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THE PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM: RESULTS THAT LAST

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The History of
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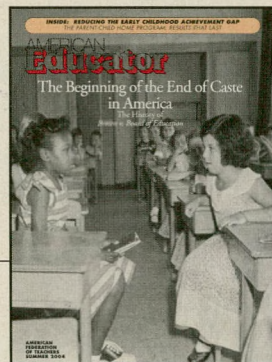
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The History of Brown v. Board of Education

It's the 50th anniversary of Brown. You know what the decision did. But do you know how it came about? These articles are great history and a great read for teachers—and for students.



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By Peter Irons

Jim Crow, the roughly 100 years in which slavery was replaced with segregation, subjected African Americans to humiliations, dangers, and obstacles. Among these were the pitiful Jim Crow schools.

8 **The Decline of the Idea of Caste**

Setting the Stage for Brown v. Board

By Robert J. Cottrol, Raymond T. Diamond, and Leland B. Ware

At the turn of the last century, racism was not just common, it was fashionable and scientifically "reputable." Then, black soldiers helped win two world wars; thanks to Hitler, Americans learned where racism could lead; and biologists rejected theories about inferior races. The time was right for a lawsuit.

9 **NAACP v. Jim Crow**

The Legal Strategy that Brought Down "Separate but Equal" by Toppling School Segregation

By Robert J. Cottrol, Raymond T. Diamond, and Leland B. Ware

America's cultural ground had shifted since 1900, but the segregation sanctioned by Plessy was still entrenched in American law. Did you know that the legal path to desegregation ran through America's graduate and law schools? Do you know why or how? A look at the fascinating strategy that brought down segregation—first in schools, then everywhere.

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How the Parent-Child Home Program Uses Books and Toys To Help Poor Toddlers Succeed in Kindergarten and Beyond

By LaRue Allen and Anita Sethi

In two years of biweekly home visits focused on books and toys, the Parent-Child Home Program models ways for parents to become their young children's first teachers. The evidence shows it works ... and that the effects last.



43 **Ask the Cognitive Scientist**

The Privileged Status of Story

By Daniel T. Willingham

Ever notice how easy it is to remember a story? And how hard it is to remember a passage from a textbook? Researchers have found that stories have a privileged status in the mind—they are easier to comprehend and easier to remember than other formats for presenting information. As a result, stories can be a great way to introduce new concepts or reinforce main themes in the classroom.

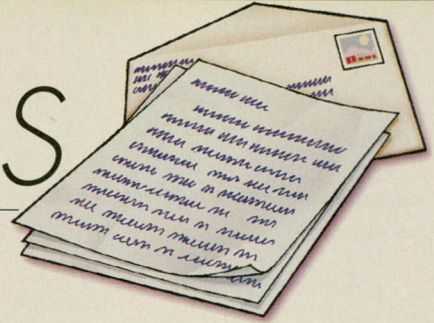
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Books for Kids that Stand the Test of Time

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It's summer, and it's time for reading. Children's book critic Terri Schmitz takes us through the casement windows with her reviews of reissued children's books, from the well-known to the hardly-heard-of.





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“Time To Tell the Kids”

The front cover of *American Educator* (Spring 2004) is going to be highlighted and taped (and laminated, because you know how some kids are...) onto the door of my high school classroom. It is a consistently needed message for today's youth.

—PAUL J. GAMMARANO
George W. Wingate High School
Brooklyn, N.Y.

I have been receiving your magazine for quite some time, but this last issue was phenomenal! I teach in a middle school in a large inner city school. Your article about what it takes to do well in college and on the job is on target. I most definitely will be doing many lessons using this article as a starting point. The pullout you supplied will be a great resource. I am encouraging my guidance counselor to assist me in a few lessons to get the ball rolling.

—MARLEEN LEVENTHAL
Museum Middle School
Yonkers, N.Y.

The Spring 2004 issue of *American Educator* says it all. From cover to cover it is packed with informative, insightful articles. James Rosenbaum's article should be required reading for every teacher, grade 6 through 12. The cutout on page 11 should be made part of every middle- and high-school newsletter to help inform parents. (I plan on submitting it to mine immediately.) The article “What Does It Mean To Be Prepared for College,” from the American Diploma Project, is great preparation for curriculum writing teams that will be working during the upcoming summer months. Finally, Daniel Willingham's article connects the reader to the science of how stu-

dents learn. Practice does count if it is sustained.

—BILL CAROSCIO
Elmira Southside High School
Elmira, N.Y.

Kids need an education and if, for some reason, they don't get a proper one in high school, then our wonderful community college system steps in and keeps them learning. What's wrong with that? Education is a lifelong process. We don't live in a perfect world.

I was not a straight A student in high school, and I was denied admission to the college I had applied for. But City College of San Francisco, a community college, was accepting students for the fall semester, and that held out hope that took some pressure off. I really needed an honest-to-goodness break at that thorny crossroads in my life. City College didn't let anyone down. Her doors were open to one and all, the strong and the weak alike. There was no high-anxiety about getting in. Anybody could, it seemed. Later, however, while a full-time student there, I discovered that only those who showed perseverance, diligence, and a capacity for hitting the books graduated, transferred, and moved on to bigger and better things—ultimately living out their dreams.

When I applied to the college of my choice the second time as a transfer student from City College, they said “yes.” All the hard work paid off. Education is ours for the taking. But when all is said and done, it's the wholehearted taking that leads to academic success. Is this what Mr. Rosenbaum is trying to say?

—VICTOR TURKS
ESL Department Faculty
City College of San Francisco

Kudos for James E. Rosenbaum's “It's Time To Tell the Kids: If You Don't Do

Well in High School, You Won't Do Well in College (or on the Job)." The information provided should be required reading for every parent of an eighth-grader.

It is the "on the job" aspect of the article to which parents might pay particular attention. Rosenbaum's insert, titled "All Good Jobs Don't Require a College Degree," includes a suggestion that nonacademically disposed students should look to vocational education to significantly increase their earning potential. I use the term "nonacademically disposed" rather than Rosenbaum's "low achieving" to identify a large group of high school students whose interests lie in pursuits other than academics. Many of these students bloom in the contextual environment of the vocational schools. As graduates, they are often found to be very successful, with lucrative careers. As an aside, these are people who allow us the quality of life we enjoy. They fix our cars, build our houses, bake birthday cakes, etc. (often making more money than the teachers who trained them). Forcing these students into quasi-college prep programs does neither them nor us any good.

One question for Professor Rosenbaum: His article makes the point that students who take rigorous courses and achieve higher grades in school do better in college than those who take less rigorous courses and get lower grades. This point would seem to be valid if the characteristics of the two groups of students were similar. Allowing that ad-

vocates who say that intelligence is based more on effort than genetics may be correct, can we really say the cause and effect relationship lies between high school courses taken and college success, or is it that higher ability students take more rigorous high school courses and are more successful in college?

—JOSEPH H. CROWLEY

*Director, Warwick Area Career and Technical Center
Warwick, R.I.*

The author responds:

I am happy that educators find my research useful. Students are easily confused by second chance colleges (and by celebrities' unusual success stories). As Victor Turks says, it is wonderful that community colleges offer second chances for students who did poorly in high school, yet it is important to realize that only 14 percent of students are as successful as he was. Unfortunately, many students mistakenly think this second chance is an alternative to high school skills. In fact, students need these skills sooner or later, and since delays are costly and risky, students are better off getting these skills the first time.

Joseph Crowley raises the question of causality, and whether intelligence or genetics (not just high school effort) might determine college outcomes. Such questions are the source of endless debates that are not easily resolved. However, such debates are a distraction, since, as a practical matter, we never observe intelligence. We only see performance, which partly reflects students' motivation (as any test proctor can see). My research suggests that we have created conditions that encourage many students to exert little effort, and one cannot accurately detect ability if students don't exert effort. However, in nations that have created clear incentives for college-bound and work-bound students (e.g., Japan, Germany), large numbers of these students have shown strong motivation and achievement. The challenge is how to provide the conditions that motivate and support students to do their best to develop their capacities. Just as the College Board articulates clear incentives for top-quartile students, we must articulate the incentives for other stu-

dents.

In addition, as Mr. Crowley notes, occupational courses can provide useful skills, while providing additional ways to motivate students to learn. Moreover, when teachers make contact with employers, I find that they can use these contacts to motivate students who think school is irrelevant. Teachers cannot solve these problems alone, but they can explain these realities to students and they can explain how skills and work habits learned in the classroom are required in later life.

Along these same lines, educational policies should buttress teachers' authority. Teachers' grades are the single best predictor of students' future college and job success, and students need to know that acquiring the academic skills, social skills, and work habits demanded by teachers is their surest pathway to future success.

—JAMES E. ROSENBAUM

Observation Benefits Teachers and Students

Thanks for an article ("Opening Classroom Doors," Spring 2004) that may redirect us to more appropriate evaluative tools. I believe that all teachers in all academic areas benefit from observation. I encourage parents to appear at our school office, sign in, and come to observe their child in my class; and, if time allows, to stay to watch the same lesson in my next class. It is important, too, that from time to time during a school year I get someone to videotape a lesson for me to observe myself. It is great feedback.

With some classes, I videotape frequently and have discussions with the students so that they can learn self-evaluation skills to improve classroom behavior. It is amazing, but some children simply do not know how they look or sound to others until they go through the analysis process. In many instances, students with irritating or poor work habits show marked improvement in a relatively short period of time. I videotape again and make certain to let students know how we all enjoy their improved status as students.

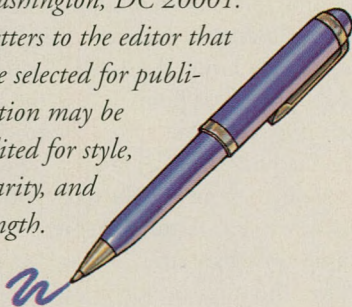
—MARY ALTIERE

*Ft. Myers Middle Academy
Fort Myers, Fla.*

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Jim Crow's Schools

By Peter Irons

In 1890, the Louisiana legislature passed a “separate railroad cars” law, stating that “no person or persons shall be permitted to occupy seats in coaches, other than the ones assigned to them on account of the race they belong to.” The law required railroads to provide “equal but separate” facilities to those different races, but it did not define “race” and left to conductors the job of assigning passengers to the proper cars.

A legal challenge to the “separate cars” law began on June 7, 1892, when Homer Plessy entered the New Orleans station of the East Louisiana Railway and bought a first-class ticket to Covington, La., a town about 50 miles away. According to the Supreme Court’s later statement of facts, Plessy “entered a passenger train and took possession of a vacant seat in a coach where passengers of the white race were accommodated.” The conductor then ordered him “to vacate said coach” and move to one “for persons not of the white race.” When Plessy refused to move, “he was, with the aid of a police officer, forcibly ejected from said coach and hurried off to and imprisoned in the parish jail of New Orleans.” His stay in jail was brief, and Plessy was released after arraignment in the local court.

Homer Plessy had arranged his arrest to challenge the “separate cars” law, which was especially galling to “Creoles” like him, descendants of the French settlers of Louisiana who often fathered children across the color line. Plessy was an “octoroon,” the word then used to describe people with seven white great-grandparents and one who was black. Plessy and his fellow Creoles wanted to expose the absurdity of a law that made a railroad conductor “the autocrat of Caste, armed with the power of the State” to decide which travelers were white and which were not, using only his eyes to measure racial purity. The prosecutor at Plessy’s trial in state court, before Judge John Ferguson, claimed that “the foul odors of blacks in close quarters” made the law a “reasonable” exercise of the state’s “police powers” to protect the health, safety, welfare, and morals of the public. Plessy’s

Peter Irons is professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego, director of the Earl Warren Bill of Rights Project, and a practicing civil rights and civil liberties attorney. This article is excerpted with permission from Jim Crow’s Children, by Peter Irons © 2002 Viking, a division of Penguin Group (USA) Inc.

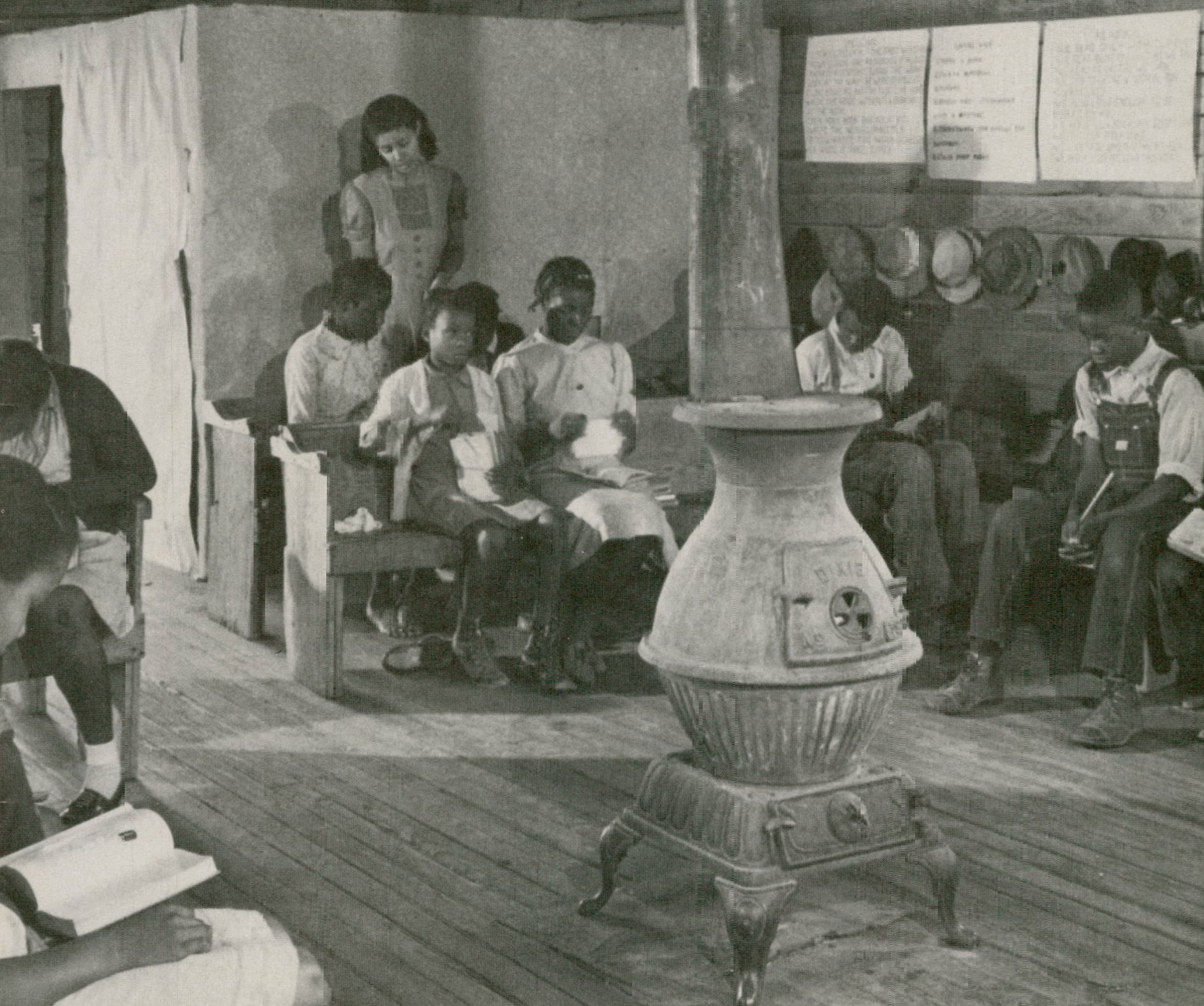
lawyers argued that the law imposed a “badge of servitude” on him and others with any black ancestry, and deprived him of the “privileges and immunities” of citizenship.

After the Louisiana courts upheld Plessy’s conviction for violating the law, the Supreme Court heard arguments on his appeal in April 1896 and decided the case the next month, on May 18. Justice Henry B. Brown wrote for all but one of his colleagues in upholding the Jim Crow law. His opinion displayed the attitude of educated whites who conceded the “political” equality of blacks, but shrank from having any contact with them in such “close quarters” as railroad cars and restaurants. Brown brushed aside the “equal protection” promise of the Fourteenth Amendment with the cavalier statement that “it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as opposed to political, equality, or a commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either.” The only question in the case, Brown wrote, was whether the Louisiana law was a “reasonable regulation” of railroads that were licensed by the state. “In determining the question of reasonableness,” he said, state lawmakers were “at liberty to act with reference to the established usages, customs, and traditions of the people, and with a view to the promotion of their comfort, and the preservation of the public peace and good order.” The “people” who Justice Brown had in mind, of course, were only the white people of Louisiana who did not want to share railroad cars with blacks, even those as light-skinned as Homer Plessy.

Brown had great difficulty in finding legal precedent for his claim that the “established usages, customs, and traditions of the people” supported the racial segregation of railroad cars in Louisiana. In fact, blacks had not been forced to ride in segregated coaches before the law was enacted in 1890, and the railroad companies did not support the law, which cost them money to maintain separate cars. And a federal court had recently held that Louisiana railroads could not segregate passengers who held tickets for travel across state lines. Instead, Brown looked across the tracks for cases upholding laws that required the separation of whites and blacks “in places where they are liable to be brought into contact” with each other. He found the precedent he needed in the judicial opinions that turned back challenges to Jim Crow schools, citing the cases decided between 1849 and 1890 by courts in eight different states. These cases all



In 1930, Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia spent \$31 to \$37 on education per white child but only \$6 to \$7 per black child. The result was poorly paid teachers, a shorter school year, and dilapidated facilities. Below: A black school in rural Georgia, 1941. Above: A black school in Anthonston, Ky., in 1916. Left: A black school in the Delta region of Mississippi in 1939; attendance is low because it's the cotton-harvest season.



dealt, Brown wrote, “with the establishment of separate schools for white and colored children, which have been held to be a valid exercise of the legislative power even by courts of states where the political rights of the colored race have been longest and most earnestly enforced.” It was the widespread and long-standing practice of school segregation that gave the Supreme Court a foundation in precedent for the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision.

There were good reasons for the Court to base its endorsement of “separate but equal” public facilities and institutions on the long practice of school segregation, in both North and South. Beginning with the 1849 decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Court in *Roberts v. City of Boston*, these rulings gave the United States Supreme Court a line of precedent going back almost 50 years. In addition, the state cases involved the institution at the core of the Jim Crow system, the public schools in which white and black children first experienced the reality of segregation. And the opinions in these cases all shared three assumptions: first, that judges should defer to the judgments of elected lawmakers and school officials that segregation was in the “best interest” of all children, black and white alike; second, that the Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantee of the “equal protection of the laws” to every person did not apply to education, which was solely a state and local affair; and third, that the “prejudices” of white voters and parents were “not created by law, and cannot be changed by law.” The *Plessy* majority easily transferred these assumptions from schools to railroad cars; thus, the long-standing existence of Jim Crow schools in both the South and North became the justification for segregation in virtually every facet of daily life.

At the turn of the century, the basic curriculum of black primary schools reflected the jobs open to black workers. In 1900, when 90 percent of all blacks lived in the former Confederacy, six of every 10 employed blacks labored on farms, mostly as sharecroppers perpetually in debt to the white landowners to whom they gave a share of their crop as rent. Almost three in 10 blacks, mostly women, worked in domestic service as cooks, housekeepers, laundresses, and nursemaids for white children. More than half of all southern white families employed a black “girl” to cook and clean. Most of the remaining 10 percent of black workers were laborers in shops and factories; only two percent held professional jobs, serving the black community as teachers, doctors, and ministers.

Jim Crow schools—which taught their students only those skills needed for agricultural work and domestic service—fit the needs of the white economy and society. Booker T. Washington reflected the reality of the situation facing southern blacks when he said in 1915 that “white men will vote funds for Negro education just in proportion to their belief in the value of that education.” The only value to a white landowner in educating black children lay in their ability to pick cotton or wash laundry. Any education beyond the rudiments of literacy and figuring would not only be wasted on them, but it might encourage them to seek higher education, which would make them unfit for working on white-owned farms and in white homes.

By the 1930s, some three decades after the *Plessy* decision, more black children attended school in the Jim Crow states, stayed longer in school, and earned higher scores on achievement tests. Yet they still lagged far behind white children, whose schools were bigger and better and whose teachers had more training. Measured solely in numbers, however, blacks had made substantial educational gains. For example, the federal Census Bureau reported a literacy rate for black adults in 1890 of slightly more than 40 percent. This meant that six out of 10 blacks could not read and write at all, at a time when nearly seven out of 10 white adults were literate. Forty years later, in 1930, the reported literacy rate for blacks had doubled, to just over 80 percent, while more than nine in 10 white adults were literate. In some of the Jim Crow states, the black literacy rate shot up dramatically between 1890 and 1930, from 30 to 74 percent in Georgia, and from 28 to 77 percent in Louisiana. But these seemingly impressive figures masked a serious problem. Asking people if they are literate is not the same as testing their reading and writing skills, and possessing the rudiments of literacy will not prepare anyone for more than manual or domestic work. Among the 80 percent of black adults whom the Bureau reported as literate in 1930, only a few stayed in school beyond the primary grades and virtually all had attended inferior Jim Crow schools.

The obstacles facing black children who thirsted for education in the 1930s—the great-grandparents of today’s black students—were enormous. More than three million school-age black children lived in the 17 states that continued to operate separate schools, along with 81 percent of all the nation’s black population. In the Jim Crow states that stretched from Delaware to Texas, local school boards spent almost three times as much on each white student as they did on blacks. The funding disparities in the Deep South states, where blacks outnumbered whites in hundreds of rural countries, were far greater. Alabama spent \$37 on each white child in 1930 and just \$7 on those who were black; in Georgia the figures were \$32 and \$7, in Mississippi they were \$31 and \$6, and those in South Carolina were \$53 and \$5, a disparity of more than 10-to-one.

The largest chunk of the school budget in every district goes to pay teachers; and the salaries of black teachers during the 1930s were far below those of whites. The monthly salary of black teachers in the South in 1930 was about 60 percent of the white average, \$73 for blacks and \$118 for whites, with the yearly school term in white schools about two months longer, which added to the salary gap. Poorly paid teachers are not necessarily poorly trained or unable to educate their students, but the meager wages of black teachers in the 1930s did not lure the most promising college graduates into rural Jim Crow schools. Horace Mann Bond, a noted black educator, administered the Stanford Achievement Test to a large group of black teachers in Alabama schools in 1931. He discovered that their average score was below that of the national level of ninth-grade students. Almost half of the black teachers had not mastered the material that eighth-graders were expected to know. And many of these teachers were assigned to teach students in grades above their own level of knowledge.

During the late 1930s, the American Council on Education sent a team of investigators into the Deep South to conduct a survey of the schools in which black children were educated. These schools were, of course, segregated by law and long-standing custom. The report of the investigators who visited the black grade school in Dine Hollow, Ala., reflected the study's findings across the "Black Belt" that stretched from southern Virginia through eastern Texas:

A typical rural Negro school is at Dine Hollow. It is in a dilapidated building, once whitewashed, standing in a rocky field unfit for cultivation. Dust-covered weeds spread a carpet all around, except for an uneven, bare area on one side that looks like a ball field. Behind the school is a small building with a broken, sagging door. As we approach, a nervous, middle-aged woman comes to the door of the school. She greets us in a discouraged voice marked by a speech impediment. Escorted inside, we observe that the broken benches are crowded to three times their normal capacity. Only a few battered books are in sight, and we look in vain for maps or charts. We learn that four grades are assembled here. The weary teacher agrees to permit us to remain while she proceeds with the instruction. She goes to the blackboard and writes an assignment for the first two grades to do while she conducts spelling and word drills for the third and fourth grades. This is the assignment:

Write your name ten times.

Draw an dog, an cat, an rat, an boot.

