

Before Rosa Parks: Claudette Colvin's Fight for Civil Rights

Annotated Bibliography
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Junior individual website.

Primary Sources

Abhinav, Kaul. "Black Residents Walking, Montgomery Bus Boycott, 1955." Patience. *Black Past, Remembered and Reclaimed*. Viewed 11/20/12 <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/montgomery-bus-boycott-1955-56>

This photo documents African American people walking. The people in this photo are of all ages. I notice that the people almost look proud to not be doing what whites want them to.

Azbell, Joe. "5,000 At Meeting Outline Boycott; Bullet Clips Bus." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. December 6, 1955. Web. Viewed 11/24/12. http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article reported on the first mass meeting by blacks. At the meeting 5,000 people came together to plan the boycott. This was where people voted to continue the boycott until they received integration and justice on busses. These meetings were very important to the boycott; they were a place for making decisions and a place for preserving morale.

Azbell, Joe, and Johnson, Tom. "Boycotters Plan 'Passive' Battle." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. February 24, 1956. Web. Viewed 11/24/12. http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article informs readers about a mass meeting discussing the boycott. During the meeting a dozen boycott leaders discussed the battle of public transportation. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said that even those who are growing weary must continue to fight. These meetings were as much educational as they were inspirational.

Azbell, Joe. "Blast Rocks Residence Of Bus Boycott Leader; None Injured After Bombing of King Home." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. January 31, 1956. Web. Viewed 11/24/12. http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

The article gave details about an attempted bombing at the Rev. Martin Luther King's home. This bombing was in response to the boycott. King responded by addressing a crowd of people and reinforcing the idea of peaceful protest. King was only 27 at the time. His leadership during the Montgomery bus boycott marked the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

Azbell, Joe. "5 Negroes Attack Segregation Laws In Federal Court." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. February 2, 1956. Web. Viewed 11/10/12.
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This newspaper article was a spectacular primary source. This article gave me a glimpse of the past. It helped me prove my thesis and see what reactions to the *Browder v. Gayle* case were. Another story in the newspaper from the same day also related to the boycott. It focused on the attempted bombing of NAACP leader E.D. Nixon (see other annotation for more details). It was so neat to see Claudette's name and other plaintiffs and leaders of the boycott's names in print from the time.

Azbell, Joe. "Negro Groups Ready Boycott Of City Lines." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. December 4, 1955. Web. Viewed 11/24/12.
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article was very interesting. It talks about the upcoming Negro boycott and even showed the letter WPA leader Jo Ann Robinson wrote advising Negroes to stay off buses following the arrest of Rosa Parks. (Read other annotation to learn significance of leaflet.) Joe Azbell the former editor for the *Montgomery Advertiser* was able to write this story only after being tipped of by an African American and NAACP leader E.D. Nixon.

Azbell, Joe. " 'Time To Be Frank' Mayor Stops Boycott Talk." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. January 24, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/24/12.

This article describes Montgomery Mayor W.A. Gayle's angry response to the ongoing bus boycott. Gayle said, "We have pussyfooted around on this boycott long enough and it has come time to be frank and honest." He said that the city had tried to deal with Negroes in a business-like fashion, but negotiations weren't working. This article shows opposition to the bus boycott and that the boycott was impacting the city.

Browder v. Gayle. District Court of the United States for the Middle District of Alabama. "Judgment." Judge Richard T. Rives, Judge Frank M. Johnson, Seybourne H. Lynne. June 19, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/26/12. National Archives. <http://www.archives.gov/atlanta/education/resources-by-state/images/alabama-judgment.pdf>

This court ruling was very significant. The federal judges in the district court ruled that segregation was unconstitutional. This ruling then led to an appeal that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court where Aurelia S. Browder, Susie McDonald, Claudette Colvin and Mary Louise Smith won. I was surprised that two judges in Alabama would rule that

segregation was unconstitutional. It's important to read that one judge disagreed because it shows opposition.

Carolyn Hamilton, Ann. Personal interview. November 10, 2012

This was a very interesting interview. Ann Carolyn Hamilton lived in the same neighborhood, King Hill, as Colvin and attended the same school. Ann gave me more examples of the hardships African Americans faced during this period. Ann told me about when Claudette stood up for justice. She also gave opinion for how African Americans now feel about Rosa Parks receiving much more the credit and recognition.

