

ROSA

A TRIBUTE TO ROSA PARKS



PRESENTED BY
AN
PT AMERICAN
NEGRO
PLAYWRIGHT
THEATRE



"I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in." -Rosa Parks

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Letter from Director-American Negro Playwright Theatre
- II. Background Information
- III. Timeline of Events
- IV. Vocabulary/Related Terms
- V. Activities
- VI. Discussion Questions
 - A. Challenging Traditions
 - B. The Montgomery Bus Boycott
- VII. Resources



"Telling Stories That Must Be Told"

Dear Teachers,

The American Negro Playwright Theatre (ANPT), a nonprofit entity that is devoted to outreach, education, and empowerment through the arts, is pleased to bring you the story of the Mother of the Civil Rights Movement—Rosa Parks.

In 1955, pride was a dangerous thing for blacks to have. With the threat of violence, brutality and death, it was obvious why most didn't speak out. But on December 1st 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus. By making the decision to keep her seat, she was actually taking a stand. And in doing so, she changed the course of American history.

This gripping one-woman show delves into the story behind the prominent figure in the Civil Rights Movement whose legacy still lives on today, giving the audience a look into the sentiments of Mrs. Parks' inciting incident and the events that followed thereafter.

We hope you enjoy!

Sincerely,

Barry Scott

Barry Scott
Producing Artistic Director
The American Negro Playwright Theatre



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Name: Rosa Louise (McCauley) Parks

Date of Birth: February 4, 1913

Place of Birth: Tuskegee, AL

Date of Death: October 24, 2005

Place of Death: Detroit, MI



ABOUT THE TIME PERIOD

Segregation and Civil Rights Background Facts:

-1875: Civil Rights Act of 1875

Under Amendment XIV, Congress passes a law that makes racial discrimination in public accommodations illegal.

-1883: Civil Rights Act overturned. The Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional and that the Fourteenth Amendment forbids States, but not citizens, from discriminating.

-1896: *Plessy v. Ferguson* case upheld a Louisiana law that required whites and blacks to occupy separate railroad cars. Established "separate but equal" doctrine.

Segregation of public transportation:

-Tennessee segregated railroad cars, followed by Florida (1887), Mississippi (1888), Texas (1889), Louisiana (1890), Alabama, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Georgia (1891), South Carolina (1898), North Carolina (1899), Virginia (1900), Maryland (1904), and Oklahoma (1907)

- Under the system of segregation used on Montgomery buses, white people who boarded the bus took seats in the front rows, filling the bus toward the back. Black people who boarded the bus took seats in the back rows, filling the bus toward the front. Eventually, the two sections would meet, and the bus would be full. If other black people boarded the bus, they were required to stand. If another white person boarded the bus, then everyone in the black row nearest the front had to get up and stand, so that a new row for white people could be created. Often when boarding the buses, black people were required to pay at the front, get off, and reenter the bus through a separate door at the back. On some occasions bus drivers would drive away before black passengers were able to re-board.



TIMELINE OF EVENTS

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- **Dec. 1, 1955:** Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, AL.

POLICE REPORT

Misc.

POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF MONTGOMERY

Date 12-1-55 19

Complainant J.F. Blake (wn) Phone No.
Address 21 So. Lewis St. Phone No.
Offense Misc. Reported By Same as above
Address Phone No.
Date and Time Offense Committed 12-1-55 6:06 pm
Place of Occurrence In Front of Empire Theatre (On Montgomery Street)
Person or Property Attacked
How Attacked
Person Wanted
Value of Property Stolen Value Recovered
Details of Complaint (Date, describe and give value of property stolen)

We received a call upon arrival the bus operator said he had a colored female sitting in the white section of the bus, and would not move back.
We (Day & Nixon) also saw her.
The bus operator signed a warrant for her. Rosa Parks, (cf) 634 Cleveland Court.
Rosa Parks (cf) was charged with chapter 6 section 11 of the Montgomery City Code.

