



>> Rosa Parks sparked a movement that resulted in a Supreme Court ruling stating that segregation on public bus systems was illegal. A year later, she rode at the front of the bus.

 **Interactive Flipped Video**

>> Objectives

Describe efforts to end segregation in the 1940s and 1950s.

Explain the importance of the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Describe the controversy over school desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Discuss the Montgomery bus boycott and its impact.

>> Key Terms

de jure segregation
de facto segregation
Thurgood Marshall
Earl Warren
Civil Rights Act of 1957
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Rosa Parks
Orval Faubus

prosperity to many, but most African Americans were still treated as second-class citizens. The civil rights movement, a broad and diverse effort to attain racial equality, compelled the nation to live up to its ideal that all are created equal. The movement also demonstrated that ordinary men and women could perform extraordinary acts of courage and sacrifice to achieve social justice, a lesson that continues to inspire people around the world today.

The Civil Rights Movement Strengthens

Segregation Limits Equality

African Americans had a long history of fighting for their rights. After World War II, the struggle intensified, as African Americans grew increasingly dissatisfied with their second-class status.

Separate but Not Equal In the South, Jim Crow laws enforced strict separation of the races. Segregation that is imposed by law is known as **de jure segregation**. In 1896, in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court had ruled that such segregation was constitutional as long as the facilities for blacks and whites were "separate but equal." But this was seldom the case. The facilities for African Americans were rarely, if ever, equal.

In the South and elsewhere, segregation extended to most areas of public life. Officials enforced segregation of schools, hospitals, transportation, restaurants, cemeteries, and beaches. One city even forbade blacks and whites from playing checkers together.

discrimination in the North, too, African Americans faced segregation and discrimination. Even where there were no explicit laws, **de facto segregation**, or segregation by unwritten custom or tradition, was a fact of life. African Americans in the North were denied housing in many neighborhoods. They faced discrimination in employment and often could get only low-paying jobs.

Jim Crow laws and more subtle forms of discrimination had a widespread and severe impact on African Americans. Black Americans occupied the bottom rungs of the economic ladder. Compared to white Americans, they had significantly higher rates of poverty and illiteracy, as well as lower rates of homeownership and life expectancy. Although African Americans living in the North could vote, most who lived in the South could not. Very few African Americans held public office.

In the West and Southwest, Asian Americans and Mexican Americans, too, faced de facto segregation and, in some cases, legal restrictions.

Civil Rights Advance Slowly in the 1940s In many ways, World War II set the stage for the rise of the modern civil rights movement. President Roosevelt banned discrimination in defense industries in 1941. Gunnar Myrdal's publication in 1944 of *An American Dilemma* brought the issue of American prejudice to the forefront of public consciousness. Lastly, after risking their lives defending freedom abroad, African Americans were unwilling to accept discrimination at home.

In the 1940s, new organizations arose to try to bring an end to racial injustice and expand participation in the democratic process. James Farmer and several others founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) with the goal of ending discriminatory policies and improving relations between races. Its members were deeply influenced by the teachings of Henry David Thoreau and Mohandas Gandhi about the use of nonviolent protest to confront injustice. They became convinced that African Americans could apply similar nonviolent methods to gain civil rights. CORE organized nonviolent protests such as sit-ins against segregation in public facilities in Chicago, Detroit, Denver, and other northern cities.

Success was limited, but one highly visible break in the wall of segregation did take place in 1947. Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers, becoming the first African American to play major league baseball. Robinson braved death threats and rough treatment, but throughout his career he won the hearts of millions and paved the way for integration of other sports.



>> Segregated drinking fountains in the South were a stark reminder that the ideals of equality described in the Declaration of Independence had yet to be attained.

[Interactive Gallery](#)



>> On February 26, 1946, racial tensions led to mass arrests of African Americans in Columbia, Tennessee. A young attorney named Thurgood Marshall helped with their legal defense.

[Interactive Gallery](#)

Nevertheless, African Americans continued to face discrimination and felt that racial equality was long overdue. However, the vast majority of white Americans took the opposite view. Racial violence erupted in the South, sometimes against African American veterans who were just trying to register to vote.

In the wake of this violence, President Truman appointed a Committee on Civil Rights to investigate race relations. In its report, the committee recommended a number of measures to ensure equal opportunity for all Americans, including an antilynching law and federal protection of voting rights. Unfortunately, Truman was unable to win congressional support for these initiatives. However, in 1948, he did use his executive power to order the desegregation of the military. Over time, the U.S. armed forces would become one of the most integrated institutions in the United States.

? IDENTIFY SUPPORTING DETAILS What tactics did some civil rights organizations use during the 1940s?

