

Oprah Winfrey

Now known as the first African American Woman to become a billionaire, life for Oprah Winfrey began tumultuously. Her parents separated, and she was abused and molested from the age of 6 until she was 13, when she ran away to live with her father. She got her start in broadcasting at the age of 17, when she was hired by WVOL radio. She double majored in Speech Communication and Performing Arts at Tennessee State University. Oprah was first a co-host on *People are Talking* in 1978, then moved to Chicago in 1984. There, she took the local talk show she hosted to the number one spot on local TV. The show was renamed after her and *The Oprah Winfrey Show* was born. Aside from her talk shows, Oprah has starred in such movies as *The Color Purple* and *Native Son*. She also owns a top selling magazine and is the owner of her own production company, called HARPO Productions, making her the first woman in history to both own and host her own talk show. Oprah received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and, because of her widespread fame and generous philanthropy, she was named one of the 100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century by *Time Magazine*.