

Profiles in Leadership



Rosa Parks



Rosa Parks

Born: 1913 Died: 2005

Rosa Parks

Rosa was born and raised in Alabama.

As she grew up, Rosa had to go to second-rate all black schools and she faced daily rounds of laws governing how she could behave in public places. These laws were called the “Jim Crow Laws”. The most important of these laws required that public schools, public places and public transportation have separate buildings, toilets, and restaurants for whites and blacks

Rosa Parks

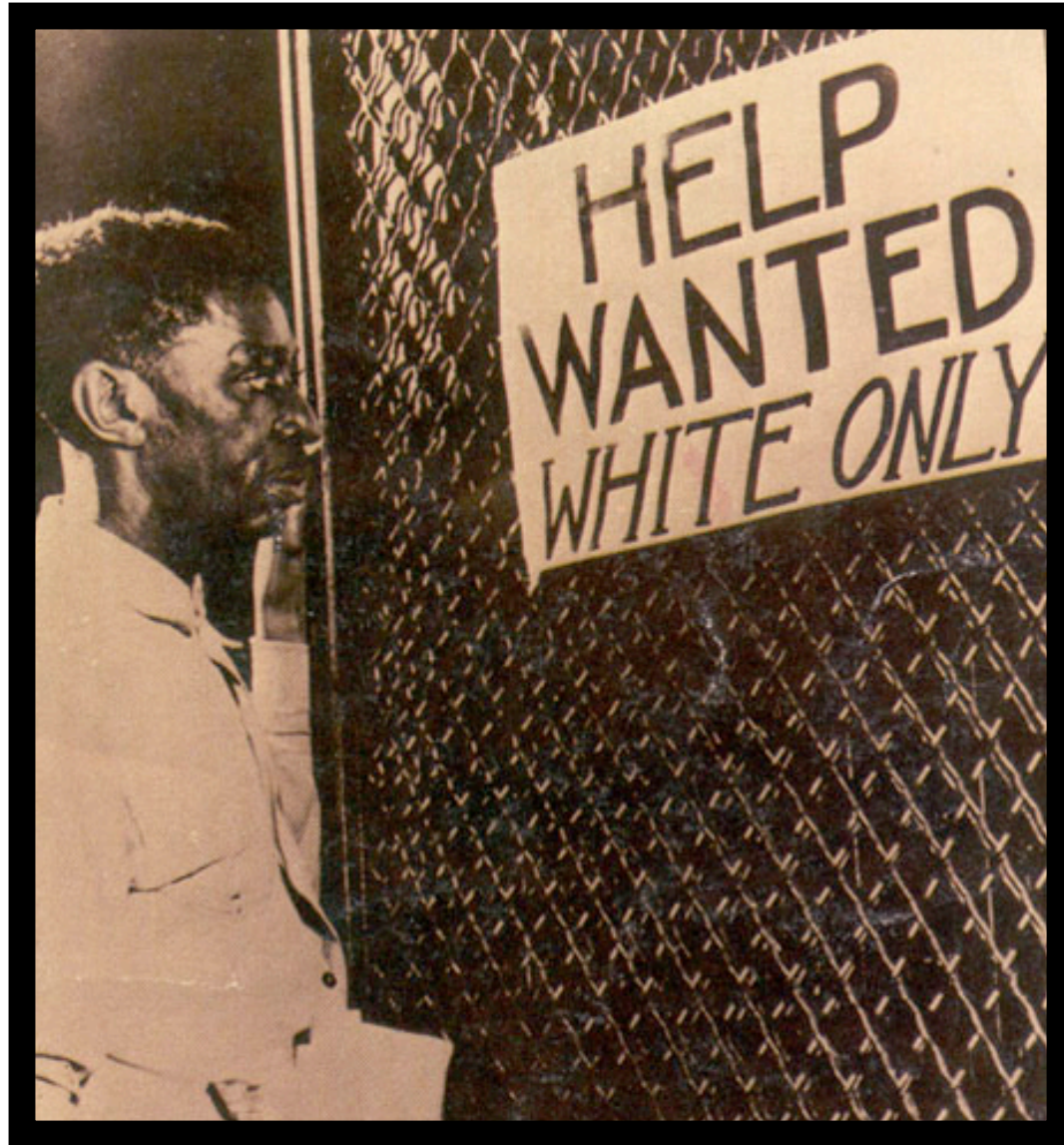
“Jim Crow Laws”



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Rosa was a seamstress in Montgomery.

