rose to tremendous prominence around the country after World War I, especially in Texas. The KKK had made its first major public

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<sup>19</sup> Davis, *Address of Governor Westmoreland Davis*, 25.

<sup>20</sup> First two quotes from Atticus Webb to Pat Neff, February 7, 1921, last quotes Preston P. Reynolds to Neff, Pat M. Neff Papers, Texas Collection, Baylor University; see also Dallas *Home and State*, April 1, 1921 (clipping), Pat M. Neff Biographical File, Barker Texas History Center; Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug*, 22, 441.

<sup>21</sup> Christopher Long, "Ku Klux Klan," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vek02>), accessed 20 November 2016.

appearing in Texas in Houston in October 1920 at a parade celebrating the United Confederate Veterans, linking their cause strictly with southern identity. By 1922 Klan membership rose to some 150,000 in Texas alone. The Texas Klan, however, was not as virulently anti-Jewish or anti-Catholic as some of its counterparts further North: it did not burn crosses against Catholics or Jews as some Klans in the North did, but focused primarily on keeping blacks “in their place” and promoting law and order through vigilante activities.

The swift ascension of a Dallas dentist, Hiram Wesley Evans, through the organization’s hierarchy embodied the meteoric rise of the Klan in American life: he joined the Klan in 1920 and by 1922 had risen to state leader (“great titan”), national secretary (“imperial kligrapp”), and finally national director (“imperial wizard”), a role which he continued until 1939. The year Evans became imperial wizard, 1922, he launched a program to elect Klansmen to offices across Texas and across the nation. That year, the Texas Klan dominated the city governments of Dallas, Fort Worth, and Wichita Falls, and likely controlled the majority in the Texas House of Representatives. Most brazenly, the Klan openly lobbied in the Democratic primary and general election for a fellow Klansman and staunch dry, Earle Bradford Mayfield, who won an election to the U.S. Senate with the reluctant backing of the ASL. Even Governor Pat Neff, while generically denouncing extralegal violence and denying personal involvement with the Klan, refused to denounce the organization by name. The Texas Klan seemed unstoppable.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Christopher Long, "KU KLUX KLAN," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vek02>), accessed November 23, 2013; Lisa C. Maxwell, "EVANS, HIRAM WESLEY," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fev17>), accessed November 23, 2013;

In its heyday, the Texas Klan received positive attention from many Protestants, even pastors, though not all. Methodist clergy such as J. T. Renfro of Dallas and Alonzo Monk of Arlington abandoned their pulpits to lecture for the Klan, and with some regularity Klansmen in full regalia interrupted funerals and church services, sometimes giving pastors small amounts of money, to express their piety. While most Protestant clergy said little against the Klan, some ministers were less than enthusiastic about the Invisible Empire. Even J. B. Cranfill, the aging militant prohibitionist and no particular friend of Catholics, was so outraged by the Klan's excesses that in April 1922 he wrote to a friend, "Never, until the advent of the Ku Klux Klan, did the Baptists persecute anybody"; but now, under Klan pressure, many Baptists "are joining in the persecution of the negroes, the Jews, the Catholics and the foreigners." While his blanket denial of Baptists persecuting anybody before the Klan is dubious, especially given his virulent diatribes against blacks and Catholics back in the 1880s, Cranfill's rejection of Klan violence as undermining Baptist principles is remarkable and unequivocal: when "any Baptist anywhere joins hands with any movement and sows the seeds of race prejudice and intolerance then uses subterranean methods of procedure, by that much he loses his grip on the age-long principles of the Baptist people." While many Methodists and

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Brown, *Hood*, 66-87. For the ASL's reluctance to support the a Klansman, see "'DRYS' AND KU KLUX COMBINE IN TEXAS: Both Backing Mayfield Against Ferguson in Fight for Senatorial Nomination," Special to the *New York Times*, Saturday, August 5, 1922, p. 6; the article mentions that the ASL's general counsel Wayne B. Wheeler admitted, "Yes, it is peculiar that in this campaign we happen to be linked with the klan [sic] behind Mayfield, but this is a circumstance over which we have no control." Contra traditional historiography associating drys with the Klan, see Richard Hofstadter's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Random House, 1955), 291-2.

Baptists joined or supported the Klan, at least a few ministers saw the clandestine organization as betraying the principles of their evangelical faith.<sup>23</sup>

One violent incident captures the multivalent bigotry of the Klan in Texas. In 1921 Hiram Evans and several other Klansmen dragged an African American bellhop, Alex Johnson, out of the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas and burned “K.K.K.” into his forehead with acid. The atrocity (ignored by law enforcement) was an explicit attack on an innocent African American, but was also an implicit attack on the German American beer baron Adolphus Busch, who built the European-style luxury hotel in 1912 at the behest of city founders. The titles of several works by then-imperial wizard Evans, *The Menace of Modern Immigration* (1923) and *Alienism in the Democracy* (1927), indicate the Klan’s hatred of non-Anglo immigrants, including Texas’ sizable German population.<sup>24</sup>

How much was the Klan connected to Texas drys? Historiography in the 1950s and 1960s, by scholars such as Hofstadter, suggested a strong natural connection between the Ku Klux Klan and prohibitionists. Yet how did they work together in practice? An excellent case study of collusion between the Klan and ASL was support for Earle Bradford Mayfield for U.S. Senate from Texas in 1922.<sup>25</sup> The *New York Times* thought an alliance between the ASL and KKK for Mayfield in the Democratic primary was news

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<sup>23</sup> Quotes from J. B. Cranfill to J. D. Sandefer, April 29, 1922, J. B. Cranfill Papers, University of Texas Archives; as cited in Norman D. Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug: Texas Politics, 1921-28* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1984), 55, 446 fn 14. Other data from Brown, *Hood*, 54-55.

<sup>24</sup> Long, "KLAN"; Maxwell, "EVANS"; The Adolphus Hotel, "Our Story," <http://www.hoteladolphus.com/our-story> (accessed November 29, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> Frank H. Smyrl, "MAYFIELD, EARLE BRADFORD," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association, (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fma91>), accessed November 29, 2012.

enough to place the article “‘DRYS’ AND KU KLUX COMBINE IN TEXAS” on the top of page 6. In the article, the editor absolved drys from the sins of the hoods: “[I]t is not their fault that the klan [sic] backs Mayfield and the Klan has nothing whatever to do with their advocacy of him.” However, since Mayfield was dry and his opponent, Jim Ferguson, was wet (and formerly impeached as governor for corruption), “there is no alternative for [the drys] except to back Mayfield.” Even the ASL’s general counsel, Wayne B. Wheeler, claimed not to know if Mayfield was a Klansman and admitted, “Yes, it is peculiar that in this campaign we happen to be linked with the klan behind Mayfield, but this is a circumstance over which we have no control.” Wheeler, ever the pragmatist, shrugged, “There are only two men in the field, and one or the other has got to be voted for,” and Mayfield was “a high-grade man” supported by “all the decent forces in the State,” namely Drys.<sup>26</sup> For the national ASL, the Klan’s intolerance was not an asset, but dryness trumped tolerance; even a Klansman was “a high-grade man” if he was the only viable dry candidate left.

The TASL also carefully distanced itself from the KKK while embracing the Klan-backed Mayfield. The *Home and State* acknowledged in its columns that many Texans “conscientiously... fear that the Ku Klux organization would prove a menace to our government” and that “there are many Prohibitionists [in Texas] who are deeply concerned over this issue, an issue concerning which the Home and State is absolutely neutral.” A dry no less than Texas Senator John Morris Sheppard, the Senate’s leading

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<sup>26</sup> “‘DRYS’ AND KU KLUX COMBINE IN TEXAS: Both Backing Mayfield Against Ferguson in Fight for Senatorial Nomination,” Special to the *New York Times*, Saturday, August 5, 1922, p. 6. For traditional historiography associating drys with the Klan, see Richard Hofstadter’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* (New York: Random House, 1955), 291-2.

voice for prohibition since 1913, was an outspoken opponent of the Klan. He demurred that “the alignment of the league about the klan [sic] was an oddity” but “came about merely because Mayfield was regarded as the best candidate.”<sup>27</sup> Dry support for Klan candidates in Texas was a concern not only to New York reporters and Ohioan Wayne B. Wheeler, but some leading Texan drys as well.

Still, it seemed a few Klansmen worked in the upper ranks of the TASL. According to *The Home and State*, the Klan in Texas was not merely a phenomenon among Democrats such as Evans and Mayfield, but Republicans boasted proportionately as many Klansmen as the Democrats. Texas Republicans had split into “lily-whites” and “black and tan” factions before 1922, suggesting a strong Anglo supremacist movement within the party of Lincoln, but the split itself does not show how much of the GOP was KKK. The *Home and State* article does not explain how the editor knew how many Democrats and Republicans were Klansmen, but it seems the kind of claim only a Klansman could make with authority. Apparently at least one Klansman was a ranking member of the TASL’s editorial board for the *Home and State*.<sup>28</sup> Despite the ambivalent official position of the Texas League on the Klan, it seems some KKK members took leadership in the TASL. Like Texas’s two U.S. Senators after the 1922 election, there were two leading voices among Texas drys: the radically nativist types like the Klansman Mayfield, and the equally dry but anti-Klan and much more tolerant Morris Sheppard. Nevertheless, the dry cause remained associated with the Klan and all its vices.

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<sup>27</sup> “WET DEMOCRATS NOMINATE DRY REPUBLICAN FOR THE UNITED STATES SENATE,” unsigned editorial, *Home and State*, October 1922, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Home and State*, October 1922, p. 1.

Thankfully, the Klan's influence began to decline after 1923, and the next year its gubernatorial candidates faced defeat at the hands of Ma Ferguson. Ma ran promising to vindicate her husband, who was ineligible to run for governor (having been impeached) and had lost the 1922 senate race to the Klan member Mayfield. She was an unassuming woman whose iconic picture with an old-fashioned gray sunbonnet inspired her campaign song, "Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet," and her slogan, "a bonnet or a hood." She bested Felix D. Robertson of the Dallas Klan in the Democratic Primary in July, then removed known Klan backers from positions of power in the state party. The Klan then backed GOP nominee George C. Butte, who was promptly trounced, though Ferguson's seventeen-point margin of victory was the narrowest a Democratic gubernatorial candidate had received against a Republican since so-called Redemption. Unlike Pat Neff, Ferguson had taken on the Texas Klan directly in her campaign, promising a draconian anti-mask law, open publication of the organization's membership, and the loss of tax-exempt status for any church that hosted Klan meetings. One version of her anti-mask law even proposed the death penalty for assault when wearing a hood. None of those proposed ideas passed except a stern anti-mask law, a symbolic victory that signaled the end of the Klan's power in Texas politics. The state attorney general, Dan Moody, completed the anti-Klan purge by cleansing his office of their influence and appointing an anti-Klan head for the Texas Rangers.<sup>29</sup> A woman in a gray bonnet had emasculated the hoods.

