

# The Brown Quarterly

Quarterly Newsletter for Classroom Teachers

Volume 5 No. 1

Women's History Month Issue

Winter 2002

## Women Who Made a Difference

### Rosa Parks

**O**n Dec. 1, 1955, a 42-year-old African American seamstress engaged in a simple act of civil disobedience that launched a pivotal event in the civil rights movement. The quiet courageous act of Rosa Parks changed the country and redirected the course of history.

On her way home from work, Rosa was asked to move to another row on the bus and give her seat to a white man. She said she would have given up her seat to child or elderly person, but when others in the row moved, Rosa did not.

"All I felt was tired," Parks recalls in her 1995 book, *Quiet Strength*. "Tired of being pushed around. Tired of seeing the bad treatment and disrespect of children, women and men just because of the color of their skin."

"No," she said, in spite of a state law saying that you had to move when the driver told you to, "I kept thinking about my mother and my grandparents and how strong they were ... I knew there was a possibility of being mistreated, but an opportunity was being given to me ..."

When told that the bus driver would have her arrested, she said, "You may do that." The police were called and she was driven to jail, fingerprinted and put in a cell. A white woman integrationist joined the president of the Montgomery NAACP chapter, where she served as secretary, to pay her \$100 bail. Despite her husband's fear that she would be killed, Rosa agreed to an attempt to break down segregation with her case.

Four days later she was found guilty of disorderly conduct and the Montgomery bus boycott began. Black cab companies joined 150 vehicles, including station wagons financed by supporters from around the country, transporting 40,000

people every day at 32 pickup sites, almost around the clock. Black people used these alternatives or just walked to work. Because 70 percent of the people riding busses were African American, the bus company lost money.

The 381-day Montgomery Bus Boycott ended when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in November of 1956 that segregation of bus service was unconstitutional. The city was served with papers and the next day Rosa boarded a bus, and for the first time was allowed to sit in any unoccupied seat.

**B**ut she had lost her seamstress job and was unable to find work. Her family was harassed and threatened. In 1957, she moved along with her mother and husband to Detroit where her brother Sylvester lived.

Rosa Louise was born Feb. 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, to James and Leona McCauley. They moved to live with her maternal grandparents when Rosa was two. Her mother, a school teacher, taught Rosa at home until she was 11. Then Rosa moved to Montgomery to live with her aunt. She enrolled in a private school, the Montgomery Industrial School for Girls, where she cleaned classrooms to pay her tuition. Later she attended Booker T. Washington High School but had to leave to take care of her sick mother and do the cleaning, cooking and shopping for the family.

When Rosa was 20, she married Raymond Parks. Raymond was self-taught and supported his wife's desire to return to school in 1934 to earn her high school diploma.



*Rosa Parks saw her decision not to give up her seat on the bus as an opportunity being given to her.*

*continued on page 4*

## A Personal Perspective

**T**he Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development is a fitting chapter in a life made famous by a simple, self-respecting act. Co-founded by the petite woman who touched off a civil rights firestorm, the institute seeks to instill the hallmarks of Rosa Parks' legacy: history, self-discipline and quiet strength.

In 1987, Mrs. Parks and I, a longtime friend of hers, created the institute to honor Mrs. Parks' late husband, Raymond, who died in 1977. Today, the institute is internationally known for its Pathways to Freedom, a program for young people that traces the physical and philosophical path of the civil rights movement. About 150 young people from around the world participate in Pathways each summer.

The purpose of the institute is to motivate and direct youth not targeted by other programs to achieve their highest potential. Young participants, ages 11 to 17, meet with Mrs. Parks and other national leaders. Those who take the annual bus journey follow aspects of civil rights history, from the Underground Railroad to the Freedom Riders.

"It's a research program," says Anita Peek, executive director of the institute. "The bus trip is part of the research. We focus on a different pathway each year. One year it was the Buffalo Soldiers."

Today, the institute has chapters in several places, including Alabama, Arizona, California, Canada, Georgia, Michigan, Mississippi, New York and Tennessee. In metro Detroit, institute programs are held in a variety of locations, including Mrs. Parks former home on Detroit's west side, the Detroit and Highland Park YWCAs, the William Walker Recreation Center and area churches.

