



# Historical Dictionary of School Segregation and Desegregation: The American Experience (Journal for the Study of the)

*Jeffrey Raffel*

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Throughout the nation's history, from before the Civil War through Reconstruction, across the years of lynchings and segregation to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and the battles over busing, no issue has divided the American people more than race, and at the heart of the race issue has been the conflict over school segregation and desegregation. Prior to the Civil War, South Carolina enacted the first compulsory illiteracy law, which made it a crime to teach slaves to write, and other Southern states soon followed South Carolina's example. After the Civil War, schools for blacks were founded throughout the South, including many Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision established the principle of separate but equal education, which led to decades of segregation. With the 1954 *Brown* decision, the Supreme Court overturned the separate but equal principle, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 empowered the federal government to affect school desegregation. The process of desegregation continues to this day, with much debate and mixed results.

Through more than 260 alphabetically arranged entries, this comprehensive reference book describes persons, court decisions, terms and concepts, legislation, reports and books, types of plans, and organizations central to the struggle for educational equality. The volume covers topics ranging from emotionally laden terms such as busing to complex legal concepts such as de facto and de jure segregation. Each entry includes factual information, a summary of different viewpoints, and a brief bibliography. The book includes an introduction, which outlines the history of school segregation and desegregation, along with a chronology and extensive bibliographic material. Thus this reference is a complete guide to school segregation and desegregation in elementary, secondary, and higher education in the United States.

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