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<sup>29</sup> David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987) 46-48.

As governor, Ma Ferguson may have dealt harshly with the Klan, but she continued her husband's tradition of giving pardons at an unparalleled rate, particularly for violators of prohibition laws. One somewhat hagiographic history of Ferguson recounts how Neff's strict enforcement of prohibition and other laws filled the jails with petty offenders and did not let off offenders for good behavior, but Ferguson sought to correct the system and was "besieged" by petitions for clemency.<sup>30</sup> Others observed that her average of 100 pardons per month, like state highway contracts, were highly irregular, and some accused her of accepting bribes and kickbacks to award them. This was too much for the public, who voted in Dan Moody as Governor in 1926 on a platform of cleaning up politics.<sup>31</sup> Miriam was gone for the moment, but would return.

By 1928 the Texas Klan had dwindled to a mere 2,500 members and prominent citizens shunned association with it. Despite its noise during the 1928 election, the Klan in Texas was severely weakened. Its once-promising U.S. Senator Mayfield had lost his primary election to Tom Connally.<sup>32</sup> By the late 1920s, a Klan past was an albatross. When Mayfield ran against Ma Ferguson for governor in 1930, he placed seventh in a crowded field. Though the Klan's influence waned after 1924, its legacy of linking prohibition with fanaticism persisted beyond the decade.

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<sup>30</sup> Carl Randall McQueary and May Nelson Paulissen, *Ma's in the Kitchen: You'll Know When It's Done! The Recipes and History of Governor Miriam A. Ferguson, First Woman Governor of Texas* (Austin: Eakin Press: 1994), 47. While the book was written for a popular audience and is evidently hagiographic, one of the authors holds a Ph.D. and so carries some academic weight.

<sup>31</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, John D. Huddleston, "Ferguson, Miriam Amanda Wallace [Ma]," accessed November 20, 2016, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ffe06>.

<sup>32</sup> Long, "KLAN," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Texas State Historical Association (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vek02>), accessed November 23, 2013; Brown, *Hood*, 10.

*Sound and Fury: J. Frank Norris and Radical Prohibition*

In Texas, perhaps the most reactionary supporter of prohibition after the demise of the Klan was the fiery fundamentalist Baptist minister and pastor of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, J. Frank Norris. Though he provoked conflict with Catholics, evolutionists, and fellow Baptists who were not sufficiently fundamentalist for his liking, Norris's primary political crusade in the 1920s was prohibition. He was dry before the Dean Law took effect, but his attention to the reform seemed marginal until he met Morris Sheppard in 1919 and gave him a silver set boasting that his church had "the largest Sunday School in America." Norris then dove into prohibition-related contests, clashing with a federal judge who supposedly sentenced bootleggers too leniently and backing Klan members like Mayfield for Senate in 1922 and Robertson against Ma Ferguson for governor in 1924. In the latter contest, he wrote provocative articles with sensational titles such as "Is Liquor Coming Back?" and "Can You Vote with the Bootlegger?" Though Norris promised to respect the result of the Democratic primary after Ma Ferguson won, ads for her Republican challenger appeared in his paper.<sup>33</sup>

In 1928, he took part in a scorched-earth campaign to stop the wet (and Catholic) Democratic candidate for president, Al Smith (see chapter 6). The dries' victory in the 1928 presidential election came at a high cost. The contest's bitter rhetoric divided the state's overwhelmingly white voters and countless Anglo Baptist congregations down the middle. Even some devoted Methodist laymen such as Morris Sheppard, Texas's senior U.S. Senator since 1913 and the champion of the Eighteenth Amendment in Congress,

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<sup>33</sup> Barry Hankins, *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris & the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1996), first quote 47, other quotes 50; 47-51.

had supported Al Smith out of loyalty to the Democratic Party.<sup>34</sup> While Texas remained deeply Democratic, it had broken with a tradition of siding with the Democratic presidential candidate in every election since achieving statehood in the 1840s, even during Reconstruction.<sup>35</sup> Norris had helped the Republicans carry the state on the presidential level, and he tried to capitalize on this victory by working with the GOP in the state, but the Republicans' win in that election did not fundamentally change the Democratic stranglehold on the state.<sup>36</sup>

Drys throughout the state took Hoover's victory as a national referendum on prohibition that settled the question and most of them withdrew from direct political activism; Norris was the exception. As Jeanne Bozzell McCarty has demonstrated in her study of Protestants and prohibition in Texas from 1919 to 1935, most drys, content that prohibition had been saved in 1928, still supported enforcement but in their everyday work tended more to the Gospel message. The editor of the *Baptist Standard* pleaded two weeks after the 1928 election for preachers to avoid the "conscientious compulsion" to perpetually engage divisive political issues—apparently a reference to J. Frank Norris—and focus more on "Christ and Him Crucified."<sup>37</sup> The editor of another paper, the *Christian Courier*, which had openly supported Hoover in the campaign, echoed this theme, pleading: "let the servants of God turn with new energy to the every-day task of

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<sup>34</sup> McCarty, *The Struggle for Sobriety*, 18.

<sup>35</sup> Even during Reconstruction, Texas had not voted for a Republican, since its representation was not admitted back into the Union until 1870, and even in 1872, Texans voted for the Democratic presidential candidate.

<sup>36</sup> Hankins, *God's Rascal*, 51-65.

<sup>37</sup> McCarty, *Struggle for Sobriety*, 20, citing *Dallas Baptist Standard*, 22 November 1928.

the church—the preaching of the gospel of Christ, the seeking of the lost, the edifying of saints. ... Not Hoover, but Christ is the Savior.”<sup>38</sup> Another issue of the *Courier* stated baldly, “Adios, Politics!” and restated the paper’s commitment to focus on matters of salvation rather than politics.<sup>39</sup> While support for prohibition did not waver among most Protestant clergy after the election, the emphasis of most shifted more towards the typical soul-saving work of ministers.

Moreover, the victory in 1928 did not end agitation against prohibition. The election had opened the question again on a national scale, and Norris responded as he usually did to a challenge. As Barry Hankins described it, Norris by 1929 had shown “an almost pathological anger in the face of continued attacks on prohibition.”<sup>40</sup> If the meltdown of one of prohibition’s leading orators in Texas wasn’t bad enough, matters got worse for prohibitionists: their once-solid voting bloc of women began to crack.

### *Women for Repeal*

Perhaps the most dramatic change that contributed to prohibition’s demise was the shift of women voters from reliably dry to split on the issue. To appreciate the significance of this shift, a survey of the link between prohibition and woman’s suffrage on the national level and then in Texas provides context. Though the early period of prohibition in Texas and across the nation maintained the comfortable link between prohibition and woman’s suffrage, 1929 provides a turning point after which women

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<sup>38</sup> McCarty, *Struggle for Sobriety*, 21, citing *Dallas Christian Courier*, 8 November 1928.

<sup>39</sup> McCarty, *Struggle for Sobriety*, 21, citing *Dallas Christian Courier*, 15 November 1928.

<sup>40</sup> Hankins, *God’s Rascal*, 66.

increasingly abandoned prohibition, most visibly through the WONPR. After tracing the chronology of the movement against prohibition, we will consider how the WONPR used gendered and religious language to advance its goal, and briefly consider how Texas fit into this movement.

In 1920, few people had reason to believe that many women would ever vote against prohibition. After all, First Wave feminists had connected woman's suffrage and prohibition for nearly a century. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton linked the two reforms when they formed the first women's temperance society in New York in 1841 and advocated for both issues through their organization. However, many prohibitionist women still resisted votes for women until after Frances E. Willard in 1879 took the helm of the WCTU, the largest woman's organization in the nineteenth century. Willard, who matched the theological orthodoxy of her day more than Anthony and Stanton, believed God had revealed to her that the woman's vote was an essential to protect the home against the ravages of alcohol.<sup>41</sup> As Willard anointed the cause of woman's suffrage with the moral force of prohibition, more and more women embraced both of the WCTU's main causes. With the rallying cry of "Home Protection," the WCTU's most famous president Frances Willard had linked the two causes together and so enlisted untold thousands of otherwise conservative women in the fight for women's enfranchisement.

Willard not only tied temperance to woman's suffrage, but also to woman's empowerment to impact any and every area of society. She championed many other

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<sup>41</sup> Jean H. Baker, *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), 164. For the heterodoxy of Stanton and Anthony, see Kathi Kern, *Mrs. Stanton's Bible* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

progressive policies, as indicated by her well-known mantra for women, “Do Everything.” Prominent sociologist Joseph Gusfield described Willard as spanning “all the major movements of conservative, progressive, and radical Christianity,” including not only woman’s suffrage but also “dress reform, cremation, vegetarianism, Christian Socialism, the Populist Party, and the Labor movement,” among other causes. He also called her “[w]ithout a doubt... the leading [t]emperance advocate of the late nineteenth century and the most dominant person in the historical development of the [WCTU].”<sup>42</sup> Willard thus played a key role in popularly linking prohibition with not only woman’s suffrage, but a wide array of Christian social causes, from the most conservative to the most radical. Thanks to Willard, prohibition became intimately associated with woman’s suffrage and women’s activism more generally.

When Willard died in 1898, the WCTU grew more restricted to the twin crusade for prohibition and woman’s suffrage but gained further strength as a new century dawned.<sup>43</sup> As the leading voice for Christian women, the WCTU provided moral clout for prohibition, which gained momentum around the nation by the turn of the century and helped dry up states in every region of the country by the 1910s. The yellow-and-black-ribboned advocates of woman’s suffrage joined in jubilation with their white-ribboned prohibitionist sisters in the twin political advances for women in 1920. The Eighteenth Amendment had gone into effect in January 1920, and by August of that year the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted women suffrage in every state in

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<sup>42</sup> Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 76.

<sup>43</sup> Okrent, *Last Call*, 37.

the Union.<sup>44</sup> With woman's suffrage established, Willard would have thought, surely prohibition could never be overturned.

Turning to Texas, this close tie between feminism and prohibition initially hurt dry efforts, though in the long run the victory of prohibition in the South helped the cause of woman's suffrage. Women helped stir up the first major surge of interest for prohibition in Texas in the 1880s, though most Texan voters wanted to keep women out of politics just as much as they wanted to keep prohibitionists out. As James Ivy argues, the close association of prohibition with socially disruptive long-haired men and short-haired women contributed to the overwhelming defeat of Texas's prohibition vote in 1887, and dry leaders sought successfully to marginalize the role of women in future prohibition campaigns in the state. Similarly, Joe Coker argues that prohibitionists across the South from the 1880s to 1900s adapted their message to uphold gender roles, keeping women on a moral pedestal but isolated from the political realm in the home.<sup>45</sup>

The narrow loss of dries in the 1911 statewide prohibition vote prompted some progressive dries to embrace woman's suffrage more boldly. The TASL's official paper in Texas, the *Home and State*, responded to the hard-fought loss by calling for votes for

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<sup>44</sup> Peter H. Odegard, *Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League* (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 1928; rpt., New York: Octagon Books, 1966); "A Nation of Drunkards," *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, 94 mins, PBS Video, 2011, DVD.