The American Council on Education let black parents and students in Jim Crow schools speak for themselves in its report, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*. What they said was both sad and sobering. Almost without exception, parents wanted their children to learn and succeed. "I believe children ought to get all the education they kin," said a farmer's wife in Coahoma County, Miss. "I'd like to see 'em all finish the 12th grade at least. My daughter is the only one that goes now. The rest have to chop and pick right now, but they be going 'long soon." Almost all black children in the South missed school to do farmwork. A tenant farmer in Shelby County, Tenn., spoke of his vegetable farming: "The children need all the education they can get, but we need them to help on the farm. If you don't make your crop, the white man will put somebody else here to do the work. The children go to school when there ain't no work for them in the fields, but where there is work, they has to stay home and do it." White landowners had little interest in educating the children of their black tenants. "It just isn't safe for me to go on a plantation to bring students to school," said a white truant officer in Shelby County. "The landowners show absolutely no concern and they tell me to let the 'niggers' work." The demands of farmwork took a heavy toll on black children in the Deep South states that had the highest rates of sharecropping. In Mississippi, where almost 90 percent of black farmers were tenants in 1930, the average black child spent just 74 days in school, while the average in Virginia, with a tenancy rate of 38 percent, was 128 days in school. Most black children in the Deep South attended school just 15 or 20 weeks each year in the 1930s.

Very few of the black children who finished grade school in the 1930s had the chance to attend high school. In 1932, only 14 percent of those between 15 and 19 years old were enrolled in public secondary schools in southern

states. From Virginia to Texas, only in North Carolina did as many as 20 percent of blacks attend high school; the rates in Mississippi and Georgia were 5 and 8 percent. A report on secondary education for blacks in 1933 showed that between them, the states of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina had a total of 16 black high schools accredited for four-year study. This report also noted that "89 percent of all Negro secondary schools are essentially elementary schools with one or more years of secondary work included at the top—often at the expense of the lower school." Even the four-year high schools had few resources; they averaged just five full-time and two part-time teachers, and most often one of the teachers doubled as principal. Hardly any of these black high schools offered science courses or had laboratories, and very few had courses in foreign languages, music, or art. Their curriculum was limited and their teachers had little training in academic subjects.

The educational status of blacks in the Jim Crow states remained abysmally low in 1950, falling below the level of whites in 1930. Black adults in Mississippi had completed an average of 5.1 years in school, while those in Georgia and South Carolina had even lower figures of 4.9 and 4.8 years. For the nation as a whole, just one of every eight black adults had completed high school, while four of 10 whites had earned their diploma. While only nine percent of white adults had attended school for less than five years, 31 percent of blacks fell into this category. At the other end of the educational spectrum, almost 16 percent of white adults in 1950 had attended college and six percent had graduated; the figures for blacks were five and two percent. These numbers should be viewed with awareness of the glaring disparities in quality of the black and white schools in the Jim Crow states; a black student who completed eight years of schooling in one of these states had attended schools that were in session two months less each year, had been instructed by teachers whose own education averaged just 10 years, had used out-of-date, hand-me-down textbooks from white schools, and had received little help at home from parents who were most likely illiterate or barely able to read and write. A white student who completed the eighth grade was almost certainly far ahead of the black child at the same grade level.

The black community had no illusions about Jim Crow schools in 1950. In a special mid-century issue, the *Journal of Negro Education* asked leading black educators to assess the educational system. Without exception, these experts laid the blame for inferior black schools on racial segregation. Benjamin E. Mays, president of Morehouse College in Atlanta, wrote that the Jim Crow system "with its inevitable consequences of inequality has warped the minds and spirits of thousands of Negro youths. They either grow to manhood accepting the system, in which case they aspire to limited, racial standards; or they grow up with bitterness in their minds. It is the rare Negro child who comes through perfectly normal and poised under the segregated system." Mays concluded that "the greatest thing that anyone can do to improve the morale of Negro children and youth is to continue to fight to destroy legalized segregation." □

The Decline of the Idea of Caste

*Setting the Stage
for Brown v. Board of Education*

By Robert J. Cottrol,
Raymond T. Diamond, and Leland B. Ware

Fifty years ago—on May 17, 1954, to be precise—the Supreme Court published its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. By doing so, the high Court gave a tremendous boost to the modern civil rights movement that forever changed American race relations. The decision, authored by recently appointed Chief Justice Earl Warren, declared segregation in public schools inherently unconstitutional.

The decision was revolutionary. A half century earlier, in 1896, the Supreme Court had declared in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that “separate but equal” facilities were consistent with the Constitution. Although *Plessy* addressed segregation on a New Orleans railroad car, the decision had much broader implications. It sanctioned the system of American apartheid, Jim Crow, that was emerging in the South and elsewhere at the beginning of the 20th century.

What was Jim Crow? The term comes from a character in an 1800s minstrel show and refers to a complete system of segregation present in almost every observable facet of public life. Colored and white signs were placed on water fountains, park benches, waiting rooms in train stations, and restrooms. The system could be absurd and petty: separate sections for black and white patrons in movie theaters, or separate bibles for black and white witnesses in courtrooms.

(Continued on page 10)

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NAACP v. Jim Crow

*The Legal Strategy that Brought Down “Separate but Equal”
by Toppling School Segregation*

By Robert J. Cottrol,
Raymond T. Diamond, and Leland B. Ware

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed in 1909 to fight Jim Crow, 20th-century America’s experience with petty and not so petty apartheid. Under the leadership of W.E.B. Du Bois, the NAACP would take the bully pulpit to push for the abolition of segregation and racial caste distinctions, and it would fight for open and equal access to education and employment for Negroes. It would crusade against lynching and offer legal assistance to defend black people mistreated in criminal court. Over time, the NAACP would become the nation’s premier civil rights organization. It would do so in large part because the NAACP early on recognized that the courts, despite their racial conservatism, were a potentially potent weapon in the battle for racial change.

In 1931, the NAACP’s first staff attorney, Nathan Margold, outlined a legal strategy to challenge school segregation. His strategy was part direct, part circumspect. Given the temper of the times, Margold recognized that it wouldn’t do to attack school segregation under any and all circumstances. Such an approach would invite, in his words, “intense opposition, ill-will and strife.” Instead Margold urged an attack on “the constitutional validity of southern school systems as they exist and are administered *at the present time* [italics added].” *Plessy v. Ferguson* had given “separate but equal” a constitutional imprimatur. But there was an opening to diminish its importance and pave the way to its undoing. It was clear that in the South, expenditures on black schools were significantly inferior on a per capita basis to those for white schools. State officials, according to Margold’s strategy, would be forced into the

(Continued on page 19)

Left: Four grades were packed into a Baptist church in West Memphis, Ark., in 1949. Because funding for black schools throughout the South was so meager, blacks were forced to make do with whatever facilities were available.



ED CLARK, LIFE MAGAZINE © 1949 TIME INC./GETTY IMAGES



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DECLINE OF CASTE

(Continued from page 8)

It could also be deadly: separate hospitals for blacks and whites, with black patients dying in emergencies because they could not be admitted to white hospitals. It also included restrictions that made it impossible for all but a handful of African Americans to vote in southern states, despite the fact that the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution had outlawed racial restrictions on voting. (For a sample of Jim Crow laws, see “Legislating Jim Crow” on page 12.) And there were separate schools for colored children; schools that had a fraction of the funding that white schools had; schools that often had children of different ages, grades, and abilities crowded into one-room cardboard shacks with holes in the roofs; schools that frequently had no books, schools where sometimes even the teachers barely had a grade-school education.

It was this system of Jim Crow that the NAACP, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was formed to fight. *Brown* would be the organization’s greatest victory. The decision represented the triumph of a brilliant, multi-decade litigation strategy to dismantle legally mandated segregation (see accompanying article). But the *Brown* victory was also the product of profound cultural change. To understand that transformation, we have to appreciate the profound changes in racial attitudes that occurred in America in the first half of the 20th century.

From our vantage point at the beginning of the 21st century, it is easy to forget how commonplace, even respectable, open expressions of bigotry were at the beginning of the last century. In 1909, when the NAACP was founded, the United States was not only a land of strict legal segregation in the South, where nearly 90 percent of the black population lived; it was also a society where whites often felt free, indeed encouraged, to assault the dignity, safety, and even lives of Negroes* on a routine basis. The use of racial epithets—*nigger*, *coon*, *darky*, *pickaninny*, *jigaboo*, and the rest—was routine. A black man, woman, or child might encounter such language from a thug in the streets, in the speeches of a politician, in the writings of a novelist, or even in a popular song like the “Darktown Strutters Ball.”

More sinister expressions of raw racism also infected early

* One word on terminology: There has been a tendency for the better part of the last generation for historians to explain, often somewhat apologetically, about the use of the term Negro. We will explain, but not apologetically. Negro was the name most African Americans called themselves throughout most of American history. They did so with pride and respect. We will treat the name in the same way.

The Jim Crow era was filled with dehumanizing experiences for African Americans. Left: A movie theater in Pensacola, Fla., in the 1930s had a separate entrance for blacks. Above right: A Greyhound bus station in Louisville, Ky., in 1943 combined the whites’ outhouse with the blacks’ dining room. Right: In 1900, 45 percent of employed blacks in the South were sharecroppers. From Reconstruction to the civil rights movement, sharecropping was common; it kept poor blacks (and whites) tethered to the land by keeping them perpetually in debt.

CORBIS

GEORGIA DIVISION OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY, OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE



20th-century America. Towns posted signs warning Afro-Americans to leave before sundown. Newspapers and prominent politicians routinely defended lynchings in editorials and speeches. Race riots occurred, during which white mobs terrorized black communities while police ignored the carnage or even assisted the mobs.

But in the years before America's 1917 declaration of war on Imperial Germany, raw racism was not the monopoly of the untutored mob or even the demagogic politician or tabloid editor—it was the received wisdom of many of the most learned men and women of the day. Racism was an inte-

gral part of the curriculum at the nation's leading universities. Eminent biologists taught scientific racism and extolled the virtues of eugenics. Leading sociologists made the case for Social Darwinism (in which concepts from evolutionary biology, such as "survival of the fittest," were used to justify whites' superior status). The most prominent historians told their students that Reconstruction was a "tragic era" and that the resulting Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were Constitutional mistakes; African Americans, agreed the leading historians of the time, should not have been granted equal rights or enfranchised by the Constitution. The courts noticed.

Legislating Jim Crow

In the hundred years that took this country from Reconstruction to the civil rights movement, more than 400 Jim Crow state laws, state constitutional amendments, and city ordinances were passed.* This legislation not only sanctioned racism, it erased the progress that was made right after the Civil War. Here we provide a small sampling of those 400-plus laws, grouped by topic.**

Education

Florida: The schools for white children and the schools for negro children shall be conducted separately.

Mississippi: Separate schools shall be maintained for the children of the white and colored races.

New Mexico: Separate rooms shall be provided for the teaching of pupils of African descent, and such pupils may not be admitted to the school rooms occupied and used by pupils of Caucasian or other descent.

North Carolina: School textbooks shall not be interchangeable between the white and colored schools, but shall continue to be used by the race first using them.

Entertainment

Alabama: It shall be unlawful to conduct a restaurant or other place for the serving of food in the city, at which white and colored people are served in the same room, unless such white and colored persons are effectually sepa-



Above: This Louisiana restaurant allowed African Americans to enter only if they were properly dressed maids.

rated by a solid partition extending from the floor upward to a distance of seven feet or higher, and unless a separate entrance from the street is provided.

It shall be unlawful for a negro and white person to play together or in company with each other at any game of pool or billiards.

Georgia: It shall be unlawful for any amateur white baseball team to play on any vacant lot or baseball diamond within two blocks of a playground devoted to the Negro race, and it shall be unlawful for any amateur colored baseball team to play baseball within

two blocks of any playground devoted to the white race.

All persons licensed to conduct the business of selling beer or wine ... shall serve either white people exclusively or colored people exclusively and shall not sell to the two races within the same room at any time.

Louisiana: All circuses, shows, and tent exhibitions, to which the attendance of more than one race is invited shall provide not less than two ticket offices and not less than two entrances.

Virginia: Any public hall, theatre, opera house, motion picture show or place of public entertainment which is

AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Few white Americans were prepared to seriously challenge the view that had become deeply woven into the fabric of American culture, the belief that Afro-Americans were a separate caste, a group apart. Even in the relatively liberal cities of the North, black workers found little welcome in the newly developing factories or in the skilled trades that employed white workers, including immigrants. Residential segregation was on the increase. Racial violence, though less pronounced than in the South, was still common. Even many of the day's leading social thinkers, including progressive intellectuals, believed that African Americans were bio-

logically inferior. Upton Sinclair's sociological novel *The Jungle* is quite instructive on this score. With sympathy and passion, Sinclair's novel portrays the desperate plight of Eastern European immigrants caught up in the harsh working world of the Chicago slaughterhouses at the turn of the century. The same novel dismisses its Negro characters as semi-human, hulking brutes.

This atmosphere can help us understand why the federal judiciary was willing to ignore the Constitution and permit Jim Crow and disfranchisement. Judges were a part of the larger culture. They shared the racist sentiments of their day,

attended by both white and colored persons shall separate the white race and the colored race.

Freedom of Speech

Mississippi: Any person guilty of printing, publishing or circulating matter urging or presenting arguments in favor of social equality or of inter-marriage between whites and negroes, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Health Care

Alabama: No person or corporation shall require any white female nurse to nurse in wards or rooms in hospitals, either public or private, in which negro men are placed.

Louisiana: The board of trustees shall maintain a separate building, on separate grounds, for the admission, care, instruction, and support of all blind persons of the colored or black race.

Housing

Louisiana: Any person ... who shall rent any part of any such building to a negro person or a negro family when such building is already in whole or in part in occupancy by a white person or white family shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Mississippi: The prison warden shall see that the white convicts shall have separate apartments for both eating and sleeping from the negro convicts.

Libraries

Texas: Negroes are to be served through a separate branch or branches of the county free library, which shall

be administered by a custodian of the negro race under the supervision of the county librarian.

North Carolina: The state librarian is directed to fit up and maintain a separate place for the use of the colored people who may come to the library for the purpose of reading books or periodicals.

Marriage

Arizona: The marriage of a person of Caucasian blood with a Negro shall be null and void.

Florida: All marriages between a white person and a negro, or between a white person and a person of negro descent to the fourth generation inclusive, are hereby forever prohibited.

Any negro man and white woman, or any white man and negro woman, who are not married to each other, who habitually live in and occupy in the nighttime the same room, shall each be punished by imprisonment not exceeding 12 months, or by fine not exceeding \$500.

Maryland: All marriages between a white person and a negro, or between a white person and a person of negro descent, to the third generation, inclusive ... are forever prohibited, and shall be void.

Wyoming: All marriages of white persons with Negroes, Mulattos, Mongolians, or Malaya hereafter contracted in the State of Wyoming are, and shall be, illegal and void.

Services

Georgia: No colored barber shall serve as a barber to white women or girls.

The officer in charge shall not bury, or allow to be buried, any colored persons upon ground set apart or used for the burial of white persons.

Transportation

Alabama: All passenger stations in this state operated by any motor transportation company shall have separate waiting rooms or space and separate ticket windows for the white and colored races.

The conductor of each passenger train is authorized and required to assign each passenger to the car or the division of the car, when it is divided by a partition, designated for the race to which such passenger belongs.

Maryland: All railroad companies are hereby required to provide separate cars or coaches for the travel and transportation of the white and colored passengers.

Work

Alabama: Every employer of white or negro males shall provide for such white or negro males reasonably accessible and separate toilet facilities.

Oklahoma: The baths and lockers for the negroes shall be separate from the white race, but may be in the same building. (Mining companies)

* Source: "Jim Crow Legislation Overview," by Susan Falck; online at www.jimcrowhistory.org/resources/lessonplans/hs_es_jim_crow_laws.htm.

** Source: "Remembering Jim Crow," a Web site based on the documentary (of the same name) by Stephen Smith, Kate Ellis, and Sasha Aslanian; online at americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/remembering/laws.html.

including the conventional wisdom that the egalitarian sentiment that had placed the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments into the Constitution was a mistake.

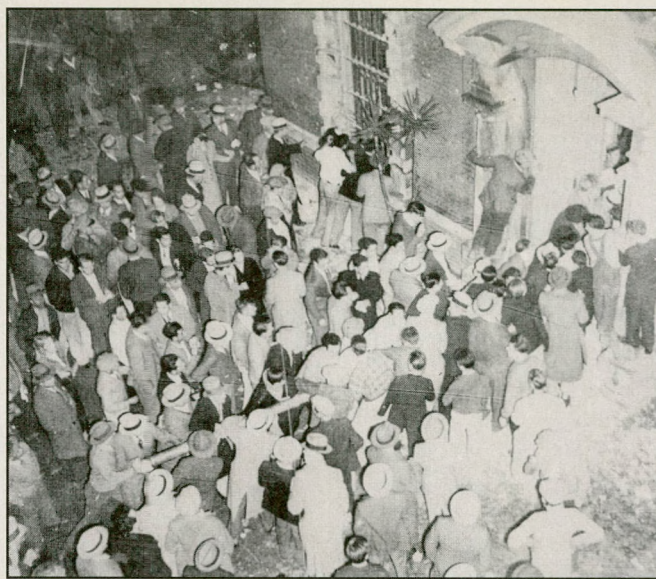
World War I

This atmosphere began to change, but only slowly. America's participation in the First World War played an indirect role in this change. The Army was strictly segregated. The treatment of black troops was shabby for a nation that fought "to make the world safe for democracy." Most black soldiers were confined to work as menial laborers. The Marine Corps and Army Air Service excluded Negroes altogether. Afro-Americans could only serve as mess attendants—uniformed cooks and officers' servants—in the Navy. Opportunities for promotion were limited. The Army frequently refused to give medals for heroism to Negro soldiers who had clearly earned them. Black troops were lectured, sometimes on the battlefields of France, not to expect political or social equality when they returned from "over there." But the Army, even with all its discrimination, exposed many Afro-Americans from the rural South to a very different way of life. They left their restricted communities. They were paid according to rank, not color. They saw black men in positions of authority, mostly corporals and sergeants, but also an occasional lieutenant or captain. One of those World War I officers, Charles Hamilton Houston, would later transform Howard Law School and become one of Thurgood Marshall's mentors.

Despite often harsh discipline and demeaning segregation, the experience for many black soldiers was oddly liberating. It fostered a new assertiveness, particularly among the 200,000 who had served with the American Expeditionary Forces. This new assertiveness was particularly unwelcome in the South, where, in 1919, a number of returning black doughboys were lynched in uniform. But that was not the reaction everywhere. In New York City, a black National Guard Regiment was welcomed home with a ticker tape parade. Chicago also held a parade for its returning Negro National Guard Regiment (although that city would also be the scene of a bloody race riot in 1919).



Above: The NAACP was founded in 1909. By 1919, when this photo was taken, its membership had grown to 90,000 people (white and black).



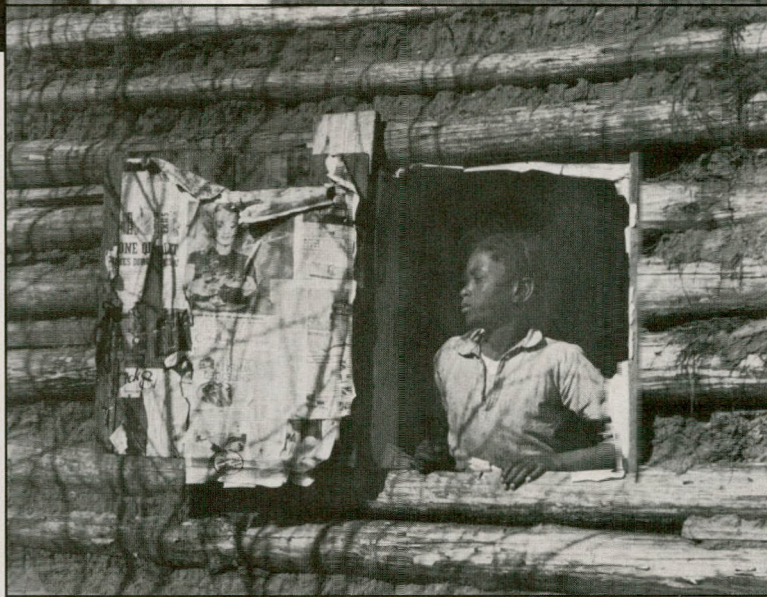
Between 1882 and 1968 there were nearly 4,000 recorded lynchings. Above: In 1933 in San Jose, Calif., a white mob broke into this jail holding two black men, Thomas Thurmond and Jack Holmes. Thurmond and Holmes were beaten and lynched, but no charges were ever pressed against anyone in the mob. Above right: Ku Klux Klan members gathered in 1948 on Stone Mountain, Ga., where the Klan was founded in 1866. Below right: Log cabin homes like this one, with newspaper on the walls to stop drafts and no glass in the windows, were common in the South. This 1937 photo is from Gee's Bend, Ala.

World War I also played an important role in moving large numbers of Negroes from the rural South to the cities of the North and West, beginning what historians have called the "Great Migration." The increased need for factory labor and the fact that the war curtailed European immigration helped bring a growing number of African Americans to the North. This helped heighten racial tensions in northern cities, but it also provided new opportunities for many blacks. Northern cities provided Negroes with better educational opportunities, better incomes, and the right to vote. All of these would strengthen the NAACP and other civil rights groups. The black presence in the cities would also strengthen the small, but growing, group of Afro-American academics, intellectuals, and writers—the people who were a vital part of the Harlem Renaissance and its counterparts in other cities. Over time, these people would play a role in changing American thoughts on race.

After the First World War, thinking on race changed—slowly. Fewer and fewer educated people were prepared to defend the kind of scientific racism that prevailed at the start of the century. The growth of the social sciences played an important role in this rethinking. Increasingly, scholars like anthropologist Franz Boas were convincing educated men and women that culture and social environment, not biology, were largely responsible for observable differences among groups.

The Great Depression

By the 1930s, in northern cities, the increasing African-American population voted in growing numbers. Franklin



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Roosevelt's New Deal was increasingly reaching out to this constituency with relief measures for those hit hard by the Great Depression of the 1930s. It should also be quickly added that Roosevelt took great pains not to offend the segregationist order in the South. There was discrimination in the administration of New Deal relief measures; the Civilian Conservation Corps, a work-relief program for unemployed youth, was largely segregated; Roosevelt was reluctant to support a national anti-lynching bill—a measure that was strongly urged by the NAACP; and, he did little to alleviate gross racial discrimination in the peacetime armed forces. Nonetheless, for the first time in American history, substantial numbers of black voters began to support the Democratic Party. And, if Franklin Roosevelt was somewhat reluctant to embrace the cause of civil rights and Negro equality, his wife Eleanor had no such reticence. She was a public and vigorous champion of civil rights, often to the consternation

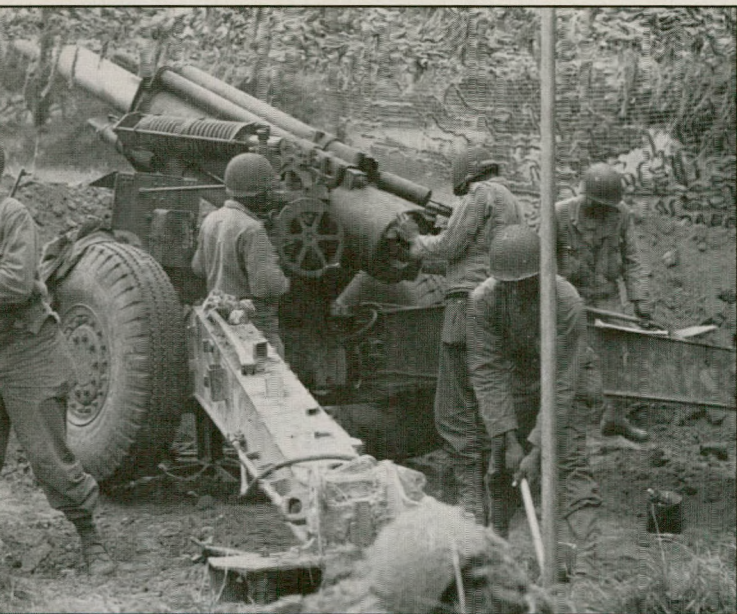
of her more racially conservative husband. Her actions often had an important symbolic value that went far beyond the official powerlessness of her position as first lady. In 1939, Eleanor sent a powerful symbolic message to Americans, black and white, when she arranged for Marian Anderson to sing at the Lincoln Memorial after the Afro-American singer had been barred from performing at the Concert Hall of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The decade of the Great Depression brought other changes. Increasingly, although by no means unanimously, social scientists and historians were rejecting earlier notions of inherent racial inferiority. This rejection was aided by the arrival in the 1930s of a significant number of influential European scholars, many of them Jewish refugees from the Nazi regime who had devastating firsthand experience with the consequences of pseudoscientific racism. Another important development was the growing popularity of Freudian psychology, which introduced university-educated Americans to such concepts as unconscious and subconscious motivations for behavior. These concepts would later prove important in studies of racial prejudice and the effects of prejudice and discrimination on blacks and other minority groups. Two important contributions to the field of Afro-American studies, W.E.B. Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction* (1935) and Melville Herskovits's *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), began to suggest a richer and more complex African-American past than had previously been presented by the American historical profession. Although both works had a rather muted influence at the time of their publications, the influence of both would grow after the Second World War.