A Landmark Supreme Court Decision

Although the civil rights movement had made some gains in the 1940s, it stalled in the early 1950s. One of its greatest disappointments was the NAACP's

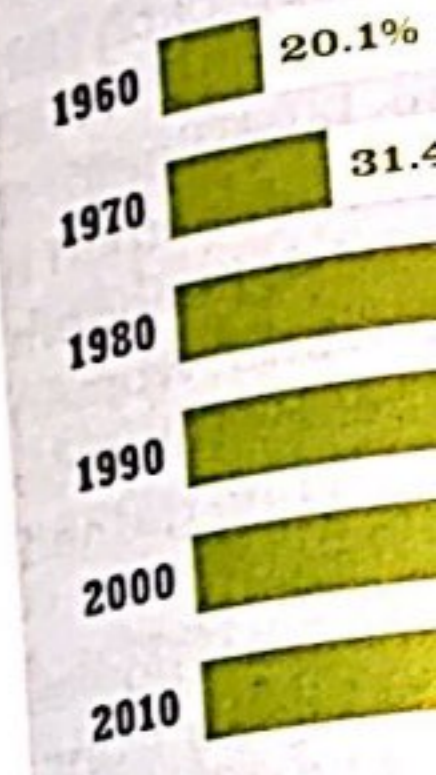
the lynching of African Americans a federal... Feeling that the executive and legislative... of government were unwilling to promote... reforms, the NAACP decided to turn to litigation... federal courts to attain its political goals.

The NAACP Turns to Litigation in the Courts By the end of World War II, the NAACP had become the largest and most powerful political civil rights organization in the nation. It attracted a wide array of individuals, black and white, including a number of lawyers who used litigation as a means to expand civil rights across the country. In the 1940s, a team of NAACP attorneys pursued a legal strategy to challenge the legacy of segregation in the courts. **Thurgood Marshall**, an African American lawyer from Baltimore, Maryland, headed the legal team that mounted this challenge.

In 1950, the NAACP won a number of key cases. In *Sweatt v. Painter*, the Supreme Court ruled that the state of Texas had violated the Fourteenth Amendment by establishing a separate, but unequal, all-black law school. Similarly, in the *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*, the Court ruled that the state of Oklahoma had violated George McLaurin's constitutional rights. Even though McLaurin had been admitted to the graduate school of the University of Oklahoma, he was denied equal access to the library,

AFRICAN-AMERICAN IN HIGH SCHOOL

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE OR MORE YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL



Source: U.S. Census Bureau
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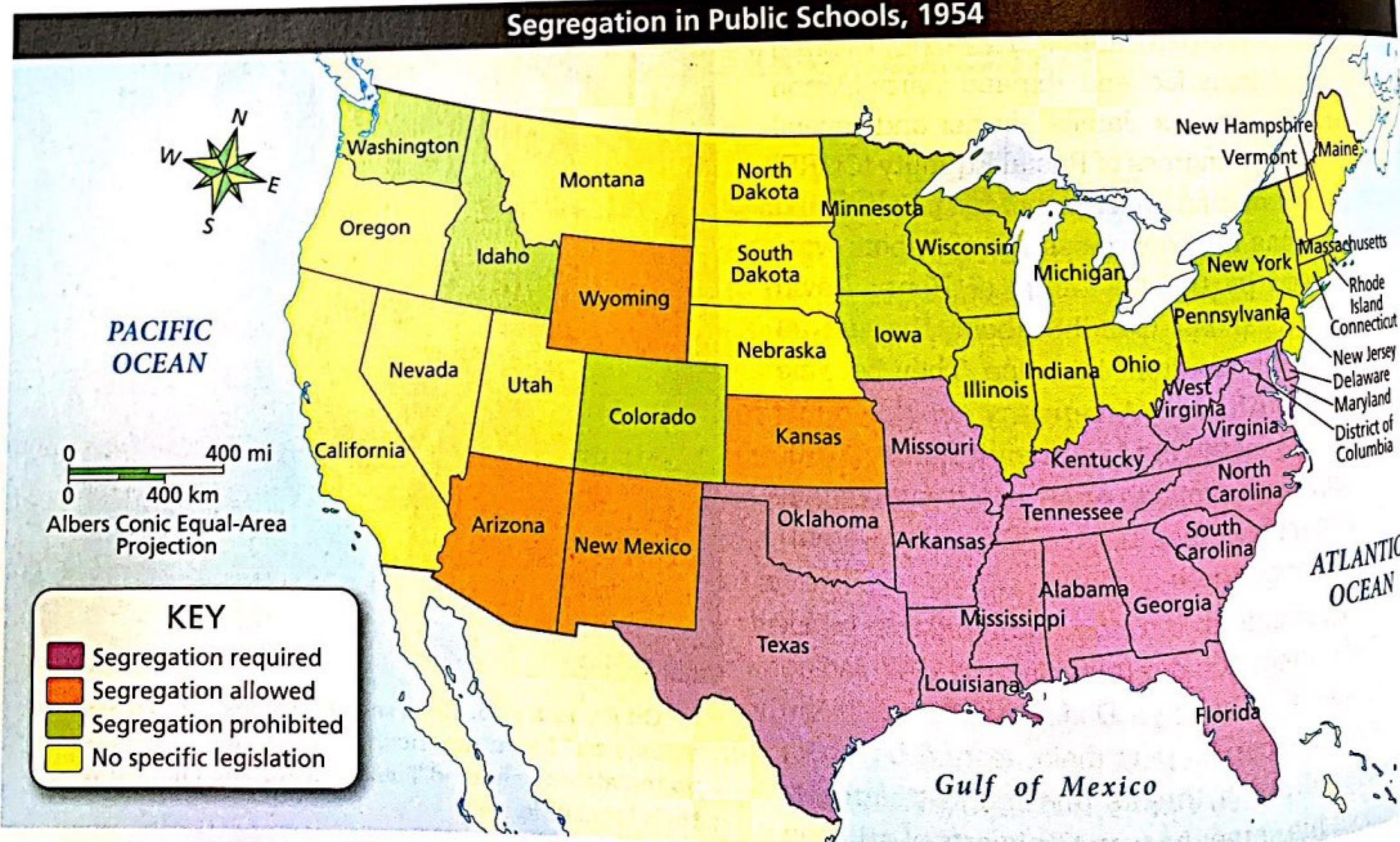
>> In what ways did the claim that segregation was necessary in the United States.

