

AMERICA'S RECORD TO DENY CITIZENSHIP AND EDUCATION TO ITS BLACK POPULATION

- The Infamous US Supreme Court **Dred Scott v Sanford** Decision – essentially denied ‘American’ citizenship to any Black person, whether slave or free. Chief Justice Roger Taney declared that blacks “an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations, and so far inferior that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.”
- The Civil War – North v South with slavery as the centerpiece of the conflict.
- The Emancipation Proclamation (Jan. 1, 1863) – declared “that all persons held as slaves” within the rebellious states “are, and henceforward shall be free.” Note, the ‘Proclamation’ did not apply to ALL states and it exempted the Southern secessionist states under Northern control and the Proclamation depended upon Union victory. (National Archives)
- 13th Amendment to US Constitution (Jan. 31, 1865) – abolished slavery and provides that “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”
- 14th Amendment to US Constitution (1868) – Equal Protection granted ‘citizenship’ to all persons born or naturalized in the United States-including former slaves and guaranteed all citizens “equal protection of the laws.” The 14th Amendment has been a major basis for future ‘landmark’ decisions of the US Supreme Court.
- 15th Amendment to US Constitution (1870) – granted Black men the right to vote by declaring that the “right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Note, it was not until passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that the majority of Black southerners were registered to vote. Southern states were effectively able to suppress the Black vote through various means including poll taxes, literacy tests and intimidation.
- The Black Codes – restrictive laws designed to limit the freedom of Blacks and ensure their availability as a cheap labor force after slavery was abolished during the civil war. Mississippi and South Carolina enacted the first Black Codes. For example, a South Carolina law “prohibited blacks from holding any occupation other than farmer or servant unless they paid an annual tax of \$10 to \$100. Blacks were assessed “heavy penalties for vagrancy, including forced plantation labor in some cases.” (History)
- Robert Smalls, former slave and SC Rep. in US Congressman (1875-79; 1882-83) – Helped draft the 1868 SC Constitution and Authored Legislation that “created the First Public Education System in South Carolina.”
- 1895 South Carolina Constitution – the effort to draft a new constitution was led by Senator and former Governor Benjamin Tillman. Threatened by the Black vote, the newly drafted SC Constitution was intended to disenfranchise the SC Black population by establishing provisions that restricted their voting power. The document required a “person must own at least 300 dollars worth of property, pass a literacy test, and pay a poll tax 6 months before elections.” Further, the state established “segregated schools and barred interracial marriages.” This SC Constitution laid the groundwork for Jim Crow in South Carolina effectively disenfranchising the states Black population for nearly 75 years. (History)

- Plessy v Ferguson (1896) – the US Supreme Court ruled that racially segregated public facilities did not violate the ‘equal protection’ clause of the 14th Amendment, a decision which essentially firmly established ‘Jim Crow’ laws throughout the South for the next 75 years.
- Briggs v Elliott (1950) – the Summerton, Clarendon, South Carolina precursor to landmark Brown v Board of Education desegregation case. Rev. J. A. DeLaine, a school Principal and AME Minister was the primary leader and organizer, who convinced Thurgood Marshall to represent the more than 20 plaintiffs, including Harry Briggs the lead plaintiff to represent them in desegregating the local schools. The case was merged among 5 cases and known as Brown v Board of Education, Topeka, Ks. Both men and most of the other plaintiffs in the case lost their jobs, forced to leave or severely punished and ostracized for taking part in the law suit.
- 1964 Civil Rights Act – “prohibited discrimination in public places, provided for the integration of schools and other public facilities, and made employment discrimination illegal.” The most significant legislation designed to equalize and protect the rights of the racially disenfranchised since reconstruction. Signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson, who championed the broad legislation in the aftermath of President John F. Kennedy assassination.
- 1965 Voting Rights Act – enacted to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote as guaranteed under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The VRA is considered one of the most far-reaching pieces of civil rights legislation in U.S. history. It is noteworthy that the late Congressman and Civil Rights Icon fought and nearly beaten to death, which many believe was a major catalyst leading to the passage of the VRA of 1965 signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson.
- 2013 Supreme Court Shelby County v Holder decision – invalidated the ‘coverage formula’ referred to as the ‘preclearance’ process in order for a state or jurisdiction to ‘pass any new elections or voting laws’. The decision left it to Congress to create a ‘new’ criteria for ‘coverage’, which it hasn’t done to date, in effect leaving it up to communities and citizens faced with discrimination in the past on their own to file potential law suits.
- The Civil Unrest of the 60’s, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders known as the Kerner Commission Report, and assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- South Carolina public schools began ‘desegregating’ students between 1965-1973. Many schools were consolidated and Black Teachers were demoted, lost their jobs or resigned during the process.

“It’s Not Policy Anymore”

- 1 in 7 South Carolina Schools Remain Segregated or 171 or 14% Students Attend Schools that are at least 90% ‘minority’ or 90% ‘white’. (A. Gilreath, Greenville News, Feb, 2020)
- Nationally, 18% of Public Schools are 90% ‘minority’. Segregation has ‘increased’ among largely ‘minority’ schools;
- Studies suggest that racially segregated ‘minority’ schools are also ‘high poverty’ schools;
- Racially segregated ‘white’ schools tend to be ‘higher income’ schools;
- Studies suggest that “diversity both in racial demographics and socioeconomic status is good for students of all races and status”. (Dr. Roslyn Michelson, UNC-Charlotte)
- Studies show evidence that having just one Black male Teacher can....(?)
- A UCLA Report cited studies that found students who attended more integrated schools had ‘higher achievement, college success at more selective colleges, higher income, better jobs, less incarceration and better long-term health’.

Source: Featured Series on Progress of Public Education after Desegregation of Greenville County Schools, Greenville News, Feb. 17, 2020

Links to other information provided via the presentation on July 22, chat room:

Suggestion from program participant:

Might I suggest the Political Advocacy might be a way to support Call me Mister and other efforts. There is application called 5Calls (www.5calls.org) – This application assists users to call their Government representatives (US Reps and Senators) on the phone and advocacy for several different causes and efforts – which includes several causes that support the Black Community – including

Community Policing, Police Reform, Civil Right reforms, and several others efforts. "Spend 5 minutes, make 5 calls. Calling is the most effective way to influence your representatives."

Phil Vischer: Race in America

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2611898429058130>

Jeffrey Robinson: Confederate monuments:

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi_qvWfmuHqAhVmh-AKHS42AD0QtwlwAXoECAEQAAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DUkvVRIUV8-o&usg=AOvVaw3EeblyEyQ5O2HSrMQ2p7_z

For a you tube on history of racism in America

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGUwcs9qJXY&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR3YZu8gR2mTMrCDsOC7TYyQriUTram5jqmYO1PR8I2or4kVx-yi5_D0ISw