NEGRO MEN
CAN CARRY GUNS FOR
UNCLE SAM
SURELY
THEY CAN DRIVE MILK
WAGONS FOR
BOWMAN DAIRY

Negro Labor Relation League





CORBIS



NATIONAL ARCHIVES & RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

At the beginning of WWII, the military believed that African Americans were not intelligent enough to engage in combat. Above: Black soldiers are putting a howitzer in place that white soldiers will operate. As the war went on, the military came to depend on highly successful black pilots, tank corps, and others who proved courageous and trustworthy in battle. Above right: Corporal Carlton Chapman is a machine-gunner in a M-4 tank. Below: American fighter pilots pose in their aviator gear. Left: Fighting for democracy overseas catalyzed a new press for civil rights at home.

World War II

The Second World War would help bring about profound changes in the racial thinking of many ordinary white Americans, but not all at once. The Army was still firmly committed to segregation. Blacks and whites were in separate units. The Army planned to largely restrict Negroes to positions as uniformed laborers, reserving combat and technical positions



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for white soldiers. The Air Corps, under presidential prodding, had finally begun, reluctantly, to train Afro-Americans as pilots and in aircraft maintenance and other technical specialties. But Air Corps leaders wanted to severely restrict those opportunities, preferring to keep black soldiers as uniformed laborers. The Navy and Coast Guard were even more restrictive. They wanted to again confine Negroes to a servants' role as mess attendants, as those services had largely done in the First World War. The Marines wanted to exclude African Americans altogether. They reluctantly admitted their first black recruits in 1942, when required to by law.

The armed forces may have wanted a severely limited role for black troops, but the political pressure generated by the NAACP and other civil rights supporters helped open new opportunities for African-American men (and later women) in uniform. But it was not just political pressure that forced new opportunities in the armed forces. The sheer scope of the military effort made unprecedented demands on manpower. Fighting occurred on every inhabited continent and in the adjacent oceans. American forces were stationed around the world.

The unprecedented demands of global war threw a monkey wrench into the plans of those who wanted only a severely restricted role for Negroes in the armed forces. Manpower demands forced the military to place black men and women in unaccustomed military roles. The Army, often with considerable reluctance, found itself employing black men in combat roles. Black men who had been mustered into the Navy and Coast Guard to act as officers' servants could be found firing antiaircraft guns or manning landing craft in amphibious assaults. The Air Corps, who had proclaimed before the war that blacks did not have the intelligence to fly planes, had all black fighter squadrons. Those squadrons, formed into the 332nd Fighter Group and known as the Tuskegee Airmen, saw action in the Mediterranean and European theaters. Three members of that group had the first confirmed kills of Luftwaffe jets over Berlin. Even the Marines were forced to accept some 20,000 Negro enlisted men during the war.

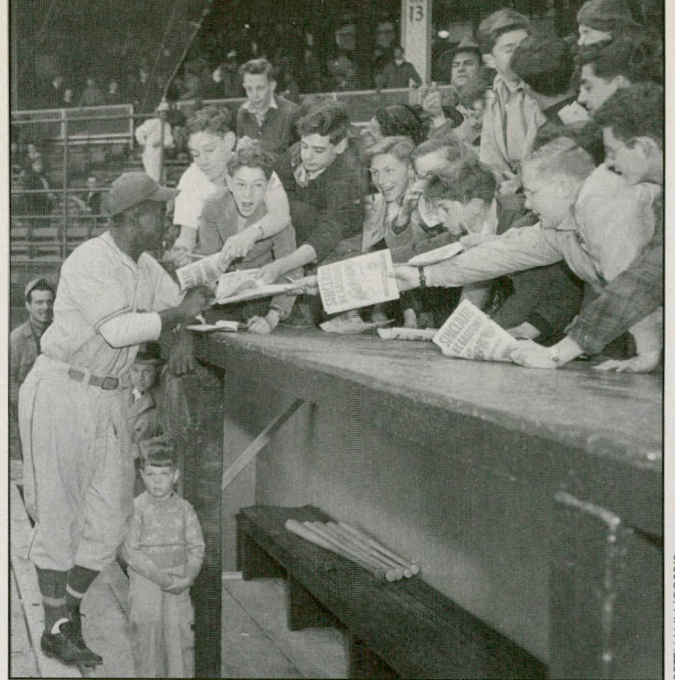
As in the First World War, the treatment of black men and women in the armed forces was often shabby. Units were segregated. Jim Crow was applied to mess halls and latrines, Chapels and USOs. Negro MPs guarding German and Italian prisoners of war in the United States found that their prisoners could eat in restaurants reserved for whites, while they, the American soldiers guarding them, could not. Some Afro-American soldiers were lynched in uniform in southern towns near their training camps. And in some overseas theaters of operation, racial tensions ran so high that black and white units even fired their weapons at each other.

Racism and racial discrimination were not confined to those in uniform—or even to Afro-Americans. In 1942, Roosevelt signed an Executive Order forcibly removing and interning all people of Japanese descent, citizens and aliens, from the West Coast. Jim Crow would remain strong throughout the South and in a good many other venues as well. Race riots, often precipitated by cases of police brutality, broke out in a number of northern cities. Two of the more serious of these occurred in Detroit and New York. Jim Crow even came to blood banks. Although Charles Drew, an African-American physician, had played a leading role in developing procedures for collecting and storing whole blood, the Red Cross nonetheless labeled blood by the race of the donor. This practice was followed in both civilian and military hospitals.

Despite the often strident racism found in the armed forces, the military experience would again provide a strange liberation for many of the more than one million Negroes who served in uniform during the war. As in the First World War, black men and now a few black women held positions of authority as noncommissioned and commissioned officers. These officers were limited to leading Negro units to be sure, but they had positions of authority that would have been inconceivable for black people in civilian life. Many learned advanced technical skills. The war caused people whose world had been confined to the limited horizons of the rural South or the emerging ghettos of northern cities to experience a far broader world than the one in which they had been raised. More than 500,000 black men and women served in the European and Pacific theaters.

The war would also bring significant changes for African-American civilians. The wartime economy created a great demand for industrial workers. Black men and women left sharecropping in the shadows of southern plantations to work in factories producing tanks in Detroit or aircraft in Los Angeles. The war accelerated the move of the Afro-American population from the largely rural South to the increasingly urban and more liberal North and West.

Military experience and the movement to the cities helped create a new awareness of and demand for rights on the part of blacks. Negro newspapers probably had the greatest influence in their history as they battled against Jim Crow in the military. The *Pittsburgh Courier* was particularly effective in this regard. Black workers used the wartime need for manpower to press against established barriers to industrial employment. Negroes of that generation spoke of a double V: V for victory against the Axis overseas and V for



Above: Famous ball player Jackie Robinson signs autographs for white fans in 1947. Integration pioneers like Robinson influenced Americans' views of Jim Crow.

victory against racism at home.

The status of blacks also received a boost from Hollywood. During World War II, the Army and Navy commissioned actors to make propaganda films designed to keep up the public's morale. In addition, the major studios all made patriotic war films designed to bolster public support and to sell war bonds. From this, a new film image for the Negro was born. The shiftless comic of 1930s movies was out. The heroic Negro soldier was in. Under prodding from both the NAACP and the military services, movies began to show blacks' contributions to the war effort. Black servicemen even found a level of integration on film that was usually denied to Negro soldiers in the real armed forces. Hollywood director Frank Capra, a wartime Lieutenant Colonel in the Signal Corps, produced the film *The Negro Soldier* (1944), that presented to civilian and military audiences a sympathetic and heroic portrayal of black soldiers. The Air Corps produced *Wings for this Man* (1945), a documentary that depicted the training of black pilots and the combat operations of the 332nd Fighter Group. That documentary was narrated by actor turned Air Corps Captain Ronald Reagan. His narration ended with a plea for fairness: "You don't judge a man by the shape of his nose or the color of his skin."

Did these cinematic depictions, civilian and military, provide audiences with a realistic portrayal of Negroes in the armed forces? No. Racism, segregation, and discrimination were not mentioned at all. The black soldier was depicted as contented and accepted, concerned only with performing his duties and defeating the enemy. But, simplistic as these portrayals were, they provided Afro-Americans with a new and decidedly improved image with the white public.

If these wartime celluloid epics began to change the white public's image of Americans of African descent, new writings in the social sciences, spurred on in part by the life and death struggle with Nazi racism, were beginning to cause educated elites to view the dismantling of racial prejudice as a national

and indeed moral imperative. Many began to see the irony of a crusade against Nazi Germany with its racist ideology being waged by a nation with an entrenched caste system. Clearly the most important work on race at this time was Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma*, published in 1944. Myrdal, a Swedish sociologist, provided a massive sociological examination of prejudice and discrimination in the United States. *An American Dilemma* was particularly influential because it emphasized the contradiction between professed American ideals of democracy and equality and the stark harshness of black lives under America's Jim Crow regime.

Myrdal and others in the social sciences were informing university-educated audiences about the problem of racism. This new perspective would resonate in postwar America. Americans had been forced to take a hard, awful look at where racism could lead. That look began when ordinary men, GIs in the European theater, stumbled across not only the unbelievable, but the inconceivable—killing grounds with names like Dachau, Buchenwald, and Mauthausen. These camps left an impression that would never be erased in the minds of the men who actually walked through them, including their commanding general, Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Nuremberg trials, as well as massive press coverage of Nazi atrocities, served to inform the wider American public of the horrors of the Third Reich's Final Solution. All of this would make the easy yet deep racial prejudice that was common earlier in the century far less respectable after the Second World War.

* * *

By the postwar era, the ground had shifted significantly. Racism, at times deep racism, still existed. Legal segregation prevailed throughout the South. *De facto* segregation and discrimination existed throughout the nation. But racism lacked the strong backing of leading institutions and cultural elites that it had enjoyed earlier in the century. And more ordinary white Americans were beginning to see racism as un-American, incompatible with the ideals for which they had recently sacrificed so much during the war. Other changes also came. Jackie Robinson's integration of baseball, President Truman's desegregation of the armed forces, and the 1948 election in which Truman proved that a Democrat could win without compromising with the segregationist South—all indicated that a new era of race and national culture was dawning. The Supreme Court began to respond to the new racial atmosphere. For example, in the 1948 case *Shelley v. Kramer*, the Court prevented lower courts from enforcing racially restrictive home-buying covenants.

These cultural changes created fertile ground for the decision in *Brown*. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 1954 decision, we should recognize that *Brown v. Board of Education* represented a legal milestone. But it represented something more. *Brown* also reflected profound cultural change. The nation had become uneasy with its most vexing contradiction, racial discrimination in a democratic society. That unease helped produce *Brown* and the still-unfinished struggle that would follow. □

NAACP'S LEGAL STRATEGY

(Continued from page 9)

Hobson's choice of having to greatly increase expenditures on black schools or to think the unthinkable, providing one set of schools for all children. It was a good strategy, but because of the depression, there would not be sufficient money to implement it during Margold's tenure at the NAACP.

In 1933, Charles Hamilton Houston succeeded Margold as the NAACP's chief attorney. Houston was a man of extraordinary brilliance. He graduated as a valedictorian from Amherst College in 1915 at age 19. For a short time afterward, he taught in the English department at Howard University. With America's entry into the First World War, Houston joined the NAACP in lobbying for a program to train black officers for the wartime National Army. He was commissioned as a first lieutenant after attending a training camp for Negro officers in Des Moines, Iowa. Houston served in France with the all-black, rigidly segregated Ninety-second Division and experienced some of the most strident racism of the Jim Crow army of that era, including almost being lynched by a mob of white troops. Those wartime experiences left an indelible impression on the young Houston, creating, as he indicated, a determination to strike back at racial oppression: "The hate and scorn showered on us Negro officers by our fellow Americans convinced me that there was no sense in my dying for a world ruled by them. I made up my mind that if I got through this war I would study law and use my time fighting for men who could not strike back."

He did get through. In the fall of 1919 he entered Harvard Law School. At Harvard he compiled a brilliant record, graduating in the top five percent of his class and serving as the first Negro editor of the *Harvard Law Review*. While practicing law in Washington, D.C., Houston taught law part-time at Howard University Law School. In 1929 he was named vice-dean and associate professor at the school. It was then that Houston decided to make changes—changes that would profoundly influence Howard University's law school and the course of the nation's civil rights law.

Convinced that the law could be an important tool in the fight against racial repression, Houston began to give the Howard Law School a strong civil rights orientation. He established the first course in civil rights law taught at an American law school. Houston also made the law school library a depository for files on civil rights litigation from around the nation. Howard became a clearinghouse and research center for those involved in the fight against segregation. Students were not only exposed to the theoretical possibility that law could shape social change, but also had the opportunity to actually work on cases that were changing the law and the society as well.

When Houston became the NAACP's special counsel in 1933, he reexamined Margold's litigation strategy. He concluded that efforts to equalize facilities between black and white schools should continue, but he also recognized (as Margold did) that victories

in such cases could cause problems for the long-term goal of eliminating segregation. In addition, black teachers who acted as plaintiffs in salary equalization suits ran serious risk of being fired—a particularly severe risk given the desperate scarcity of jobs in America in the 1930s.*

For these reasons, Houston decided that while the NAACP should continue its efforts to create a Hobson's Choice for school districts by bringing facility and salary equalization suits, it should also add a new, perhaps more promising, focus: desegregation in graduate and professional schools. Segregation in graduate and professional education was as common in the South as segregation in elementary and secondary schools. But there were far fewer graduate and professional programs and, therefore, fewer targets for a concentrated litigation effort. A victory against a state's single law school or medical school would reverberate across the state.

Also, it was easier to make the case that discrimination was occurring in professional schools. Boards of education that ran elementary and secondary schools had an arsenal of potential defenses for differences between white and black schools. Did the school for white children offer an academic curriculum while the school for Negroes offered a vocational program? Well, schools can't be expected to be identical; the schools were simply serving the different needs of their different constituencies. Was a new building constructed for the white school and not the black one? Perhaps, but the physical facilities were substantially equal, and besides the new building for the white school could help explain the differences in per capita expenditures for white and black students. These kinds of arguments could be challenged, of course, but they would involve the NAACP in long, often hard to prove, fact-specific litigation. The possibilities for long-term evasion of any reckoning over inequalities in primary and secondary education were clear. Professional schools offered a more tempting target: The NAACP was dealing with total exclusion; the state provided a law school or a medical school, but only for whites.

Professional schools were also a tempting target for another reason—they carried less emotional baggage. In the atmosphere of the 1930s, and indeed for a long time after, any effort that seemed like it was directed at the integration of primary or secondary education would raise an emotional and political firestorm. Large numbers of white children attended the public schools. Racist demagogues were sure to charge that black and white children attending elementary



Above: Thurgood Marshall (left), Charles Hamilton Houston (right), and Donald Murray (center) prepare their suit against the University of Maryland.

and secondary schools together would lead to the dreaded scourge of race mixing. The political opposition would be intense, perhaps fatal.

But professional schools were another matter. Few people attended them. There would be even fewer African Americans eligible for admission. The students were mature. An attempt to get some good cases and set some decent precedents with regard to professional schools? That might work. Maryland looked like it might provide fertile ground for such an effort. The University of Maryland's law school was only open to whites. There was no state school for the education of Negro lawyers. Between 1933 and 1934, nine Afro-Americans had applied to the school in Baltimore and had been denied admission because of race. The NAACP looked around for a strong plaintiff.

Are All Law Schools Equal?

The NAACP found one in Baltimore resident Donald Murray. Like Houston, Murray was a graduate of Amherst College, and, by any standard, qualified for admission to the University of Maryland Law School. That is, he was qualified by any standard but one. His application was rejected. The rejection letter stated that the school "did not accept Negro students." His application evidently got more than routine notice and rejection. University of Maryland President Raymond Pearson informed Murray that while the University of Maryland did not accept black students, Howard University did. He indicated that Murray might attend Howard under the auspices of a scholarship for black students who could not attend state institutions.

The correspondence between Murray and University of Maryland officials allowed the NAACP to focus on the issue of segregation. Maryland was willing to provide a state-supported legal education for Murray, but not in Maryland and not at the state university. NAACP lawyers brought the case in state court. The question was simple: Was Maryland's system of providing state-sponsored scholarships to schools outside the state equal to providing an education at the state's law school?

* Still, the NAACP received support from courageous Afro-American educators who allowed their names to be used to press complaints of discrimination in teachers' salaries. Between 1936 and 1940, the NAACP had notable success in Maryland with lawsuits and negotiated settlements designed to equalize the pay of Negro and white teachers. It also won a case challenging unequal pay in Virginia. That case, *Alston v. School Board of City of Norfolk* (1940), was decided in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

The trial judge said no, as did Maryland's highest court on appeal. Careful selection of the right plaintiff had paid off. This is clear in the language of the appellate opinion. Murray, the court noted, had been "denied admission on the sole ground of his color." The court was forced to confront the constitutional issue. It was clear to the court that to entirely deny blacks the opportunity for a state-sponsored legal education when whites were provided one would violate the formula laid down by *Plessy*, but that was not the issue here. The issue was whether the state had chosen a proper method by which equal treatment would be maintained.

The court found the state's method inadequate, not in theory but in fact. There was no separate law school for blacks, and there was no authority to establish one. The state legislature had passed a statute in response to Murray's lawsuit. But the statute provided only \$10,000 for scholarships: a paltry \$200 each for up to 50 black students seeking a professional education out of state. By the time of the trial, only 17 days after the scholarships became available, 380 African-American students had asked for applications, 113 had returned them, and there were still 12 more days during which completed applications would be accepted. On these facts, the court found that there was inadequate funding and no guarantee that Murray would have been successful had he applied for a scholarship. Even if he had received a scholarship, the court found that Murray would still be at a significant disadvantage because of the added costs of commuting or relocating.

The appellate opinion went on to consider the question of intangible differences between a law school education at Howard and one at the University of Maryland. Here it is important to note that judges, of course, know a great deal about law schools and how to compare them. They are law school graduates and they spend their professional lives working with law school graduates. They have an expertise in the subject matter far beyond that which they have in other kinds of cases. The *Murray* court noted that if Murray were barred from the University of Maryland's law school, he would miss the benefits of a state law school education, specifically gaining a familiarity with the courts of the state in which he intended to practice law. Houston's skillful cross examination of the dean of the University of Maryland's law school highlighted this point.

The court held that the state had failed in its Fourteenth Amendment obligation to provide an equal education. The court did not condemn the scholarship program as a matter of law. Instead the court relied on a close examination of the facts and concluded that Murray had not been provided with an equal opportunity. The court did not hold that another scholarship program would be unconstitutional. But it did order Donald Murray admitted to the University of Maryland's law school.

Murray was noteworthy. It was the NAACP's first major victory in the campaign against segregated higher education. It got Donald Murray admitted to the University of Maryland. It established precedent within Maryland and might persuade courts in other jurisdictions. But the case was important for another reason as well. It was the first major case for a young attorney who would succeed Charles Hamilton

Houston as NAACP special counsel—Thurgood Marshall. Like Donald Murray, Marshall was a Baltimore native. He too had applied to the University of Maryland's law school in 1930, and like Murray, Marshall was rejected. As a result, Marshall attended Howard's law school, just as Houston's reforms were beginning to take hold. Marshall graduated first in his class and passed the Maryland bar in 1933. He immediately began the practice of law, representing the NAACP's interests in Maryland. When Marshall sat with Houston on Murray's case, Marshall must have taken no small amount of pleasure in attacking the Maryland law school's policy of discrimination. Houston no doubt took pleasure in seeing, in Marshall's commitment and performance, graphic evidence of the success of his policies at Howard.

American attitudes toward race had changed since *Plessy* in 1896, and, in key areas, NAACP attorneys were striking blows against racial discrimination and gaining valuable legal experience along the way. In its battle against blatant racism in the nation's police stations and criminal courts, the NAACP had successfully stopped many African-American defendants from being railroaded, often to their deaths; reversed convictions; and got the U.S. Supreme Court to confirm that convictions based on forced confessions were invalid and to rule that a criminal court could not exclude Negroes from juries. In the voting rights arena, the NAACP ended Oklahoma's restrictive time limit on when Negroes could register to vote and Texas's all-white primary.

But in education, *Plessy's* separate but equal doctrine still remained the law of the land. True, the NAACP had taken some chunks out of the doctrine with *Murray* and other cases. But at the end of the day, "separate but equal" remained entrenched. To be successful in eliminating segregated education throughout the United States, the NAACP realized it would have to convince the courts to take a much closer look at the equal side of the *Plessy* case. It had to convince the courts that segregation was inherently unequal and that that inequality could be eliminated only by outlawing segregation itself.

In arguing another law school case in the late 1940s, Marshall had attempted to use social science evidence to make the case that segregated facilities were inherently unequal. But the Supreme Court had disposed of the case without addressing Marshall's argument. Marshall searched for another plaintiff who could help advance the court's thinking on the inherent inequality of separate education. He found that plaintiff in Heman Sweatt.

Cracking the Wall: Separate Is Inherently Unequal

Sweatt was a letter carrier who lived in Texas. In 1946 he applied to the all-white law school at the University of Texas. He was immediately rejected. The rejection letter informed him that he could request that the state of Texas establish a law school for Negroes. The NAACP filed suit in state court on Sweatt's behalf. The results were familiar. The trial court opinion stated that state officials were under no obligation to admit him to the University of Texas. The opinion allowed

state officials six months to establish a black law school. Just before the six months were up, the state presented the trial court with evidence that it had established the Jim Crow law school. The school was housed in two rented rooms in Houston. Administratively, the school was part of Prairie View University, a Texas state university for Negroes, some 40 miles away. The faculty consisted of two part-time instructors. There was no library.

Prairie View's new law school was a poor excuse for equal education, indeed even for good education. Nonetheless, the trial court found that the Jim Crow law school provided a legal education that was equal to that provided by the University of Texas. Still, state officials recognized that they were on shaky ground, that appellate courts would be more skeptical. The legislature moved to provide a more credible alternative. By the time an appellate court could hear the appeal, the legislature had appropriated \$100,000 toward the establishment of a law school at the newly established Texas State University for Negroes in Houston. Until a new facility could be built in Houston, the new school would be housed in downtown Austin, across the street from the state capitol. It was to have three rooms, a 10,000-volume library, access to the state law library in the capital building, and three part-time faculty members. The part-time faculty members were professors from the University of Texas School of Law. Because of these changes, the case was remanded to the trial court to determine if the new school was equal to the one for whites.

Of course, the trial court found that the new school provided an education equal to that provided by the state university. The judge was the same one who had held that the vastly inferior Prairie View school was equal. What was important was not so much the trial court decision as the record that was produced in the trial. That record included evidence related to the tangible differences between the black and white law schools, the differences in physical plant, financial resources, numbers of professors, books in the library, and the like. The trial court record also contained important evidence showing the qualitative, intangi-

Teachers' Roles in Ending School Segregation

Teacher Salary Equalization Was Early Goal of NAACP

In the 1940s and 1950s, John Henry McCray was publisher and editor of the Lighthouse and Informer, the leading black weekly newspaper in South Carolina. Here is his first-person account of a salary equalization suit brought by a young black teacher in Charleston, S.C.

In 1940, I started writing a column called, "The Need For Changing." We pointed out certain situations, such as the poor academic facilities in the schools and so forth. Back then, lynching and violence were still big issues as well.

We also supported the campaign across the state for equalization of teachers' salaries. I would say the movement for civil rights—back then we called it the movement for Negro rights—started in South Carolina in 1940, when the man who was to be my associate editor, Osceola McKaine, started trying to organize school teachers so that they might get equal salaries.

It turned out to be a long fight. The teachers were afraid, and the Executive Committee of the Teacher's Association wasn't supportive. In 1942, the president of the Teacher's Association, John P. Burgess of Orangeburg, was telling the teachers, "You know these white folks are not going to pay you the same money they make. You're a fool if you try to get them to. You're gonna be out of a job," and so on and so on.

