



PHOTO BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rosa Parks being fingerprinted in February 1956 by Deputy Sheriff D.H. Lackey after being arrested for boycotting public transportation in Montgomery, Ala.

A Heroine for Transit Rights

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

workshop on Highlander Folk School in Tennessee where several activist groups developed skills on leadership and civil disobedience.

Two other arrests of young black women activists refusing to move to the back of the bus occurred that same year, one of which Parks and another woman, Virginia Durr, raised money for.

Parks action was the first phase of a planned boycott of the bus company, whose ridership was 70 percent black at the time, a campaign that would cripple the bus line and spearheaded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The campaign had focused on Parks' case, but she was as integral to that campaign as she was merely a symbol of it. Indeed, the fliers announcing the boycott of the bus line were dropped on the doorsteps of African American homes in Montgomery the very afternoon of her arrest and the campaign launched King as a national civil rights figure.

Even the photos of Parks have been misconstrued in history. For instance, the photo of her getting finger-printed, which is often cited as taking place on Dec 1, 1955, actually occurred months later, when Montgomery criminalized the carpools that she participated in, in support of the bus boycott.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott was ultimately successful and in December 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a district court decision that had declared Montgomery's system of segregated seating unconstitutional.



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