

TALLULAH BANKHEAD

b. January 31, 1902, Huntsville, Alabama

d. December 12, 1968, New York, New York

ACTRESS

*“Nobody can be exactly like me.
Sometimes even I have trouble doing it.”*

**During a time
when women were
marginalized,
Bankhead was a
beacon of civil rights
and sexual liberation.**

A Hollywood celebrity, Tallulah Bankhead exemplified what it meant to be a liberated woman at a time when women were Victorian and marginalized.

Bankhead's father was a conservative Southern Democrat who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1917 until 1940. Tallulah was raised in Washington, D.C., where she received a strict religious education.

A proponent of racial integration and civil rights, Bankhead's political values starkly contrasted with those of her family. At age 15, she moved to New York City, where she made a name for herself as an actress and bon vivant both on Broadway and in London.

In Motion Pictures magazine, Bankhead's former assistant disclosed that the two had been sexually involved. A self-described ambisexual, Bankhead's sexual liaisons included the British theater actress Eva Le Gallienne and jazz legend Billie Holiday. Despite Bankhead's notoriety, she was widely admired, including by President Harry Truman.

Bankhead's colorful personality immortalized her in ways that few actresses have achieved. Despite her many scandals, turbulent relations and provocative nature, she is remembered as a beacon of civil rights and sexual liberation.

