

Moments in Time

by Frank C. Clifford

OPRAH WINFREY'S FIRST DAY HOSTING A.M. CHICAGO:
JANUARY 2, 1984; 9:00 A.M. CST; CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

THE FIRST FILMING OF THE NEWLY NAMED THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW:
SEPTEMBER 8, 1986; 8:00 A.M. CDT; CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



It's hard not to write about Oprah Winfrey without using superlatives. She's been labelled the most powerful woman in America, the greatest female success story of the modern era, and the most influential TV face of all time. To millions, she has been a benevolent, educational force like no other.

Similar to her mentor Maya Angelou, Oprah Winfrey was born in an apartheid state at the heart of racist America; shuffled between parents, she grew up in a world of poverty, abuse, and unwanted "sexual seduction" (a term she uses herself).

Well-read from an early age, Oprah found her voice in local media, working in Nashville on radio and later as a news anchor. She moved to Baltimore and, on August 14, 1978, became co-host of *People Are Talking*. The talk show format allowed Oprah to feel at home and to share her great talent: *being herself naturally*.

On September 4, 1983, just before her Saturn return, Oprah moved to Chicago and prepared to join the local morning show *A.M. Chicago* as host. According to news reports, her first show began at 9:00 a.m. on January 2, 1984. (See **Chart 1**, following page.) The chart's focus is on Sagittarius (Oprah's Moon sign), Capricorn (her Sun squares Saturn), and Aquarius (her Sun sign). Venus is on the show's Midheaven (MC) in Sagittarius, and the show's Ascendant conjoins Winfrey's own natal Sun-Venus conjunction in "everywoman" Aquarius. Oprah's disarming curiosity and gregarious disposition would prove immensely popular, and within a month the show went from last to first place in the ratings.

She became so popular, in fact, that the show was re-launched and syndicated nationally as *The Oprah Winfrey Show* on September 8, 1986 (**Chart 2**). According to her diary, filming began at 8:00 a.m. in Chicago at an exact t-square of Mercury opposite Jupiter, both square Uranus. Mass-impact Pluto was straddled by Venus and the Moon (on her natal Saturn) in Scorpio and trine the MC. Fittingly for Pluto/Scorpio, Oprah owned the show, its production company, and (from 1990) its studio, giving the media titan close to total control. It was now her responsibility; the buck stopped with Oprah. With Venus and the Moon conjunct Pluto in the show launch's chart, Oprah's huge influence was primarily over the women of America.

Always refreshingly honest and searingly self-revelatory, Oprah shared with her audience the most private aspects of her formative years.

It was the beginning of a 25-year, 4,561-episode phenomenon that would change the world of talk TV, be broadcast in 145 countries, and span two Neptune eras (Capricorn and Aquarius). When the show came to a close on May 25, 2011, Uranus stood at 3° Aries, the Descendant of her 1986 show launch, and Oprah was ready to focus on her magazine (launched on April 19, 2000, with transiting Uranus over her Mercury), her TV network OWN, and her philanthropic pursuits.

Always refreshingly honest and searingly self-revelatory, Oprah shared with her audience the most private aspects of her formative years: from the wayward teen years, climaxing with an out-of-wedlock pregnancy, to her years of sexual abuse (which she revealed on November 10, 1986, as transiting (TR) Venus retrograded back over her natal Saturn in Scorpio, TR Mercury conjoined natal Mars, and TR Mars conjoined natal Mercury).

What also made Winfrey remarkable among her peers was that she learned and evolved *with* her audience and then, with integrity and evangelical zeal, had the courage to lead the way. Oprah steered her show away from the sensationalist, titillating confessional TV of *Geraldo*, *Sally*, and *Donahue* (and sidestepped the teen hijinks of Ricki Lake and the fraternity fight-night fracas of Jerry Springer), to provide a platform that educated viewers with books, discussions, and advice — all of which supported her grand vision quest for self-improvement, self-actualisation, and spirituality.

Along the way, Oprah won a free speech lawsuit brought by Texas cattle ranchers in February 1998 (TR Uranus conjunct her natal Sun-Venus); opened a Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa in January 2007 (with TR Neptune on her natal Mercury); and had much fun playing philanthropist (giving away homes, sending her audience to Australia,

and sharing her “Favorite Things”), demonstrating a level of generosity never before seen on TV. All the while, we bore witness to her opinion-shaping/taboo-raising Mercury–Pluto opposition, as well as her Mercury in Aquarius trine benevolent Jupiter in Gemini. In Oprah, we found a curious, articulate, honest messenger — always on a mission to assist us in becoming the highest possible expression of ourselves. How many others in the public eye can make that claim?

Chart Data and Source

Oprah Winfrey, January 29, 1954; 4:30 a.m. CST; Kosciusko, MS, USA (33°N03', 89°W35'); A: Astrologer Robert Marks quotes her from the time he was on her show in 1988.