Although not all institute participants join the summer Pathways to Freedom trip, institute classes are considered preparation for the ride. Programs are positive, emphasizing substance abuse prevention, etiquette, nutrition, banking skills, life skills and reading comprehension. Another program enlists young people to teach computer skills to senior citizens.

"A lot of times, young people don't have patience for seniors or vice versa," Ms. Peek says. "But they're patient when they have a task." Ultimately, all of the institute's programs are designed to endow young people with the skills necessary to work for the cause of human rights.

The institute is a nonprofit organization and its programs are open to all children. The address of the Detroit office of the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development is 65 Cadillac Square, Suite 2200, Detroit, MI 48226.

### The Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute



by  
Elaine  
Eason Steele  
Co-founder

The Brown Foundation is pleased to publish this newsletter for classroom teachers through which we will share resources available from national parks and museums. Established to maintain the legacy of the *Brown* decision, our organization plays an exciting role as a park partner. In 1990 we were instrumental in developing *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site in Topeka, Kansas. We hope you enjoy the *Brown Quarterly* and we eagerly anticipate your comments.

Executive Director:  
Cheryl Brown  
Henderson

Program Associate:  
Linda Brown  
Thompson

Editor/Design:  
Grace L. Wilson  
gwilson1@kscable.com

Mailing Support:  
Chelsey Smith

### The Troy State University Montgomery Rosa Parks Library and Museum

The Rosa Parks Library and Museum gives visitors an opportunity to learn about the event that began the famous Montgomery bus boycott. Where once only a marker and an abandoned building existed, a state-of-the-art interactive museum now stands. A major landmark in the revitalization of downtown Montgomery, the museum was built on the site of the old Empire Theatre where Rosa Parks made her historic stand in 1955. The interpretive museum, with a 103 seat auditorium, occupies the first floor of a three-story, 55,000 square foot building that also houses the TSUM Library. Exhibits tell of the courage of early civil rights activists and include a restored 1955 station wagon, a replica of the bus on which Mrs. Parks was sitting that day, and historical documents loaned from the city. For tours, call (334) 241-8661. A librarian on duty at The Troy State University Montgomery Library assists patrons with research and reference needs at 251 Montgomery St, Montgomery, AL 36104. Email: [library@tsum.edu](mailto:library@tsum.edu).

# Women Who Made a Difference

## Rosa Parks

*continued from page 1*

**P**arks took a job as a seamstress at a Montgomery department store and became a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She also joined the Voters League and helped African American citizens pass tests that had been set up to make it difficult for them to vote. Prior to her arrest, Parks had tried to vote several times when it was nearly impossible and had experienced run-ins with other bus drivers.

"I didn't want to pay my fare and then go around to the back door, because many times, even if you did that, you might not get on the bus at all," said Parks.

In 1965 she joined the staff of U.S. Representative John Conyers of Michigan and worked there until her retirement in 1988. Parks has traveled the country extensively, lecturing on civil rights. She has actively fought racial injustice, standing up for what she believes in and sharing her message with others.

Through the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development, a nonprofit organization she co-founded with Elaine Steele in 1987, she works with young people to help them achieve their full potential. The institute has a program called Pathways to Freedom for children ages 11-18. The children travel across the country tracing the Underground Railroad and visiting the scenes of critical events in the civil rights movement. "Mrs. Parks is a role model that these students look up to, and they feel very honored and privileged to be in her company. And she's very gracious to accompany the students to these activities," said Steele.

Rosa Parks has been called "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" for her role in the long struggle against segregation. In April 1998, she attended the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Troy State University Montgomery Rosa Parks Library and Museum located on the spot she was arrested more than 40 years ago.

"We still have a long way to go in improving the race relations in this country ... We don't have enough young people who are concerned and who are exposed to the

civil rights movement," said Parks, "and I would like to see more exposure and get their interest, but I think it should just be history, period, and not thinking in terms of only Black History Month." She is firm in her belief that enough people will have the courage and dedication to make the country better than it is.

"Four decades later I am still uncomfortable with the credit given to me for starting the bus boycott," Parks wrote in her book, *Quiet Strength*. "I would like people to know I was not the only person involved. I was just one of many who fought for freedom."

In 1994, Parks was attacked outside of her home by a man who wanted money from her. "I pray for this young man and the conditions in our country that have made him this way," she later wrote. Despite the violence and crime in our society, we should not let fear overwhelm us. We must remain strong."