We got a plaintiff in Charleston in 1944—a young lady named Viola Louise Duvall from Charleston who worked at Birke School. It was her third year as a science teacher. She was a graduate of Howard University and her salary was \$600 a year! There were a lot of ladies who hadn't even gone to high school who were riveters

and so forth working at the Navy Yard there in Charleston making \$35 and \$40 a week. Hers, when you break it down to a weekly basis, was \$12 a week.

The teachers were afraid. I was asked by the president of the state NAACP and the principal of Booker Washington High School in Columbia who had recruited her as the plaintiff, to sort of keep Miss Duvall together. I made several trips—drove 115 miles from Columbia down to Charleston and many a Saturday evening sat down there with her and her mother. Viola told me that her friend at Birke High School who was usually assigned to work with her on yard duty at recess time had stopped having anything to do with her. Most of the teachers were like that publicly. There were some who favored her. I think all of them wanted the money.

Back then, Thurgood Marshall was the chief counsel for the NAACP nationally. When he came into South Carolina to assist in the prosecution of the equal pay case, it was the first case he had had in the state. He was scared to death—first time in South Carolina. He didn't know what was going to happen.

So he goes into court that morning, a little courthouse in Charleston. The Board had two lawyers: Erlich was one, and I forget the name of the other man. And Thurgood and his associates and the state attorney were sitting at the other table along with Miss Duvall and her mother sitting behind—holding each others' hands. The place was packed. You could overhear things like, "God, I sho' feel sorry for her" and "I sho' don't want to see that chile hurt, but she shudda known that" and that type of thing.

The judge came in and sat down

in his swivel chair. He liked to put his hands together and rest his chin right on the tip of them. He smiled, and then he turned his back to Marshall's table.

"Mr. Erlich," he said, "when was that case decided in Maryland, the Donald Murray case?"

And Marshall jumped up behind the judge. He says, "Your honor?"

And without looking around, the judge said, "I didn't ask you Mr. Marshall."

And boy, there was this buzz. I heard this woman say distinctly: "See that chile, he won't even let her lawyer talk. Poor thing. Poor thing. Poor thing."

Well, Mr. Erlich found whatever it was. He had it in some records there, and he gave it to the judge. Still smiling, the judge asked Mr. Erlich when another case was decided, and Mr. Marshall jumped up again. The judge, without looking, said: "Mr. Marshall, I didn't ask you."

Boy, you didn't know what was going on. I looked at Thurgood. I was sitting at the press table. They were bewildered. But the judge asked about four questions of that type, and then he swung his chair around to face the plaintiffs, his hands still up and his chin resting on them.

He said, "Now Mr. Marshall I don't want you to think I was being rude by not letting you give me the answers. I know you know the answers to those cases because you were the chief counsel for them. This is a very simple case, but what I wanted to find out from the School Board was how long it knew it was supposed to pay Negro teachers equal salaries and hadn't paid it. There's no need to take the court's time on this. Now, what I want to know from you is how do you want me to prepare this order? Do you want immediate equalization of salaries? Do you want to give the School Board some time in which to get ready for equalization? Or do you want a retroactive order that would make the School Board go back and pay these poor teachers what it has denied them for so many years?"

And that was Mr. Thurgood Mar-

shall's argument. He just stood there and looked at the other side, and asked that they be permitted to get together. The judge fixed the time for that, stood, said "Court's adjourned," and walked on out. The whole thing didn't take 10 minutes.

John Henry McCray was interviewed by Worth Long and Randall Williams for "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?"—an audio history of the civil rights movement produced by the Southern Regional Council. For the full interview and information on purchasing the series and the accompanying teacher training curriculum, see www.unbrokencircle.org/.

Teacher Activists Targeted for Harassment

In the mid-to-late 1950s, the white South's enmity toward the NAACP became a "consuming hatred," as the association became the central target for southern racists to vent their insecurities, loathing, and scorn.

Southern white politicians clearly recognized a visceral connection between black educators and the NAACP, as had been demonstrated by the higher education and salary equalization cases of the late 1930s and 1940s. Not coincidentally, in the mid-to-late 1950s attacks against both groups converged in intensity. Higher salaries had elevated many African-American teachers to middle-class status; their enhanced levels of educational attainment made them living refutations of the inherent inferiority white supremacy demanded, and their role as educators often made them self-conscious agents for social change. Severing the connection between African-American educators and the NAACP operated as an early central tactic for southern legislatures and local governmental groups.

Perhaps no event symbolized the often symbiotic relationship between southern African-American educators and the NAACP during this period than the tragic murders on Christmas night, 1951, of Florida's NAACP state Executive Director Harry T.

Moore and wife Harriette, who were killed by a bomb placed under the bedroom of their home. Harry Moore had begun teaching in Florida schools in 1925, and later served as a principal in various schools. In 1934, he organized and became the first president of the Brevard County branch of the NAACP and was active during the late 1930s and 1940s organizing for salary equalization and black voting rights. In 1946, both Moore and his wife were fired from their school positions by the Brevard County school board, seemingly in retaliation for their political activities. As a portent of future trends, their ousters by the school board were officially classified as resignations. Harriette eventually returned to the classroom and was employed as a teacher, as was one of their daughters, when she and her husband were murdered.

The Georgia Board of Education initiated one of the first attacks against both African-American educators and the NAACP in July 1955, when it unanimously adopted a resolution to revoke "forever" the license of any teacher who "supports, encourages, condones, or agrees to teach mixed classes." The next month, in August 1955, when urged by state Attorney General Eugene Cook "to go a little further," the Board revised the resolution to include under the new revocation guidelines "any teacher who was a member of the NAACP, any allied organization, or any subversive organization...." The president of the Georgia Education Association, the state's segregated white teacher group, publicly applauded the Board's actions as "...cooperating with what it thinks is the sentiment of the people." The resolution's potential illegality, however, resulted in its being rescinded within a few months. In its stead, a signed loyalty oath was re-

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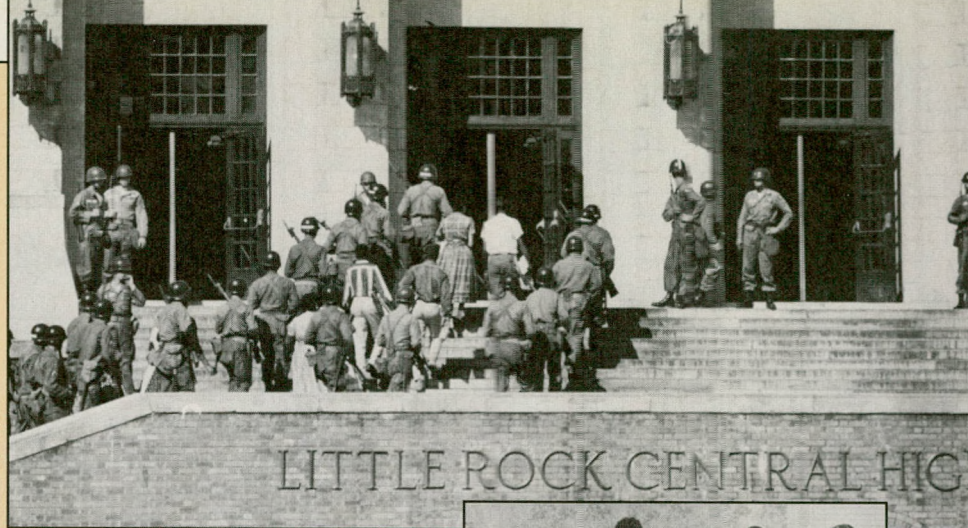
quired, demanding that all Georgia educators “uphold, support and defend” the state’s constitution. Printed on the back of teachers’ annual contracts, the oath had to be renewed annually.

About half of the 10 or so southern states that enacted measures to cramp and cripple, if not totally curb, NAACP activities included in their legislative packages demands that required the NAACP to divulge its membership lists, thus exposing members to the wrath of the Citizens’ Councils and other indignant defenders of White supremacy. As both sides knew well, retaliation resulting from such public disclosures would be uncompromising and unforgiving.

Similarly, many of these states also enacted legislation demanding that teachers and other public employees list *their* organizational memberships. Georgia, again, became a pioneer, enacting legislation in 1953 that required teachers to fill out a questionnaire detailing the organizations to which they belonged. Mississippi followed suit in 1956, as did Louisiana. South Carolina passed a similar law in 1957 and Arkansas followed in 1958, compelling school personnel to list not only their organizational memberships but also contributions given to organizations in the past five years.

Throughout the mid-to-late 1950s, African-American educators also faced concerted efforts by southern legislative authorities to alter or abolish state and local teacher tenure laws. Most common in the South were the continuing contract or spring notification laws under which a contract would be renewed unless the teacher was notified by a certain date. However, under these contracts, localities maintained no obligation to renew any individual contract, regardless of reason.

This excerpt comes from an article by Michael Fultz titled, “The Displacement of Black Educators Post-Brown: An Overview and Analysis.” The article was originally printed (with full references) in the History of Education Quarterly, 44(1), Spring 2004.



BETTMANN/CORBIS

Above: After waiting for three weeks, the Little Rock Nine, the first black students to integrate Little Rock’s Central High School, were finally escorted in by the National Guard on September 25, 1957. Right: During those three weeks, the nine students did their best to keep up in school by forming a study group.



BETTMANN/CORBIS

Teachers Worked Behind the Scenes

Because they were vulnerable to being harrassed or fired by their school boards and state legislatures, teachers were rarely out front in the fight for desegregation. But teachers were often behind-the-scenes players in key desegregation battles. Lucinda Todd, for example, taught at Buchanan Elementary in Topeka, Kan., but was forced to quit in 1935 because she got married. When her daughter, Nancy, started school, the unequal treatment became too much to bear. Nancy was a budding musician, but there was no music instruction in Jim Crow schools. Todd decided to act the day Nancy was nearly hit by a school bus: There was a white school a few blocks away, but Nancy had to take a bus to get to the nearest black school. Todd became the first plaintiff in the now-famous *Brown* case. Then she became the chief recruiter for other plaintiffs and walked door-to-door to get 1,500 petition signatures to show broad support for the case. As the secretary-treasurer for the local chapter of the NAACP, Todd hosted meetings for the legal team at her dining room table. And after *Brown* was won, Todd returned to teaching—this time at an integrated elementary school.

The mother and aunt of Ernest Green, one of the nine students who desegregated Little Rock, Ark.’s Central High School in 1957 under the protection of the National Guard, offer two other examples of teachers’ roles in bringing down Jim Crow. Green discussed their role in desegregation and in his life in an interview with *American Educator*:

AE: Tell us about the teachers in your family and how they influenced you.

Green: My mother was a teacher in the Little Rock school system for over 40 years. Her name was Lothaire Green. Before I was born, she was a home economics teacher in Little Rock for 20-odd years. After I was born, she went back around 1947 or 1948 and became a first-grade teacher. My aunt was also a teacher and a guidance counselor in the black high schools in Little Rock for some 40-odd years. Her name was Treopia Gravelly.

Growing up, I remember that my mother and my aunt participated in supporting an African-American teacher in the Little Rock school system who was suing for equal pay. The teacher had been fired for being the plaintiff and they supported her by contributing to her pay for a two-year

period. I've forgotten how many teachers were involved in supporting her. But, at that time, teachers didn't make a lot of money, so being able to save up a little bit to support this teacher who had sued the school board was important politically and economically. And, the lawyer that argued the case was Thurgood Marshall. He stayed at our house during some of the time he was in Little Rock.

AE: Was that teacher ever reinstated?

Green: Yes. She was reinstated by the court.

As for the values that my mother and aunt taught me, one, of course, was that education is a stepping stone to improve your life, better your options, and increase your ability to have a decent job and provide for a family. Excelling in school was something that was pretty well drilled into me at an early age. I thought that at Central (given the excellent reputation it had), I'd get the top education that I could receive in a public school.

AE: The first time we spoke, you said that the role that black teachers played was second only to that of the black GIs returning from WWII. Tell us what you mean by that.

Green: Well, I think the return of black GIs was a much bigger catalyst for change in many southern communities than most people realize. There were black men who left the country to eliminate Fascism and free the Germans from the tyranny of Hitler, and when they got back to their own communities, they were treated worse than the prisoners of war. They didn't have the freedoms that they were fighting for outside of the United States—you didn't need a huge light bulb to go on to see that inconsistency.

AE: And why do you see black teachers as second only to these GIs?

Green: Black teachers knew up close the inequities in funding between black and white schools in the South. They had some familiarity with what the other schools were getting in terms of equipment, books, and sup-

port.

And, obviously, they were the ones who had to work in these dilapidated buildings. Here they were trying to educate a generation of young black people and they saw themselves handicapped. Now some African-American teachers argued that if they integrated they were going to put themselves out of a job. But I don't think more than a few cared about that as much as they cared about making sure black children got equal treatment and equal access to the buildings, the equipment, the books, and the opportunity.

AE: What do you think now about your decision to volunteer to desegregate Central High?

Green: I felt deep down that changes were not going to be handed to black people in Little Rock—that we were going to have to demand them, step forward, and present ourselves to request these changes.

Each of us in the Little Rock Nine has seen the worst of society. We've seen it up close and personal. We know how vile people can be. And we have no interest in repeating that. But when I go back to Little Rock—especially when we had the 40th anniversary celebration—it is gratifying to see how people were positively impacted by what we did.

The concern about what hasn't occurred since *Brown* points out that education is even more important today than it was in 1954 when the decision was handed down. A lot has changed—I don't think anybody ought to dismiss the changes or try to minimize them—but that doesn't stop us from trying to grasp for more.

American Educator thanks Sonya Ramsey, assistant professor of history at the University of Texas at Arlington, for researching teachers' roles leading up to *Brown* and assisting with this interview.

ble differences between the two schools. The tangible differences were damning enough. The new law school's temporary facility in Austin turned out to be an office basement; the University of Texas had a permanent facility that housed a law review and a moot courtroom.* The new law school had neither. Most of the library's books had yet to be delivered to the new law school, and there was no full-time librarian; the University of Texas had over 65,000 volumes. The entirely part-time faculty had no offices at the black school. Their offices were at the University of Texas. The white law school had 16 full-time and three part-time faculty members and a student body of 850. The Negro university had only five part-time members and a tiny student body. The alumni of the University of Texas School of Law were large in number and wielded a great deal of power and influence throughout the Lone Star State and beyond. The new school had only one alumnus. By any concrete measure, the law school at the Texas State University for Negroes was a laughable substitute for the one at the University of Texas. It was, as lead counsel Thurgood Marshall stated, "an apology to Negroes for denying them their constitutional rights to attend the University of Texas," and, it should be added, not a particularly good one at that.

And there was more. If the tangible measures of inequality revealed stark differences in resources between the two institutions, there were harder to measure, intangible factors that also marked the black schools inferiority. The small size of the Negro law school's faculty meant that its curriculum lacked both breadth and depth. The absence of a law review or moot courtroom meant that critical cocurricular components of a law school education were not provided. The small number of students might have meant a smaller teacher-student ratio, but it also meant an inferior education. As one expert witness testified at trial, "a well-rounded, representative group of stu-

* A law review is a student-edited journal that publishes articles by law professors, practicing lawyers, and students; a moot courtroom is a space for practicing oral arguments and holding mock trials.

dents” was necessary to enrich the learning atmosphere and to maximize the value of classroom discussion.

Beyond the comparison of tangible and intangible differences, Marshall also brought before the court the University of Chicago’s Robert Redfield, an expert with doctorates in both law and anthropology. Redfield testified on the general effect of segregated education. He explained his view that segregated education gave its recipients a false education. It left blacks and whites ignorant of one another, “prevent[ing] the student from the full, effective and economical...understand[ing of] the nature and capacity of the group from which he is segregated.” In effect, segregated education was bad education, for while education is meant to enlighten, segregation instead “intensifies suspicion and distrust between Negroes and whites, and suspicion and distrust are not favorable conditions for the acquisition and conduct of an education, or for the discharge of the duties of a citizen.” Moreover, he continued, not only did segregated education produce negative effects, it also produced no positive effects. It had no basis in either educational or enlightened racial theory. Reflecting what had become the new thinking on race in the social sciences after the Second World War, Redfield further testified that scholars had recently become “compelled” to the conclusion that there were no “inherent differences in intellectual ability or capacity to learn between Negroes and whites,” and that should any such differences be “later shown to exist, they will not prove to be significant for any educational policy or practice.” Through Redfield, Marshall made a record that would support a conclusion that segregation was irrational, and under the Fourteenth Amendment, no distinction that was not rational could stand muster. His use of Redfield’s testimony also showed that social science could be an important tool in the quest to vindicate the constitutional requirement of equal protection under the law.

The trial court ruled against Heman Sweatt and the NAACP, as did the Texas Court of Civil Appeals. By now it was February 1948, and Heman Sweatt’s fight to pursue a legal education at the University of Texas had gone on two years. Yet, Sweatt refused to attend the law school at the Texas State University for Negroes. Both he and the NAACP refused to disappear. It would be another two years before the U.S. Supreme Court would hear and decide *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), winning for him the right to attend the University of Texas.

In representing Sweatt before the Supreme Court, Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall made the same three-part argument that had been rejected by the Texas Court of Civil Appeals. The first part of that argument was based on the equal protection clause. The segregated law school that Texas reserved for African Americans was unequal. Both the tangible and the intangible factors were inferior. The second part of the argument was also based on the equal protection clause. It was an argument that segregation inherently produced inequality. In its brief and oral argument, the NAACP gave ample evidence of this. In doing so, the NAACP placed before the Court the predictable and unavoidable consequence of segregation: in-

equality. It did so in the hopes of dealing a fatal blow to segregation under the equal protection clause. In effect, the NAACP was making the argument it had made before the Texas court that the formula in *Plessy* was constitutionally malformed and that the 1896 case should be overruled.

The third prong of the NAACP’s attack was based on the Fourteenth Amendment’s due process clause. The Court had interpreted that clause to mean that no state action not grounded in a rational basis could stand constitutional muster. The NAACP argued that there was no “valid legislative end” that justified racial segregation, that segregation was arbitrary and irrational. This argument also concerned the equal protection clause, for a racial classification that was arbitrary and irrational could not satisfy the demands of the equal protection clause either. The NAACP also argued that racial segregation did not meet the more exacting standard that had been suggested by two cases decided by the Supreme Court during the Second World War. These cases, *Hirabayashi v. United States* (1943) and *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), involved the imposition of curfews, relocation, and confinement of Japanese Americans on the West Coast. In *Korematsu*, the Court stated that while “all legal restrictions which curtail the civil rights of a single racial group are immediately suspect [t]hat is not to say that all such restrictions are unconstitutional.” Racial restrictions, even of the most damaging kind, might be upheld, though only under “the most rigid scrutiny.” Now in *Sweatt*, the NAACP was arguing that segregation could not meet that high standard if it was irrational to begin with.

The Supreme Court’s decision in *Sweatt* was unanimous in Heman Sweatt’s favor. The Court ordered his immediate admission to the law school at the University of Texas. Simply put, the Court was “unable to find substantial equality in the educational opportunities offered white and Negro law students by the State.” The Court saw significant differences between the University of Texas and the Texas State University for Negroes in the number of faculty, the breadth and depth of course offerings, the size of the student body, the size and scope of the library, and the availability of cocurricular offerings. In all of these tangible factors, the Court found the University of Texas superior. If the Court had ended its analysis there, the *Sweatt* case would have been just another case upholding the separate but equal doctrine. But because the tangible facilities were not equal, Texas could not restrict Negroes to the Jim Crow school.

But the Court went beyond that—as had Maryland’s highest court in *Murray*. It examined the intangible characteristics of a legal education. What was “more important” than those factors capable of measurement were “those qualities that are incapable of measurement, but which make for greatness in a law school. Such qualities, to name a few, include reputation of the faculty, experience of the administration, position and influence of the alumni, standing in the community, and prestige.” With respect to these factors, the University of Texas was the superior school, and the question, the Court said, was not even close. Moreover, just as black people were excluded from the University of Texas, the

Teaching About *Brown*

From the avalanche of materials marking *Brown's* 50th anniversary, we chose these as favorite resources for K-12 teachers.

BOOKS

Adult and Advanced High School

Brown v. Board of Education: Caste, Culture, and the Constitution, by Robert J. Cottrol, Raymond T. Diamond, & Leland B. Ware (2003, University Press of Kansas). Three law professors collaborated to offer a thorough, fascinating look at the brilliant legal strategy behind *Brown*—as well as how that strategy was built upon and catalyzed further changes in American culture.

Jim Crow's Children: The Broken Promise of the Brown Decision, by Peter Irons (2004, Penguin). Irons begins with a history lesson on forced illiteracy among slaves and the inadequacies of post-Civil War schools for African Americans. Most of the book is devoted to the Supreme Court cases that sanctioned Jim Crow and then declared it unconstitutional.

Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality, by Richard Kluger (2004, Knopf). This definitive study of *Brown* was originally published nearly 30 years ago; it covers everything from race relations to the inner workings of the Supreme Court.

Elementary and Middle School

Remember: The Journey to School Integration by Toni Morrison (2004, Houghton Mifflin). With more than 50 beautiful photos of ordinary children and adults and a poetic commentary, Morrison creates a journey from Jim Crow through the civil rights movement that children can understand and appreciate.

Linda Brown, You Are Not Alone: The Brown v. Board of Education Decision, by Joyce Carol Thomas (2003, Jump Sun). An anthology with selections by 10 popular children's writers. Each writer was a child at the time of *Brown*. Selections vary from accessible to sophisticated and include memoirs, short stories, and poems.

Through My Eyes: Ruby Bridges, by Ruby Bridges (1999, Scholastic). Ruby Bridges integrated William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans at the age of 6. In this photo-filled memoir, Bridges writes as a child who didn't understand that people were upset with the color of her skin.

All the People: 1945-2001, by Joy Hakim (2003, Oxford University Press). This is the final book in Hakim's award-winning U.S. history series for middle school students called *A History of US*. In an engaging style, it covers post-WWII Jim Crow, *Brown v. Board*, the resistance to integration, and the civil rights movement.

WEB SITES

Bringing Brown v. Board of Education into the Classroom. Created by the American Federation of Teachers, this site moves chronologically from the first significant school desegregation case (in 1849) to current times. Includes links to classroom resources and a reading list for lower elementary, upper elementary, middle-, and high-school students. www.aft.org/edissues/BrownvBoard/index.htm.

Separate Is Not Equal: Brown v. Board of Education. The Smithsonian's Museum of American History has a first-rate Web site. The "History" section offers images and quotes (with just enough supporting narrative); the "Resources" section provides links (mainly through the annotated bibliography) to high-quality links on *Brown*. The teacher's guide has six excellent units that parallel the "History" section and can be adapted for grades four to 12. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown>

The History of Jim Crow. This Web site is a companion to the four-part television series, "The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow," which schools can purchase for \$99; but it's worth a visit even without the series. The "History," "Geography," and "Literature" sections include essays, maps, and many lessons (written by teachers) on books such as *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Beloved*. See also the image gallery, teacher resources, and opportunities to contribute to the site.

www.jimcrowhistory.org/home.htm

Texas State University of Negroes excluded the overwhelming majority, 85 percent of the population of the state, from which would be drawn most of the lawyers, judges and other officials, witnesses, and jurors in the state. Such an exclusion meant that the education at the separate law school for blacks was not the equal of the one received by whites. No matter how much money the state might spend at the black law school, how many faculty members the state might add, how large the student body might grow, or how large the library holdings might become, the qualitative differences in the intangibles associated with the two schools meant that to deny Heman Sweatt admission to the University of Texas was unconstitutional. In effect, the Supreme Court in *Sweatt* was going well beyond *Murray* by saying that segregation in law school is inherently unequal. Once again, note that the Court was examining two different law schools and that the justices were familiar with legal education; from their own experience they could see that the two schools were clearly not equal. These facts probably helped influence the Court's decision.

The Court had not explicitly overruled *Plessy v. Ferguson*; indeed, the Court was quite clear on that point. There was no need. The Court had reiterated its frequent admonishment that it "will decide constitutional questions only when necessary to the disposition of the case...," and that such decisions will be drawn as narrowly as possible." But the Court had implicitly accepted the NAACP's first and second arguments in *Sweatt*, and though it had avoided the third, the due process claim, it had set a standard that was impossible for a segregated system of legal education to meet, for there would *always* be intangible differences in racially segregated schools. *Sweatt* was an important step in the fight to end segregation, but it applied only to law schools. The NAACP was far from certain that it could win a similar ruling on elementary and secondary schools.