CBS Broadcasting Services. "Before Rosa Parks, Another Woman Defied

Segregation."

http://m.cbsnews.com/fullstory.rbml?catid=57571707&feed_id=29&video_id=29&feed=null

Video. Viewed 2/27/13

This interview provided me with current information about Colvin and showed how important she is even today.

Colvin, Claudette. Phone Interview. December 12, 2012.

Talking with Ms. Colvin was the key to my research. I was able to hear from Claudette about the day she changed history. She also told me about life during the Civil Rights Movement and what led up to her refusing to give up her seat. She then talked about her impact and why it was a turning point. Claudette discussed what The Rev. Martin Luther King told her and how Rosa Parks thanked her for being so brave. By talking with Claudette I was able to discover so much more that lay hidden. I was able to use this interview for every component of my project.

Democracy Now. "The Other Rosa Parks: Now 73, Claudette Colvin Was First to

Refuse Giving Up Seat on Montgomery Bus," 3/29/13.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=pW80tV31eL0# Video. Viewed 4/2/13.

This was a great interview with Colvin and Jeanne Theoharis who is the respected author of *The Rebellious Life of Rosa Parks*. It provided great quotes and backed up that Colvin helped inspire Rosa Parks.

"FBI SECURES BOYCOTT LIST." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. February 24, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/ 26/12.

http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This brief says that the FBI has found a list of African Americans who have been indicted and arrested during the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This article refers to an investigation by the FBI to attempt to discover bad things about boycott leaders and the actions. To find out more continue to annotation regarding secret FBI document on King. `

"Fred Gray, Civil Rights Lawyer." Gayle V. Browder (1956) and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Posted November 17, 2010 by JakeRainWater. Online. Viewed 11/10/12. <http://blogs.dickinson.edu/hist-404pinsker/2010/11/17/gayle-v-browder-1956-and-the-montgomery-bus-boycott/>

I included this picture on my website because Lawyer Fred Gray was very important to overturning segregation on buses. Fred Gray served Colvin and many other African Americans during the movement.

Gray, Fred. Phone interview. 4/15/13.

Talking with Fred Gray was such an honor. I was amazed at how much detail he could describe Browder v. Gayle. Fred Gray truly added a new side to my project, shedding light on the legal side of Colvin's story. Mr. Gray was also kind enough to recommend numerous sources for my research.

Gray, Fred, Langford, Charles. "Complaint Filed By Fred Gray and Charles Langford." Montgomery, Alabama, District Court. February 2, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/20/12.

This primary source was very helpful in showing me what demands Fred Gray and Charles Langford were going to court for. After the appeal of the case The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. commented saying the Browder side had received even more than they had been fighting for.

Gray, Fred. "Statement of Claudette Colvin." Montgomery, Alabama, District Court. March 1955. Print Viewed 11/10/12.

This statement helped me understand what Colvin said at her trial and what Fred Gray was fighting for. The statement also gave me many details of the arrest.

Headley, Paul and Ward, T.J. Montgomery Police Department. *Police Report for Claudette Colvin*. Montgomery, Alabama. March 2, 1955. Print. Obtained from the archives at Troy University's Rosa L. Parks Library and Museum, Montgomery Alabama.

This police report was a great primary source. It gave me the details of Colvin's arrest. The officers also claimed that Colvin had assaulted them while she was in the police car. Colvin said she struggled, but did not assault the officers. It was important to see real documents from the time of the incident. This document is significant because NAACP leaders chose not to use Colvin as a symbol for the boycotts because of the officers' claims.

Ingram, Bob. "Supreme Court Out Laws Bus Segregation." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. November 14, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/24/12.
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article was important. It gave a detailed report of the Supreme Court's decision to outlaw segregation on buses. Many people in the article predicted a blood bath after the decision. A Negro leader predicted that at that night's meeting there would be an unanimous decision to end the boycott. Finally The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. commented calling it "a glorious daybreak to end a long night of enforced segregation." This article is a great source because it displays both opposition and agreement to the court decision.

Knabe, J. Walter, Hamilton, Herman H. Jr. "Appeal to Browder v. Gayle." Montgomery, Alabama. June 29, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/10/12.

This appeal gave me the details of what the attorneys of Mayor Gayle were against and what they wanted to appeal. This primary source shows opposition to the case and integration on Montgomery Buses.

Leshner, Steve. "Officials Probing Blast In NAACP Leader's Yard." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. February 2, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/10/12.

This newspaper article was an important primary source. It showed me what reactions to the *Browder v. Gayle* case were like. The article talks about a bombing at NAACP leader's house, E.D. Nixon. This example proves that people were mad about the outcome of the case. The article also refers to the bombing of Martin Luther King Jr.'s house earlier that week.

