

ANTHROPOLOGY

Texans Are Different

"Texans" are found to be a special people, not confined to limits of the Lone Star state, but spread throughout southern United States.

► THE TEXANS are right. They are a special people. Confirmation of what any Texan could tell you, and often does, comes from Dr. Evon Z. Vogt, anthropologist of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

The "Texans" are what Dr. Vogt calls a "subcultural continuum," and he puts the "Texans" in quotes because they are not really confined to Texas. They are spread over the country from the southern Appalachians to California, south to the Mexican border and north to southern Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri.

The Mormons are another subcultural continuum, which Dr. Vogt believes carry "with them a variant form of American patterns and values which make them more than merely a church group."

Both the "Texans" and Mormons were studied as subcultures of the American society by Dr. Vogt and his associates during the last six years.

The Harvard anthropologist reports results of the study by 30 field researchers, part of the Comparative Study Values in Five Cultures Project of the Laboratory of Social Relations at Harvard, in the *American Anthropologist* (Dec., 1955).

What the intensive study shows is that the "Texans" are very different from the Mormons, forming in many ways a complete contrast. But, they are alike in a few ways, too.

In broad terms, this is what Dr. Vogt and his associates found concerning the cultural patterns of the two American groups. Both Mormons and "Texans" speak English, but have little command over other languages. The "Texans" and rural Mormons both like "hillbilly" music. They also both share a belief in many agricultural folk rituals such as "water witching," and "planting by the moon."

The differences are striking, Dr. Vogt suggests. The Mormon places emphasis on cooperation and contributions to community activities, while the "Texan" is seen as a competitive individualist and is characterized by a great deal of "fussin'" and "feudin'."

A second important difference, Dr. Vogt points out, is that the Mormon is a great one for steady work habits. When he has no work to do for himself, it was found, there is always work for the church.

The "Texan," on the other hand, believes in working hard when there is important farm work to be done, then "loafs hard" the rest of the time.

Essential characteristics of the "Texans," Dr. Vogt explains, appear to have been created by a westward migration of predominantly old American stock from the

southern Appalachian country of Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia, across the Ozarks and on to Texas and Oklahoma.

"The orientations of these two subcultures to other groups in the South and West are quite different," Dr. Vogt reports.

"Neither Texans nor Mormons as a rule care to have much to do with Negroes, the Texans because of their familiar Southern attitudes toward the Negro, the Mormons for their theological reasons . . ."

The "Texan" attitude toward Spanish-Americans, Mexicans and Indians with whom he comes into contact in the Southwest is usually strongly colored by the definition of them as "dark-skinned" peoples.

Particularly with the Mexicans, "Texans" are likely to take, Dr. Vogt states, the "Remember the Alamo" type of attitude.

The Mormons have a special attitude toward dark-skinned peoples, the study shows. They call American Indians "Lamanites." The Lamanites are defined by the Book of Mormon as descendants of the ancient Hebrews. The darkening of their skin is believed due to desertion of their principles and a return to God will turn it white again. Hence, the Mormons make a special effort to convert the Lamanites.

Negroes, on the other hand, are believed to be descendants of Cain. Thus the dark color of their skin is considered a "curse."

The descendants of Cain cannot be saved, according to the Mormons, until after all the descendants of Abel are saved, and so at present it is useless to try to convert Negroes.

To the Mormons, all Mexicans, Spanish-Americans and Indians are Lamanites.

Science News Letter, January 21, 1956

NUTRITION

Urge Eliminating All Deficiency Diseases

► DR. ROBERT R. WILLIAMS of the Research Corporation, New York, who synthesized vitamin B-1, challenged scientists at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Atlanta to wipe out all the world's major deficiency diseases, except Kwashiorkor due to amino acid lack. It could be done by fortifying cereals and table fats at an outlay for vitamins of 25 cents per person per year, he said. Dr. Williams is pushing the enrichment of rice in the Philippines to eradicate beriberi and the enrichment of corn meal in southern U.S.A. and Yugoslavia to eradicate pellagra.

Science News Letter, January 21, 1956

PSYCHOLOGY

Anti-Fluoridation Groups Opposed Chlorination

► THE SAME GROUPS that now oppose fluoridation of water supplies were a few years ago fighting by vicious propaganda the chlorination of drinking water that has now virtually banished typhoid, Robert S. Ingols of the Georgia Institute of Technology told the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Atlanta.

Although almost everyone proposing fluoridation to prevent dental decay in children's teeth is vilified by being called a Communist here in America, it is the Communists in Europe who bitterly oppose fluoridation as a capitalist device.

Do not worry about the ultimate exhaustion of raw materials like coal, oil and gas, since every chemical known to man and every one likely to be invented, could if necessary be produced without them, George L. Parkhurst of the Standard Oil Company of California told the scientists.

Length of day regulates the germination of seeds as well as the flowering of plants, Dr. Olli Vaartaja, forest biologist of the Canadian Department of Agriculture, Saskatoon, reported. Birch seed in particular at relatively low temperatures, from 42 to 68 degrees Fahrenheit, will not germinate unless exposed to long daily light. This prevents freshly fallen birch seed from germinating until spring when the nights become short, whereas otherwise the tiny seedlings would perish when winter comes.

Science News Letter, January 21, 1956

ANIMAL NUTRITION

Change Steers Into Fat-Eaters

► GRASS-EATING Hereford steers have been made into fat-eaters by scientists of the Stanford Research Institute, Menlo Park, Calif.

The experimental herd had 2.25% animal tallow added to their regular grain ration, resulting in increased weight gain, improved feed efficiency and savings in cost of producing the gain, they said.

Melted animal fats were sprinkled over the cattle's grain ration in the feed trough during the 91-day experiment, then mixed thoroughly with a multi-pronged fork.

Stanford Research Institute performed the study for some West Coast meat packing and fat-rendering companies alarmed at the mounting surplus of fats and tallows. In 1953, the surplus amounted to more than 1,000,000,000 pounds.

The oversupply is due largely to increased use of detergents, which has cut sharply into the demand for fats and tallows in soap-making.

According to the Institute, synthetic detergents took 58% of soap sales in 1954, and it is predicted this figure will climb to 75% by 1962.

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