An additional important point should be made. In *Sweatt*, the NAACP was no longer alone. The new postwar racial atmosphere helped

bring the civil rights organization important allies who agreed with their stand. First among these was the United States government. Solicitor General Philip Perlman filed an amicus brief supporting the NAACP's position on behalf of the Truman administration. The NAACP also benefited from supporting amicus briefs filed by the American Federation of Teachers, the Committee of Law Teachers Against Segregation in Legal Education, the American Veterans Committee, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Japanese American Citizens League, and the American Civil Liberties Union. Social change had helped bring new allies to the fight against segregation.

Not more than three weeks after the decision in *Sweatt*, two black graduate students were admitted to the University of Texas, and Heman Sweatt became the first black person to enroll at the law school. By August 1950, the University of Delaware was ordered to admit blacks to its undergraduate campus because of the "woefully inferior" opportunities otherwise available to them. By the fall of 1950, the University of Maryland was forced by court order to open to blacks its graduate program in sociology. Louisiana State University had been ordered by a three-judge federal panel to admit black students to the law school, an order only three months later summarily affirmed by the Supreme Court. The historically white University of Tennessee also admitted black students to previously segregated programs, bringing the total of southern states doing so to six. By 1952, the number had grown to twelve.

Two things were left to the NAACP. The first was to apply the Supreme Court's new understanding of inherent inequality to elementary and secondary education. The second was to bring cases that would coax the Supreme Court into doing what it had assiduously avoided doing in *Sweatt*: overturning *Plessy*.

The Final Assault

Shortly after *Sweatt*, Marshall, 43 other attorneys, and 14 branch and local NAACP presidents convened to develop the next phase of the legal strategy. Marshall had traditionally been cautious. He believed that cases involving segregated public schools were cases that the NAACP could not afford to lose, as they would set devastating precedents. Nonetheless, understanding the risk, he joined with the other conference members to support a resolution declaring that all future education cases would be aimed directly at segregation, not merely at the inequalities between black and white schools. The aim was to produce, in the words of the conference report, "education on a nonsegregated basis ... that no relief other than that will be acceptable."

This was controversial. After all, after nearly half a century, the equal side of separate but equal was finally coming into prominence. States were being prodded toward making some progress in the equalization of schools, libraries, and recreational and other facilities. There were those who were pleased with the new progress and reluctant to give up what had been a successful campaign. But the new NAACP position did not require the sacrifice of the strategy that had

brought victory in *Sweatt* and the other cases. The NAACP could continue to urge the courts to find segregation inherently unconstitutional. It could also offer the courts the alternative argument that even if the courts did not agree that segregation was inherently unconstitutional, it was nonetheless unconstitutional in actual practice. If a case that made a frontal assault on *Plessy* lost, it would be a blow to morale, but the NAACP could resume its current campaign to litigate equal protection under the new standards that had developed in *Sweatt*. Marshall and his associates knew they would have to choose their cases and their clients carefully.

There was no shortage of potential cases with which to move the battle forward; segregated elementary and secondary schools existed throughout the South and in other regions as well. The challenge would not be undertaken in just one district. If that was done, it would be too easy for a peculiar set of facts, a shrewdly litigated defense case, or a clever and obstinate judge to thwart the NAACP's efforts. Instead different cases would be brought in several districts, in different regions of the South, and in other regions as well. Cases from across the country would be argued. Eventually, six cases would be consolidated and collectively known as *Brown v. Board of Education*.

The key to the cases lay in the innovative use of expert testimony to establish the psychological harm that segregation inflicted on African-American schoolchildren. The use of such experts as psychologists and social scientists accomplished a number of important goals. First, it demonstrated the psychological injuries that were caused by segregation. This made it clear that equalizing facilities would not remedy the harm that the black students were suffering. Second, it exposed the actual purpose of segregation, the perpetration of racial subordination. Third, the testimony of experts refuted widely held beliefs about the intellectual inferiority of Afro-Americans. The expert witnesses would force the judges to grapple with the realities of segregation. They could continue to engage in spurious rationalizations, or they could enforce the Fourteenth Amendment in a way that would make the constitutional provision meaningful. Jurists were placed in a moral and ethical dilemma. If they were intellectually honest, they could not, on the basis of the extensive evidence presented, rule that segregated schools were—or could ever be—equal. The disparities were too obvious. At the same time, it was difficult for judges to break with long-standing social traditions and legal precedent. The jurists would be caught in a difficult analytical box from which there could be no escape.

Several social science and education experts aided the NAACP in the school desegregation cases, but one stands out for the simple but compelling test that demonstrated the psychological effects of discrimination on young children. In 1951, Kenneth Clark, a social psychologist at the City College of New York, and his wife and fellow psychologist, Mamie Clark, developed a series of studies that examined the psychological effects of segregated and racially mixed schools on black children. In one of the tests, the Clarks used four dolls—two brown, two white. The Clarks first asked the children, aged three to seven, to identify the race



GETTY IMAGES

Above: Linda and Terry Brown, of *Brown v. Board*, had a dangerous walk to school in Topeka, Kan. Below: Psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark found that black children preferred playing with white dolls—they considered white dolls “nice” and black dolls “bad.” NAACP lawyers relied on the Clarks’ studies to prove that segregation damaged black children.



BRUCE DAVIDSON/MAGNUM PHOTOS

of the dolls. They then made a series of commands. These included:

1. Give me the doll you like to play with.
2. Give me the doll that is the nice doll.
3. Give me the doll that looks bad.
4. Give me the doll that is a nice color.

The experiments consistently showed that the participating black children preferred the white dolls. They picked the white doll when asked which was the “nice” one or the one they preferred to play with. The black doll was selected when the children were asked which doll looked “bad.”

The Clarks concluded that these studies indicated self-rejection, one of the negative effects of racism on children at the early stages of their development. The Clarks’ findings were corroborated by separate studies performed by other psychologists. Kenneth Clark was hired to provide expert testimony based on the doll studies. This testimony, and the studies on which it was based, became a key element of the NAACP’s evidence in the desegregation cases.

No two of these cases were argued by the exact same legal team. The facts were somewhat different in each case, but the cases were all part of a coordinated strategy directed from the NAACP’s headquarters in New York. They all had a common aim: the elimination of *Plessy v. Ferguson*’s “separate but equal” doctrine.

South Carolina

The first case originated in Clarendon County, S.C. That county maintained a system of grossly unequal segregated schools. In the 1949-1950 academic year, there were 6,531 black students attending 61 schools. The annual expenditures for these schools were \$194,575. There were 2,375 white students attending 12 schools. The annual expenditures for these schools were \$673,850. Per pupil expenditures of public funds came to \$43 per capita for black children and \$179 per capita for white children. The average white schoolteacher earned two-thirds more than the average black one; and in contrast to its treatment of white children, the school board could not be troubled to provide a single bus for the transportation of black children. Thurgood Marshall took the case on behalf of 20 plaintiffs.

Kansas

The case bearing the name by which the school desegregation cases are remembered began in 1948 when the Topeka, Kan., branch of the NAACP petitioned the local school board to desegregate the public schools. After two years of inaction, the branch contacted the organization’s headquarters in New York and requested assistance in filing a lawsuit. The lead plaintiff, Oliver Brown, was not a prominent figure in the local NAACP. He was an ordinary citizen who was angered that his daughter had to travel each day past a modern, fully equipped white school to a black school housed in a deteriorated building. There were several plaintiffs, but Oliver Brown’s name came first alphabetically, and as a result, when the case was filed in the federal court on February 14, 1951, the case bore his name. Robert Carter and Jack

Greenberg were the NAACP's point men for *Brown*.

When Oliver Brown became the lead plaintiff in *Brown v. Board of Education*, Topeka and the state of Kansas had a schizophrenic attitude about its Negro population. There was segregation, but it was not universal. Black people were only 7.5 percent of the state's population, and though they were, in general, relegated to the lowest rung of the economic ladder, they were allowed in some of the same civic organizations as whites. Restaurants and hotels were segregated, but bus and train station waiting rooms were not. Five of the seven movie theaters were relegated to whites only, and a sixth was for blacks; the seventh allowed both races, but blacks were consigned to the balcony. The state put no barriers in the way of higher education, for the University of Kansas had long been open to black people and so had Washburn University. And the state did not mandate segregation in elementary schools, but for localities above 15,000 in population, the state specifically allowed school segregation as an option.

Thus, Topeka had a limited option to have desegregated schools, and the city took it. Elementary schools were segregated, as the junior high school had been until 1941 litigation ended the practice. Senior high schools were integrated, but they had separate teams in basketball, swimming, wrestling, golf, and tennis, as well as separate pep clubs, separate cheerleaders, and a separate assembly at which black students were urged to keep to their place. Though the facilities for black elementary children were older, they were the rough equivalent of their white counterparts' facilities.

Delaware

The South Carolina and Kansas cases would also be joined by two separate cases that were filed in Delaware: *Gebbart et al. v. Belton et al.* (1952) and *Gebbart v. Bulah* (1952). *Belton* arose in Claymont, a suburb a few miles north of Wilmington. The combination grade school-high school in Claymont served about 400 white students. It occupied a 14-acre site. The school was well equipped, and the grounds were beautifully landscaped. Black children, in contrast, were required to travel by bus to Howard High in Wilmington, the only black high school in the entire state. It was surrounded by factories and warehouses. The student-to-faculty ratio was three times higher at Howard than at Claymont. Sixty percent of Claymont's faculty held master's degrees, compared with 40 percent at Howard. Claymont offered several extracurricular activities that were not available at Howard.

The second Delaware case was filed by Sarah Bulah, from Hockessin, Del., who was annoyed when she was required to drive her child past the well-equipped white school to reach the dilapidated one-room schoolhouse that served black students. Louis Redding, a black civil rights lawyer, represented the plaintiffs in the Delaware cases. Redding was a graduate of Brown University and Harvard Law School and was admitted to practice in Delaware in 1929. He was still the only black attorney in Delaware when the desegregation cases were filed more than 20 years later.

Virginia

In April 1951, a group of students at Moton High School, a black school in Prince Edward County, Va., organized a strike to protest their high school's shoddy conditions. The students intended to remain on strike until the local school board agreed to construct a new school. Eventually, the students sent a letter to the NAACP's special counsel for the Southeast region. Two Richmond lawyers, Oliver Hill and Spottswood Robinson, served in that capacity. Both were trained at Howard Law School during the years that Charles Houston was dean. They were Thurgood Marshall's contemporaries and personal friends. Hill and Robinson met with the striking students and were impressed by their resolve. The attorneys agreed to represent the students not in a case to equalize the facilities, but in a case to desegregate the schools.

Washington, D.C.

While the Prince Edward County case was pending, a separate case was filed in the District of Columbia. Compared with most other cities, Washington's black community was well educated and relatively well off. A third of the city's Afro-American population was employed by the federal government. In 1950 there were 300 Negro physicians, 150 African-American lawyers and judges, 150 black college professors, and 2,500 African-American schoolteachers residing in the District of Columbia. Despite the relative affluence of its black community, Washington was as segregated as any city in the Deep South. Public facilities, public transportation, housing, and public schools were all rigidly segregated. Furthermore, because of the rapid growth in the city's black population during World War II, housing conditions in poor communities were deplorable, and black schools were inferior to white schools.

The District of Columbia's desegregation case began when a local barber, Bishop Gardner, organized the Consolidated Parents Group. Gardner's group initiated a boycott of a black high school that was overcrowded and in a state of severe disrepair. As a result of class divisions within the African-American community, Gardner's group formed separately from the school's PTA, which was dominated by middle-class blacks. The boycott was not supported by the local NAACP branch. In February of 1948, Gardner visited a NAACP meeting at a Methodist church where Charles Houston was delivering an address. After the meeting, Gardner introduced himself and met with Houston later that night. After Gardner explained the problems with the high school, Houston agreed to represent Gardner's group.

* * *

The decision in the school desegregation cases was announced on May 17, 1954, to an overflowing courtroom. Chief Justice Earl Warren read the opinion for a unanimous Court. Given the events that led up to *Brown*—trials lasting several days in Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, Delaware, and the District of Columbia; testimony presented by dozens of witnesses; and several days of intense arguments in the Supreme Court over a two-year period—the opinion in *Brown* is remarkable in its brevity and sim-

plicity. It was written in a straightforward style that could be understood by the most unsophisticated reader.

The opinion commenced with a recitation of the history of the cases from the trials to the arguments in the Supreme Court. The Court found, as a threshold matter, that the original intent of the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment on the question of segregated schools was not clear. The Court then traced the evolution of the separate but equal doctrine from *Plessy* through *McLaurin* (a case decided shortly before *Sweatt* in which the Court ruled that segregation within a desegregated institution, such as having blacks relegated to the back of a classroom, interfered with the educational process). After describing the importance of education to a democratic society, the Court framed the issue as whether “segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race...deprives the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities.” The Court found that it did, concluding that “to separate [black] children from others of similar age and qualifications generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in ways unlikely ever to be undone.” Relying heavily on the foundation developed in cases such as *McLaurin* and *Sweatt*, as well as the social science evidence presented by Dr. Clark and others, the Court held that “separate educational facilities are *inherently* unequal” (italics added). With this pronouncement, America stood at the dawn of a new era in race relations.

The End of Caste in American Law

The *Brown* decision was momentous, but with respect to the issues of race and racial discrimination, even with respect to the issue of school segregation, the decision was hardly definitive. In many ways it fit Winston Churchill’s observation during the Second World War immediately after the allied victory in North Africa. The British prime minister observed: “This is not the end, no it is not even the beginning of the end, but it is perhaps the end of the beginning.” In a sense, *Brown* was the end of the beginning, the end of the idea as old as the Republic itself, that the law could formally discriminate—indeed totally exclude—on the basis of race and that the Constitution would support such discrimination.

But if *Brown* proclaimed that that idea was unconstitutional, the decision hardly ended racial discrimination, even state-sponsored discrimination. What *Brown* did do was to catalyze a whole new phase of the civil rights movement. It would be a phase in which the champions of civil rights would continue the struggle for equal rights in the courts and in other venues. Members of the civil rights movement would find themselves confronting recalcitrant clerks at voter registration offices and gun-toting drivers enforcing segregation on municipal buses. They would challenge segregation at small-town lunch counters and risk their lives on the often dangerous back roads of the rural South. They would bring the movement to Washington D.C.’s Lincoln Memorial and ultimately, to the halls of Congress. Along the way, the civil rights movement would encounter every conceivable kind of resistance from unofficial and official quarters, but it would succeed in winning over new supporters.

Moreover, the liberalization of racial attitudes that started

becoming part of American culture before the Second World War, a liberalization that provided an important, perhaps critical backdrop to the *Brown* decision, has continued. Indeed that liberalization has spread and intensified. Today, the raw racism that prevailed in daily life, popular culture, and academic treatise at the beginning of the last century has become an embarrassing relic, defended by only a marginalized few in public life. Few in the modern behavioral or biological sciences support the kind of scientific racism that was heartily championed at the best universities a century ago. Affirmative action programs exist to try to increase the number of minority students admitted to universities or minority employees hired by firms. And while those programs are under heavy criticism and face an uncertain future, even the critics of such programs couch their criticism in the rhetoric of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, claiming that they are seeking “color-blind” methods to increase the inclusion of those previously excluded.

The changes in racial attitudes among white Americans are perhaps even more profound than has generally been acknowledged. Social science surveys, as well as day-to-day practice indicate an acceptance of interracial relations in family life, marriage, and adoption that clearly would have been unthinkable in 1954 when the *Brown* decision was handed down. Even if one suspects that a significant portion of the responses to social surveys should be discounted as people telling the pollsters the “right” or “socially acceptable” answer, the fact that tolerance for interracial marriage or transracial adoption has become the “right” answer in the last half century itself reflects a profound cultural change. This rejection of outright racial bigotry even occurs in some quite unexpected precincts in modern America. Private schools in southern communities that originally started out as “Seg Academies,” institutions founded to allow white students to avoid integrated public schools, now routinely enroll black students. Southern white fundamentalist Protestant churches often have black parishioners. Rural white southern voters vote for African-American representatives—former congressmen J. C. Watts of Oklahoma and Mike Espy of Mississippi are perhaps the most prominent examples of this. Surprisingly, even the occasional right-wing antigovernment militia will sometimes have a black member or two. Multiracialism and a rejection of the kind of racism that prevailed in the first half and indeed beyond the first half of the 20th century has taken strong root in modern America.

But that is only part of the story. Racism still exists. It is not hard to find. But it lacks the kind of official support that it had in generations past. It is not as overwhelming a part of American culture as it was throughout most of the 20th century, but still, reports of its total demise are woefully premature. Segregation continues. It has lessened to be sure, but African Americans remain the most segregated of the racial and ethnic groups in the United States, with the exception of Indians on reservations. At the dawn of the 21st century, nearly half of the black population still lives in communities that are 90 percent or more black. The legacy of slavery, caste, and racism is a poverty rate for black families that is roughly three times that for whites. The percentage of African-American children raised in female-headed, father-

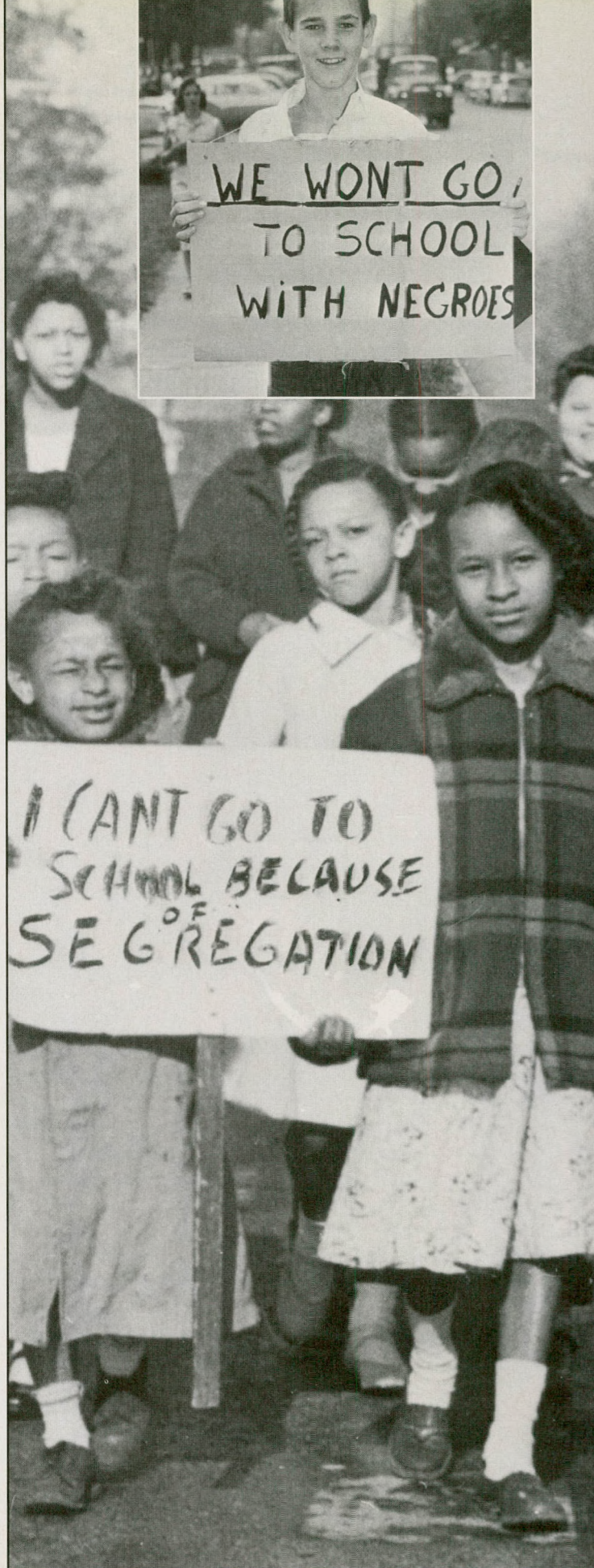
less households has risen dramatically since the *Brown* decision: More than 50 percent of all African-American children are raised in such families. The percentage of black children born out of wedlock approaches 70 percent.

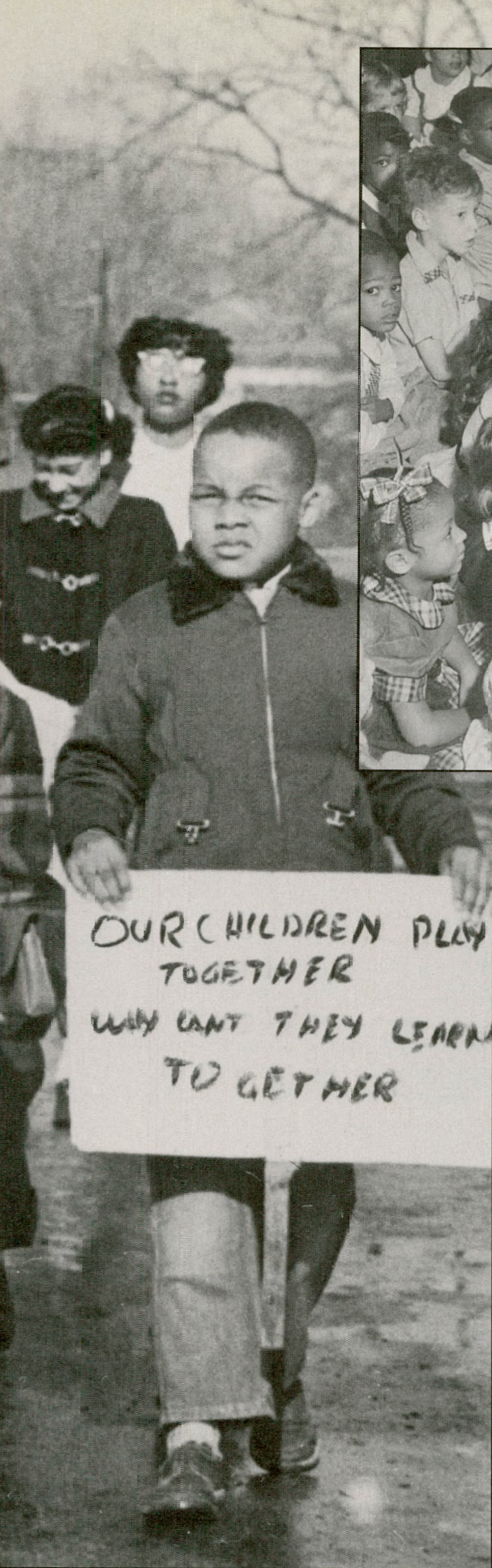
The importance of *Brown* lay in its setting the nation's law on the path of rejecting the kind of racial exclusion that had made African Americans a people apart since before the nation's founding. The 1954 decision provided a foundation for later court decisions and legislative enactments that established a new set of norms concerning law and race. Before *Brown*, the Fourteenth Amendment notwithstanding, American law gave its sanction to a patent system of racial inequality. *Brown* began the process of withdrawing the law's sanction from the system of caste and caste-like distinctions that had been a part of American life from the beginning. *Brown* did not do it alone. The decision would become a catalyst for profound changes in legal norms. It was able to do so in large part because of the remarkable courage of ordinary men and women. That courage started with parents like Harry Briggs of South Carolina, Sarah Bulah of Delaware, and Oliver Brown of Kansas, who stood up for better lives for their children by challenging, through the *Brown* cases, the entrenched system of school segregation in their communities.

But *Brown* was not self-executing. Without the willingness of Negro parents after *Brown* to risk their children's lives by sending them to the white schools of the South, the Warren opinion would have been a dead letter. Anyone who has seen the newsreels from that era with snarling and vicious mobs poised to attack children attempting to enter schools knows of the incredible bravery of the parents and students who helped turn the Warren opinion into living law. *Brown* was also enacted by the courageous Americans of all races who struggled in the civil rights movement to make it the foundation of a modern body of civil rights law. The civil rights struggles of the 1960s, which led to among other things the critical Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, played a crucial role in dismantling legal support for the American system of race as caste.