Lument, Sidney. Director. Landau, Ely. Producer. "King: a filmed record...From Montgomery to Memphis." 1970. Film. Viewed 4/13/13.

This film was great in providing important excerpts from King's addresses and providing primary source footage of the boycott.

"Mary Louise Smith." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. Online Viewed 11/10/12.

http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/img/biophotos/bio_MaryLouiseSmith.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/bio_mlsmith.htm&usq=_yLIV-e0Vy60ACSnJBTgFm65sIR8=&h=404&w=300&sz=27&hl=en&start=1&sig2=14mKg7s_X9XQ44KFxxcA8Q&zoom=1&tbnid=9Z1LJ2IObwCytM:&tbnh=142&tbnw=109&ei=xy20UNLvleOiyAHt9IGwDw&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dmary%2Blouise%2Bsmith%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26tbo%3Dd%26imgrefurl%3Dhttp://www.montgomeryboycott.com/bio_mlsmith.htm%26imgurl%3Dhttp://www.montgomeryboycott.com/img/biophotos/bio_MaryLouiseSmith.jpg%26w%3D300%26h%3D404%26sig%3D101594430891206998366%26biw%3D2560%26bih%3D1119%26tbs%3Dsimg:CAESHwn1nUsnYg5vABoLCxCo1NgEGgIIFwwh_1Splg6k7YQY%26tbm%3Disch&um=1&itbs=1&iact=hc&vpx=12&vpy=128&dur=883&hovh=142&hovw=109&tx=74&ty=128&sig=101594430891206998366&page=1&ved=1t:429,r:0,s:0,i:93

I included this photo of Mary Louise Smith because she was another teen who stood up for justice. She, like Colvin, didn't receive credit the way Rosa Parks did.

McConagha, Al. "City Seeks Ruling On Plan To Start White Bus System." *The Montgomery Advertiser*, January 26, 1957. Print. Viewed 11/24/12.
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article shows opposition to the Browder v. Gayle case decision. The article discusses reports of whites wanting to re-segregate by forming an all white private bus company.

Norman, Georgette. Personal interview. November 10, 2012.

Interviewing Ms. Norman, Director and Curator of the Rosa L. Parks Library and Museum, was very important. Ms. Norman who lived through The Civil Rights Movement as an African American and has met civil rights heroes, helped to give me background about living under Jim Crow laws. Ms. Norman also helped to tell me how significant Colvin's action was.

Officer Young. "Claudette Colvin's Fingerprint records." Montgomery Police Department. Montgomery, Alabama. March 2, 1955. Print.

These fingerprints were helpful because they were proof of Colvin's arrest. They were an interesting document from the time.

PBS American Experience. "The Montgomery Bus Boycott."
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesonthepize/story/02_bus.html
Website/Video. Viewed 1/16/13.

This website provided in-depth sources about the Montgomery bus boycott including actual footage of people walking for justice and of Martin Luther King talking about the arrest of Rosa Parks.

Robinson, Jo Ann. "Don't Ride the Bus. Come to a Mass Meeting December 5."
Montgomery, Alabama. 1955. Print. Viewed 11/3/12

This leaflet was a huge primary source. This document helped prove my thesis that Colvin's action helped spark the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This document names Colvin and says it's time for a boycott. The document is also a great example of peaceful protesting. Instead of encouraging violence, Jo Ann Robinson, who was a leader of the Women's Political Council, WPC, encouraged a boycott and a meeting.

Staff Report, Montgomery Advertiser. "Boycott Pool Denied Car Insurance Policies."
The Montgomery Advertiser. September 17, 1956. Print Viewed
11/20/12 http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article tells readers that boycott carpool organizers are being denied insurance for their vehicles. Later in the boycott whites damaged some of the vehicles for the boycott. Terry Mastin, representative of the Montgomery Association of Fire and Casualty Insurance Agents who were being charged for denying the services, responded saying, "It's not true. I haven't heard one thing about anyone ganging up on the carpool operators." The Rev. Robert Graetz referred to this as an ongoing game to try to kill the boycott. This shows that many people treated Negroes with hate.

Staff Report, Montgomery Advertiser. "Segregation Case Reset For March 18." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. March 10, 1955. Print. Viewed 11/24/12
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article gave me a short description of when Colvin stood up for her rights. The article's purpose was to inform citizens about a change of date for Colvin's case. The article talks about the arresting officers who said they received abuse, which was one of the charges.

