

American government



Of Facts, Importance, and Impact of Brown v. Board of Education The 1954 Brown v. Board of Education ruling was remarkable in the history of human thought. To see the value of this ruling, one has to review the basic facts associated to the Brown case: such Opinion of the Court was a compilation or consolidation of cases coming from four States in America (Whitman, 2004); these cases from the States of Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware were “ premised on different facts” and social/historical conditions. The plaintiffs generally seek for a “ nonsegregated basis” admission to public schools within their community. Their cases -- except in Delaware’s case -- were originally denied in the federal district court level; the main argument why these cases were denied was grounded on the doctrine of “ separate but equal” characterized in Plessy v. Ferguson. The Brown v. Board of Education decision, however, found the unconstitutionality of Plessy v. Ferguson as praxis for racial segregation within the public education; the Opinion of the Court reversed the “ separate but equal” doctrine on the principle prominent in the Fourth Amendment. By and large, the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education case significantly ruled in favor of the African American plaintiffs, arguing that racial segregation practiced by Plessy v. Ferguson is fundamentally unconstitutional. Chief Justice Earl Warren’s ruling concerning the Brown v. Board of Education is a landmark decision of the U. S. Supreme Court; such ruling is notably important especially in its social and historical contexts. In social purview, the decision made in Brown was essential considering the widespread racial discrimination against the African American or the “ Negro” (in Warren’s word) prominent in the United States. Before the Brown ruling, many white Americans believed, consciously or not, that their race was superior to other races, which include the black race. This

belief -- commonly known as scientific racism -- became visible through separation or segregation between the whites and the non-whites within the sphere of education. The philosophy apparent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* widely characterized the idea of scientific racism. The Supreme Court in 1954, however, saw the negative effect of segregation for the black people because it subtly propagates the superiority of the White against their race. In general, the relevance of the *Brown* ruling is its promotion of equality among races, and not “separate but equal.” Chief Justice Warren’s decision to the *Brown v. Board of Education* case tremendously changed -- at least in its principles (Smiley, 2004) -- the thoughts and beliefs of the human race. When one compares the states and/or conditions prominent in the periods between the 1950s and the present time, one can see or feel the wide differences of how they generally view their colored or non-colored neighbors. In the tangible world, for instance, modern-day people of different races or ethnic backgrounds are permitted and capable of studying in public schools and universities without any racial-centered restriction. Blacks can now study in colleges and universities attended by Whites. In contrast to the present-day system, the 1950’s America prohibited the integration of Negroes to the so-called superior race. Racial segregation within the realm of current public education is becoming a mere footnote in history. Of course, racism is still apparent in today’s America, yet there are some changes, little as they may seem, that transpired due to the *Brown* ruling. References Smiley, T. (2004). Introduction. In J. Anderson & D. N. Byrne (Eds.), *The unfinished agenda of Brown v. Board of Education* (pp. 1-8). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. Whitman, M. (2004). *Brown v. Board of Education: A documentary history*. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers.