

History of jim crow laws

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



The social structure of America prior and during the 1950s-1960s was an unfair playing field for African-Americans. After slavery ended, many African-Americans struggled with their new found freedom. Although African-Americans were considered to be free under the 13th Amendment, they were still not truly free in all aspects of life. In the 1896 supreme court case of Plessey v. Ferguson, ruled that segregation was Constitutional under the doctrine of “ separate but equal”. Black (color) and White designated signs were placed in every public establishment throughout the south in order to limit skin to skin interaction between whites and blacks (color). These laws would become known as Jim Crow laws. In the article Jim Crow Laws- United States, Author Melvin I. Urofsky describes Jim Crow laws as, “ any laws that enforced racial segregation in the south between the end of the Reconstruction in 1877 and at the beginning of the civil rights movement in the 1950s”. African-American (color), facilities were substandard compared to their white counterparts. African-American schools were extremely poor. Students were taught from second-hand books that were handed down by the superior white schools. It was common for books to be missing several chapters or even having at least half of the book missing. Within the South, the general common belief was that if you kept African-Americans ill-educated, they would maintain their lower place in society. As if being treated as a second- class citizens within their own country was not bad enough for African-Americans, white supremacist made it their mission to make their lives as difficult as possible. The Klu Klux Klan roamed southern streets instilling fear in the hearts of many African-Americans. African-Americans homes and black owned business were frequently boomed and

raided. There were many positive and negative outcomes that occurred during and after the civil rights movement.

It wasn't until the 1950s that the Civil Right began to get its start. In 1954 in the famous Brown vs. Board of Education, ruled that segregation in schools was unconstitutional, overturning Plessey vs. Ferguson ruling, " separate but equal " in 1896. In 1955, an African-American woman named Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a bus, and was later jailed in Montgomery Alabama. Local Alabama residents began to boycott the buses. The boycott lasted 382 days. Before any further finical deficit could accumulate the Supreme Court ruled 2 to 1 majority that segregation on buses was unconstitutional. Martin Luther King stated, " the once dormant and quiescent Negro community was now fully awake."

On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the voting rights act. The Voting Right act was implemented in order to end racial biases at the state and local level, that prevented blacks from voting. Lyndon Johnson proclaimed that the voting right act was meant to correct " a clear and simple wrong,". The 15 amendment (1870) granted African-American the right to vote and abolished the use of poll taxes, literacy tests and other means that were used to disenfranchise African-Americans. The voting right act is one of the many accomplishments that occurred in during the civil rights movement. According to History. com " In 1965, at the time of the passage of the Voting Rights Act, there were six African-American members of the U. S. House of Representatives and no blacks in the U. S. Senate. By 1971, there were 13 members of the House and one black member of the Senate". African-Americans were now being represented in congress. By

being in congress, African-Americans can ensure that the laws of the land apply to everyone and not just one race or region of the country. The voting rights act helped increase black voting turn outs. According to Jim Rutenberg “ In 2008, for the first time, black turnout was nearly equal to white turnout, and Barack Obama was elected the nation’s first president”.

Because of people like, Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and many others who lost their jobs and lively hood during the civil Rights movement; America has been fortunate opportunity to be governed by their first African-American President in 2008. An African American running and winning the presidential election was not even imaginable for blacks during the Civil Rights Movement. In a country where African Americans were first considered to be property and not citizens, this was a monumental moment. On January 20, 2008, thousands of African Americans wept across the nation in solidarity. People like my Grandmother watched with tears of joy in her eyes, recalling the unbearable torment that they endured during the Civil Right movements.

White segregationists used violence in order to decelerate the progress of the civil rights movement. In 1961-1962, it was common for freedom riders to be physically assaulted by belligerent mobs. The first recorded Freedom Ride occurred on May 4, 1961. Two public buses containing seven blacks and six white were headed towards the deep south from Washington, D. C to protest to abolish Jim Crow laws. On May 14 the Freedom riders were met in Anniston Alabama by an angry mob who proceeded to throw rocks at the bus and slashed the bus tires. According to Black Past. org “ When he {bus driver} stopped to repair the tires, white supremacists firebombed the

vehicle. They managed to get to Birmingham where they encountered a larger mob who beat them with baseball bats, lead pipes, and bicycle chains". They were brutally beaten and nearly half of the freedom riders injuries caused them to be in vital critical condition shortly following. Many people were beaten, jailed and sometimes killed during the civil rights movement.

Shortly after the Supreme Court ruling in the Brown V. Board of education case, allowing segregation in public schools, " white flight" occurred. White flight is the movement of white people, especially middle-class white people, from inner-city neighborhoods undergoing racial integration to the suburbs. Whites did not want their school, business and communities to be integrated with African Americans. When Whites left the inner city a massive wave of African American migrated from southern rural areas into the inner cities. When whites left, they also took their money with them which caused a downfall of social resources in inner city. In order for public facilities to operate, most of their funding has to come from taxes. Because whites fled it causes inner city economic wealth to diminish. African American was unable to pay the same taxes as of those of whites which caused a decline in public services. In the article THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL, assert, " As prices decline, the community's socioeconomic level changes as well. As communities get poorer, they are less able to maintain the same level of public services. Schools, sanitation, public transportation, police, and fire protection all begin to decline, at the same time that demands these services increases". Do to the lack of quality public services; the community began to see an increase in crime. Schools were very poor and did provide students received a

mediocre education compared to their white counterparts. Due to the poor education that African Americans received they were at a significant disadvantage when competing for jobs. The civil rights movement goal was to end discrimination. Inner city school with predominately African American schools had a significant low test scores compared to schools that were in suburbs. In a census conducted by Discover The Net Works. org, concluded that “ In America’s public high schools, 45% of black students and 43% of Hispanics (as compared to 22% of whites) drop out before their classes graduate”. Socioeconomic hardships plays a vital role in the reason why African American children are unable to academically compete with white student from privileged backgrounds. In 2011 only 11% of African American high school graduates were proficient in math and only 13% of blacks were proficient in reading.

Noticing that the academic gap between blacks and whites was a problem, President Lyndon Johnson began to take action. President Lyndon Johnson signed executive order No. 10925 that forced government contractors to use affirmative action. Affirmative action was designed to increase employment and educational opportunities for minority groups. It was a remedy imposed by the government to relieve long standing discrimination imposed by the government. President Lyndon Johnson became a strong advocate for affirmative Action. President Lyndon Johnson seated in 1965, “ You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say you are free to compete with all the others, and still just believe that you have been completely fair.” Affirmative action helped African-American move up the

economic ladder. However, some may argue that affirmative action is unequal and cripples African American. Minorities may no longer work hard to receive the position that they are applying for and start to solely depend on their status as a minority to guaranteed their position. Another compelling argument against affirmative action is that it leads to reverse racism. By considering someone race as a factor in determining whether or not this person is qualified for the position or not is racist.