dining hall, a Supreme Court, a truly simply admitted white univer

The Supreme Court

long after it... a much better education... known as *Brown v. Board of Education* and *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*... experienced... challenged... which had... Ferguson...

The Supreme Court's argument... the U.S. Court supported... newly approved... segregation... basis of... group equality... in his decision... Justice... education... place."

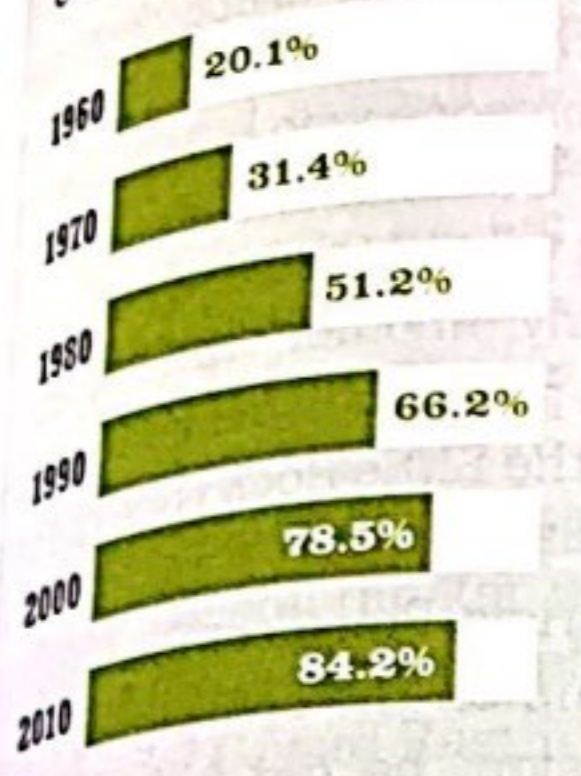


>> In 1954, each state had its own laws governing segregation in public schools. **Analyze Maps** What states required segregation in 1954?

EFFECTS OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

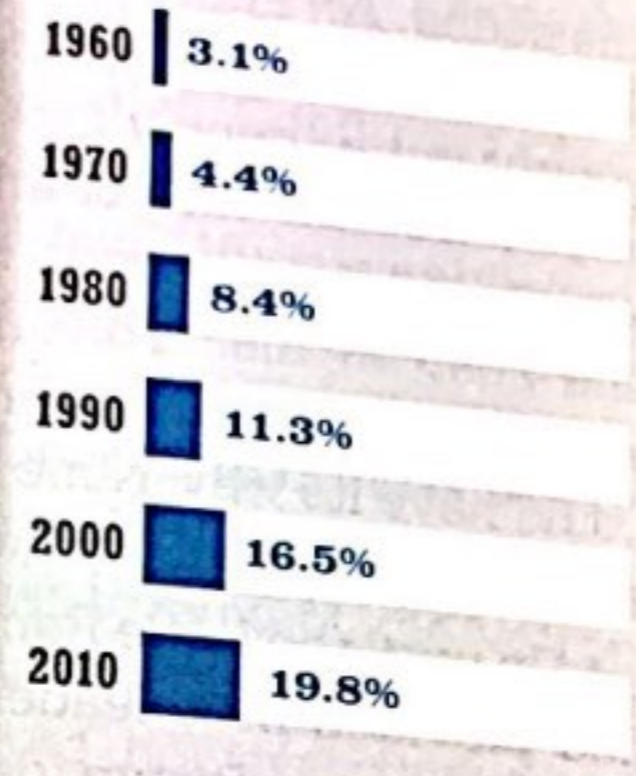
AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN HIGH SCHOOL

