

Supreme court cases in education



Running Head: BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION Brown v. Board of Education of the of the Brown v. Board of Education Isolation has always been a problem of United States. Apart from of what race somebody is, or everywhere they live, there all the time are people disparate to their racial, ethnic, social, or religious surroundings. There constantly are individuals who think they are superior than others are, and who are trying to impede the progression of the mediocre peoples. One of the many court cases that have attempt to clear the individual race of this corrupt way of life named as “ Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka”, Kansas. While Brown v. Board directive the end of segregation, injustice and unbalanced treatment still existed.

Linda Carol Brown was an eight year old girl who was denied the privilege of attending the Sumner Elementary School, because she was black. Linda Brown had to walk six blocks, over a switch track, just to catch a bus, although the Sumner Elementary School was a mere seven blocks away. Her father, Reverend Oliver Brown, was a well respected Christian minister. He peacefully approached the principal of the all-white school and calmly asked if his daughter could attend. Linda Brown and her father were immediately denied the right to attend the school. At this point, Reverend Brown sought the assistance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (Dudley, 2004).

The NAACP was an organization that was born in 1909. Its goal was to grant all minorities the rights of equal voting, schooling, and housing. It pounced on the opportunity to have a legal battle with the white dominated public schools of America. For years, the NAACP had attempted to stop this sinister way of life through court cases. Until Brown v. Board, the many attempts had

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proved unsuccessful. The head of the NAACP, Thurgood Marshall, figured that with Linda Carol Brown, they had the greatest possible chance of winning the court case and upsetting the former case, Plessy v. Ferguson. On February 28, 1951, Linda Brown, her father and the NAACP filed their lawsuit against the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (Barlow, 2004). A grand jury decided to hear their case but their plea for the overturning of Plessy . v. Ferguson was quickly dismissed. Since the case was being held in Kansas, a southern state, the jury was mostly composed of white male, landowners who still believed that African Americans were inferior humans. This was the reason that the court decided to reject the proposed idea of integrated school districts. Because of appeals, the case kept advancing from court to court, through the Supreme Court of Kansas, and finally to the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Supreme Court had become more liberal over the years, thanks to appointments made by Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Harry Samuel Truman. Liberals at this time favored change, and they attempted to grant more equality between the races. They thought of this as the perfect opportunity to put an end to the evil practice of segregation. Finally, after over three years of legal battling and appeals, the NAACP, Linda Carol Brown, Reverend Brown, and all African Americans were granted total equality in public schooling. This did not include private schools. In fact, one of the problems with this was that there was no way that the legal team could get a court order preventing private schools from discriminating solely on race. Although this did not prevent all forms of discrimination, it did prevent some forms of it.

After this court decision, Linda Carol Brown began attending Sumner

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Elementary School. Life however, was tougher than ever. She suffered daily harassment and heckling. This was not good for her growing up. Kenneth Clark, who testified his and his wife's findings on the negative results of segregation, and his wife, created a test for African American children. He showed children a number of dolls, some white, some dark, and asked them which was the nicest doll, which the ugliest, and which was most like themselves " research showed that African American children typically called the white dolls nice and the dark ones ugly, while saying that the dark ones were most like themselves. According to the Clarks, this showed that African-American children had negative self-images. (Benjamin, 2002)

If African American truly does have a negative self-image, then Linda Brown may have a troubled life. Soon, African Americans all over the country slowly began trickling into former white school districts. Statistics showed more African Americans going to school, but some believe that in reality, the NAACP's three year fight for desegregation did not solve the problem. By 1963, fifty-three percent of Washington D. C. was composed of African Americans. In schools however, eighty-four percent of schoolchildren were African Americans. Some people attribute this sharp increase of African American schoolchildren to African Americans being bussed in from suburbs. Others believe conservative, white parents began taking their children out of school. They then placed them in the only place they were safe from the African Americans. The African American population in public schools increased radically, while the white population decreased noticeably.

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