



# Icons of Talk: The Media Mouths That Changed America (Greenwood Icons)

*Donna L. Halper*

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Americans love talk shows. In a typical week, more than 13 million Americans listen to Rush Limbaugh, whose syndicated radio show is carried by about 600 stations. On television, Oprah Winfrey's syndicated talk show is seen by an estimated 30 million viewers each week. Talk show hosts like Winfrey and Limbaugh have become iconic figures, frequently quoted and capable of inspiring intense opinions. What they say on the air is discussed around the water cooler at work, or commented about on blogs and fan web sites. Talk show hosts have helped to make or break political candidates, and their larger-than-life personalities have earned them millions of fans (as well as more than a few enemies). *Icons of Talk* highlights the most groundbreaking exemplars of the talk show genre, a genre that has had a profound influence on American life for over 70 years.

Among the featured:

- Joe Pyne
- Jerry Williams
- Herb Jepko
- Randi Rhodes
- Rush Limbaugh
- Larry King
- Dr. Laura Schlesinger
- Steve Allen
- Jerry Springer
- Howard Stern.
- Oprah Winfrey
- Don Francisco
- Cristina Saralegui
- Tavis Smiley
- James Dobson

- Don Imus

Going behind the scenes, this volume showcases the techniques hosts used to motivate (and sometimes aggravate) audiences, and examines the talk show in all of its various formats, including sports-talk, religious-talk, political-talk, and celebrity-talk. Each entry places the talk format and its hosts into historical context, addressing such questions as: What was going on in society when these talkers were on the air? How did each of them affect or change society? What were the issues they liked to talk about and what reaction did they get from listeners and from critics? How were talk hosts able to persuade people to vote for particular candidates or support certain policies? Which hosts were considered controversial and why? Complete with photographs, a timeline, and a resource guide of sources and organizations, this volume is ideal for students of journalism and media studies.

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