Brown's importance in the history of American race relations is assured. But if *Brown* should be seen as having a central importance in the fight against caste and racism, *Brown* also provides an important lesson in the law's limitations. *Brown* played an important role in challenging the system of caste and exclusion that had developed in American society. But the law has found the system of structural inequality a more vexing problem. The often profound socioeconomic inequalities between blacks and whites can be traced to slavery, segregation, and long-term patterns of exclusion. These were sanctioned, indeed often mandated, by law. Yet it is not clear the extent to which the law will or can provide remedies in the future for the legacy of exclusion in the past. What is clear is that the terrain would have been much bumpier and the playing field an awful lot less level without the efforts of those men and women who developed the strategy, argued the case, and changed history in *Brown v. Board of Education*. □

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The mid-1950s was a time of great ups and downs for supporters of integration. Left: Black students marched to Webster School in Hillsboro, Ore., in 1956 demanding that school officials comply with a Supreme Court desegregation order handed down the previous day. Left inset: A student from Clinton High School in Clinton, Tenn., refused to enter his newly desegregated school in 1956. Above and below: In September 1954 in Washington, D.C., students attend school together in what just a few months before were all-white schools.



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Bridging the Gap Between Poor and Privileged

How the Parent-Child Home Program Uses Books and Toys To Help Poor Toddlers Succeed in Kindergarten and Beyond

Last spring, American Educator published research by Betty Hart and Todd Risley showing that, on average, low income parents spoke much less to their children (and spoke to them about a narrower range of topics using a smaller vocabulary) than did their higher-income counterparts. As a result, the average low-income child had heard 30 million fewer words than his higher income peers by the time he or she was just three years old. The obvious question: If this early word gap is a major source of the subsequent school achievement gap, what can be done? High quality early education programs can make up some of the difference. But consider how the achievement gap could be reduced if low-income parents were to begin interacting with their children in ways that greatly diminished this 30-million word gap.

One program that attempts this stands out for its effectiveness, its research base, and its longevity: the Parent-Child Home Program. PCHP is as simple as it is effective. While a home visitor engages a toddler from a low-income family by reading a book or playing with an educational toy, the parent is either participating or, at the very least, observing. Parents quickly begin to interact with their young children in similar ways—and by the beginning of kindergarten, the children look very similar, cognitively and behaviorally, to their middle-class peers.

—EDITORS

By LaRue Allen and Anita Sethi

Phyllis Levenstein had a hunch. Immersed in the 1960s quest for social justice and in her own quest to earn a doctorate in clinical psychology, she knew that a critical step in the cycle that locks generations in poverty was dropping out of high school. The dropout rate had to be drastically reduced—but how? Levenstein realized that the path to school failure actually started before school entry. She believed that the dropout rate could be reduced by help-

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ing low-income parents see that talking to their young children is a great way to educate them.

Today, nearly 40 years later, it's clear that Levenstein's hunch was correct. Researchers know that the verbal interaction between parents and their young children—especially interaction around books and toys that inspire the children to initiate conversations—is absolutely essential to cognitive development. Researchers also know that the program that Levenstein developed, the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP), is the most effective intervention of its kind. Dozens of studies have been conducted by Levenstein as well as independent researchers; the results overwhelmingly indicate that PCHP is highly effective in preparing young children from low-income families for school. For example, researchers have found lasting increases in IQ scores; scores above national norms on the California Achievement Test in the second, fifth, and seventh grades; and high school graduation rates as high as those of middle-class students. Even more impressive, results like these have been found among a great variety of children (whites, blacks, non-English speakers, etc.) and in a great variety of communities (New York suburbs, inner-city Los Angeles, semi-rural South, etc.).

Here, we offer a look inside a PCHP home followed by a review of the program's research foundation and evidence of its effectiveness.

* * *

Moises P., a two-year-old boy with dark, serious eyes, is trying to find something to do. He looks out the window but his mother pulls him away, frightened that he will fall. It is early afternoon and there are no children's programs on television—his parents can't afford cable TV—and Moises has no books or toys.*

Moises lives with his parents and his seven-year-old brother in one room of an apartment that they share with two other families in a small Northeastern city. He is a sturdy little boy with just a bit of baby fat left on his cheeks,

*Facts about Moises, as well as all of the other program participants mentioned in this article, are taken directly from PCHP records; the participants' thoughts were extrapolated from those records.



but he does not get many opportunities to exercise his growing muscles. The room he lives in is cramped and, during these hot summer months, stifling. All available space is taken up by bedding, dressers for clothing, and a small television. Mrs. P. also keeps some food in the room for the children since things sometimes get “lost” in the communal kitchen.

There is no money for playthings and there is not much space to move around—the bed is used as a couch, workspace, and kitchen table, as well as a place to sleep—and Mrs. P. is always worried that if the children make too much noise, a neighbor will complain that there are too many people living in the apartment. Now that it is summer, Mrs. P. can take the children outside, but drug dealers and drunks are often at the park. And Mrs. P. is tired. She works evenings cleaning a local office building, after her husband comes home from his job. As a result, she often allows the children to spend much of the day watching television. It keeps them quiet, it keeps them still, and she knows they are safe.

Mrs. P.’s biggest worry is the children’s safety. Other mothers let their children play in the hallways of the four-story, 1950s-era apartment building they live in, but Mrs. P. does not like to let her boys out of her sight. In the small town in Mexico where she grew up, the children played in each other’s yards and in the fields behind their houses. The families knew one another and everyone watched out for everyone else’s children. Here, in this city of abandoned factories and scrawny trees, Mrs. P. knows almost no one. She cannot be sure that others will look out for her boys, so she feels better when they are near her.

So, on this hot July day, Mrs. P. takes the children with her to the laundromat, where she meets a young woman who is posting colorful fliers, written in Spanish, on the bulletin board. The fliers offer free toys and books; although Mrs. P. hasn’t room for these things, she still wishes her children had them. The woman has a nice smile and tells her, in Spanish, that her boys are handsome.

A few minutes later, the woman, whose name is Liliana,* is telling Mrs. P. about the free book and toy program while Mrs. P. empties her laundry into a large machine. The boys run around the space, happy to have room to move and new things to look at, even if they are just clothing spinning around in machines. Liliana explains that twice each week, a “home visitor” could come to their apartment and play with Moises and Mrs. P. for half an hour. The visitor will be a person trained to work with children, and she will bring a toy or book for Moises to keep each week. The program is called the Parent-Child Home Program, and a visitor could start coming in just a few months. Best of all, it costs nothing—all Mrs. P. has to do is sit with the visitor and Moises and play with them together.

Mrs. P. is still wary, but wants so badly for her sons to have the things that other children have—not just toys, but opportunities and abilities—that she decides to gamble and give the program a try. She has been worried that Moises does not seem to be talking as much as his brother did as a

two-year-old and wonders if it is because he does not get enough attention. She is concerned that he will have trouble when he begins kindergarten in three years. She gives Liliana her address and phone number.

At Risk for School Failure

Mrs. P.’s concern for Moises is well-placed. Based upon his demographic characteristics, Moises is at risk for school failure. Variables such as poverty (Stipek and Ryan, 1997), low maternal education (Chandler et al., 1999), and being a member of a racial/ethnic minority (Swick, Brown, and Boutte, 1994) affect school readiness. Making matters worse, the effect of these factors appears to be additive: Cumulative risk factors are associated with even poorer math and vocabulary scores among 4-year-olds (Nord, Zill, Prince, Clarke, and Ventura, 1994). For example, a recent study found that only 26 percent of three- to five-year-old children with two or more risk factors (such as a low level of maternal education, mother’s language not being English, familial poverty, or a single parent home) exhibited three out of the following four critical readiness skills: recognizing all letters, counting to 20 or higher, writing one’s name, and reading or pretending to read. In contrast, 40 percent of children with one risk factor and 47 percent of children with no risk factors exhibited three out of four readiness skills (Chandler, Nord, Liu, and Lennon, 1999).

Study after study has found that school readiness is largely based on early childhood experiences within the family. Children like Moises are less likely than their middle-class peers to experience the sorts of activities—like being read and spoken to frequently—that help a child come to school ready to learn. For example, when surveyed, 91 percent of parents with none of the risk factors listed above reported having read to their three- to five-year-old at least three times in the past week. Among parents with two or more risk factors, that figure dropped to 66 percent (Chandler et al., 1999).

The impact of poverty on children’s academic and social-emotional development is made shockingly concrete by the work of Hart and Risley (1995). These researchers found that over a 100-hour week (of non-sleeping time), the typical child in a professionals’ family was exposed to 215,000 words, while the typical child in a family on welfare was exposed to 62,000 words—less than half the amount that the professionals’ children hear. By the time they are four years old, professionals’ children will have accumulated experience with about 45 million words, but children from families on welfare will have accumulated experience with just 13 million words. Compounding this deficit, the children of professionals were supported by environments that were more positive and encouraging than were the children in lower-income homes. Specifically, children of professionals heard six times more encouragements *per hour* than the children in families on welfare. In contrast, children in families on welfare heard almost twice as many prohibitions *per hour*.**

** For more information on Hart and Risley’s research see “The Early Catastrophe,” Spring 2003 *American Educator*, online at www.aft.org/american_educator/spring2003/catastrophe.html.

* Liliana is a pseudonym given to protect the privacy of the particular site and participants discussed.

The bulk of the relationship between poverty and children's cognitive outcomes is associated with poor parents' inability—whether it is due to poverty or its correlates—to engage their children in a stimulating, enriching way.



This sort of negativity has a direct impact on school performance: Parents who are controlling and unsupportive of autonomy are likely to have children who show less persistence in approaching a difficult task (Frodi, Bridges, and Grolnick, 1985) and who exhibit poorer school adjustment (Barth and Parke, 1993).

The stresses of poverty make it difficult for parents to act as children's teachers, leading researchers to observe that the lower school performance of poor children could be explained by the absence of cognitive stimulation from parents and the type of emotional support that comes from reading, playing, and conversing together (Korenman, Miller, and Sjaastad, 1995). Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn, McCarton, and McCormick (1998) suggest that the bulk of the relationship between poverty and children's cognitive outcomes is associated with poor parents' inability—whether it is due to poverty or its correlates—to engage their children in a stimulating, enriching way.

Similarly, Yeung, Linver, and Brooks-Gunn (2002) found that the family's inability to provide resources to support cognitive development mediates the relationship between poverty and cognitive outcomes. Yeung and her associates looked at data from a large longitudinal study of over 3,500 children and their families. They found that the presence of intellectually-stimulating toys (such as books or games that involved numbers, colors, shapes, sizes, or letters) in the home, and the tendency of parents to spend time on such activities, as well as on things like playing a sport together, was significantly related to children's scores on standardized tests of cognitive development. In fact, the impact of low income on children's test scores was no longer significant when the mediating effects of these stimulating toys and activities were included in the analysis. This means that the ability to spend time and money on stimulating toys and activities—not poverty *per se*—is the real key to achievement. As we will see, the Parent-Child Home Program offers parents the books, toys, and skills they need to stimulate their young children.

We see each of these issues in Moises' situation. His mother cannot afford the books or puzzles to engage him intellectually, and is too isolated to send him to preschool. (Although PCHP serves families of all races and ethnicities, the under-representation of Latino families in center-based programs makes home-based services an especially appropriate intervention for this population.) Mrs. P's living situation presents many restrictions (on noise and level of activity), forcing her to prohibit more behaviors than she would like. Mrs. P. is tired from her multiple responsibilities and does not have the concrete or emotional resources to teach her son, even though she is concerned about his development.

It is these early and pervasive family-based experiences that PCHP aims to alter, and this is where Liliana Vasquez comes in. Liliana, who immigrated to this country from Ecuador in 1993, is the mother of three children and a PCHP home visitor. To combat the fear and isolation she felt when she first arrived in the U.S., she signed up for English as a second language classes at a local community col-

lege. It was there that she saw fliers offering free books and toys. She enrolled her middle child and upon his graduation from PCHP was hired as a home visitor.

Moises Is Entranced

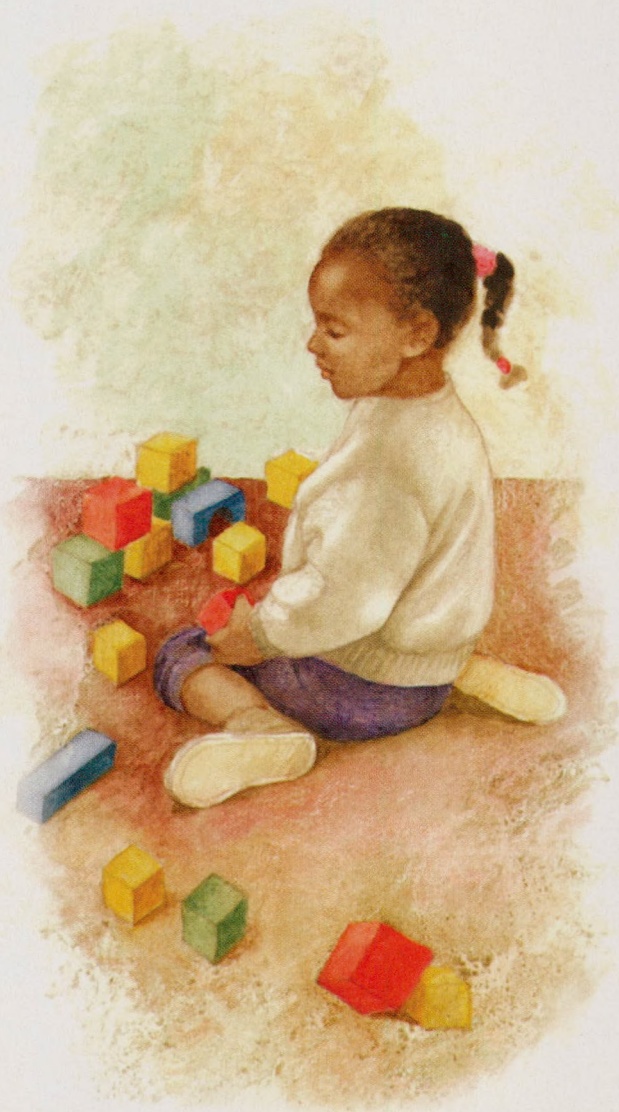
Liliana visits Mrs. P. in the early weeks of September. Mrs. P.'s older son is back in school, giving him something to do for much of the day, but Moises is still underfoot and increasingly hard to entertain. Liliana arrives and explains that she is collecting "intake" information. Mrs. P. is anxious—will her immigration status make her ineligible, will she be reported to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services—but Liliana does not ask any such questions. Instead, she wants to know how old Mrs. P. and her husband are, how much education they have, and whether or not they work outside the home. Liliana asks what country they are from and when they came here, but does not ask about immigration status. She then schedules two 30-minute time slots per week when she can see Moises and his mother.

When Liliana begins program visits in October, she brings a copy of *Goodnight Moon*. She sits down on the floor, inviting Mrs. P. to do the same, and reads it to Moises. Mrs. P. has never heard anyone read a book like this before: Instead of just reciting the words, Liliana speaks in a gentle, singsong voice that is like a soothing lullaby to both Moises and his mother. She says words like "author" and "illustrator" to Moises, and engages him in the story by asking what he thinks is going to happen next. She points out interesting little details in the pictures—things Mrs. P. never had the chance to notice before—and makes the story a game by asking him to find a tiny mouse hidden on some of the pages. Moises is thoroughly entranced, and seems utterly surprised and delighted that he gets to keep the book when Liliana leaves.

The book is so bright and the memory of Liliana's kind voice is so warm that Mrs. P. is happy to pick up the book several times before Liliana's next visit. She shares it with her older son, who enjoys looking for the mouse, and reads it again to Moises, who laughs each time she says "Goodnight mush." Moises' squeals of pleasure are so encouraging, so gratifying, and curling up to read with him is so restful that Mrs. P. finds herself reading the book again and again. When Moises sees Liliana at the door again that week, he runs to fetch the book.

When Liliana comes the following week, she brings a set of brightly-colored blocks with her. The blocks are arranged in a pattern in a little wagon that has a string for Moises to pull around the room. Liliana sits down with Moises, inviting his mother to join them on the floor, and builds a tower, holding up each block and naming the color in Spanish and English as she goes. Moises is transfixed. Liliana engages his mother by asking her to put some blocks on the tower as well. Mrs. P. names the colors in Spanish, imitating Liliana, as she adds them to the tower. Liliana then asks Moises to try to build a tower on his own and Mrs. P. looks on, amazed, while he does. When it is time to leave, Moises stares quietly at Liliana packing up her things. Mrs. P. knows he is wondering what is going to become of the blocks—he is afraid to hope he will be able to keep them, too, but he is

This seemingly simple activity—
"demonstrating" the use
of the toy or book—
is the core of the intervention.



also afraid to ask. Liliana seems to read his mind when she stoops down next to him and says, "These are for you to keep. I want you to practice making some more towers with these, and then you can show them to me next time I come back." Moises beams and gets back to work; Mrs. P. wants to hug Liliana for making her son so happy.

Over the next few days, Mrs. P. finds herself mimicking the warm, encouraging words she heard Liliana use with Moises. When he builds a tower, she tells him she likes the blue block at the top, or the yellow block at the bottom. She does not always remember, and she does not always have the time or energy to focus, but she has a new idea now about how to talk to her toddler. When Liliana returns that week, Mrs. P. is proud to see Moises accurately name all of the colors of the blocks.

How PCHP Works

All PCHP replication sites start the program with a book and alternate between a book and toy for the 46 weeks that comprise the intervention. (The minimum length of the in-

tervention is 23 weeks per year for two years, but many sites offer more.) In order to make the program flexible and responsive to the needs of various communities, each site is provided with a set of criteria to guide selection of books and another set to guide selection of toys. The criteria are quite specific—toys, for example, must elicit or at least permit language, and must have a readily-discernible goal. Another important criterion is that the materials be like those that children will see in preschool and kindergarten, so that they will feel familiar with such items when they confront them later on. For these reasons, puzzles are a common PCHP gift. Books are expected to have many large, colorful, detailed illustrations and should be within the reading level of most parents. Books should be appealing to boys and girls and should "widen the child's experience," but not cover topics that might make a child anxious.

For the next 21 weeks, Liliana returns, bringing a new toy or book at the beginning of each week and spending two half-hour sessions demonstrating its use to Moises and his mother (she will then take a summer break and return the

Bring PCHP to Your Community

The model for the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) was developed by Phyllis Levenstein for her doctoral dissertation in the 1960s, based on her theory that the most effective way to reduce high school dropout rates—and thus break the cycle of poverty—would be to work with parents and children before the children entered school. In her book, *Messages from Home: The Mother-Child Home Program and the Prevention of School Disadvantage* (1988),* Dr. Levenstein writes that:

Talking to infants comes naturally to all mothers (or mother substitutes). For most mothers, especially those who are at least high school graduates, talking to baby becomes conversation. The dialogue is often focused around the toys and books that middle-income parents can afford. The Program's hypothesis was that this verbal interaction gradually fosters a parent-child network that is both intellectually and emotionally supportive for the child, whatever the family's ethnolinguistic style....

The Program's view was that family factors linked to poverty often hamper the full development of the parent-child network. For children thus at risk for educational disadvantage, an intervention program should

begin at home when they are about two years old. The program should center around toys and picture books of high quality, permanently assigned to the family and used as the focus of the child's verbally oriented play with his or her mother. The mother herself might make gains in parenting skills and self-esteem through her participation in the Program.

Levenstein's first pilot demonstrated short-term cognitive gains from participation in the program. Based on these promising results, she focused on researching the model's effectiveness and developing a small number of replications to duplicate the model program's results. By 1975, there had been four replications, all with positive results. And in 1978, the Parent-Child Home Program, Inc., was incorporated as an independent nonprofit to support the spread of the PCHP model. There are currently 136 replications in the United States, each of which costs approximately \$2,000 per year per child.

Replications are sponsored by schools, school districts, public libraries, social service agencies, and community-based organizations that are willing to provide meeting space and secure funding. Each replication is run by a Coordinator with a back-

ground in early childhood education or working with at-risk children. Coordinators must receive three days of initial training by the Program's national staff and submit a program implementation plan to establish a replication. The Coordinator receives extra training and supervision throughout the first two years of the replication; during that time, members of the national staff visit to sit in on meetings, check files, and observe home visits. Only minor modifications of the program are allowed to suit individual communities. If all goes well, the replication is certified at the end of two years as an authentic PCHP site—but sites are still required, annually, to document that they are following PCHP procedures.

For more information, visit PCHP's Web site at www.parent-child.org. To inquire about establishing a replication, contact the Parent-Child Home Program's National Center at 516-883-7480 or info@parent-child.org.

* *Mother-Child Home Program* was the name first given to this intervention. It was changed in 1998 to *Parent-Child Home Program* to reflect its applicability to both mothers and fathers.

following October for another 23 weeks of weekly gifts and twice-a-week visits). In each visit, she sits down with Moises, usually on the floor. She invites Mrs. P. to join (parents must agree to participate, even if they are just watching the session), and plays with him or reads to him. This seemingly simple activity—"demonstrating" the use of the toy or book—is the core of the intervention. Liliana's overarching goal is to help Mrs. P. find ways to interact with Moises in a supportive, intellectually stimulating way. As stated by Phyllis Levenstein, the founder of the program, there are only two proximate goals of PCHP: "(1) to increase the cognitive and emotional development, and thus the school readiness and perhaps eventual literacy, of at-risk toddlers, and (2) to promote parents' verbal interaction with their children and other parenting skills" (Levenstein, Levenstein, & Oliver, 2002, p. 333). Within these broad targets are sub-goals influenced by the needs of the family and the characteristics of the local community. For Mrs. P., a goal is giving her ideas for things to do with Moises in their limited space so that she can be more supportive of his curiosity and less negative in her interactions with him. For example, one day Mrs. P. is folding laundry when Liliana arrives, Liliana shows her how she can engage Moises, naming colors and putting socks in one pile and shirts in another. Liliana also acts as a resource for Mrs. P., referring her to a housing agency to help her find a better living situation and alerting her to the Head Start program in her area.

Although Liliana may indirectly cover many topics in her visits, home visitors are trained to have a "light touch" (Levenstein, 1988) and *not* to be counselors or even teachers. Rather, they are encouraged to simply play and chat with the parent and child (generally about the toy or book they've brought) in order to demonstrate developmentally appropriate, supportive interactions. This approach reflects the program's philosophy that the parent is the most important person in the child's life and that that role should not be usurped by PCHP or any other intervention. The goal of PCHP is for the parent to "own" the suggestions and activities offered and not to feel that they must memorize a set of behaviors. For this reason, there are no "lessons" or tasks to be completed by parents—the learning happens through observation and interaction.

Home visitors receive 16 hours of training before working with families, and they represent a range of educational, ethnic, racial, and personal histories. A recent evaluation of five PCHP sites across three states found home visitors with graduate degrees and those with less than a high school education. Across the country, however, most home visitors do not have college diplomas. In our evaluation, the majority lived in the communities they served, had children, and were in their mid-forties (although the range was from 25 to 63). A third had participated in the program as parents themselves. The only unifying characteristic was that all of the home visitors were women (Allen, Astuto, and Sethi, 2003).

The training of home visitors is supported by weekly supervision sessions with Program Coordinators, who visit families two or three times each year to oversee and advise on progress. Program Coordinators keep their programs

aligned with PCHP goals through these weekly sessions that they, in turn, must document in reports to the National Center (the executive offices of PCHP). Once each year, program sites must complete two reports describing their activities during the year and confirming that they have followed protocol with all families. Both reports serve to remind the sites of the goals of PCHP and to alert them to any deviation from the model, while also keeping the National Center apprised of the activities of each site. Attendance and attrition rates are yet another source of information about the work being done at each site; if average attendance rates are consistently low at a given site, the National staff will look more carefully at the activities at that site.*

In addition to their roles as monitors of program fidelity, Program Coordinators also may make referrals to other agencies to assist with issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness, learning disabilities, or other family matters that are beyond the scope of the home visitors' training. It is the job of the Program Coordinator to make decisions about a family's eligibility for a program as well—if a given family is repeatedly absent when the home visitor arrives, and has no reasonable explanation, that family is given a warning and may eventually be terminated from the program.