<sup>45</sup> James D. Ivy, *No Saloon in the Valley: The Southern Strategy of Texas Prohibitionists in the 1880s* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 1, 7-23, 28, 31, 47-52, 56-64, 68, 89-90, 100-101, and especially 118: "By 1911 [prohibitionists] could reject the assistance of women because they were confident that they could accomplish their goal without them"; Joe L. Coker, *Liquor in the Land of the Lost Cause: Southern White Evangelicals and the Prohibition Movement* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2007), 1-3, gender and women 199-229; Robert Wuthnow, *Rough Country: How Texas Became America's Most Powerful Bible-Belt State* (Princeton, New Jersey, 2014), 171. See also James D. Ivy, "'The Lone Star State Surrenders to a Lone Woman': Frances Willard's Forgotten 1882 Texas Temperance Tour," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 102, no. 1 (1998): 44-61 (on which chapter 1 of Ivy's *No Saloon* was based); and Judith N. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

women. As mentioned twice before, Mrs. S. J. Sweeny of Waco wrote the *Home and State* on September 1911 to protest the lack of votes for women. Though she had not until then supported votes for women, she was driven to that position by the narrow loss of statewide prohibition in the 1911 election, and despite her age (seventy-three years) vowed to become a militant advocate for the WCTU.<sup>46</sup> Over a year later, Sinclair Moreland of Austin, Texas wrote an article that took up almost the entire front page, titled rather appropriately, “Woman Suffrage.” The opening paragraph is not just a proclamation, but a revelation:

THE hour of dawn has come. The east is aglow with the rising sun of a great and momentous question—the suffrage of American woman. With the advancing light of a new day—the herald of a new era, the mists and isms of ages are disappearing. The fetters and shackles of the enslaved are being loosed. The emancipation proclamation is being written. The dogmatist and reactionary are in retreat. The hosts of Deborah are marching on.<sup>47</sup>

Rather than reaffirming traditional gender roles, Moreland declared that God made man and woman equal in the Garden of Eden. Moreland then anticipated dry criticisms of suffrage: “We hear it said that women’s sphere is the home. That there she is the guardian angel of all that’s pure and noble. Yes, ... Her administration has been a success.” But Moreland argued that woman’s success in the limited sphere of the home is not a reason to keep her limited there, but to expand her sphere to suffrage. “The unsolved moral, social and political problems will find their solution in the suffrage of the American woman,” he wrote. He set the situation for suffrage in the direst terms: non-suffrage is slavery and suffrage is liberation; men have failed to reform the nation, and women must

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<sup>46</sup> Mrs. S. J. Sweeny, “The Negro and Mexican vs. Woman,” *Home and State*, September 13, 1911, p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> Sinclair Moreland, “Woman Suffrage,” *Home and State* (Nov 2, 1912), 1.

rise to slay the serpent of public vices whose “coils are tightening around the vitals of the Nation.” After praising Francis Willard as one who tore away from “man-made limitations,” Moreland concluded with a cry: “Awake! Woman, awake! Awake from your lethargic sleep—the dawn of your morning has come.”<sup>48</sup> The desperate failures of prohibitionists to win male votes stirred up dry advocates to embrace the radical reform of woman’s suffrage to attain victory.

As prohibition seemed increasingly likely, support for woman’s suffrage also rose. Bob Shuler in 1917 claimed anti-prohibitionists tried to keep women out of political speeches and voting because no women supported them.<sup>49</sup> Texan women had gained access to suffrage in the Democratic primary beginning March 1918, which in Texas almost had the effect of voting in the general election. Male Texan voters still refused to expand the franchise to women in a vote on May 24, 1919. While on that same day voters had approved a state constitutional amendment for statewide prohibition by a margin of 20,000 votes, the amendment for woman’s suffrage during the same election lost by 25,000 votes out of roughly 300,000 cast. Where the popular vote failed to enfranchise women, the state legislature intervened, ratifying the Nineteenth Amendment in June 1919. Texas thus became the first southern state to give the franchise to women, just one of three southern states to do so before three-fourths of the states had ratified the Nineteenth Amendment and given it the force of law.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Moreland, “Woman Suffrage,” *Home and State* (Nov 2, 1912), 1.

<sup>49</sup> Bob Shuler, “The Onward March of Local Option,” *Bob Shuler’s Free Lance*, Paris, Texas (November 1917), 279.

<sup>50</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, A. Elizabeth Taylor, “Woman Suffrage,” (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/viw01>) accessed November 20, 2016, published by the Texas State Historical Association. Robert Plocheck, “Prohibition Elections in Texas,” *Texas Almanac*

Governor Pat Neff further illustrated the intimate connection between woman's suffrage and prohibition. When he first announced candidacy for governor in late 1919, Neff declared in the same breath that he had supported and voted for both prohibition and woman's suffrage. The former had already been adopted into the U.S. Constitution as the Eighteenth Amendment, while the latter had just been approved by the Texas legislature. Since woman's suffrage was so recent, however, Neff promised to safeguard that right—alongside prohibition—by supporting “every bill that seeks to put an unpolluted and unintimidated ballot into the hands of our women.”<sup>51</sup> Later in his speech, he reiterated his commitment to keeping elections “pure and unhampered” by backing woman's suffrage, which he believed would lead to “many laws both to purify and to dignify the ballot box.”<sup>52</sup> His terminology implies concern that his anti-woman's suffrage and anti-prohibition opponent, Joe Bailey, would intimidate women voters and continue the corrupt brand of politics associated with saloons and brewers. With women fully enfranchised, corrupt politics would finally face a reckoning.

For a time, that assessment was correct, but in the long run it was wrong. Prohibition encountered increasing resistance as the 1920s roared on, especially in urban areas. Though wets suffered decisive defeat in the 1928 presidential campaign, the issue had been opened for discussion on a national level once more. Perhaps more significantly, President Hoover inadvertently prompted the most powerful woman in

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(<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>51</sup> Neff, *The Battles of Peace*, 275.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

Republican politics to launch an all-out and remarkably successful campaign to overturn prohibition. That woman was Pauline Sabin.

Sabin was a wealthy heiress and well-connected in Republican politics. She had fundraised for Republican presidents from Harding to Hoover, had taken a high position in Hoover's reelection campaign, and was the first woman ever elected to the Republican National Committee. As Director of the Women's Republican Campaign in the East, Sabin had worked hard for the Republican Herbert Hoover's election in 1928 with the understanding that he would look into the effects of prohibition on the justice system in hope that he would try to change dry laws. Though woman's suffrage had led women like Sabin to political prominence, her insistence on prohibition reform suggests that some of the women empowered by the Nineteenth Amendment, even those who had supported the dry Hoover, were not so keen on protecting the Eighteenth Amendment.

When Hoover won the election, he broke his promise and dodged the prohibition issue, insisting that the current law was in no need of major reform. "I made up my mind I was fooled," Sabin said, and resigned her position at once. The next day headlines around the country read, "Mrs. Sabin out to battle Drys!"<sup>53</sup> This was news for several reasons. She was a nationally known figure who had just contributed significantly to the election of a prohibitionist candidate for president against his openly anti-prohibitionist opponent, Al Smith, and was now dedicating herself to defeat prohibition – no small change in her political position. More importantly, in a world that had associated

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<sup>53</sup> Grace C. Root, *Women and Repeal: The Story of the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform*, authorized by Mrs. Charles H. Sabin (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1934), 3-4.

woman's suffrage with prohibition under the WCTU's slogan of "Home Protection," no woman was expected to oppose prohibition publicly.

Undeterred, Sabin founded the Woman's Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR) in May 1929 with the implicit idea that temperance (including moderate drinking and abstinence) was a good ideal but legal prohibition was a counter-productive tactic for achieving it. This distinction between the end of reducing drinking and various means for accomplishing that end is indicated by the WONPR's first working name, the Women's League for True Temperance. As the first prominent woman to come out against prohibition publicly, Sabin soon discovered she had spoken for "thousands of other women ... ready to be organized, wanting to be organized," she said. "And the road before me was so plainly indicated I could not turn back from it."<sup>54</sup> Like Frances Willard before her, she framed her activism not as a selfish endeavor for personal power or fame, but as a selfless act of service. Whatever her true motives, her rhetoric spoke to the norms of her time, which just as in Willard's day insisted that a woman's activism was best justified when it was done for the needs of others, like a mother caring for her children.

The WONPR's Declaration of Principles revealed an organization committed to objectives eerily similar to the ASL, but wider in its goals. While the ASL sought to destroy the saloon and its attendant vices, the WONPR not only sought state laws "forbidding the return of the saloon," but also laws to "drive the crime-breeding speakeasies of the present day to the same extinction that has already met the saloon as an instrument of our national life."<sup>55</sup> The WONPR explicitly sought to prevent the return of

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<sup>54</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 4.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

the pre-prohibition saloons, but to wipe out the speakeasies that prohibition had helped establish. In addition, the WONPR denounced prohibition for being first, wrong in principle, and second, “disastrous” in its consequences. First, prohibition arrogated too much power to the Federal government and imposed law without support from the “moral sense and the common conscience of the communities affected by it.”<sup>56</sup> Second, it led to more hypocrisy, corruption, death, and crime; stunted the steady growth in temperance before prohibition; had a “shocking effect” upon youth; impaired individual rights; and weakened “the sense of solidarity between the citizen and the government which is the only sure basis of a country’s strength.”<sup>57</sup> The WONPR took a moral ground higher than the dries, and surprisingly argued that the supposed cure for societal decline had been an overreaction creating more problems than it solved. WONPR did not seek to undermine the WCTU’s Victorian model of womanhood in which women were the moral guardians of society, but rather expropriated it to achieve a radically new political goal for women at a time when the concept of womanhood was shifting in other respects.

One issue that animated Sabin and her followers was hypocrisy. Sabin allegedly founded WONPR because her disgust with hypocrisy and broken promises among prohibitionist leadership compelled her to push for repeal. “I had started out believing in the Eighteenth Amendment,” she said, but when she saw politicians “who would vote for prohibition and stricter enforcement and then half an hour later would be seen taking a cocktail,” she “just couldn’t stand anything so doubled-faced.”<sup>58</sup> Prohibitionists like

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 161-2.

<sup>57</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 162.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 3.

Wayne B. Wheeler and his ASL had long tolerated hypocrisy among “wet-dry” politicians who drank, so long as they voted dry, and WONPR women decried prohibition as a prodigious producer of hypocrisy. The dry newspaper *Christian Leader* criticized H. L. Mencken’s suggestion “that prohibition will not last long if we can have an exposure of all the hypocrites who are supporting it.” However, it also confessed, “undoubtedly, there is some truth in the remark,” not least because many pastors preached with the assumption that some of their parishioners were also patrons of bootleggers.<sup>59</sup> Hypocrisy and lax enforcement not only bred disillusionment for prohibition, the WONPR claimed, but undermined the very spirit of the law. Women with WONPR followed their matronly duty to stand for purity against hypocrisy, even if that meant standing against prohibition.