Warrant #11251

THIS OFFENSE IS DECLARED:
DISPOSED
CLEARED BY ARREST
EXCEPTIONALLY CLEARED
INACTIVE (NOT CLEARED)

Officers J.D. Day
D.W. Nixon
Division Patrol Time 7:00 pm
12-1-55

- **Dec. 5, 1955:** Rosa Parks is convicted and fined in Montgomery city court. A one-day boycott of city buses results in about 90 percent of normal black ridership staying off buses. The Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) is formed by black leaders, who elect the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. president. Several thousand black citizens attend the first MIA mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church, where they overwhelmingly support continuing the bus boycott.
- **Dec. 8, 1955:** The first negotiations between MIA leaders and city and bus company officials deadlock over a proposal by MIA spokesmen for a bus seating policy that is

more fair to blacks but still segregated. The MIA issues formal list of demands: courteous treatment by bus operators; first-come, first-served seating for all, with blacks seating from the rear and whites from the front; and black bus operators on predominately black routes.

- **Dec. 13, 1955:** The MIA begins to operate a car pool system. In time, the system grew to more than 200 private automobiles and station wagons, many of which were operated by black churches.
- **Dec. 16, 1955:** The vice president of the parent company of the Montgomery bus system meets with city and local bus officials and with MIA leaders. The mayor forms a biracial committee, supposedly to negotiate a compromise.
- **Dec. 19, 1955:** The biracial committee meets but cannot agree on a compromise proposal. While never disbanded, there is no record of the committee meeting again.

ROSA PARKS FINGER PRINTS

Name	Parks	Rosa	L.	Classification	28 MO 72
Surname		Given Name	Middle Name		28 MI
Alias					
Nickname:	Reference				
No. 79521	Color C.	Sex Female			
RIGHT HAND					
1. Thumb	2. Index finger m	3. Middle finger 0	4. Ring finger	5. Little finger ✓	
LEFT HAND					
6. Thumb	7. Index finger m	8. Middle finger ✓	9. Ring finger	10. Little finger	
Impressions taken by Mary Cannon	Not simulated	Not simulated	Not simulated	Not simulated	Not simulated
(Signature of official taking prints)		Files searched by ROSA L. PARKS x Rosa L. Parks			
Four fingers taken simultaneously			Four fingers taken simultaneously		
Left Hand		Left thumb	Right thumb	Right Hand	

- **Jan. 9, 1956:** MIA leaders meet with city commissioners, but neither group modifies its position.
- **Jan. 23, 1956:** Mayor W. A. Gayle announces a tougher policy on the bus boycott, including no further negotiations with the MIA.
- **Feb. 21, 1956:** City officials obtained injunctions against the Montgomery Bus Boycott and indicted over 80 boycott leaders under a 1921 law prohibiting conspiracies that interfered with lawful business.



- **May 11, 1956:** A Montgomery federal court holds a hearing on the *Browder v. Gayle* lawsuit challenging bus segregation law. Claudette Colvin, Mary Louise Smith and two other plaintiffs testify before circuit judge Richard T. Rives and district judges Frank M. Johnson Jr. and Seybourn H. Lynne.
- **June 5, 1956:** Federal judges Rives and Johnson rule the city and state bus segregation laws are unconstitutional. Lynne dissents.

- **June 19, 1956:** Federal judges in Montgomery issue an injunction against segregation on Montgomery buses, but suspend its enforcement pending an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- **Nov. 13, 1956:** With no dissent, the U.S. Supreme Court upholds the Montgomery federal court's *Browder v. Gayle* decision striking down Alabama's bus segregation laws.
- **Nov. 14, 1956:** Those attending an MIA mass meeting unanimously vote to end the bus boycott when the U.S. Supreme Court decision is implemented.
- **Dec. 17, 1956:** The U.S. Supreme Court rejects the Montgomery City Commission's appeal of the *Browder v. Gayle* decision.
- **Dec. 20, 1956:** The Supreme Court's *Browder* ruling takes effect. Those attending mass meetings of the MIA again vote to end the bus boycott.
- **Dec. 21, 1956:** Black citizens desegregate Montgomery buses after the 13-month boycott. The bus company resumes full service.



