



Named one of the 50 Greatest Players in NBA History, Charles Barkley has followed up his Hall of Fame basketball career with an Emmy Award-winning television run. A consummate entertainer, Barkley has evolved into a pop culture icon who commands a diverse audience that may not always agree with his opinions, but respects his ability to tell it like it is. Never one to dodge controversy or consequences, Barkley shoots from the hip and speaks from the heart.

But Barkley isn't outspoken for the mere sake of being outrageous, earning a buck or getting a laugh. Barkley's larger-than-life personality is seeded in his ability to connect with others through a unique combination of humor, honesty and humility. His direct pipeline to people enables him to open up the often uncomfortable but ultimately critical dialogues about issues such as racism and classism that impact the day-to-day lives of the members of his community and the world at large.

Barkley's compassion and activism can be traced back to his roots in the rural South. Born on February 20, 1963 in Leeds, Alabama, Charles Wade Barkley played basketball at Leeds High School and caught the attention of Auburn University scouts at the state semifinals his senior year. Barkley was recruited by head coach Sonny Smith and played basketball at Auburn for three years. Physical, fiery and fiercely competitive, number 34 outplayed taller and quicker opponents because of his strength, agility and passion for the game. Barkley led his conference in rebounding for three years, earning the moniker "The Round Mound of Rebound." He was named Southeastern Conference Player of the Year in 1984 and received three All-SEC selections, one Second Team All-American selection and one Third Team All-America...

Charles Barkley

Speech Topics

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