Such sentiment against the hypocrisy of prohibition was common among the WONPR literature, but is most humorously featured in the cartoon opposite the title page in their official history. In that picture, dated 1930, a huge male figure has his hands clasped in prayer, a fake halo shining above his cowboy hat, and the word “LEGISLATOR” written on the belly of his fine suit shirt. A fashionably yet modestly dressed woman with a modern hat with one arm props up a sign with the title “WOMEN’S ORGANIZATION FOR PROHIBITION REFORM” while her other hand lifts up the legislator’s suit tails to reveal a bottle of whiskey in his pocket. The cartoon is simply titled: “AND HE VOTED DRY!” The message is simple: intended to reverse the

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<sup>59</sup> “R.W.G., “From Our Western Correspondent,” *The Christian Leader* (January 19, 1928), 71, Boston; A Nation of Drunkards,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick; “A Nation of Hypocrites,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick.

moral decline brought on by alcohol abuse, prohibition had attended the rise of a slew of other vices, especially hypocrisy in government.<sup>60</sup>

But in 1929, it was still embarrassing for women to be seen coming out against prohibition. Sabin recounted later that many women of Maryland whom she asked to join the WONPR in 1929 had said, “We are heart and soul with you, but don’t put our names down!”<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless, the ranks of the WONPR rapidly swelled to 100,000 less than a year after its founding (April 23, 1930), then tripled to 300,000 a year thereafter, then doubled to over 620,000 by April 12, 1932, and finally doubled again to 1,326,000 by April 5, 1933—at that time the largest women’s activist group in American history. Even the WCTU at its height in 1927 had reached a dues-paying membership of only about 766,000.<sup>62</sup> By enlisting more women than the WCTU ever had while WCTU membership slipped, the WONPR demonstrated that publicly supporting prohibition repeal, which had been embarrassing for respectable women in 1929, had within a few years become not only possible but increasingly fashionable.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., opposite title page.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>62</sup> WONPR numbers in Root, *Repeal*, vii-ix; WCTU numbers in Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World/Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1800-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 2. Tyrrell also states on that page that “The WCTU was not the largest organization of women in the United States over the period of the 1870s to the 1930s,” a claim that seemingly confirms the WONPR’s claim to have more members than the WCTU ever did. It must be noted, however, that WONPR members were not required to pay dues, whereas WCTU members were, indicating a greater degree of commitment among dry women. The WCTU also claimed a following of over a million, comparable to the WONPR at its height. Still, the superior official numbers of the WONPR are more impressive given the equal power of each woman’s vote and the cultural pressure for many decades against respectable women publicly opposing prohibition. Even if the WONPR number is inflated to a degree, it is still clear that the number of dues-paying members (and probably casual followers) of the WCTU declined after 1927. Meanwhile, the WONPR membership overtook that of the WCTU decisively by early 1933, the crucial year in which the sheer number of women’s votes mattered most for determining state conventions on the prohibition question.

The women of the WONPR campaigned with surprising energy and “a systematic campaign of publicity, through the press, by radio, by public mass meetings, by the distribution of printed material.”<sup>63</sup> One speaker at the 1932 WONPR convention proposed to “take a leaf from the book of the Anti-Saloon League [ASL]. ... Work for any candidate of any party who promises to vote for Repeal. Vote against any candidate who refuses to promise.”<sup>64</sup> The WONPR turned the relentless tactics and single moral purpose of the ASL against it.<sup>65</sup> By combining the ASL’s political shrewdness and single-issue focus with the WCTU’s women’s political activism and moral authority, the WONPR thus used the traits of two leading prohibitionist groups to effectively fight for prohibition’s repeal.

The presidential campaign of 1932 was the final test for the WONPR, as it decided to endorse Franklin Delano Roosevelt at a time when the male-led repeal organizations refused to endorse a presidential candidate. Though risky, the decision was a certain gain for the organization: soon after declaring its support for FDR, the WONPR received 150 resignations but gained 137,000 new members.<sup>66</sup> FDR and other wets swept into power that November, due in part to the promise of more jobs and government revenue from alcohol sales during the growing crisis of the Great Depression. By the time the WONPR reached its high-water mark in 1933, Congress had already passed a repeal

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<sup>63</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 29.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. “A Nation of Hypocrites,” *Prohibition*, produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick.

<sup>66</sup> The repeal organizations that refused to declare for a presidential candidate were the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA), Crusaders, Voluntary Committee of Lawyers, and the Hotel men’s Association, all of whom supported wet candidates for local and Congressional office. Root, *Women and Repeal*, 103-104.

resolution, and through a series of direct statewide elections, three quarters of the states voted to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment with the Twenty-first Amendment by December 1933.<sup>67</sup>

### *Women and Gendered Language*

Having considered the overall progress of the WONPR, an examination of its methods reveals the importance of their conservatively gendered language in their success. While scholars have correctly evaluated the success of prohibition as a triumph for women's political activism, Kenneth D. Rose has rightly contended that women and the gendered language of home protection played a crucial role in prohibition's repeal. In his aptly titled *American Women and the Repeal of Prohibition* (1996), Rose argues persuasively that an "essential" and "decisive" factor in repeal was "the presence of a large number of well-organized women promoting repeal" in the numerically greatest women's organization against prohibition, the WONPR.<sup>68</sup> What was "even more significant than the *fact* of organized women's support for repeal," Rose claims, "was *who* these women were and *how* they expressed their support for prohibition repeal."<sup>69</sup> WONPR women shared the basic worldview and techniques of the old fashioned WCTU in the 1920s and 30s, but believed that prohibition ironically hurt the cause of true

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<sup>67</sup> Robert A. Slayton, *Empire Statesman: The Rise and Redemption of Al Smith* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 237-328; Christopher M. Finan, *Alfred E. Smith: The Happy Warrior* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002), 189-230; K. Austin Kerr, "ANTI-SALOON LEAGUE OF TEXAS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vaa02>), accessed 5 May 2014, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>68</sup> Kenneth D. Rose, *American Women and the Repeal of Prohibition* (New York: NYU Press, 1996), 2.

<sup>69</sup> Rose, *American Women*, 2.

temperance and further damaged the sacred domestic sphere rather than safeguarding it, as prohibition advocates had hoped.<sup>70</sup>

Unlike the culturally marginal women such as those in the Molly Pitcher Club who defended drink on the grounds of individual freedom, the women of the WONPR turned the WCTU's conservative rhetoric of home protection and true temperance against them, seizing the moral high ground of true womanhood from the prohibitionists who had formerly occupied its heights undisputed. At the same time, the WONPR was very much a creature of its times, expertly wielding the media and upper-class leadership to make the WCTU seem outdated and outclassed. The WONPR's relatively secular rhetoric also resonated with the changing times, as its big-tent approach of inviting people of every race, religion, and economic status to membership sharply contrasted with the distinctively Protestant Christian crusading identity of the WCTU. Despite its modern aspects, however, the WONPR's rhetoric showed the continued viability of a seemingly Victorian notion of women's role as the moral mothers of society.<sup>71</sup>

The WCTU and WONPR shared some common ground on what constituted womanhood, yet their perspectives come out of the different social situation of their origins. In Frances Willard's words, the WCTU was doing nothing less than "reconstructing the ideal of womanhood," breaking the single mold of women as a "the wife and mother... carefully enshrined at home" and "declaring a true and blessed gospel... concerning honest independence and brave self-help."<sup>72</sup> This "new woman"

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 3-7.

<sup>71</sup> Rose, *American Women*, 2-7.

<sup>72</sup> Frances E. Willard, *A While Life for Two* (Chicago: Woman's Temperance Publish Association, 1890), 6, cited in Frances Willard, *The Ideal of "The New Woman" According to the Woman's Christian*

according to Willard and the WCTU of the late nineteenth century was, in the summation of Carolyn De Swarte Gifford, “above all, *Christian*.” The model for this kind of self-development was Jesus Christ, whom Willard called “The prophet and priest of *individuality* [emphases original]” who moved each woman to act as she was gifted and called by God.<sup>73</sup>

The “new woman” of the 1920s was very different from that of Willard’s time. Through the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, women had received new political empowerment as full-fledged citizens with the vote, seats in Congress, and other government positions. Most notable among women in politics was Mabel Willebrandt, the Assistant Attorney General of the United States during most of the 1920s and perhaps the most public face of prohibition enforcement in the nation. It speaks volumes to the increased political empowerment of women by the 1920s and 30s that Pauline Sabin, president of the WONPR, could realize the repeal of prohibition in less than five years while Francis Willard’s WCTU took nearly forty-five years to enter prohibition into the U.S. Constitution. By the 1920s, women could not only engage politics without reference to, but in open defiance of, the truism that women need the vote principally to support prohibition.

In addition to women’s political empowerment in its own right, the Roaring Twenties also saw shifting ideas of what womanhood meant, with the “new woman” defying earlier gender norms. Writing in 1931 before prohibition was overturned,

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*Temperance Union*, ed. Carolyn De Swarte Gifford (New York: Garland, 1987), Introduction (no page number).

<sup>73</sup> Frances E. Willard, *Woman and Temperance, or, The Work and Workers of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union* (Hartford, CN: Park Publishing Co., 1883), 310, reprinted in *Religion in America*, ed. Edwin S. Gaustad (New York: Arno Press, 1972).

Frederick Lewis Allen reported that supposedly respectable women were smoking, drinking, kissing many men casually, petting, taking rides in the newly released closed car with young men late at night, and a “bumper crop of sex magazines, confession magazines, and lurid motion pictures” added fuel to the fire of teenage and young-twenties rebellion against their ancestor’s morays.<sup>74</sup> Scholars since then have elaborated on the changing trends, such as a woman in the 1920s meeting a boy with her hat on signaling her desire to go out alone with him rather than idle at home as tradition would have it. Historians have also written about the changing sexual, drinking, and other habits of the increasingly liberated young women of the Roaring Twenties whom contemporaries often looked at with dread. In addition to sexual activity, women also began drinking alcohol with men. Whereas the typical saloon before prohibition had served exclusively adult male customers, the illicit nature of the speakeasies of the Jazz Age meant that refusing customers was not an option: one call to the police by a disgruntled customer and you might find yourself out of business. Alcohol and sex went hand in hand, as indicated by the rising popularity of hip flasks.<sup>75</sup> Whether or not young people were drinking more, sexual standards for drinking had changed. If the rise of the automobile enabled greater sexual independence, prohibition had ironically facilitated the

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<sup>74</sup> Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday* (New York: Perennial Classics, 2000), 87; 76-105; first edition New York: Harper and Row, 1931.