VOCABULARY

RELATED TERMS



VOCABULARY/RELATED TERMS

1. Segregation
2. Boycott
3. Activist
4. Advocate
5. Civil Rights Movement
6. Injustice
7. U.S. Supreme Court
8. *Plessy v. Ferguson*
9. *Brown v. Board of Education*
10. *Browder v. Gayle*
11. Montgomery Improvement Association
12. Montgomery Bus Boycott
13. Harass
14. Prosecute
15. Fear
16. Intimidation
17. Pride
18. NAACP

ACTIVITIES



Activity 1: Role Play: Taking A Stand

On December 1, 1955, by refusing to give up her seat on the bus, Rosa Parks was taking a stand against the injustice of racial segregation in public transportation. In this exercise, students will have the opportunity to re-enact that day on the bus, as well as other following events. The students will take on the roles listed below, however, in their roles they must portray how their character could have taken a stand, instead of continuing on in the tradition of injustice.

Instructions:

1. Break students into groups.

2. Assign each student a character:

Bus driver

Police Officer

Politician

White passenger

Black passenger

Mixed Race passenger

(Be creative and make up some of your own characters as well)

3. Set the scene: It is Dec. 1, 1955 and the end of a long work day. Passengers of all races, educational backgrounds, and career paths load a bus, exhausted and ready to make it to their respective destinations. Passengers load the bus at each stop until the bus is full. The bus continues along and makes another stop. A white man enters the bus looking for a seat. He stops beside a black woman who is seated in the “colored section” of the bus and demands that she give up her seat so that he may sit. What happens next?

4. Allow the students a specified amount of time to work together within their groups to develop a short script for their characters as they recount what happened on Dec. 1, 1955. Remember, their character must tell their story as if they took a stand, instead of allowing the injustice to continue. Encourage the students to think critically and include explanations of what they did to take a stand and why they chose to take a stand. Encourage them to use the background information about the time period and other civil rights cases as resources to contribute to their stories.

5. When finished, have each group share their stories.

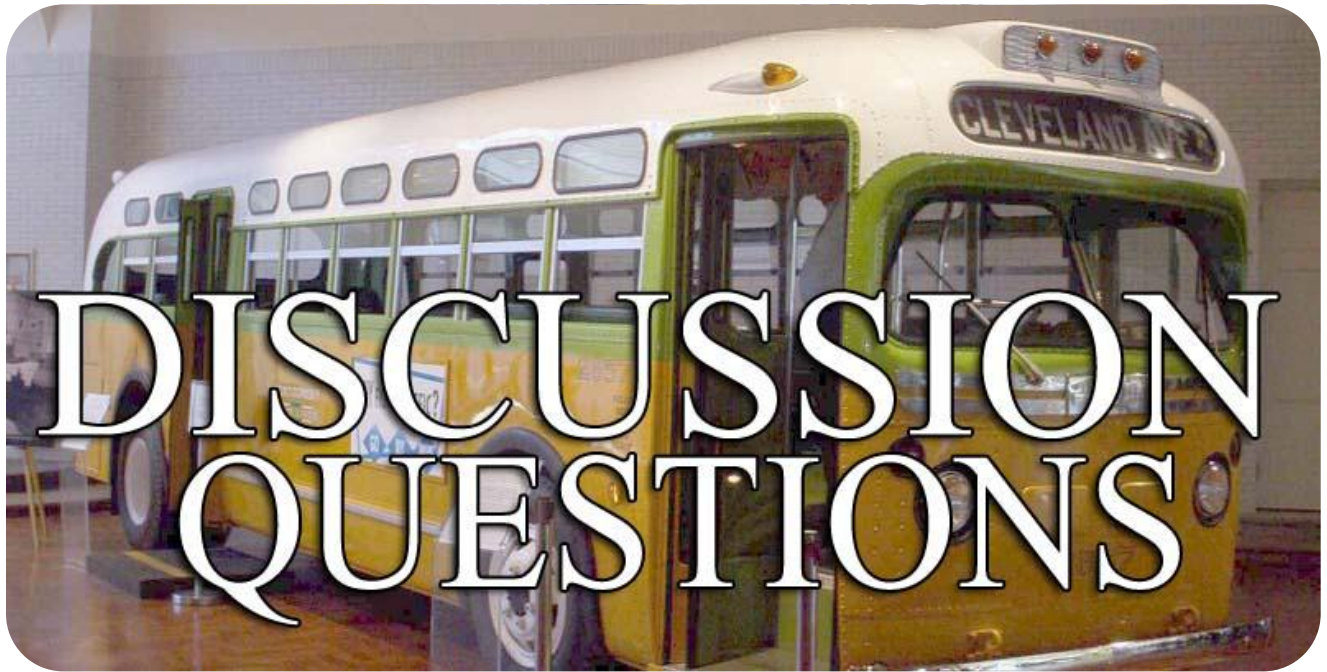
Activity 2: What If...

