



Student Name:  
Class Period:  
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## Meet the Originals

*Texas Originals* is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Mody Coggin Boatright. Then, answer questions about it.

### Mody Coggin Boatright 1896–1970

Folklorist and oral history pioneer Mody Boatright was no stranger to the tall tale. Raised in a West Texas ranching family in the early twentieth century, he was descended from pioneers, cattlemen, and merchants. He grew up immersed in stories of the Texas frontier.

Boatright served in World War I and earned his bachelor's degree from what is now West Texas A&M University. In 1922, he arrived at The University of Texas, where he ultimately earned his PhD. With the exception of one year in El Paso, Boatright taught in Austin until his retirement in 1968.

In 1934, Boatright published his first book, *Tall Tales from Texas Cow Camps*, which gathered stories from his childhood and from his many students who were also raised on ranches. Boatright also recorded the folklore of the Texas oilfields, presenting the hardworking drillers and roughnecks as the mythical figures of a new age in American industry.

Unlike other folklorists, who added literary flourishes to the tales they published, Boatright presented his stories in the unadorned voices of their original tellers.

Boatright was a fellow of the Texas Folklore Society and edited its annual publications. Following his death in 1970, his friend and colleague Américo Paredes described Boatright as “the most distinguished professional folklorist that Texas has produced.”

**Check for Understanding:** Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Mody Coggin Boatright. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. How did Mody Coggin Boatright's family life influence his interest in writing stories about ranch life and cowboys?
2. How did Boatright's stories differ from those told by other folklorists?

**Going Further:** Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Making Inferences.** How do you think stories like the kind that Boatright wrote contributed to the mythology of Texas?