<sup>75</sup> For example, see “Flapper Carrying a Whiskey Flask in her Garter, ca. 1920s, *John Binder Collection*, in <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/prohibition/photos/>.

new phenomenon of women drinking beside men. Prohibition, therefore, accidentally helped spur a revolution in drinking equality for men and women.<sup>76</sup>

In this context, it is little surprise that prohibitionists, including those in the WCTU, attacked the women of WONPR as libertines representing the very worst of their nation. Dr. Mary Armor, dubbed “The Georgia Cyclone” and the WCTU president in her state, assailed “Mrs. Sabin and her cocktail-drinking women” and boasted, “we will out-live them, out-fight them, out-love them, out-talk them, out-pray them and out-vote them.”<sup>77</sup> Churchmen also assailed the character of the women against prohibition. The Secretary of the Methodist Board of Temperance, Dr. Clarence True Wilson, was described as believing that “the great home-loving, church-going Americanized body of women would stand by Prohibition through thick and thin,” and stated, “The little group of wine-drinking society women who are uncomfortable under Prohibition, will have as much influence in assaulting the Constitution of their country as they would have blowing soap bubbles at Gibraltar.”<sup>78</sup> Other than their love for drinking, these voices suggested, why else would women want to repeal prohibition?

Overstated though they were, these attacks against the WONPR stung at the time. Even in 1930 after the Depression hit, the WONPR official history written by high-ranking member Grace Root claimed that “there were few optimists in the country (aside from the so-called fanatics in the Association against the Prohibition Amendment and in

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<sup>76</sup> Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920's* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

<sup>77</sup> *New York Tribune*, June 18, 1930, cited in Root, *Women and Repeal*, 13.

<sup>78</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 13.

the WONPR) who thought the Eighteenth Amendment could be changed within ten years”; the anti-prohibition American Federation of Labor, for example, until 1932 aimed for the more realistic goal of modifying existing laws rather than the “impossible goal” of repeal.<sup>79</sup> Root wrote in 1934 that, after prohibition had been so quickly defeated, “it is hard to believe that but three years ago such a crusade was necessary among the women of America!” Yet she recalled “the uncertainty and timidity which existed about Repeal so short a time ago.”<sup>80</sup> Public perception of repeal women shifted dramatically in just a few years from disreputable drunkards to defenders of the home, and the WONPR played no small part in that shift.

In addition to making repeal sentiment more respectable, women in the WONPR responded to and participated in the evolving roles of women in this time of societal change, including women’s increasingly accepted activism in the political realm as well as changes in popular media. While Willard exploited the technologies of her day and gained a cult-like following after her death,<sup>81</sup> Sabin followed the example of 1920s starlet-activists like Aimee Semple McPherson, who built personal fame, a Pentecostal

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 19. Root routinely quotes Sabin and other sources without full citation.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>81</sup> The cult-like following of Willard is evident in her high veneration in a massive memorial book published just after her death – Anna A. Gordon, *The Beautiful Life, or Frances E. Willard, A Memorial Volume* (Chicago: Woman’s Temperance Publishing Association, 1898) – as well as in the observances of regular WCTU chapters after her death. To take just one example: over a decade after Willard’s death, three of the ten special days that WCTU organizations commemorated (nearly all birthdays) related to Willard: her birthday, her mother’s birthday, and Willard’s day of death, or “heavenly birthday.” Likewise, the president of the Texas WCTU in 1909 favorably cited a bishop who called Willard “as great as Thomas Jefferson” because “while he wrote the Declaration of Independence for men, she wrote it for women.” Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Texas, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report* (Marlin, TX: N.P., 1909), 4, 32.

denomination, and a media empire from her shrewd combination of old-fashioned ideas of holiness and Hollywood connections.<sup>82</sup>

Like McPherson's followers, WONPR did its best to idolize its leader's combination of political acumen and good looks, all while emphasizing her humility and womanliness. The Executive Committee of the WONPR's Pittsburgh Branch passed a resolution in 1932 praising "Mrs. Charles S. Sabin" for doing "more than anyone else for the Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment," while Root claimed in her official history of the WONPR, "No other woman has done as much for Repeal."<sup>83</sup> They may have been obsequious, but likely were not exaggerating much. Sabin was called a "taskmaster" who "gave full responsibility" to the few women who were "graduates of the school of politics," and trusted them to get out the vote, even when she disagreed with their methods.<sup>84</sup> Root also claimed, rather implausibly, that "[e]veryone, except Mrs. Sabin, realizes that she *was* the WONPR [emphasis original]," but her public image no doubt benefited from such alleged humility.<sup>85</sup>

Many praised Sabin's beauty in contrast to the unattractiveness of the head of the WCTU at the time, Ella Boole. One unnamed Senator had welcomed Mrs. Sabin's anti-prohibition activism with the remark, "Thank God, a pretty woman in politics at last."<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Matthew Avery Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). Incidentally, both McPherson and Sabin in 1932 were currently married, former divorcees in the national limelight.

<sup>83</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 135.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>85</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 134.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

This sentiment is reflected in a pair of pictures in the official history of the WONPR that contrasts a stunning portrait of “Mrs. Charles H. Sabin” with an unflattering image of the WCTU president, “Mrs. Ella Boole.” Sabin appears like a movie star with elegantly placed fingers, a refined pearl necklace, a white gown, part of her collarbone showing, an intent stare, and a dreamy haze that gives the impression she is wearing a halo. Boole, by contrast, has hands fumbling over books, a simple necklace buried in a dark drab coat, a double chin, a toothy smile, and spectacles that all convey the impression of an elderly, tottering, and old-fashioned woman.<sup>87</sup> This contrast fits well with the WONPR’s use of “radio, moving pictures, special feature articles and daily press releases” as well as newsletters to members “from coast to coast and from Canada to Mexico” through their National Publicity Department.<sup>88</sup> While the WONPR with one arm embraced some modern changes such as direct political activism and new media technologies, with the other it clung to the rhetoric and some of the tactics of the WCTU.

When WONPR women copied exactly the WCTU’s rhetoric and tactics, they often received angry charges that they were not true women. In one story, WONPR women set up booths at state and county fairs, often placing their booths fittingly “opposite those of the WCTU, which had long ago discovered this method of advertising, and felt that they had a peculiar claim on its use.” According to official WONPR report, at one such county fair in New York State, a prohibitionist woman “loudly called out that [a WONPR worker] must be a childless woman if she wished to get liquor back.” When the WONPR woman “replied that she was working against Prohibition because she had

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., photo between pp. 32 and 33.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 136.

four children, and asked the dry worker how many children she had,” the latter hung her head, confessed she had none, and walked off. She later returned to apologize and sign the WONPR member pledge.<sup>89</sup> While the story may be apocryphal, it accurately reflects how anti-prohibition women had to contend with charges that they were social deviants more interested in booze than babies, and how the WONPR highly valued turning this narrative on its head. By showing themselves to be “truer” women than many fighting for the WCTU, they won over some women who were formerly their political enemies and had increasingly harbored their own doubts about prohibition’s efficacy. Once “the home had been both purified and equalized” by prohibition and suffrage, women used their newfound political power to decide for themselves the best way to cleanse their homes instead of accepting the proper role others, including other women, had assigned to them.<sup>90</sup> The WONPR thus framed its politically radical goal of turning women against prohibition with the conservative language of safeguarding motherhood and true temperance.

In order to overcome the stigmas associated with anti-prohibition women, Sabin and the WONPR adopted the rhetoric and methods of their political rival, the WCTU. The WONPR argued that national prohibition impinged upon “local home rule” by banning alcohol across the nation rather than letting states and locales decide for themselves how best to deal with alcohol. The language of “home rule” echoed the conservative WCTU slogan of “Home Protection” and reflected the WONPR’s over

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<sup>89</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 26-27.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

desire for the death of saloons and speakeasies that prospered during prohibition.<sup>91</sup> Some male-led anti-prohibition groups such as the Moderation League that wanted to repeal prohibition professed to seek the “restoration of temperance,” and the WONPR described the repeal of prohibition as the only way to achieve “true temperance,” by which they meant moderate alcohol use closely regulated by the government.<sup>92</sup> Unlike earlier repeal groups, however, the WONPR was the first well-organized group led exclusively by respectable women, for women, and posed the first credible organized threat to the WCTU claim to speak for all upstanding women in the nation. Despite accusations by the WCTU to the contrary, WONPR women generally had no material interest to the alcohol lobby, and even dries called their leaders “personally above reproach.”<sup>93</sup> The WONPR did not reject the objective of prohibition to overturn the vice of alcohol abuse, but rather believed that prohibition was only making the situation worse by turning otherwise respectable citizens into criminals and fostering hypocrisy among politicians.

According to Al Smith, the failed Wet presidential candidate for 1928, the WONPR marked the turning point against prohibition. This was so, he declared, because “when women entered the fight for repeal, sanity began to return to the country.”<sup>94</sup> Hundreds of thousands of women who he claimed were “misled” by the notion that “that all good women must be for drastic enforcement” of prohibition came to believe that

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<sup>91</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 161-62.

<sup>92</sup> Irving Fisher, *Prohibition at its Worst* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1926), 18. Though this book is written by a prohibitionist, it does reflect some of the rhetoric of the anti-prohibitionists and gives some credit where credit is due.

<sup>93</sup> Fisher, *Prohibition at its Worst*, 15.

<sup>94</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 8.

prohibition itself was not a cure for moral decline, but a cause of even greater moral decline. It was “more dangerous to the home, more harmful to children, more threatening to future generations, than anything else in American life.” This kind of thinking only became possible with the combination of two factors. First, “the ideas of the fanatics [prohibitionists] began to loose [sic] their hold upon the women of the country,” who perceived prohibition to be making at least as many problems as it solved. Second, “courageous women like Mrs. Sabin risked public condemnation by attacking the whole theory of the Eighteenth Amendment,” thereby turning the perceived moral authority of women against the very prohibition intended to protect them from the ravages of a drunken husband. As a result, “the Drys who had had everything their own way were put on the defensive.”<sup>95</sup> Seen as the traditional defenders of the home, women had given much of the moral suasion and political pressure behind prohibition, and women shifted the moral momentum to repeal.

### *Women and Religion*

In contrast to the explicitly Protestant Christian character of the WCTU and its counterpart the ASL, the WONPR was much more secular in its rhetoric. This secular exterior of the WONPR, however, must be understood in the context of a cultural shift away from Protestant and especially evangelical dominance over society.<sup>96</sup> Yet it would not do for the WONPR to openly attack Protestantism, since most US citizens still

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Mark Noll, *The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 135, and Jeanette Miller Schmidt, *Souls or the Social Order: The Two-Party System in American Protestantism* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1991), 199.

belonged to that religion, and many of those coming around on the prohibition question were liberal Protestants who strongly supported prohibition in 1920 yet grew increasingly alienated from it by the vitriolic harangues of fundamentalist evangelicals for prohibition throughout the 1920s. One typical liberal Protestant remarked at a 1928 prohibition convention that he was leaving because Congregationalists and other Christians were “merely scenery at this convention; it is altogether a Methodist and Baptist movement.”<sup>97</sup> Secular language for the WONPR was not merely a neutral stance on questions of religion, but an outright rejection of the sectarian fundamentalist language of the most virulent supporters of prohibition in an effort to welcome other religious groups. This shift away from Protestant hegemony towards a more religiously inclusive politics signaled the rise of the New Deal coalition, which included the endorsement of the Democratic candidate for president in 1932 by the WONPR leadership, including the leading Republican woman in the country, Pauline Sabin.

