

Jillian MacDonald

1 February 2012

“Unlikely Hero” Research Paper

### “Parking the Racism”

Who had to walk to and from school everyday even through snow or rain?

Everyday was a struggle for Louise because she could not ride the bus. This made her very annoyed that she could not ride in most vehicles without getting punished. Born on February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, she would soon fight against racism in the United States of America.

To begin with, Louise’s childhood was filled with racism and illness, which became a recurring theme that this “unlikely hero” would have to overcome. When she was having poor health, everyone in her household was sick, and it was hard to get well. James McCauley and Leona Edwards were Louise’s parents. At a young age in her life, her parents divorced. When they split up, Louise moved in with her mother in Pine Level, Alabama. She had to grow up on a farm with her close family and relatives which instilled in her how to be yourself and stand up for what you believe in. With diseases spreading throughout the farm, it was hard to keep Louise’s motivation and dedication up. Most of the time, she would deal with her illness called tonsillitis. There was no haven for Louise to go to because wherever she went she was immediately shackled by rude racist comments, diseases, and depression.

When this young girl walked to school, she felt that it was unfair that the “white world” was pampered with bountiful amounts of special treatment. Being bullied everyday because of the color skin bothered her, but she assimilated to it from being

independent and fighting for her own freedom. Thus, there were many hardships in Louise's childhood for this "unlikely hero" to overcome during her childhood.

Furthermore, this "unlikely hero" realized in her early years that was going to stand up for her rights. At a young age of eleven, she attended college at Industrial School for Girls in Montgomery. She studied academic courses. After studying at Industrial School for Girls, she decided to get more education at Alabama State Teachers College for Negroes, and there she went to learn science in laboratories. Later that year, Louise had to drop out to support her family that was dying from all the infections being allotted not only from individuals, but from the farm animals as well.

She married a barber named Raymond in December of 1943. They met near Louise's mother's house. Once married, Louise had to support her family by taking numerous jobs such as a housekeeper and seamstress. After marrying Raymond, Louise decided to go back to school and learn about racial rights at Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee. Surprisingly, who she worked for fostered and sponsored her to make legal action on her beliefs. The couple she had worked for were white and soon became Louise's friends. Therefore, this "unlikely hero" did numerous activities that helped her prepare to stand up for her freedom.

In addition to, Louise surpassed expectations on her job to get more money to provide for her family and was hard working. She wanted to be treated equally and because of this she was rewarded. Working long nights at Montgomery Fair Department Store made Louise tired. All she wanted to do was sit back and relax on the bus ride home. When she boarded the bus, she sat down in the back in the "colored" section in an open seat. When several white passengers boarded the bus, the bus driver asked

Louise to get up and move out of the seat so the white passengers could sit down. Back then it was illegal for a black person to refuse to white people. Louise just sat there and said, "I don't think I should stand up." This agitated the bus driver to the point where he said that he was going to call and have her arrested. She told him to go ahead and call the police as long as she gets to sit down. For Several months Louise was in jail. After hearing Louise's story, a man named Jo Ann Robinson came up with a brilliant idea to have a bus boycott. He posted the boycott form in the windows of the black people's church. Many of the black race decided to go forward with the boycott because they wanted to prove that the black race were people too. After work, the black people were to walk home and not take the bus until the bus companies lost money.

On December 5, 1955, the bus boycott was a thriving success. Over 40,000 black commuters walked home that day. This movement helped Louise get bailed out of jail although the jury thought her case was deceptive and that she was lying. Because she stood up, or should I say sat down for her rights as a black women she was able to get her way, and her whole race was able to sit on the bus freely.

All in all, Rosa Parks was rewarded with sublime respect, and ornate medals. Rosa was put into the Women's Hall of Fame and was allotted other medals too. In her memoir that she wrote herself it stated that before she was just a conventional women, and she was known all around the United States of America. It also said that after her arrest, when she was walking home, she slipped on an icy sidewalk. She broke two bones and was hospitalized until she was able to go a senior citizens apartment. At the apartment, she was taken care of until she died of cancer and geriatric dementia in

1979 at the age of ninety-two. So, Rosa Parks made history by standing up for what she believed in and took legal action that changed the racial differences in America.

#### Works Cited

- . "Rosa Louise Parks Biography." *Rosa & Raymond Institute For Self Development*. Mediakliq Multimedia Company, 2012. Web. 30 Jan 2012. <[http://www.rosaparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=118&Itemid=60](http://www.rosaparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=118&Itemid=60)>.
  
- . "Rosa Parks." *Wikipedia* . N.p., 1 Mar 2012. Web. 30 Jan 2012. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa\\_parks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_parks)>.