*Photos for article provided by the Rosa Parks Museum.*



*Rosa Parks with participants of Pathways to Freedom at the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute in Montgomery.*

**John Lewis** of Congress from the state of Georgia and author of *Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, will be the speaker on the evening of **May 17** sponsored by the Brown v. Board 50th Anniversary Coalition. Watch for more information from The Brown Foundation at [brownvboard.org](http://brownvboard.org).

# Women who made a difference...

## More than a decade as leader of India: *Indira Gandhi*



*"I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people."*

**I**ndira Gandhi (1917-1984) was the only child of Kamla and Jawaharlal Nehru. A childhood photograph shows her sitting by the bedside of Mahatma Gandhi. Though she was not active in his struggle, she had the opportunity to know many political leaders.

She joined the Congress Party in 1938 and was jailed by the British for her support of India's independence from Great Britain. After India's independence, her father, a widower, became Prime Minister. Indira Gandhi managed his official residence and went with him on foreign trips.

After her father's death, she was elected to Parliament in 1966. When the Prime Minister died unexpectedly, Indira Gandhi was picked as a compromise candidate. Some thought she could be easily manipulated, but she showed her political skills, pushing others out of power.

As Prime Minister from 1966-77, she was popular after India's victory in the war against Pakistan. She was seen as a tough political leader when India exploded a nuclear device in 1974. However, there were angry demonstrations against inflation, the poor economy and corruption. She was found guilty of illegal campaign practices in 1975, and some demanded her resignation.

Gandhi responded by declaring a state of emergency, imprisoning foes and censoring the press. In 1977, she called for new elections, but was defeated by a coalition of several political parties. Expelled from Parliament, she reorganized her party and was re-elected as Prime Minister three years later.

In her second term from 1980-84, Indira Gandhi ordered an assault which damaged a sacred Sikh temple where armed terrorists were waging a campaign against the government. In 1984, she was assassinated by two of her own Sikh bodyguards. At her death, her son Rajiv was sworn in as Prime Minister.

## 3 term "Iron Lady" of England: *Margaret Thatcher*



*"If you just set out to be liked, you would be prepared to compromise on anything at any time, and you would achieve nothing."*

**A** strong-willed child, Margaret Thatcher was born in 1925 in Lincolnshire, England. She was the daughter of grocer and a dressmaker. Her father was active in politics as an alderman and mayor.

After earning a degree in natural science and a master of arts from Oxford in 1950, she worked as a research chemist, reading for the Bar in her spare time. In 1954, she started practice as a barrister, specializing in taxation. She lost two parliamentary elections before marrying Denis Thatcher in 1951.

In 1959 she won a seat in the House of Commons. Thatcher was secretary for pensions and insurance from 1961-64. While her party was in opposition, she was a spokesperson and a member of the Shadow Cabinet. In the 70s, she was minister of Education and Science. One newspaper named her the most unpopular woman in Britain, but she continued to rise in politics, becoming leader of the Conservative party in 1975.

When the Conservatives returned to power, she became a privy counsellor and a spokesperson, first on the environment and later on treasury matters. Following the success of the Conservatives in 1979, Thatcher became the first woman to be elected Prime Minister of Great Britain. She is the first Prime Minister of the 20th century to serve three consecutive terms. She earned the nickname "The Iron Lady" because of her hard line against the USSR over their invasion of Afghanistan, and against Argentina when they challenged Britain's right to the Falkland Islands. In 1990 she resigned as prime minister, although she stayed in Parliament until 1992.

Mrs. Thatcher has written *The Downing Street Years* and *The Path to Power*. She has a twin son and daughter. Libby Hughes has written a book about her for young adults entitled *Madam Prime Minister: A Biography of Margaret Thatcher*.

**See Web sites about these and other women leaders listed on page 6.**

# ...as leaders of their nations

## 2nd Philippine woman president: *Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo*

**P**hilippine President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, was elected Senator during her first try in politics in 1992. She was re-elected in 1995, authored 55 economic and social reform laws and was named outstanding Senator several times.

