

Rosa parks essay sample

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Rosa Louise McCauley Parks was a black African American woman who was a civil rights activist. Rosa Parks was the “first lady of civil rights” she made a name for herself in history on the first of December 1955 while riding on the Montgomery Alabama bus. Rosa refused to give up her seat to a white passenger who had no where to sit as the bus as it was full. Even though Rosa was sitting in the right colour section. On this day when Rosa refused to obey the Jim Crow Laws of segregation she sparked the Black Civil Rights Movement. Many experiences had happened in Rosas lifetime, which lead up to her making a stand on the bus. Her childhood experiences and growing up with the Jim Crow Laws. Experiences of racial discrimination as an adult, experiences working with the NAACP all of these are causes but this leads to personal consequences and historical results for example The Montgomery Bus Boycott.

On December the first 1955 Rosa Parks a 42-year-old African American woman was arrested and convicted for violating the laws of segregation. So-called the “Jim Crow” laws. This major event in black civil rights history occurred when Rosa Parks boarded the Montgomery City bus to go home from a long and tiring day from work. She sat down just passed the first few mostly empty rows of seats marked “Whites Only.” The law is that any black person is allowed to sit in this section unless a white person is standing.

Rosa Parks had never broken one segregation law until this day. Although she disliked the laws of segregation very much. The bus started to full up and the bus driver ordered the blacks to stand. Rosa Parks quietly refused. The bus driver started getting very angry and shouting at Rosa she sat there. Rosa sat in her seat till the police came and arrested her. She said to her

followers “ the only tired I was, was tired of giving in.” Rosa got named the “ mother of the civil rights movement” for not giving up her seat on the bus. “ I did not get on the bus to get arrested; I got on the bus to go home.”

There were many causes that lead to Rosa Parks not giving up her seat on the bus, however the first causes occurred in her childhood experiences. Rosa Parks grew up with the Jim Crow laws of segregation all around her. “ By the time I was six I was older enough to realize we were not actually free” Rosa Parks quotes. She grew up with the K. K. K known as the Ku Klux Klan and this exposed Rosa Parks to the black civil rights the most. They rode through the black community, burning churches, beating up people and killing people. Rosa Parks has a vivid memory’s of her grandfather responding to the threat by keeping a double-barreled shotgun close at hand at all times, loaded and ready for the first hooded person who trespassed onto his property.

Rosa also remembers there escape plan they talked about often quotes Rosa “ And I remember we talked about how just in case the Klansmen broke into our house, we should go to bed with our clothes on so we would be ready to run if we had to.” Rosa’s grandfather was very brave and courageous. Rosa quotes “ I can remember my grandfather saying, ‘ I don’t know how long I would last if they came breaking in here, but I’m getting the first one who comes through the door.” Another horrific childhood experience of Rosa Parks was when Rosa saw a white man letting his dog drink out of the “ blacks” drinking fountain. This site showed Rosa a taste of how whites

treated the blacks. Also the experience when Rosa saw a black man being hung on a tree.

Starting with the seventh grade, Rosa had to go to school in Montgomery, Alabama. In Montgomery, Rosa became more aware of the segregation and discrimination between the Blacks and the Whites. Rosa would walk to school on most days, except in bad weather when she would take the streetcar. She had to sit in the back of the streetcar because that is where Blacks were supposed to sit. She also noticed the different drinking fountains for the black and the white people. She often wondered whether water in the white fountains tasted better than the water in the black fountains. Rosa recalls the times when she was not allowed to try on shoes as the “ blacks” apparently had germs or diseases on their feet. They had to draw around their feet instead.

All these childhood experiences caused Rosa to make a stand. As Rosa Parks grew older and became an adult she experienced more discrimination. At the age of twenty Rosa married Raymond Parks, a barber, active in black voter registration and other civil rights causes. Rosa faced racial discrimination in April 1945 she finally got a chance to register for voting. She failed three times. When registering the white lady secretary made Rosa fail the literacy test when Rosa knew she would of passed. Also Rosa had to pay more to register as a white lady came in to register to vote and the white secretary charged her less money than Rosa right in front of Rosa’s eyes.

An event that lead up to Rosa Parks not budging from her seat was her experiences working with the NAACP the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People. It works on cases about violence against negro home owners. Rosa joined the NAACP in 1943 as a secretary and youth advisor she became one of the first women to be a member of the Montgomery Chapter of the NAACP. She later said, “ I was the only woman there, and they needed a secretary, and I was too timid to say no.” She continued as secretary until 1957. Rosa worked directly for the head of the local branch. One of her main jobs was to write out every case that came into the office about discrimination that was done against the black people. She also kept the national organization informed of everything happening in Montgomery. She heard all the horrific stories of blacks and fought for their justice.

Every little thing Rosa Parks did that lead up to her refusal of giving up her seat had a personal consequence some good and others not so good. Due to economic sanctions used against activists, she lost her job at the department store. Her husband quit his job after his boss forbade him to talk about his wife or the legal case. Parks traveled and spoke extensively about the issues. After Rosa Parks got arrested this put a big strain on her marriage and family. Not knowing if she was safe resulted in keeping a shot gun in their house and boarding up the outside of the house to keep trespassers out and K. K. K members. In 1957 Raymond and Rosa moved to Hampton Virginia mostly because they could not find jobs.

Rosa and her family were now targets for white racists and in 1957 the family decided to move to Detroit to escape all of this. The 1970s was a decade of loss and suffering for Rosa in her personal life. Her family became ill; she and her husband had suffered stomach ulcers for years and both required hospitalization. In their 60s, her brother Sylvester and husband were both diagnosed with cancer, as was her mother. Rosa sometimes visited three hospitals in the same day. In spite of her fame Rosa was not a rich woman. She donated most of the money from speaking to civil rights causes, and lived on her staff salary and her husband's pension. Medical bills and time missed from work caused financial strain that required her to accept assistance from church groups and admirers.

The outcome of Rosa Parks hard work was the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This was a perfect opportunity to take a stand against racial discrimination. The blacks did this by distributing leaflets calling for the blacks to protest by boycotting the city buses. So on Monday the 5th of December 1955 the buses of Montgomery were almost empty. The blacks walked to work or went in a taxi as the black cab companies had bus fare prices. Some blacks could not afford the taxi prices as the court raised the taxi fares later. The MIA suggested a car pool 150 people including three whites supplied their cars so the bus boycott could continue. For thirteen months the 17, 000 black people in Montgomery walked to work or obtained lifts from the small car-owning black population of the city. Eventually, the loss of revenue and a decision by the Supreme Court forced the Montgomery Bus Company to accept integration, and the boycott came to an end on 20th December, 1956. After

the success of this campaign, Rosa became known as the “ mother of the Civil Rights Movement”.

The result of the Montgomery bus boycott and the Supreme Court action was in the black race favor. The results quoted from the book “ Black Civil Rights in the USA second edition.” “ The value of using the Supreme Court to oppose racial discrimination was further underlined.” “ States could no longer insist on their own laws of segregation on public transport.” “ Non-violence was shown to be a powerful weapon of direct action in civil rights campaigns.” “ Blacks of all social classes had found they could work together for each others’ benefit.” “ Important new leaders had emerged as national figures especially Martin Luther King Jr.” “ The black civil rights movement had been given a powerful boost.”

Therefore Rosa Parks faced many causes and consequences which lead to her breaking the law on December the first 1955, not only for herself but for other black African Americans who had suffered from racial discrimination. She became a huge name in history and still is to this day. “ I would like to be known as a person who is concerned about freedom, equality, justice and prosperity for all people,” said Rosa Parks.