



In such tremulous times, it is important to revisit history. Throughout history, women have played a pivotal role in defining the world today. Learning from history allows us to better understand how far we've come in the present day, and allows us to move into the future with a wider perspective.

In this month's thinkHER newsletter, we will be highlighting the work of **Rosa Parks**, the American activist who campaigned valiantly in the American Civil Rights Movement. Collaborating with other civil rights figures such as Martin Luther King Jr, **Rosa Parks** was integral in the movement against racial segregation in America from the 1950s.

Under the Jim Crow laws, racial segregation was legal in the Southern American States. This meant that African Americans were forced to sit at the back of buses, surrendering their seat to all white people even though the majority of the bus passengers were black then.

Of course, **Rosa Parks** would not stand for that. (Literally!)

Rosa Parks was the catalyst for the Montgomery Bus Boycott over December 1955 to 1956, after she refused to yield her seat to a white man. For this act of bravery, she was arrested and this then snowballed into a major boycott of the public bus system by African American bus riders. The movement demands were simple: the hiring of black bus drivers and first-come-first-service seating policies. The black community rallied behind this, with organised carpools and African American taxi drivers supporting the movement by offering bus-fare prices to ensure people kept mobile during the boycott.

Needless to say, **Rosa Parks** was successful in her fight against racial segregation. However, she was not alone in her activism. We cannot discount the efforts of others involved in the movement. Mary Louise Smith was only 18 when she was arrested for taking a similar stand. Susie McDonald was in her seventies when she was similarly arrested in her participation. Regardless of age, the fundamental belief of creating a better society is timeless.

While we as individuals may feel powerless to incite change, just remember: a movement takes people, but it takes one to inspire them.

We can all be remarkable!