



A TIMELINE OF THE WOMEN
WHO CHANGED AMERICA



July 2022 Her Story ENewsletter Authors' Choice

Smithsonian Magazine recently featured two amazing women from our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*: Shirley Temple Black and Octavia Butler. We thought we would share some of their accomplishments as well.



Child actress and star **Shirley Temple Black** helped lift America's spirits during the Great Depression. Beginning her film career when she was three years old, Shirley Temple danced and sang her way through many box office hits starting in 1931; she was the top box office draw from 1934 to 1938. She received a special Juvenile Award Oscar in 1935 for her work in the movies during 1934. She retired from her acting career in 1950 at age 22.

In 1969, she began her career as a diplomat when President Nixon appointed her as U.S. delegate to the United Nations. In the years that followed, her diplomatic roles included the first woman U.S. ambassador to Ghana, the first woman chief of protocol at the State Department, and the first woman U.S. ambassador to what was then called Czechoslovakia. One of her biggest responsibilities was as the U.S. delegate to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Serving as leader of the U.S. delegation to the 1972 UN Conference on the Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, she helped champion a petition calling for radical change in the number of women involved in environmental policy-making decisions. At that conference, only 11 delegations from 113 nations included at least one woman. Her other awards, in addition to her Oscar, include the Kennedy Center Honors.



Science fiction writer **Octavia Butler** began writing as a teenager. By age 12, she had already drafted what would become the foundation for her *Patternist* novels that were published in the 1970s and 1980s. Growing up in a racially integrated community in California, she was taken aback when her aunt told her (when she was 13) that Negroes couldn't be writers. She persisted and had her high school teacher submit one of her stories for publication in a science fiction magazine. She won a college-wide short-story contest during her first year at

Pasadena City College and graduated in 1968 with an associate of arts in history. She later attended UCLA and then took classes through the UCLA extension.

Working temporary jobs so that she could find time to write, Butler wrote five novels in the *Patternist* series from 1976 to 1984 and a novel in 1976. In 1984, Butler won the Hugo award for short stories for *Speech Sounds*. In 1985, she won multiple awards for her novelette, *Bloodchild*. In 1995, she was the first science fiction writer to receive a MacArthur Fellowship. In 1999, she won the Science Fiction Writers of America Nebula Award for her novel *Parable of the Talents*. Butler has been inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

Shirley Temple Black and Octavia Butler are among the more than 850 women profiled in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*. Women's accomplishments continue to inspire and encourage us all. Continue to help us tell women's stories!

Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen

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