Elected vice president in 1998, she was sworn in as the 14th president of the Philippines in 2001, the second woman to be swept into power by a peaceful movement (see Corazon Aquino). Born in 1947, Arroyo was valedictorian of her convent high school class and attended college in the United States. Back home, she graduated magna cum laude with a B.S. in Commerce. After earning her Ph.D., she was a professor and lecturer in Economics.

Arroyo entered government service in the Department of Trade and Industry during the Aquino Administration and rose to Undersecretary of Trade and Industry. While vice president, she was concurrent Secretary of Social Welfare and Development. She is married to lawyer-businessman Jose Miguel Arroyo and has three children.

## Pakistan leader ousted in 1997: *Benazir Bhutto*

**B**orn in 1953, Benazir Bhutto graduated from Radcliffe and studied politics and economics in England. When she returned home in 1977, her father's election as Prime Minister was challenged. Citing demonstrations and civil disorder, the military took power. Her father was executed by Gen. Zia's military government. She was detained, then allowed to leave Pakistan.

When a brother died mysteriously, Bhutto took part in anti-government rallies, was arrested and released. Upon receiving a tumultuous public welcome, she demanded that Zia step down. Elected co-chair of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), she was re-arrested but later released.

Bhutto was elected prime minister in 1988, the first woman leader of an Islamic (Muslim) country. She wanted to return Pakistan to civilian rule and oust her father's enemies. In 1996 she had several rival leaders arrested during demonstrations. When her husband, a cabinet member, was accused of taking government bribes, her government was charged with corruption and dismissed. She was defeated in national elections in 1997.

## Elected leader under house arrest:

### *Aung San Suu Kyi*

*Awng-Sahn-Soo-Chee*



*"Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it..."*

**I**n 1991 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma (Myanmar) to recognize her struggle for democracy, human rights and ethnic conciliation by peaceful means. Held under house arrest by Myanmar's military dictatorship, Suu Kyi was unable to accept the award and was represented at the ceremony by her husband and two sons.

Suu Kyi's father, assassinated when she was only two, wanted to liberate Burma. Suu Kyi became interested in Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence when her mother was ambassador to India.

Suu Kyi worked at the United Nations in New York, married a British scholar, spent time in Bhutan, and then in England. When she married, she told her husband that the day might come when her country might need her.

When her mother was dying, she returned to Burma and witnessed the government brutally repressing an opposition movement. She became the leader of a political party using non-violent means to resist the regime. With her Buddhist faith as the foundation for her beliefs, she knew she needed to be fearless. Once while campaigning, she kept walking down the street in spite of a line of soldiers prepared to fire on her. The order was withdrawn.

The 1990 election resulted in a clear victory for her party, but the regime ignored the election results and jailed its leaders. Put under house arrest, Suu Kyi was to be released if she left country permanently, but she stayed.

Suu Kyi has been under detention, separated from her two sons, despite efforts by the United Nations. Her book, *Freedom from Fear*, was published by her husband, Michael Aris, but she and Aris were not allowed one last visit when he was dying of cancer.

More than a year of closed-door meetings did not end the deadlock over the junta's refusal to cede power to Suu Kyi's political party, but many political prisoners were released. People believed she might be freed on Jan. 4, 2002, their independence day, but instead the NLD party again demanded her freedom and a speedy transition to democracy.

Myanmar has been isolated by much of the international community over its treatment of Suu Kyi and NLD and sanctions have hurt the country's struggling economy.

## Women Who Made a Difference

### **Irish women peace activists: Mairead Corrigan & Betty Williams**

Three children were killed by a Irish (IRA) gunman's car fleeing British soldiers. This senseless tragedy was a part of the ongoing violence in Northern Ireland between Catholic and Protestant extremists.

Two women, Betty Williams, who came upon the scene, and Mairead Corrigan, the aunt of the children, led marches in which Protestants and Catholics walked together to demonstrate against violence. Many people in Northern Ireland recognized that violence would not bring social justice, but Williams and Corrigan had the courage to take the first step.

At the presentation of their Nobel Peace Prize in 1976, it was said, "In the name of humanity and love of their neighbor; someone had to start forgiving... [and] shine forth when hatred and revenge threaten to dominate."

Betty Williams emigrated to the United States, where she taught and lectured. Mairead Corrigan Maguire continued to carry the message of non-violence to other countries. *Making Peace in Northern Ireland* is a book about them for ages 9-12. On the Web, visit [www.poets4peace.com](http://www.poets4peace.com).

