



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 Sarah T. Hughes. Then, answer questions about it.

Sarah T. Hughes 1896–1985

When Sarah T. Hughes arrived in Dallas as a young lawyer, in 1922, no firm would hire a woman. Nevertheless, as Hughes put it, she had “an ambition to do something for the state.”

Although she is best known for administering the oath of office to Lyndon B. Johnson aboard Air Force One after John F. Kennedy’s assassination, Hughes considered her 1930 election to the Texas Legislature to be her greatest accomplishment.

After serving three terms, Governor James Allred appointed her to the bench of Dallas’s Fourteenth District Court, in 1935, making her the state’s first female district judge. Although opponents proclaimed that she should be “home washing dishes,” she was elected to the same post the following year.

Dismayed that women could not serve as jurors in the very courtroom over which she presided, Hughes played a key role in the passage of a 1954 amendment to the Texas constitution allowing women to serve on juries.

Hughes served six terms on the state bench and earned wide respect as a tough and exacting jurist. President John F. Kennedy appointed her as the first female federal district judge in Texas, in 1961.

Over the course of a fifty-five-year career, Hughes championed equal rights and encouraged women to get involved in politics, illustrating her lifelong belief that “women can indeed be a force in history.”

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Sarah T. Hughes. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. According to the episode, what is Sarah T. Hughes best known for?
2. Why did Hughes support amending the state constitution in 1954?

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 did some people oppose Hughes working as a judge?