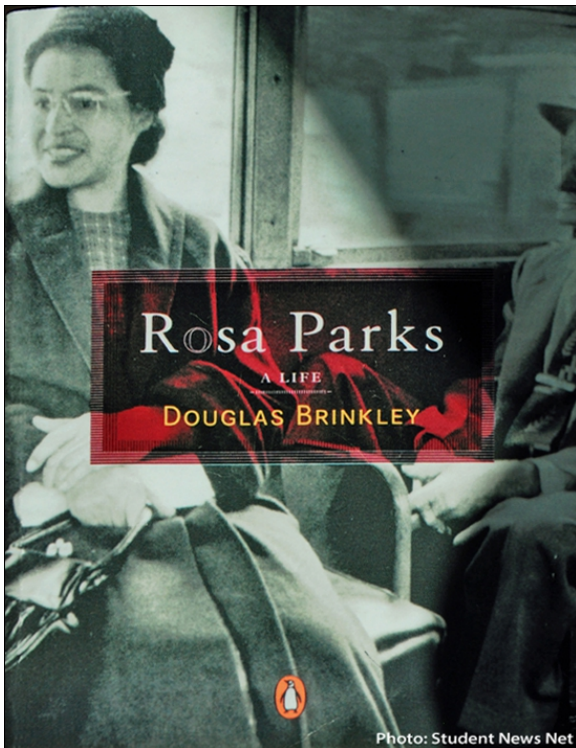


Study Guide and Learning Activities: Part II for *Rosa Parks: A Life* by Dr. Douglas Brinkley

This study guide has been developed by Judy S. Miller, M.Ed., M.A., Student News Net editor, in support of the April 27, 2018 Student News Net Symposium: **Actions and Accomplishments of African American Women of the 1940s and 1950s**. Dr. Douglas Brinkley will be the keynote speaker discussing his book, *Rosa Parks: A Life*, published in 2000. Students are invited to read the book before the Symposium and submit presentations to the Symposium through this website beginning in March.

Symposium website: www.studentshareknowledge.com



Rosa Parks: A Life by Douglas Brinkley



Rosa Parks is fingerprinted during her second arrest on Feb. 22, 1956. (Photo: Library of Congress)

Overview

Age range: grades 7-12

Part I – Chapters 1 through 9 (pp. 1-173)

Part I of the Study Guide covers the life of Rosa Parks through her Dec. 1, 1955 refusal to give up her seat on Montgomery City Bus #2857 and the immediate aftermath of that brave action. For her safety, her brother convinced Rosa and Raymond, her husband, to move to Detroit in 1957 where she lived until her death in 2005.

Part II – Chapters 10-12 (pp. 174-246)

Part II of the Study Guide covers the last three chapters in the book from 1957 on after Rosa Parks moved to Detroit.

Objectives:

After reading Dr. Brinkley's book and completing activities in this study guide, students will be able to:

1. Summarize the reason Dr. Brinkley chose to write a biography of Rosa Parks (1913-2005).
2. Summarize the process Dr. Brinkley followed in writing his biography on Rosa Parks.
3. List, recall, and explain the significance of eight key years in the life of Rosa Parks and the Civil Rights Movement.
4. Explain multiple experiences that coalesced to lead Rosa Parks to a lifelong commitment and dedication to the Civil Rights Movement.
5. Explain why Rosa Parks was uniquely qualified to help advance the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and beyond.
6. Analyze why Rosa Parks' Dec. 1, 1955 action on the Montgomery, Alabama city bus fostered a national awareness of discriminatory practices (Jim Crow laws) against African Americans and widespread resolve to address the injustice.
7. Compare Rosa Parks' life before and after her Dec. 1, 1955 action on the Montgomery city bus.
8. Formulate a statement on the legacy of Rosa Parks.
9. Create a presentation based on Dr. Brinkley's book.

Part II (Chapters 10-12)

A. Chapter 10 (pp. 174-194): Study Guide and Questions

In 1957, Rosa and Raymond, her husband, left their home in Montgomery, Alabama to move to Detroit where Sylvester, her younger brother, lived with his family. Sylvester had moved from Montgomery to Detroit in 1946 shortly after he returned home from serving in the U.S. Army during WWII.

In December 1945, Sylvester came home to Montgomery from an overseas deployment only to find that discriminatory practices remained. Imagine being an African American veteran returning from serving on the beaches of Normandy where unimaginable horror took place only to be turned away at home from the voting booth, places of worship, restaurants, hotels, and even spat upon. Nazi war prisoners in camps in the United States had certain privileges African Americans did not. Nazi Prisoners-of-War (POWs) would sometimes be taken out to eat. They entered through the front door of cafes and their African American guards were forced to enter through the back door (p. 63). About 500,000 African Americans served during WWII. Realizing that even risking life and limb for your country in lands far and wide would not overcome racism and bigotry at home had to have been a devastating and demoralizing blow to returning soldiers and those at home dedicated to the success of the Double V campaign.