### **Madeline Albright - United States**

[www.theglassceiling.com/biographies/bio4.htm](http://www.theglassceiling.com/biographies/bio4.htm)

### **Gloria Arroyo - The Philippines**

[www.kgma.org/speech.html](http://www.kgma.org/speech.html)

See also <http://www.wic.org/bio/caquino.html>

### **Aung San Suu Kyi - Burma (Myanmar)**

[www.dassk.com/](http://www.dassk.com/)

### **Benazir Bhutto - Pakistan**

[www.wic.org/bio/index\\_bio.htm](http://www.wic.org/bio/index_bio.htm)

[womenshistory.tqn.com/cs/bhutto/](http://womenshistory.tqn.com/cs/bhutto/)

### **Kim Campbell - Canada**

[www.nlc-bnc.ca/2/12/index-e.html](http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/2/12/index-e.html)

### **Indira Ghandi - India**

[www.encyclopedia.com/articles/04900.html](http://www.encyclopedia.com/articles/04900.html)

### **Barbara Jordan - United States**

[www.lnstar.com/mall/texasinfo/bjordan.htm](http://www.lnstar.com/mall/texasinfo/bjordan.htm)

### **Rosa Parks - United States**

[time.com/time/time100/heroes/profile/parks03.html](http://time.com/time/time100/heroes/profile/parks03.html)

### **Margaret Thatcher - England**

[www.womenshistory.about.com](http://www.womenshistory.about.com) (Notable women)

### **Mairead Corrigan & Betty Williams - Ireland**

[www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/](http://www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/)

[www.almaz.com/nobel/women.html](http://www.almaz.com/nobel/women.html)

### **Other Sites:**

[www.greatwomen.org/](http://www.greatwomen.org/)

[www.womeninworldhistory.com/](http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/)

Or use a multi-search engine (like [dogpile.com](http://dogpile.com)).

## BOOK NOOK

### **Wilma ManKiller - Chief of the Cherokee Nation**

By Bruce Glassman

"If I had another life, I'd spend all my time just on education. I would try to impact the kind of information that Americans get every day, information about what is essentially every American's history, the history of our native people."

These are the words of Wilma ManKiller, chief of the Cherokee Nation. Only a small group of people know about this woman. This small group is so privileged to know her, for she is a giant among her people.

Wilma ManKiller is the first woman to be chief of the Cherokees. Becoming chief of the

Cherokees was no easy feat for her. The virtues that she possessed such as dedication and a great deal of faith, helped her to win not only the election, but the hearts of the Cherokee people.

Wilma ManKiller has a large responsibility being chief of the Cherokee Nation, but she has also dedicated herself to teaching the world about true Native American culture. Much of her life has been filled with helping her people improve their lives.

Through all her illness, divorce and being frowned upon as a woman in politics, Wilma ManKiller never lost her focus to make a better way of life for Native Americans. She is truly a woman of courage and valor.

*Note the differing religions of the women leaders in this issue - Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Catholic, Protestant and Native American.*

# Teacher Talk

## A Lesson Plan about Eleanor Roosevelt

**V**al-Kill was a very special place for Eleanor Roosevelt and for anyone who came to visit her. She gained personal growth and inspiration from the place as well as needed relaxation. Some of her greatest accomplishments came in the later years of her life. The following activities highlight her humanitarian efforts. For articles about Eleanor Roosevelt and Val-Kill, see the following web site:

### Activity 1: My Day

Almost every day for more than 25 years, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote a newspaper column she called "My Day." The column was started in 1936 to give readers a view of what a First Lady does during her day at the White House or wherever she may be traveling. Roosevelt wrote her column Sunday through Friday so every newspaper reader in the United States knew what she was doing or thinking on particular days.

Have students keep a personal journal every day for two weeks. Have them reflect on their place in the community and the world, and think about how much of their time is spent in community service or personal growth. At the end of the two weeks, have volunteer students share their thoughts with the class. Then ask the class to compare their own activities and thoughts about the world with what they have learned about Eleanor Roosevelt.

Remind students that Roosevelt did not begin her column until she was in her forties. Ask if that would explain important differences between her thoughts and those of the students. Also, mention that Roosevelt knew she was writing for publication. How might that knowledge affect a person's writing?