PCHP tries not to have rigid rules about the number of sessions that a family may miss before being terminated so that home visitors and program coordinators can consider each family's circumstances before making such a decision. Families often face challenges such as eviction, pregnancy, illness, job loss, or immigration issues that affect their ability to participate. One of the benefits of the high frequency of visits in PCHP—higher than any other home visiting program of its kind—is that home visitors can keep up-to-date with events in each family's life. Programs with lower frequencies of visiting—as low as once a month, for some programs—often do not know when a family is about to be evicted, for example, making it hard to respond in time to help prevent the eviction, let alone learn where the family has gone. The high rate of visiting in PCHP means that a home visitor will know when a family may need to miss some sessions and will make allowances. Further, because many home visitors live in the communities in which they work, they are often able to find a family who has "no-showed" and identify what the hurdle to participation might be. As a result, the attendance rates for PCHP are high compared with other home visitation programs. Gomby, Culross, and Behrman (1999) reported attendance rates ranged from 42 percent to 56 percent of intended visits in their review of six non-PCHP home visiting programs. In contrast, PCHP boasts attendance rates of 85 percent, attributable in part to the higher intensity of visits and the staff's connection to the community. The intensity and structure of the program and PCHP's commitment to retaining families in

* Attendance rates are how many sessions each family attends, although data are kept on cancellations versus "no-shows." Attrition rates are how many families drop out. Attendance rates are related to attrition rates in that families who have low attendance rates for no readily-resolved reason may be asked to leave the program or may leave themselves.

PCHP children's IQ scores rose, on average, by 17 points, putting these low-income children above the national average IQ score of 100.

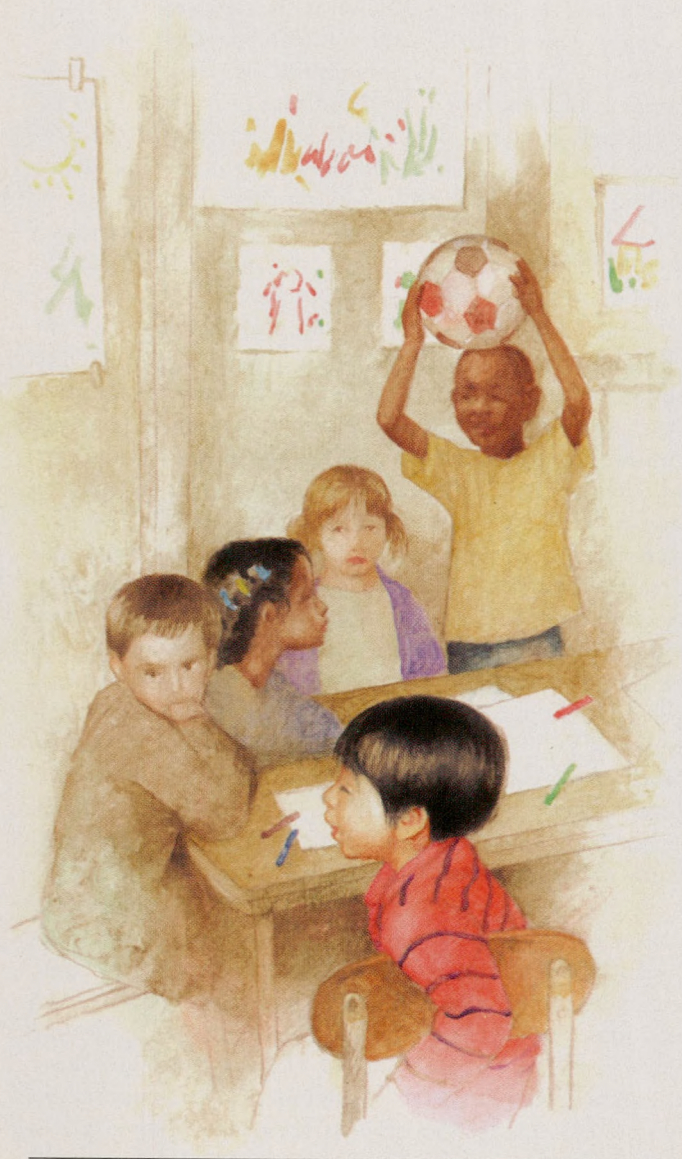
the program result in very low attrition/termination rates and reduce the self-selection that may otherwise occur if families in high-stress situations must motivate themselves to participate. It is notable that in the studies reviewed by Gomby et al., higher attendance rates were associated with better outcomes. Related to this, PCHP tracks families' completion of the program. Around the country, 80 to 85 percent of families complete the two years, although there is some variation across sites because some communities are much more subject to changes in work status, etc., that can affect program participation.

Evidence of Effectiveness

As with any intervention, the real proof of its effects is in the research data. Good research results are difficult to obtain, however. First, the type of research that one must conduct to successfully evaluate such interventions—field-based research—is fraught with so many challenges that conducting a methodologically-sound study is an achievement in and of itself. Many home visitation programs have not been studied enough to know if they work or not. Second, it is hard for one intervention to alter the course of things because the lives of children and their families are affected by so many variables. Of the home visitation programs that have been studied, most lack strong evidence of effectiveness—a recent review of six early childhood home visiting programs (not including PCHP) found no consistent positive effects upon parents or children across programs (Gomby et al., 1999).

On both scores, PCHP stands out. It has a strong research history, not only in terms of the quantity and quality of research conducted, but also in terms of the outcomes obtained. Overall, the large body of research that has been conducted on PCHP indicates that it is an effective program that addresses many of the risk factors associated with poverty by showing parents how to teach and stimulate their children. We'll review a sample of the dozens of studies on PCHP to provide examples of the broad range of evidence of its effectiveness. And, in more poignant terms, we will illustrate that evidence with the recollections of the children and parents who have participated in the program.

Early research revealed that, as expected, mothers who participated in PCHP demonstrated more supportive verbal interactions with their children two years after program completion, and that these interactions were, in turn, associated with school success in first grade (Levenstein and O'Hara, 1993). PCHP aims to help parents listen to children's cues. This helps with school since (as we noted above) parental over-control and lack of support for autonomy are associated with poor school adjustment. Parents learn to listen to their children and are, therefore, more able to help them develop verbal skills as well as more responsive to the content of what their children are saying. Marilyn M., an African-American parent from a suburb of New York City, recalls, "With me, it had to be one way or no way, [but after participating in PCHP] I learned not to be so hard on my child. At the time, I did nothing with play. Now I know that the best way for a young child to learn is through play." Five years after participation in PCHP, Marilyn's son was named the best reader in third grade and won an award for out-



standing behavior.

Early research also revealed a significant impact on IQ. PCHP children's IQ scores rose, on average, by 17 points, putting these low-income children (most of whom had mothers who were not high school graduates) above the national average IQ score of 100. Notably, this increase in IQ was still evident when the children were in third grade (Madden, Levenstein, and Levenstein, 1976).

More recently, a study in Florence County, S.C., (a largely African-American, semi-rural, Southern community), compared first-graders who had participated in PCHP to first-graders in their community and state on the Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery (CSAB), which is given to all children in the state when they enter first grade. The CSAB assesses children in 12 areas, including fine and gross motor skills, ability to identify differences and similarities in visual and auditory stimuli, ability to classify, compare, and sequence stimuli, and receptive and expressive communication. On this measure, the PCHP graduates were indistinguishable from others in the state, even though all children in the PCHP group were from low-income, high-risk families. When compared with children from similar socioeconomic backgrounds, PCHP graduates' rates of passing the CSAB were significantly higher than their peers' (Levenstein, Levenstein, and Oliver, 2002). In South Carolina, then, PCHP essentially removed the measurable academic deficits associated with low-income status that children typically bring to first grade.

One of the most striking findings from PCHP research is that participation in the program as a toddler is associated with higher rates of high school graduation some 15 years later (Levenstein, Levenstein, Shiminksi, and Stolzberg, 1998). In a study conducted in Pittsfield, Mass., (a post-industrial city) 84 percent of the low-income, high-risk children who participated in the program graduated from high school, compared with 54 percent of those in the control group. The 123 PCHP graduates even had higher graduation rates than students as a whole in Pittsfield, graduating at a rate no different from that of middle-income students nationally. Since those who received the intervention were randomly assigned, it is unlikely that graduation had to do with self-selection effects. Further, language tests administered when the students began the program as toddlers indicated no differences between the PCHP group and the control group, suggesting that later differences in academic achievement were not due to fundamental differences in ability or home environment (pre-intervention) between the two groups.

Anecdotes from PCHP indicate that children not only graduate, but often continue their education as a result of the early, important influences of the program. Candy P. is the first member of her family (a white family from Pittsfield, Mass., who has been in this country for many generations) to graduate from college, yet when Candy entered the program in 1979, she was considered developmentally delayed. When she completed the program in 1981, she tested above average on cognitive assessments. By the second grade, her teachers wanted her to skip a grade. In May 2004, she

completed an MBA while working full-time.

Her mother believes that PCHP was critical to Candy's success. Both Candy and her mother remember her particular fascination with the shape sorter, a toy brought by the PCHP home visitor. Candy liked the challenge of fitting the shapes in the correct slots, and she can still describe it exactly. She also remembers that she always knew what day the home visitor would come and that she entered school confident she could succeed.

The confidence Candy recalls is not easily measured, but its effects are far-reaching. Consider the story of Julian G., now an associate in a prestigious New York City law firm. For Julian, graduation from PCHP in 1978 was a first step that led to graduation from Cornell University and then Pace University Law School. Julian believes the program gave him the confidence he needed to become "comfortable with himself as a learner." It also "brought education home" so that once he entered school, learning didn't stop when the school day ended. Confirming his own perceptions, Julian reviewed his prekindergarten and kindergarten records, and discovered that his teachers had noted that he was very focused on learning everything and very comfortable interacting with all the different children in the classroom.

In the winter of 2001-2002, we conducted our own evaluation of PCHP in five communities on Long Island (suburbs east of New York City). We chose to examine three interrelated outcomes of families' participation in the program: children's social-emotional skills, children's academic abilities, and parents' involvement in their children's schooling. These outcomes were selected because we expected them to be influenced by PCHP and because of their influence, in turn, on children's school success.

Results were again positive and also shed light on the challenges faced by PCHP families. We evaluated PCHP children and their families during the children's kindergarten year, just under two years after completion of the program, and we compared them with children in their classrooms who had not participated in the program. The first thing we learned when we analyzed the data was that PCHP families were quite different from other families in their communities: Their parents had lower levels of education than their neighbors, worked less hours per week (which in this community means that they earned less), and were more likely to be Latino immigrants. Each of these differences represents a risk factor experienced by PCHP children but not experienced by their classmates—factors which would, in the absence of some intervention, present hurdles to school success.

Yet despite the presence of these risk factors, PCHP graduates were indistinguishable from their classmates on the bulk of our measures of preliteracy and social-emotional competence. Teachers' reports indicated no difference between PCHP graduates and their more privileged peers on measures of prereading skills and classroom behavior, two important aspects of school success. This is a key finding since teachers are at the frontlines of decision-making about children's school pathways—both in terms of the minute-to-minute expectations they set out for their students as well as

(Continued on page 54)

HOW WE LEARN

ASK THE COGNITIVE SCIENTIST

The Privileged Status of Story

How does the mind work—and especially how does it learn? Teachers' instructional decisions are based on a mix of theories from teacher education, trial and error, craft knowledge, and gut instinct. Such gut knowledge often serves us well, but is there anything sturdier to rely on?

Cognitive science is an interdisciplinary field of researchers from psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, philosophy, computer science, and anthropology who seek to understand the mind. In this regular American Educator column, we consider findings from this field that are strong and clear enough to merit classroom application.

By Daniel T. Willingham

Question: I have read that the mind treats stories differently than other types of information. It seems obvious that people like listening to stories, but it's not obvious how to use that in the classroom. Is it really true that stories are somehow "special" and, if so, how can teachers capitalize on that fact?

Answer: Research from the last 30 years shows that stories are indeed special. Stories are easy to comprehend and easy to remember, and that's true not just because people pay close attention to stories; there is something inherent in the story format that makes them easy to understand and remember. Teachers can consider using the basic elements of story structure to organize lessons and introduce complicated material, even if they don't plan to tell a story in class.

* * *

Everybody loves a good story. Even small children who have difficulty focusing in class will sit with rapt attention in the presence of a good storyteller. But stories are not just fun. There are important cognitive consequences of the story format. Psychologists have therefore referred to stories as "psychologically privileged," meaning that our minds treat stories differently than other types of material. People find stories interesting, easy to understand, and easy to remember. To understand why these bene-

fits accrue, it is necessary to understand the underlying format of stories.

Definitions of *story* vary, but a useful starting point is to consider how professional storytellers—that is, playwrights, screenwriters, and novelists—define *story*. There is relative agreement on some basic features, sometimes called "The Four Cs."¹

The first C is **Causality**. Events in stories are related because one event causes or initiates another. For example, "The King died and then the Queen died" presents two events chronologically, but "The King died and the Queen died of grief" links the events with causal information. The

second C is **Conflict**. In every story, a central character has a goal and obstacles that prevent the goal from being met. "Scarlett O'Hara loved Ashley Wilkes, so she married him" has causality, but it's not much of a story (and would make a five-minute movie). A story moves forward as the character takes action to remove the obstacle. In *Gone With the Wind*, the first obstacle Scarlett faces is that Ashley doesn't love her. The third C is **Com-**

plications. If a story were just a series of episodes in which the character hammers away at her goal, it would be dull. Rather, the character's efforts to remove the obstacle typically create complications—new problems that she must try to solve. When Scarlett learns that Ashley doesn't love her, she tries to make him jealous by agreeing to marry Charles Hamilton, an action that, indeed, poses new complications for her. The fourth C is **Character**. Strong, interesting characters are essential to good stories, and screenwriters agree that the key to creating interesting characters is to allow



the audience to observe them in action. F. Scott Fitzgerald went so far as to write, "Action is character."² Rather than *tell* us that Scarlett O'Hara is popular and a coquette, the first time we meet her we observe two men fawning over her.

Stories Are More Interesting

We might guess that stories are interesting because they often touch on themes that people find intrinsically interesting: romance, sex, death, and the like—all found in *Gone With the Wind*. That's true enough, but there's more to it. People find material presented in a story format more engaging than if it is presented in expository text no matter what the topic. In one study (Britton et al., 1983), the experimenters asked subjects to read passages. As they read, they were to listen for a tone that sounded unpredictably and only occasionally. Upon hearing it, they were to press a button as quickly as possible. The idea was that if subjects were more absorbed in what they were reading, they would be slower to press the button. The results showed that subjects responded more slowly to the tones when reading stories than when reading expository passages. This result was replicated across many different passages using different tasks (other than the button press) to probe attention.

The reason that stories are engaging may be inherent in their structure. Story structure naturally leads the listener (or reader) to make inferences that are neither terribly easy, nor impossibly difficult. New information that is a little bit puzzling, but which we can understand, is deemed more interesting than new information that is either very easy or very difficult to understand. For example, people enjoy working crossword puzzles, anagrams, and the like, but only if they are moderately difficult. They are tedious if too easy, and frustrating if too hard.

Sung-il Kim (1999) tested the idea that a story's interest is derived from readers' need to make medium-level inferences. Kim had subjects read short passages and then rate them for interest. In some passages the penultimate sentence provided a reason for the final action taken, but other passages omitted the reason. For example, one passage (below) described a woman preparing a soup and then serving it to her husband.

A newlywed bride had made clam chowder soup for dinner and was waiting for her husband to come home. Although she was not an experienced cook she had put everything into making the soup. Finally, her husband came home, sat down to dinner, and tried some of the soup. (He was totally unappreciative of her efforts and even lost his temper about how bad it tasted.) The poor woman swore she would never cook for her husband again.

Example of materials from Kim (1999).

The penultimate sentence is in parenthesis to indicate that some saw the sentence and some didn't. Subjects found the passage more interesting if the reason for the ending was not explicitly in the passage. Similar effects have been re-

Memory was best if the subject had to make an inference to connect the sentences, provided it was not too difficult to find the connection.

ported for more educational materials (e.g., historical passages, see Frick, 1992).

Stories Are Easier To Comprehend

Stories are also easier to comprehend than other forms of text. In one study (Graesser et al, 1994), the experimenters had their subjects read several different types of texts. Texts varied in the familiarity of their content and in their format; some were stories (e.g., one that is very familiar, Princess and the Pea, and one that is not, Bodisat) and some were expository texts (e.g., concerning earthquakes or harvester ants). Each text was read on a computer screen, one sentence at a time; subjects pressed the space bar when they were ready to read the next sentence, so the experimenters were able to measure reading time. The experimenters had analyzed each sentence on a number of dimensions including number of words, grammatical complexity, number of propositions (a linguistic measure of ideas), position in the text, topic familiarity, and narrativity. The experimenters then calculated which of these text characteristics were associated with fast reading times, and which with slow. They found that most of these dimensions had some impact on reading time (e.g., subjects were somewhat slower to read sentences that had more words), but narrativity* had the largest effect by far. Stories were read much faster than expository texts. The researchers take the faster reading speed to indicate greater ease of comprehension.

One key reason that stories are easy to comprehend is because we know the format, and that gives us a reasonable idea of what to expect. When an event is described in a story, we expect that the event will be causally related to a prior event in the story. The listener uses his or her knowledge of story structure to relate the present event to what has already happened. For example, Scarlett agreeing to marry Charles initially seems senseless, as it has been established that she thinks he's a fool. But the viewer knows that there must be a causal link to prior events, and knows that the link is likely related to the main character's goal. Indeed, Scarlett's acceptance of Charles's proposal makes sense given her goal of marrying Ashley and his rejection of her.

* "Narrativity" was determined by asking readers to rate whether they believed that a given piece of writing seemed like a "story."

Stories Are Easier To Remember

The structure of stories also contributes to the ease of remembering them, and many studies show that stories are indeed easy to remember. In one study (Graesser et al., 1994), subjects listened to the same set of stories and expository texts used in the study described above. Their memory was later tested. Again, familiarity had some impact on memory, but the main effect was for the narrativity of the passages. Subjects remember about 50 percent more from the stories than from the expository passages.

Most researchers believe that it is the causal connections that make stories easy to remember (e.g., Meyers & Duffy, 1990). Janice Keenan and her associates had subjects read different versions of a brief paragraph. The last sentence was always the same, but the penultimate sentence varied so that its causal relationship to the final sentence was more or less obvious. The sample below shows how the penultimate sentence varied in one of the passages.

Level of causal relationship	Sentence	Percent recalled
1 (strongest causal relationship)	Joey's big brother punched him again and again. The next day his body was covered with bruises.	69
2	Racing down the hill, Joey fell off his bike. The next day his body was covered with bruises.	83
3	Joey's crazy mother became furiously angry with him. The next day his body was covered with bruises.	75
4 (weakest causal relationship)	Joey went to a neighbor's house to play. The next day his body was covered with bruises.	50

Sample materials from Keenan et al. (1987). Level is a ranking of the relatedness of the cause described in the first sentence and the effect described in the second sentence. The rankings were based on subject ratings.

Memory was tested about 35 minutes after reading. Recall was poor if the sentences were very closely related or very unrelated. Memory was best if the subject had to make an inference to connect the sentences, provided it was not too difficult to find the connection.

Part of this memory effect likely occurs as subjects are reading or hearing the story; when the second sentence is moderately related, they think more carefully about how the sentences are connected. As discussed in a previous column (see "Students Remember ... What They Think About," *American Educator*, Summer 2003, www.aft.org/american_educator/summer2003/cogsci.html), thinking

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about meaning is helpful to memory. Indeed, if subjects are asked to elaborate on the sentences and find a connection between them, the memory advantage for the moderately related sentences disappears (Duffy, Shinjo, & Myers, 1990). Thus, it appears that the moderate connection encourages subjects to think about the sentences, whereas the very strong or very weak connection does not.

The story format brings a memory benefit not only when you hear it, but also when you later try to remember it. Causal connections provide an effective web of associations. If you remember the goal of the main character, that is an entrée to remembering how the character tried to achieve that goal, which leads to memory for successive events. For example, if you had difficulty remembering what happened to Charles Hamilton, you might use your knowledge of story structure to guess that Scarlett could not have remained married to him, which would prompt you to remember that he died.

Our Minds Seek Causal Connections

The story format has psychological significance—better comprehension and better memory—because we know what to expect in a story. These expectations are driven by a mental representation for story structure. In most (but not all) cultures, stories entail causality and goals, and so that's what listeners expect when they hear a story. This expectation is so strong that the listener will use them when remembering the story, even if the story lacked these elements. Take a moment to read the Native American folktale in the box. In a

War of the Ghosts

One night two young men from Egulac went down to the river to hunt seals, and while they were there it became foggy and calm. Then they heard war-cries, and they thought: "Maybe this is a war-party." They escaped to the shore, and hid behind a log. Now canoes came up, and they heard the noise of paddles, and one saw a canoe coming up to them. There were five men in the canoe, and they said:

"What do you think? We wish to take you along. We are going up the river to make war on the people."

One of the young men said, "I have no arrows."

"Arrows are in the canoe," they said.

"I will not go along. I might be killed. My relatives do not know where I have gone. But you," he said, turning to the other, "may go with them."

So one of the young men went, but the other returned home.

And the warriors went on up the river to a town on the other side of Kalama. The people came down to the water and they began to fight, and many were killed. But presently the young man heard one of the warriors say, "Quick, let us go home: that Indian has been hit." Now he thought: "Oh, they are ghosts." He did not feel sick, but they said he had been shot.

So the canoes went back to Egulac and the young man went ashore to his house and made a fire. And he told everybody and said: "Behold I accompanied the ghosts, and we went to fight. Many of our fellows were killed, and many of those who attacked us were killed. They said I was hit, and I did not feel sick."

He told it all, and then he became quiet. When the sun rose he fell down. Something black came out of his mouth. His face became contorted. The people jumped up and cried.

He was dead.

(Continued on page 51)

Magic Casements

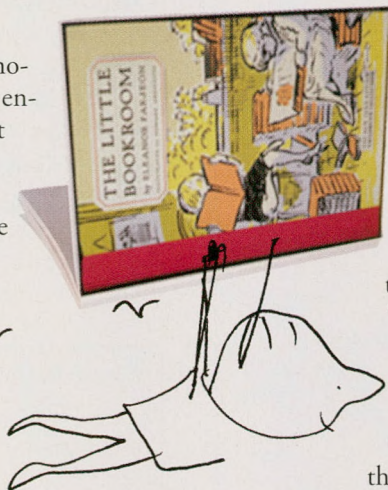
Books for Kids that Stand the Test of Time

By Terri Schmitz

One of my most vivid childhood memories is of reading Eleanor Farjeon's entrancing introduction to her short story collection *The Little Bookroom* (1955). She described growing up in a house filled with reading material, where "it would have been more natural to live without clothes than without books." Although there were books in every room, the little bookroom was given over to them completely, crammed floor to ceiling with haphazardly arranged titles, "much trash, and more treasure." Every visit the young Eleanor made to the bookroom was an expedition of discovery, every book examined had the potential to be a lifelong friend. I desperately longed for just such a room, to experience what Farjeon so enticingly described: "That dusty bookroom, whose windows were never opened, through whose panes the summer sun struck a dingy shaft where gold specks danced and shimmered, opened magic casements for me through which I looked out on other worlds and times than those I lived in: worlds filled with poetry and prose and fact and fantasy."

The child Eleanor, born in 1881, grew up to be an accomplished writer best known for her lyrical poems and stories for children. Sadly and undeservedly, most of her work is now out of print, with just the odd poem occasionally appearing in one anthology or another. Several years ago I was delighted to see Candlewick publish two different editions of her lighter-than-air story "Elsie Piddock Skips in Her Sleep." And now, the New York Review of Books, which is just embarking on a program to reprint children's classics,

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has chosen *The Little Bookroom* as one of its inaugural offerings.

The Little Bookroom is an immensely satisfying collection of Farjeon's own favorite stories, easy to get lost in, and lingering in the mind long after the book is closed. Her delight in language and mastery of form draw the reader in immediately: "One night the King's Daughter looked out of her window, and wanted the Moon"; "There was in the village a simpleton who was not the ordinary type of village idiot, by any means"; "Did you ever hear the tale of the Six Princesses who lived for the sake of their hair alone?" The stories defy categorization, mixing fact and fantasy, sense and nonsense. There's nothing cloying or sentimental about them, shot through as they are with wisdom and longing, taking unexpected plot twists just when you think you know where the story is headed. The black-and-white crosshatch illustrations by Edward Ardizzone elaborate on the stories without overwhelming them.