This more inclusive, less sectarian language opened up the WONPR coalition to more religious groups than the exclusively Protestant and evangelical-dominated WCTU. Roman Catholics, Jews, and Episcopalians, among other religious groups, had deeply rooted beliefs valuing alcohol, as they all (legally) maintained the use of sacramental wine throughout prohibition. Some Jews and Christians alike noted the absurdity of prohibiting a drink that traditional teachings, the Bible, and even Jesus approved.<sup>98</sup> Catholics had been particularly embittered by the ugly presidential election of 1928 that

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<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Barry Hankins, *Jesus and Gin: Evangelicalism, the Roaring Twenties, and Today's Culture Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2010), 38.

<sup>98</sup> Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* (New York: Scribner, 2010), 182-192; Erskine, *Prohibition and Christianity*, 11-27.

largely united Protestant voters for Herbert Hoover against the anti-prohibitionist Catholic Al Smith, and they welcomed a discussion of prohibition that took anti-Catholicism out of the political equation.<sup>99</sup> Catholics also valued the family and community over the individual as the cornerstone of democracy, yet largely opposed prohibition, and so could naturally agree with the ostensibly secular rhetoric of the WONPR that prohibition was bad for the family.<sup>100</sup> Black Protestants, who likewise suffered cultural marginalization at the hands of their white co-religionists, found a place at the table in WONPR and joined in considerable numbers. The Michigan branch included from its inception “Greeks, Russians, Roumanians, Ukranians, Poles and Negroes [sic],” which likely would have including Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Christians; the branch in Illinois boasted Swedish, Polish, Norwegian, Bohemian and German voters, suggesting a good number of both Protestants and Catholics.<sup>101</sup> A Committee of Foreign-born Women gained wide coverage in foreign-language newspapers, twenty-two in Ohio and too many to count in New York, doubtless reaching out to people of a wide variety of Christian denominations.<sup>102</sup> By harnessing the power of the minority communities that had been targeted by prohibitionists in the past, the WONPR was building a coalition that was seemingly secular yet broadly Judeo-Christian.

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<sup>99</sup> Hankins, *Jesus and Gin*, 187-212.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>102</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 58.

Contrary to the overstatement by Rose that “the morality of the WCTU was deeply religious, whereas the moral system of the WONPR was strictly secular,” the WONPR also indulged in religious rhetoric from time to time.<sup>103</sup> The first page of the WONPR’s authorized account declared that by 1927, many people had realized that “prohibition had, after all, not brought the millennium,” a direct critique of the religious optimism that equated the Kingdom of God with the political program of prohibition, or perhaps any political program.<sup>104</sup> The account later recalls how letters written back to sincere but misunderstanding critics of the WONPR resulted in “many ‘conversions’ or near-conversions,” evidencing the continued use of religious, even evangelical language by a “secular” movement.<sup>105</sup> Sabin herself used religious language for the WONPR, at times calling upon the “crusading spirit of every member” or saying “I prophesy” to describe her predictions for women’s political empowerment.<sup>106</sup> At times, the women of the WONPR did not resist equating their battles as those between God and Satan, resorting to the Manichean rhetoric and moral oversimplicity of their opponents. In encouraging women to resist the ASL and WCTU with their own tactics, WONPR leaders cried, “Fight the Devil with his own weapons.”<sup>107</sup> Despite using more secular rhetoric overall, the WONPR leadership did not hesitate to employ dualistic religious

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<sup>103</sup> While Rose is generally correct that the WCTU was more explicitly religious, his point is overstated. Rose, *American Women*, 4.

<sup>104</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 1.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>107</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 69.

rhetoric to simplify their struggle as one of good against evil, rhetoric that bore striking similarities with that of the WCTU.

### *Women and Repeal in Texas*

The WONPR had women working in the bone-dry state of Texas as early as May 1929 with prominent Texan women, particularly Mrs. Helen Moore, a figure whose influence in Texas politics mirrored that of Mrs. Sabin nationally. Though Moore was born in Wisconsin in 1881, she was a faithful Democrat who integrated well into the one-party system of the South after moving to Texas with her husband in 1905. Moore had fought for woman's suffrage since 1907 and served as the president of the Texas Equal Suffrage Association from 1915. After voting equality had been achieved, she became president of the League of Women Voters of Texas in 1923 and served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1924 and again in 1928. The later convention is particularly noteworthy, as the Democratic nominee for president that year was, like Moore, both a wet and a Catholic. Not until Sabin founded the WONPR in 1929, however, did Moore have the opportunity to join a well-organized, bi-partisan, national organization against prohibition led by women.<sup>108</sup>

Despite Moore's stature in women's organizations in Texas, both her Catholicism and her wet stance made her an outlier for women in the state. The dry leanings of Texas from September 1930 are clear enough in the famous quote of Morris Sheppard: "There is as much chance of repealing the Eighteenth Amendment as there is for a hummingbird

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<sup>108</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, Priscilla Myers Benham, "Moore, Helen Edmunds," accessed February 04, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmo83>. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

to fly to the planet Mars with the Washington Monument tied to its tail!”<sup>109</sup> Even Mrs. Sabin had named Texas among several “hopelessly dry” states, yet pressed on with forming organizations and gaining members in every state.<sup>110</sup> The “wall of prejudice in the South” for prohibition began crumbling when a member of the WONPR in Kentucky in 1931 happened upon an old clipping of Jefferson Davis’s public letter against prohibition in Texas in the 1887 campaign. Davis’s message, with its emphasis on personal liberty and moral responsibility, was widely recirculated and resonated with people throughout the South, including its original audience in Texas, albeit 44 years later.<sup>111</sup> Texans in the WONPR worked closely with other wet organizations and made use of the newest technologies, such as radio, to get out their message.<sup>112</sup> By 1933, the Texas WONPR was “responsible in large measure” for pushing through the Hughes Moffitt bill that submitted the Twenty-first Amendment to the Texas citizens, who voted for repeal.<sup>113</sup>

At the WONPR’s height in 1933, a woman returned to the governor’s mansion in Texas, and she pardoned violators of prohibition laws more readily than ever. Given Ma Ferguson’s reputation for liberality in pardoning, it is little wonder that “[p]ardon seekers filled the waiting room” outside her office and that sacks of gifts arrived from those seeking pardons for their loved ones behind bars. One sob story she received was from a

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<sup>109</sup> Root, *Women and Repeal*, 40.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 57, 114.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

mother of five children who had been abandoned by her husband and made a living selling home brew, but was wrongly caught by a deputy when another man left his whiskey stash at her place. Given such tales, it is little wonder that the governor, though a teetotaler personally, pardoned generously those found guilty of violating prohibition laws. On one occasion, when criticized for pardoning twenty people in one day, she responded by pardoning forty the next day.<sup>114</sup> The “feminine” virtue of compassion—perhaps as a cover for corruption in selling pardons to the highest bidder—was on full display in Ferguson’s second term as governor, especially for prohibition violators.

Prohibition’s zealous defenders, however, continued their scorched-earth arguments against alcohol to a people already burnt out by them. Since Methodists had initially taken the chief role in making prohibition a national issue, it was not surprising that they were particularly tenacious in opposing repeal. The North Texas Annual Conference of the MECS seconded uncompromising comments by Bishop James Cannon, Jr., and the MECS national convention earlier that year. “Methodism has ever been in the forefront of every battle” for prohibition over the past century, they declared. Every level of the church from the pulpit to general conference has “recorded relentless opposition to the traffic and invincible determination to outlaw it as the common enemy of the [human] race.” Whatever other groups might do, they declared, “Methodism will not lower her standards or agree to give a legal status to the traffic anywhere under the

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<sup>114</sup> McQueary and Paulissen, *Ma’s in the Kitchen*, quote on 56, 56-57.

flag.”<sup>115</sup> Nationalist sentiment and religious loyalty meshed for Methodists who would rather go down in a blaze of glory than surrender to the pressures of popular opinion.

Texans began to repent of their prohibition bent under Ma Ferguson’s last term. In August 1933, voters decided in two simultaneous elections to approve the Twenty-first Amendment to the U.S. Constitution overturning national prohibition and to approve the sale of beer with up to 3.2 percent alcohol. The Eighteenth Amendment and the Texas prohibition amendment, both of which banned the production and sale of “intoxicating beverages,” still remained in effect at that time, but the U.S. Congress had already passed a law earlier that year allowing for light beer (3.2 percent alcohol) by redefining it as not an “intoxicating beverage.” Curiously, the Texas vote for light beer was greater than the vote against prohibition: Texans had voted 304,696 to 191,966 for repeal of federal prohibition, but 317,340 to 186,315 for light beer. While most Texans wanted beer back, a few of these voters held reservations about heavier drinks; a state constitutional amendment against “intoxicating” beverages remained until its repeal in 1935.

Dry rhetoric in the 1935 contest suggested desperation. The Southern Methodist flagship newspaper in the South, the *Southwestern Advocate*, accused liquor forces of organizing fraudulent payment of poll taxes and urged “every good citizen” to register to vote and keep liquor (aside from now-legal light beer) illegal.<sup>116</sup> An article in that paper on the eve of the election stoked fears that the end of statewide prohibition would herald

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<sup>115</sup> R. G. Mood, ed., *Minutes of the Sixty-Sixth Annual Session of the North Texas Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Gainsville, TX, 1932), 35.

<sup>116</sup> Dallas *Southwestern Advocate*, January 10, 1935, p. 2. The paper continued the *Texas Christian Advocate* and *Oklahoma Methodist* and officially represented the views of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South for the conferences of Texas, North Texas, Central Texas, West Texas, Northwest Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.

the return of the dubious tactics of the brewers before prohibition. The article cited *The Brewers and Texas Politics*, a 1916 publication of evidence used in a suit against the brewers, which included letters revealing the scandalous work of black ministers in getting out the African-American vote.<sup>117</sup> The implication was clear: good white citizens should vote down prohibition's repeal to keep those good whites in power and less desirable voters out. Though racism and classism were powerful arguments at the time, they were not convincing enough to win.