Instructions:

1. Have students imagine what *could* have happened if...

- Rosa Parks had given up her seat.
- The Supreme Court hadn't ruled that segregation laws were unconstitutional.
- Civil rights leaders had launched a violent protest.

2. Conduct an open discussion OR have the students write their opinions, thoughts, etc. in an essay.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In 1955, why was pride a dangerous thing for blacks to have?
2. What role did fear play in preventing blacks from speaking out about the unfair conditions in which they were treated?
3. Have you ever been punished for doing something that you thought was right? Give an example.
4. Would you break the law for something in which you strongly believed? Give an example. Are people ever justified in breaking the law?

Challenging Traditions

Tradition (noun): a specific practice of long standing; an inherited pattern of thought or action.

1. A lot of rituals, rules and procedures are carried out on the basis of tradition. What are some traditions carried out by Americans? What are some of your own traditions carried out by your family and/or friends?
2. Very rarely are traditions challenged; many people continue traditions because, as they claim, "This is the way things have always been." Describe a situation in which you fought to change the "way things have always been".

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

1. How long did the Montgomery Bus Boycott last? What were the goals of the boycott? Why was it so successful?
2. Did the citizens of Montgomery see the issue as simply seating arrangements on a bus or something larger?
3. Why were citizens of Montgomery willing to walk for miles each day, risk their jobs and personal safety to support the boycott?
4. In general, is a boycott an effective strategy? Why or why not?
5. How can everyday people organize to transform a community?



RESOURCES
RESOURCES

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/>

www.history-timelines.org.uk/people-timelines/29-rosa-parks-timeline.htm

http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_montgomery_bus_boycott_1955_1956/

http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/encyclopedia/enc_parks_rosa_1913_2005/

<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1248>

www.montgomeryboycott.com/frontpage.htm

www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/rosa-parks-how-i-fought-civil-rights-teachers-guide

www.RosaParksFacts.com

S. S. PIER, CLERK - MONTGOMERY, ALA.

DECEMBER 1955

TO THE MONTGOMERY PUBLIC.

We, the Negro citizens of Montgomery, feel that the public has a right to know our complaints and grievances which have resulted in the protest against the Montgomery City Lines and our refusal to ride city busses. We, therefore, set forth here some of the many bitter experiences of our people, who have, at various times, been pushed around, embarrassed, threatened, intimidated and abused in a manner that has caused the meekest to rise in resentment:

COMPLAINTS:

1. Courtesy:

The use of abusive language, name calling and threats have been the common practice among many of the bus operators. We are ordered to move from seats to standing space under the threat of arrest, or other serious consequences. No regard for sex or age is considered in exercising this authority by the bus operators.

2. Seating:

The bus operators have not been fair in this respect. Negroes, old, young, men and women, mothers with babies in their arms, sick, afflicted, pregnant women, must sit through their seats, even to school children, if the bus is crowded. Of lines serving predominantly Negro sections, the first four seats must remain vacant, even though no white passenger boards the bus. At all times the Negro is asked to give up his seat, though there is not standing room in the bus. One white woman, during a heat, will force some Negroes to relinquish their seats for the accommodation of this one person.