Staff Report, Montgomery Advertiser. "Negro Churches, Residences Suffer \$50,000 Bomb Damage." *The Montgomery Advertiser*. January 11, 1957. Print. Viewed 11/24/12.
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article shows the direct unintended consequences and opposition to the Browder v. Gayle Decision. This story is one of many that report on damage to Negro property.

Staff Report, Montgomery Advertiser. "Negro Jailed Here For 'Overlooking' Bus Segregation" *The Montgomery Advertiser*. December 1, 1955. Print. Viewed 11/10/12.
http://www.montgomeryboycott.com/index_article.htm

This article was important because it's from the day Rosa Parks was arrested. I found it interesting that the article was very small and almost unnoticeable next to the advertisements on one of the back pages of the newspaper.

Sullen, Richard. Personal Interview. November 10, 2012. Montgomery, Alabama.

Richard Sullen grew up in the same neighborhood as Claudette Colvin. He told me some of the places that were segregated during the Jim Crow era. Sullen also told me why he thinks Colvin should receive more recognition.

The United States of America. Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Racial Situation*. Montgomery, Alabama. January 4, 1956. Print. Viewed 11/24/12

This secret report from a mobile agent in Montgomery, Alabama to the FBI director was one of many informational forwards. Starting 12/7/55 FBI agents began forwarding information about the bus boycott to the director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover. This report was sent from an agent in charge of finding derogatory information about the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. The agent probably was a member of the Montgomery Police Department.

Weiner, Dan. "The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. at a mass meeting." 1956. Photograph. Montgomery, Alabama. Online. Viewed 11/24/12.
http://www.amistadresource.org/civil_rights_era/montgomery_bus_boycott.html

This photo helped me visualize how many people attended the mass meetings for the boycott. I think this has to do with how powerful leaders like The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. were.

Secondary Sources

Adler, Margot. "Before Rosa Parks, There Was Claudette Colvin." Weekend Edition Sunday. National Public Radio. New York. March 15, 2009. Radio.
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=101719889>

This radio story was a very good source. The start provided me with background about the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Later Claudette Colvin was interviewed by Margot Adler and she described many of the details of the Bus Boycott. It was very interesting to hear Colvin talk about her own change and impact.

Barnes, Brooks. "From Footnote to Fame in Civil Rights History." The New York Times. November 26, 2009.
<http://query.nytimes.com/search/sitesearch/#/claudette+colvin/> Viewed 11/2/12

This article gave me a good understanding of when Claudette Colvin refused to give up her seat on the bus. It also provided me with quotes from various interviews with Colvin.

Goodheart, Adam. "10 Days That Changed History." The New York Times. July 2, 2006.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/02/weekinreview/02goodheart.html?pagewanted=print> Viewed: 11/4/12

This article was very important because part of it proves that Claudette Colvin's actions were a major turning point in the Civil Rights Movement. It

also explains how the Montgomery Bus Boycott turned Martin Luther King Jr. into a leader. Finally, it explains why Claudette Colvin is not better known today.

Gray, Eliza. "A Forgotten Contribution." The Daily Beast. March 1, 2009.
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2009/03/01/a-forgotten-contribution.html> Viewed 11/6/12

This article gave me more background on Claudette Colvin. The information helped me format my thesis. This article also introduced me to Phillip Hoose's book "Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice."

Hoose, Phillip M. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. New York: Melanie Kroupa /Farrar Straus Giroux, 2009. Print.

This book was an excellent source. It provided me with background and gave lots of details about Claudette Colvin's role in the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The book's notes also led me to further information.

Hoose, Phillip. *We Were There, Too!* New York: Melanie Kroupa /Farrar Straus Giroux, 2001. Print.

This book helped me find my topic. While in search for a topic, I came across this book at the library and soon became interested in Claudette Colvin. This book gave me important facts about Claudette Colvin and the events leading up to and following subsequently concerning the incident.

Welch, Catherine A. *Children of the Civil Rights Era*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Carolrhoda Books, Inc. 2001.

This book helped me interpret the courageous acts demonstrated by youth during the Civil Rights Movement. The book included Claudette Colvin's actions and many other youth citizens who marched, protested, were arrested and risked their lives for justice.

Williams, Donnie. *The Thunder of Angels*. Chicago, Illinois. Lawrence Hill Books. 2006

This book gave me extensive information about people who sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and other citizens who fought the grasp of Jim Crow. The book included excerpts from interviews with many participants of the movement.