

# Eslanda



THE LARGE AND UNCONVENTIONAL  
LIFE OF MRS. PAUL ROBESON

BARBARA RANSBY

*Race & Class* would like to invite you to the UK launch of

*Eslanda: the large and unconventional life of Mrs. Paul Robeson*

The first biography of the bold, principled and fiercely independent woman who defied convention to make her own mark on the world.

Tuesday 16 April, 6.30pm  
Firebox, 106-8 Cromer Street, London WC1H 8BZ

**Speakers:**

- **Barbara Ransby** - Scholar-activist, historian and professor of African-American and Gender and Women Studies at the University of Illinois (Chicago), *Race & Class* Board member
- **Colin Prescod** - IRR Chair
- Plus others who knew the Robesons

Tickets are free but booking is essential, please email: [events@irr.org.uk](mailto:events@irr.org.uk) to book your place.

**RACE & CLASS** Yale

Eslanda "Essie" Cardozo Goode Robeson lived a colorful and amazing life. Her career and commitments took her many places: colonial Africa in 1936, the front lines of the Spanish Civil War, the founding meeting of the United Nations, Nazi-occupied Berlin, Stalin's Russia, and China two months after Mao's revolution. She was a woman of unusual accomplishment. Eslanda "Essie" Cardozo Goode Robeson lived a colorful and amazing life. Yet historians for the most part have confined Essie to the role of Mrs. Paul Robeson, a wife hidden in the large shadow cast by her famous husband. In this masterful book, biographer Barbara Ransby refocuses attention on Essie, one of the most important and fascinating black women of the twentieth century. Details about Eslanda: The first biography of the bold, principled, and fiercely independent woman who defied convention to make her own mark on the world

Eslanda "Essie" Cardozo Goode Robeson lived a colorful and amazing life. Her career and commitments took her many places: colonial Africa in 1936, the front lines of the Spanish Civil War, the founding meeting of the United Nations, Nazi-occupied Berlin, Stalin's Russia, and China two months after Mao's revolution. Yet historians for the most part have confined Essie to the role of Mrs. Paul Robeson, a wife hidden in the large shadow cast by her famous husband. In 1920, Paul Robeson and Eslanda attended summer school at Columbia. They married one year later in August 1921. Eslanda gave up her intentions to study medicine and supported her husband as his business manager. Indeed, Paul credited her as the catalyst for his acting career, saying "Even then, I never meant to [become an actor]. I just said yes to get her to quit pestering me." [4] Eslanda worked at the hospital until 1925, when the career of her husband took more and more of her time. She spent time in Harlem, London and France in the following years. ^ Ransby, Barbara (2013). *Eslanda: The Large and Unconventional Life of Mrs. Paul Robeson*. New Haven: Yale University Press. ISBN 978-0-300-18907-0.