She became active in the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People).

Like many Southern blacks, she often boycotted the public facilities marked “Colored”



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At age forty-two, on December 1, 1955, Rosa had a tiring day and her back and shoulders ached.

She got on a bus and found a seat near the middle. A few stops down the line, a white man got on and demanded the seat. Rosa Parks refused!



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She was arrested, booked, fingerprinted and jailed

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The black community called for a boycott of the buses. For more than a year they refused to ride on the buses.

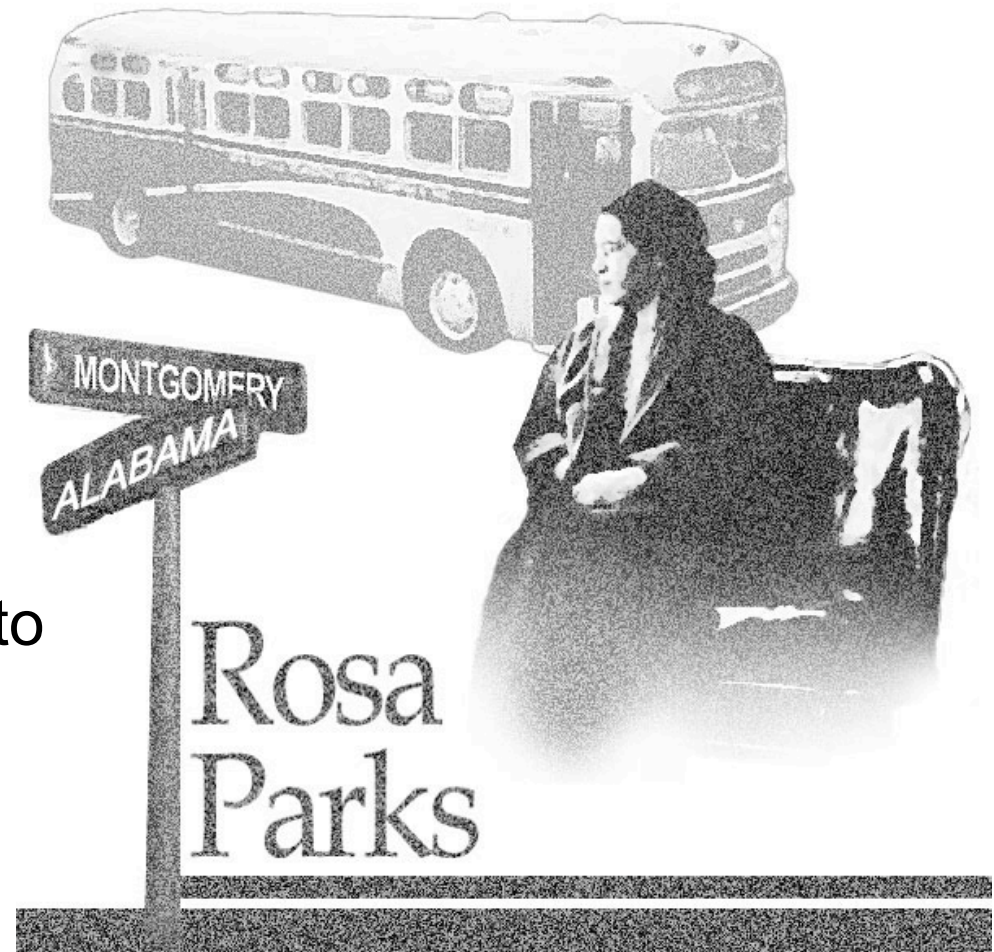
On November 13, 1956, the United States Supreme Court ruled that segregation was unlawful and one month later all signs designating white and colored sections were removed.



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Parks and her family received numerous threats and almost constant telephone harassment.

In 1957 Rosa moved north to Detroit, Michigan.



Rosa Parks

Honors

Peace Prize in 1994

Presidential Medal of
Freedom in 1996

Congressional Gold Medal in
1999



Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks, at the age of 92, passed away on October 24, 2005. Her casket was placed in the rotunda of the United States Capitol for two days. This is an honor usually only reserved for Presidents.



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