

Claudette Colvin



Claudette Colvin was born September 5, 1939. She is a pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement. On March 2, 1955, she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery Alabama. She relied on the city's buses to get to and from school, because her parents did not own a car. Colvin was a member of the NAACP Youth Council and had been actively learning about the Civil Rights Movement in school. The bus was full, and Colvin was asked to give up her seat for a white person; she refused, stating she paid the same as everyone else. The police were called, and she was arrested and physically removed from the bus. Colvin said, "Young people think Rosa Parks just sat down on a bus and ended segregation, but that wasn't the case at all." Claudette Colvin was the fifteen-year-old that inspired and motivated Parks.

Fred Gray, Claudette Colvin's attorney, had a plan after the incident with Colvin. Someone else needed to be arrested, so Gray could take a stand. And according to their lawyer, Fred Gray, Parks was waiting to be asked to get off the bus. Rosa was an acquaintance and was an adult. She was advised to resist if and when she was asked to move or vacate the bus. Colvin was among the four plaintiffs included in the federal court case filed by civil rights attorney Fred Gray on February 1, 1956, as *Browder v. Gayle*. She testified before the three-judge panel that heard the case in the United States District Court. On June 13, 1956, the judges determined that the state and local laws requiring bus segregation in Alabama were unconstitutional.

According to Gray, Colvin was the truly extremely brave one since she was so young and had no back up at the time when she refused to cooperate. She moved to New York since she had difficulty finding employment in Montgomery. Similarly, Parks moved to Detroit. Claudette Colvin worked as a nurse's aide in a retirement home for 36 years. In my opinion, that is a character of a persistent caring person. She had two sons.

It could be said, she was the spark that ignited the Montgomery bus boycott movement; she rarely told her story once she moved to New York City. She has stated "I feel very, very proud of what I did," "I do feel like what I did was a spark and it caught on I'm not disappointed. Let the people know Rosa Parks was the right person for the boycott."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claudette_Colvin

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