PERCENTAGE COMPLETING FOUR OR MORE YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL



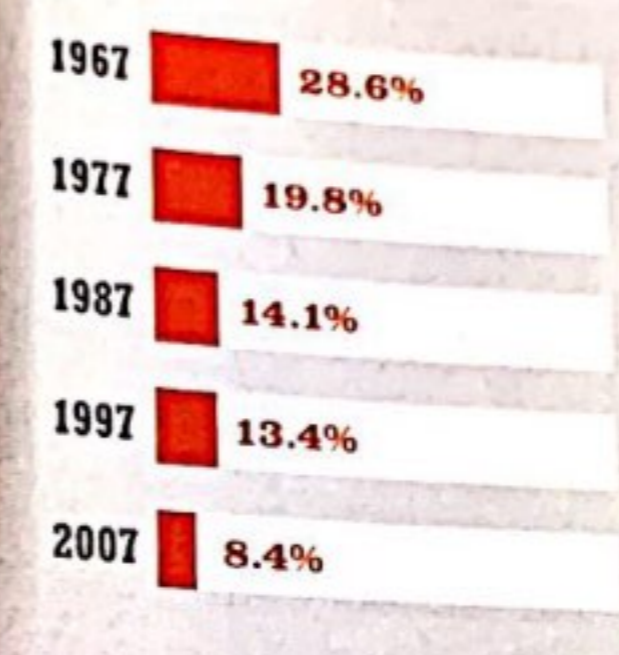
AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN COLLEGE

PERCENTAGE COMPLETING FOUR OR MORE YEARS OF COLLEGE



AFRICAN-AMERICAN DROPOUT RATES

PERCENTAGE OF 16-24 YEAR-OLDS LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL BEFORE GRADUATION



AFRICAN-AMERICAN INCOME

PER CAPITA INCOME (2012 DOLLARS)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau
 [ED: Please note upper/lowercase "Source:" is the correct format for infographics]

>> In what ways are these graphs related? **Analyze Data** Cite evidence to support the claim that school desegregation improved the lives of minorities living in the United States.

dining hall, and classrooms. According to the Supreme Court, a truly equal education involved more than simply admitting African Americans to previously all-white universities.

The Supreme Court Issues a Broad Decision Not long after it won these cases, the NAACP mounted a much broader challenge to segregated public education at all grade levels. This challenge became known as *Brown v. Board of Education*. In the *Sweatt* and *McLaurin* cases, the NAACP asserted that Texas and Oklahoma had failed to provide equal educational experiences. In the *Brown* case, however, the NAACP challenged the "separate but equal" principle itself, which had been established in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case.

The Supreme Court agreed with the NAACP's argument that segregated public education violated the U.S. Constitution. All nine of the Court's Justices supported the *Brown* decision, which was written by newly appointed Chief Justice **Earl Warren**. "Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race . . . deprive the children of the minority group equal education opportunities?" Warren asked in his decision. "We believe that it does." The Chief Justice and the Court declared, "in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place."

In the same month as the *Brown* decision, the Supreme Court decided another civil rights case, this time involving Mexican Americans. In *Hernandez v. Texas*, the Court ended the exclusion of Mexican Americans from trial juries. The *Hernandez* decision was the first Supreme Court ruling against discrimination targeting a group other than African Americans.

The Public Response The *Brown* decision was one of the most significant and controversial in American history. Because public education touched so many Americans, it had a much greater impact than cases involving only professional and graduate schools. Moreover, by overturning the principle of "separate but equal," the Court lent its support to the views of many civil rights advocates that all forms of segregation are wrong.

In a separate ruling, known as *Brown II*, the Court called for the implementation of its decision "with all deliberate speed" across the nation. However, most southerners had no intention of desegregating their schools without a fight. In 1956, about 100 southern members of Congress endorsed "The Southern Manifesto." They pledged to oppose the *Brown* ruling through all "lawful means," on the grounds that the Court had misinterpreted the Constitution.