When Texans repealed statewide prohibition, in 1935, the margin of victory was narrower than in the 1933 elections: 297,597 for repeal to 250,946 against.<sup>118</sup> Part of the reason for the change was aversion to federal intervention. It was one thing for Texans to vote on prohibition for themselves, but a law against alcohol by the federal government—which demanded Texans' support to keep millions around the country from drinking—was a bridge too far for the thousands of Texans who voted to keep statewide prohibition in 1935 but voted for repeal of national prohibition in 1933. Another factor was the economy: despite promises to the contrary, the depression had not been dramatically improved by the legalization of beer in 1933, and legalizing more heavily alcoholic drinks than beer seemed unlikely to make a major impact. The leading Southern Methodist paper for Texas in February 1935 specifically cited the failure of alcohol legalization to assuage the Depression and [less plausibly] reduced milk sales since the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment as economic reasons to oppose repeal. James

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<sup>117</sup> Olin W. Nail, "Lest We Forget, Lest We Forget," Dallas *Southwestern Advocate*, August 22, 1935, p. 18, 31.

<sup>118</sup> Robert Plocheck, "Prohibition Elections in Texas," *Texas Almanac* (<http://www.texasalmanac.com/topics/elections/prohibition-elections-texas>), accessed November 28, 2012, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Endersby has convincingly demonstrated that voters' ideological values were important in 1919, when prohibition had won the popular vote, but these factors were overwhelmed in the 1930s by economic concerns. While Endersby interpreted prohibition sentiment in general as more closely related to economic status than to religious affiliation, his analysis only included one religious variable—Catholic percentage of the population—so further research on other factors is needed, particularly the percentage of Baptists and Methodists, before a determinative judgment can be reached on the subject.<sup>119</sup> For stalwart prohibitionists, however, the issue was a simple divide between order and chaos, law and lawlessness.<sup>120</sup>

One matter was certain in 1935 in Texas: the fight for statewide prohibition was over. Some counties and locales have remained dry to the present day, but dries had fought a rear-guard action in gradual retreat since 1935, when the remnants of the Texas Anti-Saloon League and like-minded groups formed the United Texas Dries. The organization in that year expressed its future hopes in the words of an old prohibition song in the state, "Texas Going Dry." The song foretold not only Texas but the whole nation and world abolishing alcohol. Yet even Frank Norris admitted that same year that prohibition would prevail not in this life, but only when Christ returned to usher in his millennial reign.<sup>121</sup> Heaven on earth would have to wait, thanks to women.

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<sup>119</sup> James W. Endersby, "Prohibition and Repeal: Voting on Statewide Liquor Referenda in Texas," *Social Science Journal* 49 (December 2012): 503–12.

<sup>120</sup> Dallas *Southwestern Advocate*, February 14, 1935, p. 4; February 21, p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> J. Frank Norris, "The NRA and the Mark of the Beast," *The Fundamentalist*, 18 October 1935, 2, 6, and 8. See also Hankins, *God's Rascal*, 71.

## *Conclusion*

Prohibition, which had begun with such utopian promise in 1919, fizzled with extremist associations and bitter rhetoric by the 1930s. Moderates drawn to the hopes of the reform movement grew disillusioned by its undelivered expectations and ever-sharper calls for strict enforcement. As prohibition seemed increasingly reactionary, its detractors appeared increasingly reasonable, particularly when those detractors were women. Ma Ferguson, a Texas Democrat, wielded her husband's unique brand of popularity to take the governor's seat twice during prohibition's reign and weaken enforcement of prohibition by generously pardoning offenders without rejecting prohibition laws outright. She also crippled the power of the Klan in Texas, marginalizing a group that continued to taint prohibitionists by association. Further angry rhetoric by personalities such as J. Frank Norris, even when successful in keeping a wet out of the Oval Office in 1928, backfired in the long run as wets used their extremist words as proof that there was nothing to be gained by association with such personalities.

Pauline Sabin, a New York Republican, suavely channeled her resentment at Herbert Hoover, particularly over his broken promises to reform prohibition, into a national movement with over a million women and made it respectable for women to openly reject prohibition for making things worse, not better. She found success by a curious combination: harnessing the strong winds of a profoundly progressive message while anchoring their reform programs to the seabed of conservative cultural norms. Sabin evoked rhetoric similar to that of the WCTU that affirmed woman's role as the moral guardian of the home even as it empowered women to cast decisive votes on the opposite side of a major culture war issue. Intemperate words and deeds by prohibition's

champions drove enough moderates and women away from prohibition to overturn it. Natural allies of the movement to do away with the excesses of alcohol turned away from it due to the excesses of virulence, hypocrisy, and moral superiority within that movement.

Prohibition in Texas had come full circle from 1885 to 1935. Opponents of prohibition ended where they started: claiming that true temperance was not a matter of involuntary abstinence, but controlled use. Preachers that grew emboldened to engage in politics temporarily retreated, at least from the state-wide level. Most of Texas remained dry due to local-option laws on the books, and these low-level skirmishes continued, though now they led on the whole to progressive triumphs for wets.<sup>122</sup> Prohibition had, however, emboldened people to inject their faith into political issues not only on one side of a given issue, but across the spectrum.

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<sup>122</sup> The percentage of dry counties in Texas continues to shrink, having fallen from 128 in 1970 to just 35 in 2008. However, a few states such as Arkansas and Kansas have seen a significant increase over the same period, showing that prohibition's universal demise is by no means inevitable. John Frendreis and Raymond Tatalovich "Secularization, Modernization, or Population Change: Explaining the Decline of Prohibition in the United States," *Social Science Quarterly* 94 (June 2013), 386.

## CHAPTER NINE

### Epilogue

Texas did not turn from completely dry to entirely wet when the voters overturned statewide prohibition in 1935. The repeal of state prohibition in 1935 did nothing to overturn the many local alcohol prohibitions and regulations, which remained in effect, while new laws arose to regulate when, which, and where alcoholic beverages could be purchased and consumed. As of 2016, hard liquor stores still cannot open on Sundays until noon, encouraging those whose flesh is weak to stop by church before drinking the rest of the weekend. While Texas as a whole never again seriously countenanced banning alcohol, most of its counties were still dry and most others were partly so. Texas's prohibitionist groups reorganized as the United Texas Drys (UTD), which produced literature to combat demon rum, such as the curiously-titled 1938 book, *Drinking and Its Moral Lessons*, which admitted dries' relative impotence on the issue: "[S]ince repeal they [the brewers] have been ignoring us and trying to create the impression in the minds of the people that prohibition is a closed issue."<sup>1</sup> Despite this fact, the UTD remained convinced that prohibition had only failed because it focused too much on enforcement and not enough on education. All they needed to win over the populace to prohibition, they believed, was facts. "If we supply that [temperance education], mark the statement,

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<sup>1</sup> Jeff Davis, comp., *Drinking and Its Moral Lessons: A Scrap Book* (Dallas: United Texas Drys, 1938), 5.

other phases of our program will take care of themselves.”<sup>2</sup> Unable or unwilling to press for direct political action as the Anti-Saloon League had done in days gone by, Texan dries comforted themselves by thinking that the dissemination of facts alone would persuade others to support prohibition. In some ways, this defense of prohibition bore surprisingly impressive fruit: as late as 1953, 142 of Texas’s counties were dry while 82 were partly dry and just 30 entirely wet, permitting the sale of distilled and fermented beverages alike.

Yet in the long run, the optimism of Texan dries proved unfounded. The UTD’s efforts were more a defensive holding action than an offensive against alcohol. The United Texas Dries had by the 1970s changed their name to Drug Prevention Resources, Inc., and shifted their primary focus from alcohol to other drugs. The number of dry counties in Texas continued to shrink, falling from 128 in 1970 to just 35 in 2008. Still, a few states, such as Arkansas and Kansas, have seen a significant increase in dry counties over the same period, showing that prohibition’s demise has been neither universal nor inevitable.<sup>3</sup>

The tenacity of conservative Protestants, particularly some Methodists and Baptists in the South, to support prohibition or various forms of alcohol regulation well into the late twentieth century has contributed to the popular misconception that

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<sup>2</sup> Davis, *Drinking and Its Moral Lessons*, 3. On the same page: “The weak point in our years of prohibition, was lack of, or our failure to keep up an aggressive educational program. As a result, we have one generation of young people of voting age, with thousands of younger men and women, boys and girls, who are absolutely ignorant of the evils of drink.”

<sup>3</sup> John Frenreis and Raymond Tatalovich “Secularization, Modernization, or Population Change: Explaining the Decline of Prohibition in the United States,” *Social Science Quarterly* 94 (June 2013), 386. For the 1953 number, see United Texas Dries, “Official Wet and Dry Map 1-1-’53,” *United Texas Dries Vertical File*, Texas Collection, Baylor University.

prohibition was a reactionary rather than progressive movement. To the contrary, prohibition was profoundly progressive in seeking solutions for real social ills through collective action directed by a powerful, activist state that affected the personal consumptive habits of millions of its citizens. Prohibition was not the brainchild of repressed puritans seeking to snuff out fun—in fact, actual Puritans had embraced alcohol consumption—but a utopian panacea for serious social, economic, and political evils wrought by the corrupt alcohol industry that worked hand in glove with political machines, especially through nefarious saloons. Its two greatest organizational backers were the WCTU, which rose to prominence under the leadership of a Christian socialist who championed woman's right to vote, and the ASL, which deployed cutting-edge printing technology and practically invented wedge-issue politics. If prohibition was anything, it was thoroughly progressive and modern, even if some of its advocates did not see themselves as such.

In Texas, prohibition started out as too modern for the tastes of its rough populace. In 1887, most voters shunned political preaching and preferred to limit ministers' influence to purely spiritual matters rather than the affairs of state. While many southern ministers never strictly held to the doctrine of the spirituality of the church, - these clergy's influence was limited in a frontier state still being civilized in the late nineteenth century. Even though dry clergy insisted that their crusade against alcohol was against the clear sins of drunkenness and corruption rather than merely political meddling, most voters sided with the Lost Cause idol Jefferson Davis rather than their souls' shepherds. In the 1887 statewide election, these voters believed clergy had stepped

beyond their God-given roles of saving souls and flogged them back with decisive defeat at the polls.

Texan ministers after 1887 did not sound the retreat, however, but refocused their energies on local option elections and on winning over more white voters at the expense of poorer and less reputable voters, particularly ethnic and racial minorities. While dry leaders in the 1887 election had with few exceptions agreed to reach out across religious and racial lines, some white dries—often without justification—blamed black voters for their loss. As native-born whites flooded into Texas in the decades after 1880, white Methodist and Baptist churches proliferated and blossomed with more members, money, and influence over Texas culture and politics. The poll tax of 1902, while not conceived by or for prohibitionists alone, allowed middle-class white prohibitionists to focus on winning over their own rather than pleading for support from African, German, or Mexican American voters or from lower-class whites. The defeat of prohibitionists in 1911 led white dries—with some justification—to blame voters of color for casting decisive votes and to push ever harder for their disfranchisement. By the decade's end, African Americans had lost the support of the crippled liquor lobby and their voting numbers sank to insignificance for decades.

