

Black Legacy Our Past, Present and Future.



The First Oprah?!?

PAST

Madame Walker

Born: April 8, 1867

Contribution: Business



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Madame Walker was born on a Louisiana cotton plantation in 1867, just two years after the abolition of slavery. As a child, she worked alongside her sharecropper parents; she was orphaned when she was seven. Determined to provide an easier life for her own daughter, she started doing laundry, yet always searched for a better way to make a living. She decided to sell a line of beauty products that she'd invented specifically for Black women. Her line sold so well that she began hiring other women to promote it. By 1916, Walker employed 20,000 saleswomen throughout the country. Women who had toiled for pennies at arduous jobs were earning more money than ever before. "You have opened up a trade for hundreds of colored women to make an honest and profitable living," a Walker College graduate wrote Mme. Walker. "They make as much in one week as a month's salary would bring from any other position they could secure." Madame Walker built a factory, hair and manicure salon and several training schools to teach women new ways to style Black hair, how to sell her products and how to open their own salons. **As a result of her efforts, Madame C. J. Walker became America's first self-made woman millionaire of any nationality! This during a time when Blacks couldn't even vote and were openly oppressed!**



The 2nd Madame Walker?!?

PRESENT

Oprah Winfrey

Born: January 29, 1954

Contribution: Business



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Oprah Gail Winfrey is the multiple Emmy-winning host of the highest rated talk show in television history, an influential book critic, an Oscar nominated actress, and a best-selling magazine publisher. Oprah Winfrey launched the Oprah Winfrey Show in 1986 as a nationally syndicated program. The show grossed \$125 million by the end of its first year, of which Winfrey received \$30 million. She soon gained ownership of the program from ABC, drawing it under the control of her new production company, Harpo Productions and making even more money from syndication. **According to Forbes magazine, Oprah was the richest African American of the 20th century and the world's only Black billionaire for three years running.** In 2005, Business Week named her the greatest Black philanthropist in American history. In 1994, President Clinton signed a bill into law that Winfrey had proposed to Congress, creating a nationwide database of convicted child abusers. Because of her accomplishments, Oprah has become one of the most respected and admired public figures today.

What Will You Contribute To The Legacy?