
Rosa Parks: The Lady of the civil rights

Born in Tuskegee, Alabama on February 4, 1913 to James and Leona McCauley, Rosa's parents were born before slavery was banished from the United States. They suffered a difficult childhood, and after emancipation, conditions for blacks were not much better.

Rosa's mother was a schoolteacher and her father, a farmer. Rosa's parents separated in 1915, and her mother moved Rosa and her younger brother to Montgomery, Alabama to live with their grandmother. The southern states during this period of time were extremely segregated. Filled with racists; Confederate Army veterans from Tennessee established the Ku Klux Klan, a secret society in 1866. Members of the Klan beat and murdered several African American people. There were several occurrences where Klan members would beat, rape, and murder blacks.

In order to hide their identity, they would wear white robes, and white sheets over their faces with only the eyes cut out. They would burn crosses to petrify their victims and their families. The Ku Klux Klan was very involved in Montgomery, where Rosa and her family were living. Rosa's mother was a very important role model for her and her brother. Because their mother was a schoolteacher, she home schooled Rosa until the age of eleven.

Although Raymond received very little proper education, he was very supportive of his wife's wishes to return to school and receive her High School diploma. Rosa indeed did return to school and earned her diploma in 1932. When Rosa McCauley was 20 years old in 1932 she met and married a barber by the name of Mr. Raymond Parks. Rosa began to sew and to take on several seamstress jobs, and also housekeeping jobs.

Rosa was a major part in the end to segregation and one of the people that changed America to the free willed country it is today. She's one of the reasons why racism isn't nearly as prominent as it was in her time period. America today is filled with many different cultures and people, who are able to do whatever whenever they want partially thanks to Rosa Parks. Back then buses were a major problem not only in Montgomery Alabama, but in the rest of the Southern United States as well. Black citizens made up 60 percent of the bus population. Buses stopped in every white community and most black people had to walk up to a half mile to get to a bus stop. Black people were forced to pay at the front of the bus, and then walk behind the bus to get on. The front four rows of the bus were restricted to white passengers only. Most of these front four rows were usually empty, because most white people could afford cars.

Even before Rosa's mainstream appearance for her defiance she had stood up for what she believed in still. It was 1943 Rosa was on her way home from Maxwell Field Air Force Base,

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where she was currently employed. Rosa was physically exhausted from her full day of work, and did not feel she could walk home. She boarded a bus, and paid the driver her fee. He said to her, "Go and get in through the back door." Rosa calmly told him that she was already on the bus and did not want to go around in order to get back inside. The driver violently took Rosa by the arm, and escorted her off the bus. Rosa was forced to wait at the bus stop for another bus to take her home, this sparked Rosa's fire for equality and it was twelve years after Rosa was kicked off the bus, that she would make history.

It was 1955, where Rosa Parks boarded a city bus to get home. Mrs. Parks walked past the first few rows of seats mostly empty these rows of seats were marked "Whites Only." Rosa Parks refused to move from her seat on the bus and started the beginning of a revolution, she stood up for herself and her culture. Rosa was 42 years old and tired of the discrimination. He angrily told her, "Well, I'm going to have you arrested." Rosa said, "You may do that." She was immediately convicted and arrested for her "crime". The word of Rosa's arrest spread very quickly. For not moving and letting a white male in her seat, she was arrested, something hard to fathom now, but the norm for back in the time.

Through this perspective we can really start to see how twisted our society was back then. Keep in mind black citizens made up 60 percent of the bus population. The night after the arrest fifty leaders of the black community including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. met to discuss the issues of Rosa's situation. They met at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a minister. Dr. King told these people that the only way the black community could fight back was if they boycotted the bus company.

These fifty leaders organized the boycott, the purpose was to change the segregation laws of bus transportation. The boycott began on December 5, 1955, the day of Rosa's court case. The following Monday Rosa was found guilty of disorderly conduct, and she was fined. This was when the black community really took a stand and organized the Montgomery Improvement Association. The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted 381 days. During these 381 days, blacks chose to walk instead of riding the bus or arranged carpools in order to get to and from wherever they need to go. Some of the few black people who could afford cars were arrested for picking up hitchhikers. Black people were also arrested for loitering while standing on street corners waiting for rides. Because blacks were 60 percent of the bus population, during these 381 days the bus companies lost thousands of dollars.

Rosa Parks showed what a miraculous woman she was when she "sat down" to stand up for what she believed in. She has been an inspiration and an influence for the African American race and culture. This protest created a riot and more people stood up for their rights. She's is now known forever as the "The Lady of the civil rights".

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What Rosa had, was the ability to stand up for herself more than any other person. Even before this she was a secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). Rosa also went to Highlander Folk, Tennessee center where she trained for rights and racial equality. This fire within her ignited her drive for the rights of her people. Lines between the whites and blacks were crossed. Anywhere blacks went there were sets of rules that didn't apply to the white man because of their god given right of being white.

We know Rosa Parks as a hero in a way that made us come together and share what we have and know today. It was a struggle at first for everyone to come together and it still is, races will always have extremes on either side but Rosa was the beginning of a revolution that changed everything any American had ever known. Trust was hard at first, but once the ball was rolling, nothing stopped the movement. Even though some races may have fallen in love or became friends with another, there was always someone who didn't like that. These feelings hosted a slew of problems causing race wars, bombings and shootings. Through this all we persisted but people still stayed away from each other like a line or fence was there that separated them.

Rosa Parks was a rebel, not a bad one, but a hero that knew when to stand up. I believe what Rosa Parks did was incredible and that everyone should stand up for themselves and remember her legacy as well. After her arrest she had lost everything but became an icon to the civil right movement Rosa Parks made history for doing simply what was right. During the 1970's, Rosa Parks and her family suffered with Rosas husbands illness and cancer. In 1977, her husband peacefully passed with cancer along with this her brother too passed. It seems that Rosa Parks had gone through incredibly tough times in the 70's. She outlived her family and had witnessed the death of her family. To suffer like that and experience the pain was hard for her, but continued to have a strong will. As she got older, she grew weaker until 2005 when she passed away.

There was a memorial for her and many had kind words about her. Even though she might be gone, her legacy lives on, people still talk about her and what she did, even all those years ago. Everyone thanks her for her strong willed nature and what she did. Rosa Parks is a hero of America. Something so simple yet meaningful as not moving from her seat on the bus, she had created history.

A statue of Rosa Parks was made and the bus where she protested was preserved and kept away in a museum where people could view. She earned the name "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." A name well deserved. Rosa is also known as the "spark that lit the fire." There were several protests and riots that took place after December 1, 1943. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was also seemingly unknown until he spoke out after the Rosa Parks bus incident.

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