3. Arrests:

Numerous arrests have been made even though the arrests are made in observing the color of your skin. The year the following persons have been arrested and convicted, although they were not arrested according to the policy given us by the bus company. They are: Clarence Cain, Alberta "Cotton" Smith, and Mrs. Rosa Parks. Among others arrested at other times are Mrs. Viola Young, Mrs. Mary Wright, two children from New Jersey, and a Mr. Smith, who was killed by the policeman.

4. Two Fares:

Many passengers are required to pay an additional fare if the bus is late getting to town, causing them to miss a bus going to Clarendon or other distant points. Some of these have complained that on returning from such distant locations have incurred necessitating the payment of double fares.

5. Making Change:

We understand that correct change should be given the operator, but there are times that such is not possible. Several bus operators have refused to make change for passengers and threatened to put them out for not having the exact amount. One one occasion a fellow-passenger paid the fare of one such passenger to prevent her from being put out.

6. Passing Up

Passengers:

In many instances the bus operators have passed up passengers standing at the rear to board the bus. They have also collected fares at the front door and, after commanding Negro passengers to enter from the back door, they have allowed off, leaving them standing.

7. Physical Torture:

One three months, with two small children in her arms, got on in the front seat where she boarded her child for her fare. The driver ordered her to take the children from the seat, and without giving her the chance to place the children elsewhere, lunged the vehicle forward, leaving the small children to be thrown into the aisle of the bus.

8. Acknowledgement:

Not all operators are guilty of these accusations. There are some who are most cordial and tolerant. They will go to the extent of their authority to see that justice and fair play prevail. To those we are grateful and sympathetic.

9. Adjudication:

Every effort has been used to get the bus company to remove the causes of these complaints. Time and time again complaints have been registered with the bus company, the City Commission and the manager of the bus company. Commissions of both areas have conferred but to no avail. Petitions have been filed with the Mayor, but no improvement has been made.

In March we held a conference with the manager of the Montgomery City Lines and made a very modest request: (1) that the bus company attorney meet with our attorney and give an interpretation of the company's policy on the subject of the petition; (2) that the bus company attorney meet with our attorney and give an interpretation of the company's policy on the subject of the petition; (3) that the bus company attorney meet with our attorney and give an interpretation of the company's policy on the subject of the petition. To this day the bus company has not responded to our request.

5,000 At Meeting Outline Boycott; Bullet Clips Bus

By JOE ARBELL, Staff Writer

Regents Give Georgia Tech 'Green Light'

Atlanta, Dec. 3.—A meeting of the Board of Regents of the State of Georgia today gave the go-ahead to a boycott of the University of Georgia and the Georgia Institute of Technology...



NEGROES TO CONTINUE BOYCOTT



LONE NEGRO WAITS AT BUS STOP

Approval Near On 2 Matrons For City Jail

Two matrons for the city jail are expected to be approved by the city council today...

White House Checked Strauss Balks On Story Behind D-Y Pact Axing

Washington, Dec. 3.—A White House aide today said that the White House had checked the story that Strauss had balked at the D-Y pact axing...

Voters To Tackle King-Size Ballot Over State Today

Education Aid Top Two Items To Face Test

Montgomery, Ala., Dec. 3.—Voters today will go to the polls to elect members of the Alabama state legislature and to vote on two major amendments...

County Eyes No. 6 Result

County officials are hoping for a certain result in the election of the county commissioners...

Safe Guards Among Neighbors Topic Of Fifth Legal Forum

The fifth annual legal forum will focus on the topic of safe guards among neighbors...

NEGRO BOYCOTT POSTER

This is one of the posters which will be distributed to the public...

Remember We're Fighting For Jesus Do Not Ride A Bus Today

NEGRO BOYCOTT POSTER. This is one of the posters which will be distributed to the public...

