

## PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

### Jovita Idár

teacher, journalist

*“Women are no longer servants but rather the equals of men, companions to them.”*

Page | 1



COURTESY OF ROBERT ALEXANDER/GETTY IMAGES

#### Background Information

Born: September 7, 1885

Died: June 15, 1946

Idar was born in Laredo, Texas. She had seven siblings and her family was a part of the “gente decente”, which meant that they had access to the best education and other opportunities. She received her teaching certificate from the Holding Institute in Laredo. She taught in the segregated area of Los Ojuelos. She quickly realized that her teaching efforts were not making a great impact since these segregated schools did not have access to the best resources.

#### Idár’s Resistance

Idar retired from teaching to become a journalist because she felt that this career would allow her to make a difference. She returned home to Laredo to work with two of her brothers for their father’s newspaper, La Crónica. The newspaper advocated for civil rights and social justice for Mexicans and the Tejano people.<sup>1</sup> Idar wrote articles that would expose the poor living conditions of Mexican American workers. In 1911, Idar became the first President of the League of Mexican Women. This organization was founded with the purpose of offering free education to Mexican children. In 1914, she began to write for El Progreso. She published an article that denounced Woodrow Wilson’s command to dispatch troops to the Mexico-United States border. The article angered the Texas Rangers and they completely destroyed the office in efforts to shut down the newspaper. After this incident, she returned to La Crónica.

#### Achievements

Idar’s journey as a public servant as a teacher and later as a journalist gave her a unique perspective in exposing the injustices against Mexican and Tejano people. She worked tirelessly in advocating for Latin communities, dedicating her life to creating educational and career opportunities for its members. Idar was the founder and first president of La Liga Feminil Mexicaista. Along with her family, she organized the First Mexican Congress.

<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia contributors. (2020, December 25). Jovita Idar. Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jovita\\_Idar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jovita_Idar)

## Essential Questions

1. After critiquing President Woodrow Wilson, Idar's office was destroyed.
  - a. How can journalists continue their work to express themselves and simultaneously ensure that their work will not cause them harm?
  - b. Should journalists use an alias when publishing their works?
  
2. Why did Idar believe that her role as a teacher was not as impactful as it could have been?
  - a. What caused her to commit to journalism as a method of exacting larger change?
  
3. ***"Women are no longer servants but rather the equals of men, companions to them."***
  - a. Given what you know about Idar, how does this quote represent her goals and views?
  - b. Do you think this statement holds true today?