

In the mid-1950s, as many developing nations sought independence from colonial rule, black women in the American South and in South Africa launched parallel campaigns to end racial injustice within their respective communities. Just as the dignified obstinacy of Mrs. Rosa Parks sparked the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955, the 20,000 South African women who marched in Pretoria a year later to protest the pass laws signaled a new wave of resistance to the system of apartheid. In both places women who had previously been consigned to subordinate roles brought fresh leadership to the struggle for political freedom and social equality. In this book, Pamela E. Brooks tells their story, documenting the extraordinary achievements of otherwise ordinary women. In comparing the experiences of black women activists in two different parts of the African diaspora, Brooks draws heavily on oral histories that provide clear, and often painful, insight into their backgrounds, their motives, their hopes, and their fears. We learn how black women from all walks of life—domestic and factory workers, householders, teachers, union organizers, churchwomen, clubwomen, rural and urban dwellers alike—had to overcome their class differences and work through the often difficult gender relations within their families and communities. Yet eventually they came together to forge their own political organizations, such as the Womens Political Council and the Federation of South African Women, or joined organizations of women and men, such as the Montgomery Improvement Association and the African National Congress, to advance the common agenda of black liberation. By tracing the dual rise of political consciousness and activism among the black women of the U.S. South and South Africa, Brooks not only illuminates patterns that have long been overlooked but places that shared history within the context of a larger global struggle to bring an end to the vestiges of European colonialism.

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Boycotts, Buses and Passes: Black Women's Resistance in the U.S. South and South Africa. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press,

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Women's Resistance Against the Pass Laws During its long history of As I was talking to them, explaining about the march, a black SB passed near us, in a rush. In the morning, I met them at the bus rank, and we took the same bus who boycotted, were increased to five years in prison, or ten lashes.

In South Africa, pass laws were a form of an internal passport system .. Boycotts , Buses, and Passes: Black Women's Resistance in the U.S. South Africa and the United States in Transnational American Studies Brooks , Pamela E. Boycotts, Buses, and Passes: Black Women's Resistance in the.

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