On p. 175, Dr. Brinkley outlines three reasons why Rosa and Raymond finally decided to move from Montgomery to Detroit. In Detroit, Rosa found a job again as a seamstress. But she continued her work as a civil rights activist and remained dedicated to her church.

Pages 181-189 are incredibly fascinating pages in the book. It's quite possible had Dr. Brinkley not decided to research Rosa's life, few people would know that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, held

a dress rehearsal for his August 28, 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in Detroit just weeks before. On June 23, 1963, Dr. King came to Detroit where Rosa joined him for King's March to Freedom.

On p. 187, we learn of Dr. King's ironclad rule not to endorse political candidates. He broke his rule when Rosa called. Having the support of Rosa and Dr. King, John Conyers was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1964. The first thing Conyers did was hire Rosa to work in his Detroit office, a position she held from 1965-1988. On pp. 188-189, Conyers describes Rosa and marvels at her peaceful and serious personality.

Supporting Questions

1. What were the three reasons Rosa and Raymond finally decided to move from Montgomery to Detroit in 1957?
2. Of the three reasons, which one hurt Rosa the most?
3. Whom did Rosa meet while working as a seamstress?
4. What were Rosa's job responsibilities when she worked for Rep. Conyers?
5. What did Rosa think of Dr. King's speech in Detroit at the King's March to Freedom rally?

Compelling Questions

1. Why did Rosa need the strength of her convictions even more so after her brave action on the bus and the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956?
2. Why did Rosa support John Conyers so adamantly that she called Dr. King to enlist his help in getting him elected to Congress?
3. Why was Dr. King's rally in Detroit an explicit harbinger of what was to come in August at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom held on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.
4. Was the Double V campaign a success? Why or why not?
5. Why is John Conyers' description of Rosa Parks such a valuable part of American history and the history of the Civil Rights Movement?

B. Chapters 11-12 (pp. 194-231): Study Guide and Questions

Moving to Detroit did not prevent Rosa and Raymond from experiencing frightening days because of policies and practices of racial segregation. On pp. 202-203, Dr. Brinkley describes how Detroit's image as a model city of race relations was shattered on July 23, 1967 when the city erupted into eight days of rioting.

Then on April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated as he stood on a hotel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee. The entire world suffered a "cruel jolt," Dr. Brinkley states on p.204. Rosa began feeling "that what had been healthy chaos in the 1950s had soured into destructive anarchy in the 1960s, marked by race riots and anti-Vietnam War protests that left ghettos burning, college campuses seething, and John F. Kennedy, Malcom X, and Martin Luther King, Jr. dead." (p. 204)

"A part of Rosa Parks died with King that day." (p. 205)

On p. 210, Dr. Brinkley talks about Rosa's unconditional love for her husband. Raymond died in

1977.

In 1987, the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development was established in Detroit. (p. 213) The Institute took youth on summer “freedom rides” to important historic sites (p. 215). Between 1987-2000, more than five thousand young people took part in Institute programs. (p. 215)

In 1994, Rosa was attacked in her apartment. She then moved to Detroit's Riverfront Towers where she lived on the 25th floor. She wished Raymond was alive to see the panoramic views from her windows (p. 218)

Supporting Questions

1. In 1967, what did the Michigan governor cite as the reason for the horrible riots?
2. What personal tragedies did Rosa experience during this time?

Compelling Questions

1. How did policies and practices of segregation lead to the 1967 race riots in Detroit, years after laws were passed protecting civil rights and voting rights?
2. What does Dr. Brinkley mean when he states: “A part of Rosa Parks died with King that day.” (p. 205)
3. What was the “healthy chaos” of the 1950s? What was the “destructive anarchy” of the 1960s?
4. What is unconditional love? How did Rosa and Raymond demonstrate that quality toward one another during their marriage?

C. ACTIVITY (Objective 7)

Divide the class into two groups. On two large pieces of paper, draw a series of concentric circles on each. Label one set of circles “Before 1957” and the other set of circles “1957 and after.” Have each group work on one paper. Fill in the circles beginning with the innermost circle representing the core foundation of Rosa Parks' life in those two time periods. Working outward, fill in the circles with important aspects and experiences of her life, noting similarities and differences during the two time periods. Bring the two groups together and present both papers. Discuss.

D. ACTIVITY (Objective 8)

Write a 1-2 page summary of Rosa's legacy based on the book, Symposium materials, and learning activities. Present to the class. When all papers have been presented, discuss her legacy. As a group, formulate a one-page summary of bullet points to tell the story of her life. Present the information to younger classes.

E. ACTIVITY (Objective 9)

Individually or as a group, prepare a presentation about the book and/or ancillary topics of the Symposium. Presentations can be in the form of text, video, PowerPoint, graphical, website, or other modes of communication for a wider on-demand audience.