



Student Name:
Class Period:
Date:

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 Carlos E. Castañeda. Then, answer questions about it.

Carlos E. Castañeda 1896–1958

Historian Carlos Castañeda changed how we think of the Southwest. He told the story of the Texas–Mexico borderlands as one of shared culture and heritage, rather than conflict and division.

Raised in Brownsville, Castañeda earned his doctorate from The University of Texas at Austin in 1932. He served there as a professor and librarian for the rest of his life.

In his 1928 book *The Mexican Side of the Texan Revolution*, Castañeda cast new light on the events of the 1830s. He rejected the idea that the revolt simply pitted Anglo Americans against Mexicans. Rather, he presented the revolution as a struggle in which a diverse group of rebels, Mexicans and Anglos, fought against dictatorship.

Castañeda's masterpiece was the seven-volume *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas*, written under the auspices of the Texas Knights of Columbus. It documented the Hispanic history of Texas at a time when many marginalized the state's Mexican American population.

Castañeda did not just write about the past. He oversaw the university's extensive Latin American archives and led efforts to collect and preserve documents pertaining to early Texas history.

Castañeda's quest for cross-cultural understanding made him an activist. He worked for reforms in South Texas schools, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt named him the Southwest chair of the Fair Employment Practices Commission during World War II.

Castañeda died in 1958, and, fittingly, The University of Texas's main library now carries his name.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Carlos E. Castañeda. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. How did Carlos E. Castañeda change the way historians view the history of the borderlands?
2. How did Castañeda's scholarship change the way people viewed the Texas Revolution?

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.** Why is writing a more inclusive history of Texas important?