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Frank Clifford is the author of *Getting to the Heart of Your Chart*; *Horoscope Snapshots: Essays in Modern Astrology*; and *Palmistry 4 Today (2009 edition)*. New mini-books, including *Dialogues: Tools for the Working Astrologer (with Mark Jones)*, have recently been published and are available on Amazon and in e-book format. Recently, Frank published *The Astrology Quartet* as an e-book; it contains his works on *Solar Arcs*, *Venus and Mars*, *Humour*, and *the Midheaven*. Frank's websites can be found at <http://www.flareuk.com> and <http://www.frankclifford.co.uk>

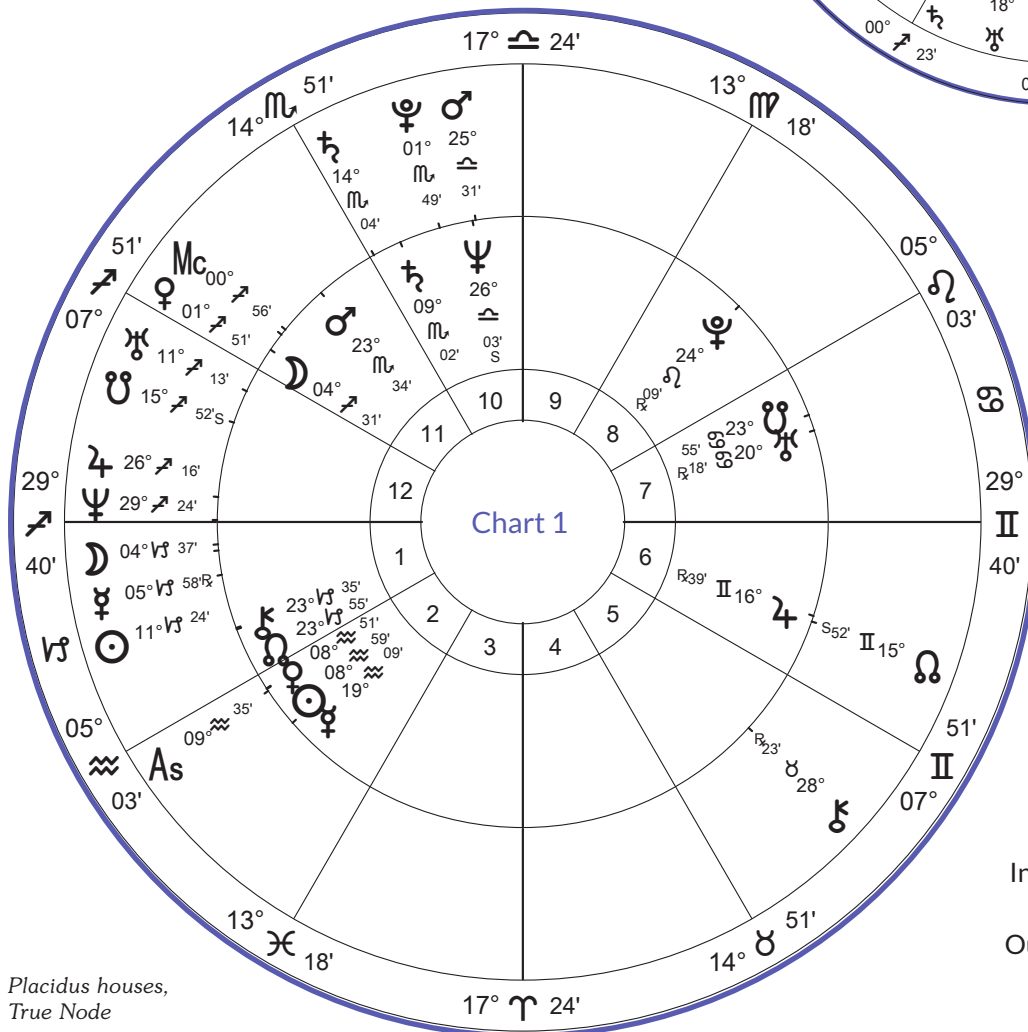
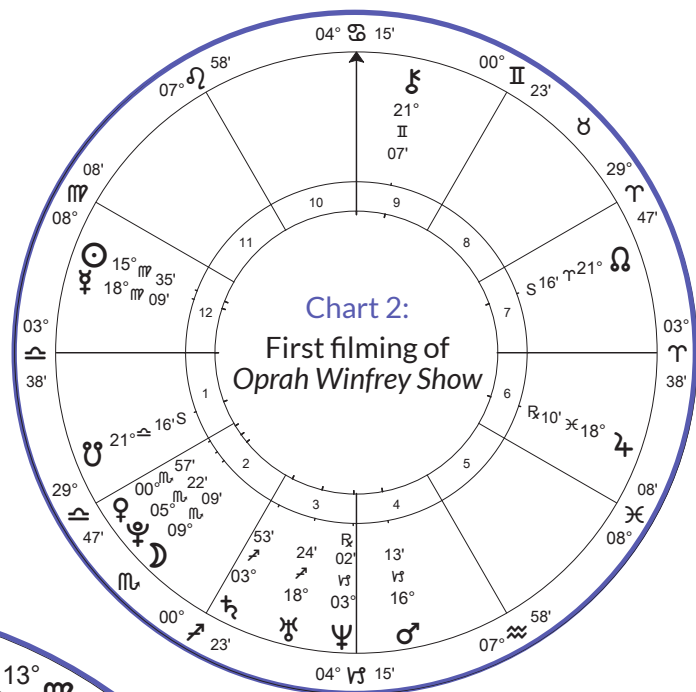


Chart 1: Bi-wheel.

Inner wheel and house cusps:
Oprah Winfrey, natal
Outer wheel: Oprah's first day
hosting A.M. Chicago

Placidus houses,
True Node