



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 Juanita Jewel Shanks Craft. Then, answer questions about it.

Juanita Jewel Shanks Craft 1902–1985

In 1918, sixteen-year-old Juanita Craft accompanied her critically ill mother to a tuberculosis treatment facility in San Angelo. They arrived at the hospital after a long journey, only to be turned away because of their race. Craft's mother died two months later. That tragedy spurred Craft—whose grandparents had been enslaved—to a lifelong fight against racial discrimination.

As a young woman, Craft studied at Prairie View A&M. She later settled in Dallas, finding work as a bell maid at the posh Adolphus Hotel.

In the 1930s, she joined the Dallas chapter of the NAACP and ultimately traversed the state, helping to organize and revive local chapters. One observer, inspired by Craft's energy and eloquence, reported that her visits were like "a blood transfusion to a very weak patient."

Craft also became a mentor to Dallas's Black youth. She led them in anti-segregation protests at restaurants, stores, and the State Fair, always preaching the importance of communication and respect for others. "Build a bridge," she advised. "Then carry them over to your side."

Craft herself built many bridges in Dallas, often at potluck dinners in her backyard. In her seventies, she served on the city council. Among her many accolades, she received the Linz Award, Dallas's highest honor for efforts benefiting the city. Craft remained a champion for civil rights until her death in 1985.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Juanita Jewel Shanks Craft. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. What tragic event inspired Juanita Jewel Shanks Craft to fight against racial discrimination?
2. What civil rights organization did Craft join and help to revive?

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. **Taking a Position.** Craft put a great deal of effort into building relationships with people to work with them to support her cause. Do you agree that it is important to build relationships with people you are hoping to influence? Why or why not?