Black voters were still a considerable force in the 1880s and up for grabs when it came to prohibition. While many of them defended legal alcohol and the saloon for giving a struggling man a place to find solace, friendship, and social networks, most upright clergy—like their white Methodist and Baptist coreligionists—condemned alcohol as sin and sought to make the church, not the dram shop, the social center of their communities. Many initially welcomed the invitation of white leaders to join their

campaign in 1887, but the racist rhetoric of some dries alienated the majority of black voters and convinced them that prohibition would be another form of restriction and slavery. The poll tax of 1902 and white-only primaries for the Democratic Party—which effectively decided statewide offices—further restricted the African American vote, and most of those who still exercised the franchise appreciated aid from brewers in rallying their votes for meaningful political campaigns. While African Americans never voted solely on one side or the other on prohibition, their overriding concern on both sides of the issue was to better their race and gain white allies who would treat them like equals. Sadly, brewers proved to be just as fickle friends for wet blacks as prohibitionist whites were for dry blacks; whatever their stance on prohibition, black voters were treated as second-class citizens and allies of convenience, discarded whenever not needed. The political division of Anglo Texans in 1928 was mixed news for African Americans. While they no longer played a significant role in statewide politics like they had during the early 1910s, African American Texans could at least celebrate the first-ever Republican presidential candidate carrying the state in 1928. Few African American voters could now afford their poll taxes, yet most continued to vote Republican until 1934, and many doubtless took pride in siding with the winning side in a presidential contest for the first time in the state's history. Few could predict that the state would become a swing state and then solidly Republican by the end of the century, though black voters ended the century in a similar political situation, marginalized by a white-dominated power structure.

While African Americans were losing their suffrage, Mexican and German Americans became targets for Anglo prohibitionists seeking to link their reform to white

Americanism against “foreign” influences, particularly in the shadow of wars and rumors of wars at home and abroad. The Mexican Revolution in general and Bandit War in particular gave a fresh militancy to prohibitionists already upset that Mexican Americans voted almost to a man against prohibition due to the influence of their political bosses and their cultural support for alcohol consumption. The repercussions of the conflicts between Anglos and Mexicans on the Texas border, which left hundreds if not thousands dead over several years, marginalized Mexican influence on Texas politics for decades. A similar situation occurred for German Americans, who dominated brewing in Texas and throughout the nation, when most Americans went to war with all things German after the United States entered World War I in April 1917. Mounting investigations of brewers and their connections with the hated Hun provided the push that prohibitionists in Texas needed to ban liquor across the state by legislative action in 1918 and finally by amending the state constitution in 1919. Prohibition’s triumph showed that Anglo Protestant ministers were leaders of cultural life in Texas.

Protestants were not all of one mind on prohibition, however. Traditionalist and high-church Protestants, particularly Episcopalians but also some Lutherans and Presbyterians, treasured traditional Christian theology and practice too much to dispense with a focus on moderate drinking or voluntary abstinence rather than prohibition. In this respect they aligned with most Catholics, who embraced drinking not only for theological reasons but also because of cultural factors, especially since most of their adherents were from ethnic minorities that embraced alcohol use, whether Mexican, German, Italian, Polish, or Czech. A more high-church approach to communion also emphasized the tradition of wine in communion, which in turn informed attitudes to alcohol more

generally, even when church ministers—particularly Lutherans and Catholics—who opposed prohibition generally did so quietly and personally rather than before the whole congregation. Even when not addressing the issues directly, theology and culture deeply influenced attitudes towards alcohol which in turn shaped attitudes to prohibition.

Opponents of prohibition wielded many religious arguments against prohibition, particularly on the topic of liberty. Prohibition, they argued, sought to remove temptations to sin and thus undermined the ability of people to develop the necessary moral strength to become fully developed moral Christians or even human beings. Wets also argued that prohibition violated the principle of self-governance, which was not only very American but also had roots in Christian teaching about the proper limits of government and the need for the community of faith and God directly to guide one's moral development. These issues were so great that even several Episcopal bishops, usually politically quietistic, spoke out publicly against prohibition in the height of statewide controversy on the issue in 1911.

Various denominations played an increased role in politics since prohibition, which made political preaching increasingly commonplace and socially acceptable, though their approaches have differed. Among evangelicals, the division between Methodists and Baptists is illustrative. Southern and northern Methodists eventually joined in 1939 (later forming the United Methodist Church in 1968), and their post-merger denomination continued to advocate for reforms throughout the twentieth century as the largest member of the progressive National Council of Churches. While Methodists' relative influence in the South stabilized or declined following the scarcity of the Great Depression, the more independent approach to church leadership for the

Southern Baptist Convention gained undisputed numerical and cultural dominance in Texas by the 1950s and helped it become the largest Protestant denomination in the nation. Its bottom-up governance also helped it turn from moderate to conservative on a national scale between 1979 and 1990. Though theological moderates rather than conservatives won control of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in the 1990s, a more conservative style of political preaching still emanated from Texas since the Great Depression and influenced the formation of the modern Christian right.

The Catholic hierarchy maintained its relative aloofness on most political issues, yet a few partisans showed willingness to work alongside similarly aligned Protestants to achieve their goals: some sought conservative evangelical partners against abortion, gay rights, and eroding family values while others rallied with liberals to seek social justice for the poor and exploited at home and abroad. Episcopalians, once opposed to prohibition and the guardians of traditional Protestantism, had by the 1970s become famous for their progressive theological leadership and lack of definite dogma. Perhaps the only constant for these more formal denominations was their continued fondness for wine both in and beyond the Eucharist.

Some racial divisions have persisted while others faded away. Race continued to separate white-dominated denominations from black-led Methodist and Baptist fellowships, though Baptists of all races have joined together within the theologically moderate Baptist General Convention of Texas. Mexican Americans struggled to regain the political and cultural clout they had lost in the throes of conflicts in the late 1910s. After Jose Canales retired from the state legislature, no other Tejano would serve in that body until the 1950s, over thirty years later. Yet by the late twentieth century Mexican

Americans had gained considerable social, economic, and political influence in the state, and by 2014 the state had elected its first Latino U.S. Senator, Ted Cruz, ironically from the tiny Cuban minority rather than the far larger Mexican population in the state. European immigrants, however, by the mid-twentieth century had won increasing acceptance in a Texan culture that embraced light-skinned people from various backgrounds as equally white.

Women's politics has retained some of the progressive edge it had when women gained suffrage in Texas and across the nation in 1920, yet the connection of progressivism to prohibition has been conveniently forgotten. The turn of prohibition from a revolutionary vision of social change to a messy enforcement of laws dampened enthusiasm for the project, even among women, whose suffrage was granted in part to ensure that prohibition could never be overturned. The same tactics of the WCTU were used against them by the WONPR with updated technology and a remarkably similar message, and the first elected woman governor in the United States, Miriam A. Ferguson of Texas, took an ambivalent stance towards prohibition. The story of millions of women turning against prohibition demonstrated that women's votes, like the votes of any other demographic, could never be taken for granted, but changed over time according to their own priorities and needs.

Religious arguments over prohibition also exposed the divide between pulpit and pew that merits further attention from historians, especially on major cultural divides such as prohibition. Church history with a focus on sermons, denominational minutes, and other official denominational sources captures some voices on major social issues such as prohibition, yet leaves out the eloquent voices of figures that were not

professional clergy but wielded theological arguments and Bible verses with equal if not greater alacrity. The religious rhetoric of Governor Oscar Branch Colquitt, a Methodist, in his anti-prohibition speeches carried at least as much weight among ordinary laypeople as did the pronouncements of local bishops, who were probably less recognizable even to members of their own denomination than the sitting governor. Other extra-denominational sources such as secular newspapers with religious arguments, isolated pamphlets like Bob Shuler's 1911 diatribe against "Local Booze Government," and popular books are not only fair game for historians examining religion and prohibition, but essential sources for uncovering the views of everyday people who may have been regular church attenders but dissented from their church's official line on alcohol. The divide between most clergy and most lay voters on the prohibition issue appears throughout the state, but is particularly evident in the black church. This divide deserves further scrutiny in future scholarly investigations of prohibition through greater attention to religious sources that have been under-utilized in traditional church history.

The dogmatic insistence of self-professed Biblicist evangelicals to oppose vehemently a practice that the Bible did not explicitly condemn—such as drinking alcohol—continued after prohibition into the twenty-first century with issues such as abortion and the use of various other drugs. On the issue of same-sex marriage, as with prohibition, many Christians on the both sides of the debate have wielded historical and philological arguments in their efforts to inveigh Scripture on their side. Religion now as then plays on both sides of the culture wars.

Perhaps the greatest takeaway from this project has been its complexity and irony. Within each group where one would expect a voting bloc, there were always dissenters.

An Episcopal priest publicly reprimanded his bishop for criticizing statewide prohibition. Roman Catholics widely opposed prohibition, yet some priests and bishops spoke at the ASL's national convention. Methodists led the charge for prohibition, yet one of their laymen openly deployed theological arguments against it while serving as governor of the state. The African American pastor who masterminded the black get-out-the-vote effort for dries in the 1887 statewide election reversed course and in 1911 claimed to save the state from prohibitionists. Black voters tried to serve their race by making their votes indispensable to their white allies but divided their support between wets and dries. Brewers' corruption and myopic self-interest rather than enlightened racial attitudes led them to assist thousands of black voters to decide major prohibition elections by ignoring widely accepted social sanctions against interracial political cooperation. Women provided the moral core of the temperance movement and also tipped the moral center of the nation against prohibition. Even Baptists had a remarkable range of views on communion wine and prohibition, and ministers frequently struggled to enforce alcohol abstinence on their own members, much less the world. Religious organizations for prohibition such as the WCTU and ASL have given the impression that the church only served on one side of the prohibition battle; a closer examination of the evidence reveals that religious ideas, leaders, and practices served on both sides. While for many people of faith alcohol meant only sin and death, for others it was health and life.

The story of prohibition and anti-Catholicism in Texan politics continued well beyond the 1930s with still more twists and turns. In 1960, Texans repented of their anti-Catholic streak in presidential politics, voting against the reliably Protestant Republican in favor of a Catholic Democrat (albeit with a Texan running mate and by a margin of

two percentage points).<sup>4</sup> Then in the 1980s a “neoprohibition movement” convinced Texas – and every other state – to raise the legal drinking age to 21 when the U.S. Congress in 1984 tied the higher age limit to highway funding, and subsequent laws have required labels on alcohol bottles warning potential buyers of the dangers of drink.<sup>5</sup> Even for supposedly long-dead dinosaurs like prohibition, the story is never really over: a seemingly victorious or apparently vanquished movement can always evolve, make new allies or enemies, adapt to changing circumstances, and come back with a bang or fade out with a whimper.

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<sup>4</sup> Texas Secretary of State, *Elections and Voter Information*, “Presidential Election Results” (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/historical/presidential.shtml>), accessed December 02, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> K. Austin Kerr, "PROHIBITION," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vap01>), accessed December 02, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

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