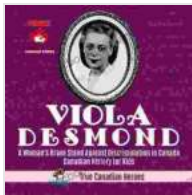


# Viola Desmond: A Woman's Brave Stand Against Discrimination in Canada

Viola Desmond was a black woman who stood up against racism in Canada. She was arrested and jailed for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. Her case helped to change the law and make Canada a more equal society.



## Viola Desmond - A Woman's Brave Stand Against Discrimination in Canada | Canadian History for Kids | True Canadian Heroes by Gladys Muir

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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## Early Life

Viola Desmond was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1914. She was the daughter of James Albert and Gwendolyn Irene Desmond. Her father was a barber and her mother was a homemaker. Desmond had two older sisters, Elsie and Helen.

Desmond attended school in Halifax and graduated from high school in 1933. She then worked as a teacher for several years. In 1940, she married Jack Desmond, a businessman. The couple had two children, a son named Donald and a daughter named Norma.

## **The Incident on the Bus**

On November 8, 1946, Desmond was traveling on a bus from Halifax to Sydney, Nova Scotia. The bus was full and Desmond was sitting in a seat in the "whites only" section. A white man asked Desmond to give up her seat, but she refused. The bus driver called the police and Desmond was arrested.

Desmond was charged with violating the Jim Crow laws that were in place in Nova Scotia at the time. These laws segregated black people from white people in public places, such as buses and restaurants.

## **The Trial**

Desmond's trial was held in Sydney, Nova Scotia, in December 1946. She was found guilty of violating the Jim Crow laws and was sentenced to pay a fine of \$20. Desmond refused to pay the fine and was jailed for 12 days.

While Desmond was in jail, her case gained national attention. The Halifax Chronicle-Herald published a story about her arrest and trial, and the story was picked up by other newspapers across Canada. Desmond's case became a symbol of the racism that black people faced in Canada.

## **The Aftermath**

After Desmond was released from jail, she continued to fight against racism. She spoke out against the Jim Crow laws and helped to raise awareness of the issue. In 1954, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Jim Crow laws were unconstitutional. This ruling was a major victory for the civil rights movement in Canada.

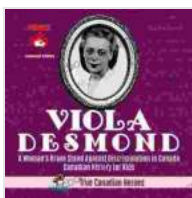
Desmond died in 1965 at the age of 51. She was posthumously inducted into the Free Download of Canada in 2010. In 2016, the Canadian government apologized for the treatment that Desmond received.

## Legacy

Viola Desmond was a courageous woman who stood up against racism. Her case helped to change the law and make Canada a more equal society. Desmond is an inspiration to all Canadians who believe in justice and equality.

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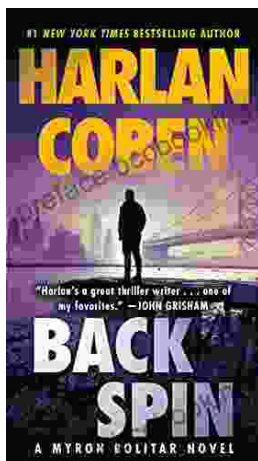
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