



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 Eugene C. Barker. Then, answer questions about it.

Eugene C. Barker 1874–1956

Eugene C. Barker, in the words of his biographer, “did more than any other historian to show the influence that Texas exerted in shaping the destiny of the United States.”

Born in East Texas in 1874, Barker first attended The University of Texas at Austin in 1895. His life intertwined with that of the young school, helping to make it the “university of the first class” called for in the state constitution.

Between 1915 and 1917, Barker was a leading voice in the university’s struggles with Governor Jim Ferguson over academic freedom. Barker had a reputation for being stern, fair, and honest, qualities that made him a legendary teacher and colleague.

As a scholar, Barker furthered the study of Texas and expanded the Texas State Historical Association. In 1925, he published the first biography of Stephen F. Austin. Through this and other works, Barker made narratives of the borderlands central to American history.

Barker’s influence was large. His students Walter Prescott Webb and Carlos Castañeda continued to make Austin a capital for scholarship on the American Southwest. In 1950, UT dedicated the Eugene C. Barker Texas History Center, the first time the university named a campus facility for a living faculty member. Barker retired shortly thereafter and died in 1956.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Eugene C. Barker. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. According to his biographer, how would Eugene C. Barker describe the relationship between Texas and the United States?
2. What concept about American history did Barker highlight in his works?

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.** Why is it important to consider multiple perspectives when studying history?