



A TIMELINE OF THE WOMEN
WHO CHANGED AMERICA



February 2023 Her Story ENewsletter In Memoriam

In this month's ENewsletter we profile two women featured in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America* who died in 2022: Angela Lansbury and Barbara Walters.



Angela Lansbury, who was born and spent her early years in England, was drawn to acting and the world of make-believe after her father died, when she was nine years old. She and her family came to the U.S. in 1940 to escape the London Blitz. She made her screen debut in 1944 in the movie *Gaslight*, for which she was nominated for a Best Supporting Actress Academy Award. She was 18. A second nomination occurred for her work in the 1945 movie *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. What has been described as her best work occurred in the 1962 movie *The Manchurian Candidate*, for which she earned her third Best Supporting Actress nomination. Her film, stage and television career spanned eight decades.

Saying she was an actress who could sing, Lansbury won praise for the title role of *Mame* on Broadway in 1966, for which she won her first Tony Award. Her sixth Tony came for *Blithe Spirit* in 2009, more than forty years later. In 1984, she began starring in the television show *Murder, She Wrote* which was a hit and ran for twelve seasons. In what was then unheard of, she played a leading lady who was in her sixties. She then won new fans with her performance as the voice of Mrs. Potts, the teapot in the 1991 film *Beauty and the Beast*. Lansbury was nominated for many Primetime Emmy Awards and a Grammy Award. In 2014, Lansbury was presented with an Honorary Academy Award recognizing her career longevity and substance: "To Angela Lansbury, an entertainment icon who has created some of cinema's most memorable characters, inspiring generations of actors."



Pioneering journalist **Barbara Walters** was signed in 1976 as the first woman co-anchor of a major network's evening news. Her \$1 million annual salary was unprecedented. In 1997, she originated *The View*, a weekday show with a female panel discussing wide-ranging topics. She considered it "the dessert" of her career. Walters was a trailblazer in many ways. She began in 1961 as a writer for the *Today* show and then was selected to fill the "woman's slot" among the show's eight writers. Occasionally she would be featured in on-air stories, which eventually led to her exclusive interviews with celebrities including rulers and royalty around the world, as well as people in the entertainment industry.

From co-host of *Today* at NBC, Walters was hired away by ABC, for a five-year \$5 million contract. Satirized by Gilda Radner on *Saturday Night Live*, Walters later was successful with her interviews and on ABC's newsmagazine *20/20*.

Walters said, "A woman can do anything. She can be traditionally feminine and that's all right; she can work, she can stay at home, she can be aggressive, she can be passive; she can be any way she wants with a man. But whenever there are the kinds of choices there are today, unless you have some solid base, life can be frightening."

Angela Lansbury and Barbara Walters 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. Continue to help us tell women's stories!

Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen

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