### Activity 2: The Declaration of Human Rights

Review with students the function of the United Nations. Then hold a classroom discussion in which students compare their lists of similarities and differences between the Declaration of Human Rights and the Bill of Rights.

Now ask students to consider writing their own Declaration of Human Rights for their class or school. You might wish to break the class into groups to work on specific sections of the document. When the document is complete, have students provide copies to other classes, the student council and the administration.

If the document provokes controversy, have students discuss why and debate suggestions for change. Note that there were long, hard-fought arguments over both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the U.S. Bill of Rights. In the end, it was the resolution of those arguments that produced unparalleled human rights statements.

### Activity 3: Local Volunteer Organizations

Eleanor Roosevelt volunteered much of her time to helping others, including hosting an annual picnic for school children. Most communities have volunteer organizations or chapters of national organizations that help people in need. Ask students to make a list of the volunteer groups and programs in their community that are dedicated to helping others (Meals on Wheels, Big Brother/Sister programs, church groups, shelters, nursing home visitors). Working in small groups, ask students to choose one organization or program and write an essay to share with the whole class. If the school has a community service program, ask students to consider volunteering their time.

### Essays should describe:

- Purpose of the organization
- How, when, and why it was founded
- Who started it, an individual or group
- Membership
- Facilities used
- Benefits to the community

*"I think December 5th is an important date for all of us in the U.S. to remember. The bus protest carried on by the colored people of Montgomery, Alabama, without violence, has been one of the most remarkable achievements of people fighting for their own rights but doing so without bloodshed and with the most remarkable restraint and discipline, that we have ever witnessed in this country. It is something all of us should be extremely proud of for its achievement by Americans which has rarely before been seen."* ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

See the National Parks Service "Links to the Past" site at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/>

*Do you recognize these two U.S. stateswomen?*  
**Madeleine Albright & Barbara Jordan**



**Madeleine  
Albright**

**Former  
Secretary  
of State**

**A**fter a unanimous vote in the U.S. Senate, Madeleine Korbel Albright became the 64th Secretary of State in 1997. The first woman to lead the State Department, she was the highest ranking woman in the history of the U.S. government.

Albright earlier served as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations and as a member of the President's Cabinet and National Security Council. Before that, she was at the non-profit Center for National Policy, promoting the study of domestic and international issues.

At Georgetown University, she taught international relations and directed programs to enhance women's international opportunities. Albright won a fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at the Smithsonian in 1981. In the competition, she wrote about the role of the press in Poland. She also served as a Senior Fellow in Soviet and Eastern European Affairs and as legislative assistant to Senator Edmund S. Muskie.

An honors graduate from Wellesley in political science, she studied at Johns Hopkins University, the Russian Institute at Columbia University, and earned her Masters and Ph.D. in public law and governance. Albright, who speaks four languages, has three daughters.

**B**arbara Jordan's father was a Baptist minister who insisted that she get good grades. She was not allowed to go to dances or movies. Like her mother, she was a gifted speaker. When a black woman lawyer spoke at her school, she decided to be a lawyer. Jordan studied political science and history, led her university debate team and graduated magna cum laude. In 1959, she earned a law degree in Boston and first practiced law from her parent's dining room table in Houston. She also worked for a judge and became an active Democrat.

Jordan ran twice for the Texas House of Representatives and lost. She was elected as the first black woman to the Texas Senate by a huge majority in 1966. Jordan supported the state's first minimum wage law. In 1972, Jordan won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. On the Judiciary Committee, she was at the center of President Nixon's impeachment proceedings.

In 1973, Jordan was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. She began using a wheelchair, but said it was not the reason for not seeking a fourth term in 1978. She was the first black woman to give a keynote speech at a party convention. In 1979, she became a professor at the University of Texas where her courses were extremely popular with students. She died in 1996 at age 59.

*Look for the Web sites about women leaders listed on page 6:*



**Barbara  
Jordan**

**Former  
Member  
of Congress**

**For information on African, Hispanic, Asian, Native American  
experiences, see past issues of the Brown Quarterly at our website:**

**[brownvboard.org](http://brownvboard.org)**

E-Mail: [brownfound@juno.com](mailto:brownfound@juno.com)

Web: <http://brownvboard.org>