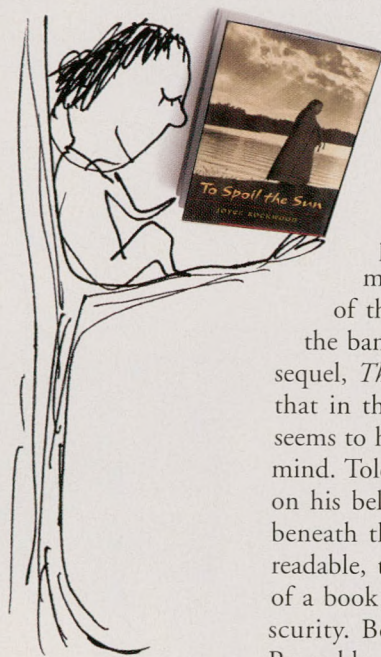
Several of the stories could easily stand alone as excellent picture books. I particularly liked "The Little Dressmaker," in which the unselfish nature of a young seamstress, who is forced to sew dresses to make other girls look beautiful, is rewarded in the end, but not quite the way we expect. "The Seventh Princess" relates how a wise, regretful queen makes sure that her beloved daughter's life is happier than her own. A little boy's touching devotion to his very ordinary father is protected by a compassionate teacher in "The Connemara Donkey." And the relationship between 10-year-old Griselda and her 110-year-old great-grandmother is almost unbearably poignant in the unforgettable "And I Dance Mine Own Child." Like the magic casements of her childhood, Farjeon opens windows for us into worlds both mysterious and reassuringly familiar.

Another welcome reissue from the New York Review Children's Collection is Esther Averill's *Jenny and the Cat*



Club (1973), a collection of five of the 13 stories Averill wrote about Jenny Linsky, a plucky little black cat whose bright red scarf gives her courage. Jenny is an orphaned cat, living in Greenwich Village with her rescuer Captain Tinker. Her dearest wish is to become a member of the Cat Club, a group of neighborhood cats who meet every night in the captain's garden, but she feels too shy and untalented to ever be accepted by the others. The first story deals with how she screws up her courage, develops a special talent, and is welcomed into the Club. In subsequent adventures she goes to her first cat dance, loses her scarf, and gains two adopted brothers. With endearingly simple illustrations by Averill herself (nothing could be loopier than the picture of Jenny teaching the other cats to do the sailor's hornpipe), the stories can be easily read by second-graders and enjoyed by children as young as four. When this title arrived in my bookstore just before the holidays, it fairly flew off the shelf. I was amazed at the number of customers who remembered these stories fondly and couldn't wait to share them with their children.

Mention should be made of the two other titles in the New York Review Children's Collection, which unfortunately demonstrate that out of print is not always a bad thing. *The Crane* (1970), written and illustrated by the Polish author Renier Zimnik, is allegedly a parable of war and peace in which an unnamed crane operator becomes one with his machine and stays at his post



through good times and bad. *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily* (1946), written and illustrated by Dino Buzzati, is an even odder tale of a race of bears who descend from the mountains of Sicily, conquer the cities of Men, and then return to the mountains when their leader realizes that they have been corrupted by aping the ways of humans. I must confess that both titles left me puzzled and not a little irritated. They seem to be curiosities directed at adults, destined for a place in college bookstores where earnest undergraduates can debate the deeper meanings behind the simple texts.

In sharp contrast, Eleanor Estes's *The Alley* (1964), reprinted by Harcourt, is perfectly attuned to the concerns and thought processes of real children. Estes, author of the beloved Moffat family stories, gives us a window into a tightly knit Brooklyn neighborhood, providing a meticulous look at the hierarchies inherent in any group of children. Ten-year-old Connie Ives is the central figure in the large cast of characters, and the events, such as they are, revolve around the thrilling episode of a burglary in the neighborhood and the attempts of the Alley children to solve the crime. However, the unhurried pace and the spot-on child's-eye-view of events make this far less a mystery than a skillful depiction of the fluctuating loyalties and animosities that bind the band of children together. In 1972 Estes produced a sequel, *The Tunnel of Hugsy Goode*, but I'm sorry to report that in the time that elapsed between the two books she seems to have completely lost her ability to inhabit a child's mind. Told in the first person by Nicholas, the story centers on his belief that there is an undiscovered tunnel running beneath the Alley. The narration is endless, the slang unreadable, the situations unbelievable. Altogether it's a mess of a book that would have been better left in deserved obscurity. Both books have appealing new covers by Peter Reynolds, with the original black-and-white interior art by

Edward Ardizzone.

Like Eleanor Estes, Virginia Sorensen excelled at giving us a glimpse of family life. Well-known for her adult novels featuring Mormon characters, she also wrote several highly regarded children's books, including *Plain Girl*



(1955) and the Newbery award-winning *Miracles on Maple Hill* (1956). These two titles have just been reissued by Harcourt with new cover art by Kevin Hawkes and the original interior art by Charles Geer (*Plain Girl*) and Beth and Joe Krush (*Miracles*). As a child, I was fascinated by *Plain Girl* with its sympathetic and appealing portrait of Esther, an Amish girl being sent to public school—and the wider world—for the first time, against the wishes of her father. *Miracles on Maple Hill* was also a revelation to me. Marly's father, a decorated World War II veteran, has returned from the war with what would now be diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder. I had never before read about an im-

perfect father, one who was angry and withdrawn and liable to lash out unpredictably at his wife and children. The story itself is a little too tidy, dealing with the healing power the family experiences at the mother's old farm, but

Marly is a complicated, interesting child, and her conflicted feelings about her father are honestly drawn.

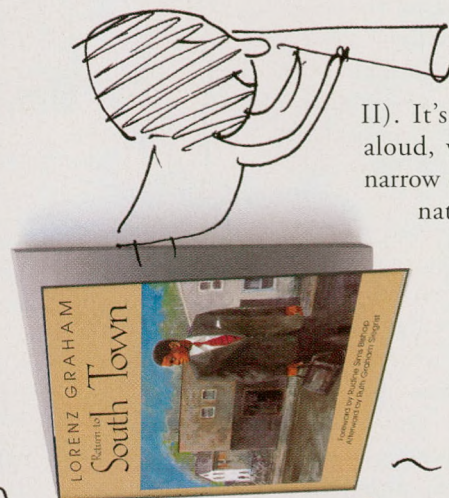
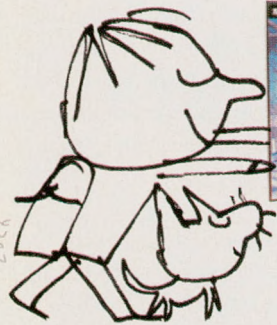
Often the books that influence us the most show us views that are painful to confront. I will never forget the shock I felt in the mid-sixties when I stumbled across Lorenz Graham's *South Town* (1958) and *North Town* (1965). Growing up in a small town in southern Minnesota, I was only vaguely aware of the civil rights movement roiling the southern states. Graham's novels about an ordinary African-American family confronting implacable racism brought the struggle vividly to life. Graham, a pioneering African-American writer for children, chronicles the fortunes of David Williams and his family. In *South Town* it becomes increasingly impossible for them to live "normal" lives in the segregated South, so they make the difficult decision to move north. *North Town* details the whole new set of problems that emerges after they move. David is determined to become a doctor, and two further novels, *Whose Town?* (1969) and *Return to South Town* (1976), continue the story of his education and return to the South to set up his medical practice. What was and is still so extraordinary about these books is their honest portrayal of hard-working people up

against attitudes and actions beyond their control, and the feelings of anger and helplessness they fight to overcome. Re-reading the books, I was struck by how powerful they remain, even though similar stories have since been written by many other talented writers. There is definitely an instructional flavor to much of the writing, but it's impossible not to care about David Williams's fate. Boyds Mills Press, which republished Graham's magnificent *How God Fix Jonah* in 2000, deserves thanks for reissuing these important novels. Rudine Sims Bishop provides an insightful foreword (reprinted in each book) putting the stories into their historical context.

An equally shameful episode in American history is chronicled in Joyce Rockwood's *To Spoil the Sun* (1976). This meticulously researched novel tells the story of Rain Dove, a 16th-century Cherokee girl, and the devastating effect smallpox, brought by European colonists, had on her clan. Much of the book is an affecting look at the customs and way of life of the Cherokee, as Rain Dove comes of age and starts a family, making even more tragic the swift and inescapable progression of the epidemic.

Two engaging fantasies round out the season's reissued novels. Terry Pratchett's *The Bromeliad Trilogy* (HarperCollins) is a wickedly funny compilation of three novels he wrote about a race of four-inch tall "nomes" inhabiting a department store: *Truckers* (1989), *Diggers* (1990), and *Wings* (1990). The imminent closure of "Arnold Bros (est. 1905)," the store that has been their home from time immemorial (nomes have *very* short life and attention spans), forces them to flee out into the wider world they have only known about through ancient nomic myths. In the process, they learn to drive a truck, operate earth-moving equipment, and pilot a plane, eventually discovering the astonishing secret of where nomes originated. It's a fast, funny, and thoroughly entertaining fantasy for both children and adults, satirizing anything and everything in our world as seen through the eyes of the nomes. The other cheerful offering, from Random House, is a new edition of Ian Fleming's *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (1964), the

rollicking story of the Potts family and their magical car (license plate: GEN II). It's a great family read-aloud, with plenty of action: narrow escapes, bands of international smugglers to be outwitted, and a car that knows her own mind and isn't shy about ordering the Potts family around. Unaccountably, the original illustrations by John Burningham have been replaced by the rather flat art of Ian Cunliffe. It's a



pity that every chapter has the same opening picture of the family flying in the car—nothing like ruining the suspense of finding out just what makes Chitty Chitty Bang Bang so unusual.

Several new editions of classics are worth mentioning. Houghton Mifflin has an appealing 100th anniversary edition of Kate Douglas Wiggin's *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1903), with old-fashioned color plates by Barbara McClintock that perfectly suit the story. Harcourt's 50th anniversary edition of *The Borrowers* (1952) by Mary Norton is a lovely gift edition with Diana Stanley's illustrations from the original British version, a letter, and drawing by Mary Norton, and an informative foreword by critic and historian Leonard S. Marcus. We've been without any new editions of Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio* (1883) for some time; now there are two. Helen Rossendale and Graham Philpot have abridged and retold the original story in *The Adventures of Pinocchio* from Dial Books, with brightly colored illustrations by Philpot of a swaggering blond Pinocchio. Candlewick's slipcased edition of *Pinocchio* is the complete text, translated by Emma Rose and illustrated with quirky collages by Sara Fanelli. Both are a far cry from the familiar Disney version most parents are looking for. I had certainly forgotten that early in the original story an irritated Pinocchio squashes the talking cricket flat. So much for Jiminy Cricket.

Glimpses of other times and places can be seen in several notable collections now making their reappearance. Adèle Geras's captivating *My Grandmother's Stories: A Collection of Jewish Folk Tales* (1990) from Knopf has been exuberantly illustrated by Anita Lobel. A little girl describes things in her grandmother's apartment that prompt her grandmother to recount wondrous stories: cutting up apples for a strudel leads to "Bavsi's Feast," the story of a man who learns the true meaning of hunger; a tapestry on the wall reminds her of "A Tangle of Wools," in which a young woman wins over the parents of the man she loves; the grandmother's complaining friends inspire "The Market of Miseries," where a kvetching woman learns that it's better to keep one's familiar troubles than to go shopping for new ones. The stories are clever and wise; the relationship between the girl and her grandmother is deep and affectionate.

The American folklorist Richard Chase compiled two stellar collections of Appalachian folktales: *The Jack Tales* (1943) and *Grandfather Tales* (1948). Houghton Mifflin has published new editions of these robust tales—European folktales with an unmistakable American backwoods flavor. *The Jack Tales* features the brash Jack in adventures such as "Jack and the Bean Tree," "Jack and the Varmints," and "Fill, Bowl! Fill!" Chase also came across other tales, which, published as

Grandfather Tales, are also transmuted European folktales, such as "Ashpet," or Cinderella; Robin Hood in "The Outlaw Boy," and Hansel and Gretel transformed into "The Two Lost Babes." They are all told in colorful Appalachian dialect, and the scholarly notes appended are useful for students of folklore as well as storytellers.

Farrar, Straus and Giroux has reissued a handsome new one-volume edition of *The Juniper Tree and Other Tales from Grimm* (1973), translated by Lore Segal and Randall Jarrell, with haunting illustrations by Maurice Sendak. Originally published in a slipcased two-volume edition, this collection contains 27 of the 210 Grimm fairy tales, from standards such as "Rapunzel" and "Snow-White" to unfamiliar tales such as "Godfather Death" and "Frederick and His Katelizabeth."

There was a surprising dearth of worthwhile picture book reissues this season, but a few can be welcomed back with open arms. Internationally acclaimed artist and graphic designer Bruno Munari's glorious alphabet book *Bruno Munari's ABC* (1960) has been republished by Editions de Seuil in collaboration with Chronicle Books. The crisp, clean lines make this a visual treat even for the very young (watch for the meandering fly that escapes from the *F* pages). It's also a pleasure to become reacquainted with Mercer Mayer's series of wordless books about the adventure of a boy and a rambunctious frog. Starting with *A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog* (1967), the series continued with *Frog, Where Are You?* (1969), *A Boy, a Dog, a Frog, and a Friend* (1971), *Frog on His Own* (1973), *Frog Goes to Dinner* (1974), and *One Frog Too Many* (1975). Each is a tiny masterpiece of storytelling, with expressive characters and easy-to-follow action. I'm relieved and grateful to Dial Books that no attempt was made to change the cozy trim size, colorize the artwork, or—

heaven forbid—add words. They're perfectly satisfying as they stand.

Felicia Bond's irrepressible pig Poinsettia is back in *Poinsettia and the Firefighters* (1984). Getting a room of her own is unexpectedly unnerving and insomnia-inducing to the usually self-possessed Poinsettia. ("Oh, no!" Poinsettia whispered, 'I am the only one awake.'") After her wakefulness alerts the family to a nearby fire, she meets the fire department's night watchman, who tells her that it's his job to stay awake all night. Reassured, Poinsettia finally falls asleep. Farrar is publishing

new paper editions of Uri Shulevitz's *The Moon in My Room* (1963), a quiet evocation of a child's universe ("This is the little boy. This is his little room. In his little room there is a whole world."), and the splendid *One Monday Morning*

(1967), in which a king and his ever-increasing retinue try unsuccessfully through the week to visit a little boy, who is always out doing other things. The colorful parade of royal retainers stands out sharply against the boy's drab, rain-soaked New York neighborhood. At last, on Sunday morning, the much-anticipated visit takes place in this charming tribute to the power of a child's imagination.



In 1986 Arnold Lobel illustrated *The Random House Book of Mother Goose*, a volume fairly bursting at the seams with 306 classic rhymes. Now rightfully called *The Arnold Loebel Book of Mother Goose*, this oversized collection pulsates with color and life, with some of the illustrations so hard to contain that the book has to be turned on its side to accommodate them. The extensive compilation of both well-known and obscure rhymes makes this new edition an essential collection for every baby's bookshelf.

"Poetry and prose and fact and fantasy"—the best of this season's reissues open for us the ever-widening vistas Eleanor Farjeon so eloquently described. Even though I have not yet achieved my own Little Bookroom (although owning a bookstore is pretty close), I will be forever grateful to her for articulating what we who love books all instinctively know: There is no limit to the worlds we can inhabit when we look through the magic casement of a book. □

Titles Reviewed Above

Esther Averill, *Jenny and the Cat Club: A Collection of Favorite Stories about Jenny Linsky*; illus. by the author. New York Review Books. ISBN 1-59017-047-4. \$16.95.

Felicia Bond, *Poinsettia and the Firefighters*; illus. by the author. Geringer/HarperCollins. ISBN 0-06-053509-1. \$14.99. Library edition ISBN 0-06-053510-5. \$14.89.

Dino Buzzati, *The Bears' Famous Invasion of Sicily*; illus. by the author; trans. by Frances Lobb. New York Review Books. ISBN 1-5907-076-8. \$18.95.

Richard Chase, selector-editor, *Grandfather Tales*; illus. by Berkeley Williams Jr. Houghton. ISBN 0-618-34691-0. \$17.00.

Richard Chase, editor, *The Jack Tales*; illus. by Berkeley Williams Jr. Houghton ISBN 0-168-34693-7. \$17.00. Paper edition ISBN 0-618-34692-9. \$7.95.

Carlo Collodi, *The Adventures of Pinocchio*; retold by Helen Rosendale and Graham Philpot; illus. by Graham Philpot. Dial ISBN 0-0837-2919-7. \$19.99.

Carlo Collodi, *Pinocchio*; illus. by Sara Fanelli; trans. by Emma Rose. Candlewick ISBN 0-7636-2261-3. \$18.99.

Eleanor Estes, *The Alley*; illus. by Edward Ardizzone. Odyssey/Harcourt. ISBN 0-15-204917-7. \$17.00. Paper edition ISBN 0-15-29-04918-5. \$5.95.

Eleanor Farjeon, *The Little Bookroom: Eleanor Farjeon's Short Stories for Children Chosen by Herself*; illus. by Edward Ardizzone. New York Review Books. ISBN 1-59017-048-2. \$18.95.

Ian Fleming, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Random ISBN 0-375-82591-6. \$15.95. Library edition ISBN 0-375-92591-0. \$17.99.

Adèle Geras, *My Grandmother's Stories: A Collection of Jewish Folk Tales*; illus. by Anita Lobel. Knopf ISBN 0-375-82285-2. \$19.95. Library edition ISBN 0-375-92285-7. \$21.99.

Lorenz Graham, *North Town*. Boyds Mills ISBN 1-59078-162-7. \$16.95.

Lorenz Graham, *Return to South Town*. Boyds

Mills ISBN 1-59078-164. \$16.95.

Lorenz Graham, *South Town*. Boyds Mills ISBN 1-59078-164-3. \$16.95.

Lorenz Graham, *Whose Town?* Boyds Mills ISBN 1-59078-163-5. \$16.95.

Arnold Lobel, selector, *The Arnold Lobel Book of Mother Goose*; illus. by the selector. Knopf ISBN 0-679-88736-9. \$19.95. Library edition ISBN 0-679-98736-3. \$21.99.

Mercer Mayer, *A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog*; illus. by the author. Dial ISBN 0-8037-2880-8. \$5.99.

Mercer Mayer, *Frog Goes to Dinner*; illus. by the author. Dial ISBN 0-8037-2884-0. \$5.99.

Mercer Mayer, *Frog Where are You?*; illus. by the author. Dial ISBN 0-8037-2881-6. \$5.99.

Mercer Mayer and Marianna Mayer, *A Boy, a Dog, a Frog, and a Friend*; illus. by Mercer Mayer. Dial ISBN 0-8037-2882-4. \$5.99.

Mercer Mayer and Marianna Mayer, *One Frog Too Many*; illus. by Mercer Mayer. Dial ISBN 0-8037-2885-9. \$5.99.

Bruno Munari, *Bruno Munari's ABC*; illus. by the author. Seuil/Chronicle ISBN 2-02-061075-2. \$15.95.

Mary Norton, *The Borrowers*; illus. by Diana Stanley. Harcourt ISBN 0-15-204928-2. \$19.95.

Terry Pratchett, *The Bromeliad Trilogy*. HarperCollins ISBN 0-06-00949301. \$17.90. Library edition ISBN 0-06-054855-X. \$18.89.

Joyce Rockwood, *To Spoil the Sun*. Holt ISBN 0-8050-7372-8. \$16.95.

Lore Segal, selector-translator, *The Juniper Tree and Other Tales from Grimm*; selected and illus. by Maurice Sendak. Farrar ISBN 0-374-33971-6. \$30.00.

Uri Shulevitz, *The Moon in My Room*; illus. by the author. Farrar paper edition ISBN 0-374-45314-4. \$5.95.

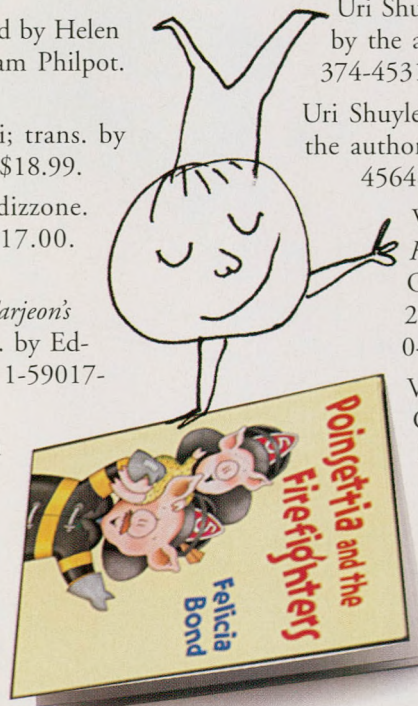
Uri Shulevitz, *One Monday Morning*; illus. by the author. Farrar paper edition ISBN 0-374-45648-8. \$6.95.

Virginia Sorensen, *Miracles on Maple Hill*; illus. by Beth and Joe Krush. Odyssey/Harcourt. ISBN 0-15-204719-0. \$17.00. Paper edition ISBN 0-15-2047189-2. \$5.95.

Virginia Sorensen, *Plain Girl*; illus. by Charles Greer. Odyssey/Harcourt. ISBN 0-15-204724-7. \$17.00. Paper edition ISBN 0-15-204725-5. \$5.95.

Kate Douglas Wiggin, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*; illus. by Barbara McClintock. Houghton ISBN 0-618-34694-5. \$20.00.

Reiner Zimmik, *The Crane*; illus. by the author; trans. by Nina Ignatowicz and F.N. Monjo. New York Review Books ISBN 1-59017-075-X. \$16.95.



COGNITIVE SCIENTIST

(Continued from page 45)

landmark study, Frederic Bartlett (1932) asked English schoolboys to read this folktale, in which some events happen with no apparent causal connection to prior events. When subjects were asked to recall the folktales weeks later, they added and dropped elements for which there were no apparent causal connections in an unconscious effort to make the story better fit their idea of a story. In particular, subjects had difficulty understanding why some characters were ghosts and difficulty understanding why the Indian dies at the end, and those two facts were especially subject to change in their memory. For example, some subjects omitted the fact that the warriors were ghosts, and one subject later remembered that “Ghost” was a clan name for another group of Indians. Many subjects inserted language indicating causality for the death at the end, for example, relating that he had seemed all right, but became ill the next morning and then died.

Causality is so powerful a cue to recall that subjects will use it even in expository prose, if it’s available. In one study (Gentner, 1976), subjects who listened to passages from a history textbook later recalled the events described *not* in the order that they heard them, but in the order of causation.

Stories and Story Structure in the Classroom

Stories are interesting, easy to comprehend, and easy to remember; and even preschoolers have some appreciation of story structure (Wenner, 2004). Exactly what has led our minds to handle stories in such a privileged way is not well understood, but it has been suggested that understanding the actions and characters in a story calls on the same processes we use in trying to understand the actions and intentions of people in the real world (Bower, 1978). We evolved as a social species, and so we may have special cognitive apparatus to deal with social situations that are co-opted in thinking about stories.

How can teachers capitalize on the privileged status of stories? There are two groups of applications. First, obviously enough, one can tell more stories. Second, where stories are inappropriate, it may still be useful to inject *elements* from the story format into lessons. Both approaches are discussed here.

■ Tell more stories in class.

Since stories are interesting, easy to remember, and easy to understand, they are an ideal introduction to a new unit. The teacher can introduce new material in a way that is both non-threatening and interesting. Further, students may acquire some of the basic vocabulary of the content area and be better prepared to delve more deeply into the subject matter. If you think of stories as a particularly “easy to swallow” way of teaching content, you’ll think of a lot of ideal times for using stories: after lunch, at the end of a complex discussion when a simple recap is needed, and during the last few minutes of the school day. A teacher might know of a story that complements the lesson’s educational point, but does so in a way that is less taxing, more fun, and more in-

A teacher might know of a story that complements the lesson’s educational point, but does so in a way that is less taxing, more fun, and more interesting.

teresting. For one such story, see “Mayday at 41,000 Feet: Watch Those Units!” from the Winter 2003/2004 issue of *American Educator* (available at www.aft.org/american_educator/winter03-04/mayday.html). Such a story can also make an ideal break on a day when students are frazzled—and is more attractive than other alternatives (such as undemanding busy work).

■ Have students read stories outside of class.

Books are available that use a narrative structure to convey complicated content. Most notable are biographies of great figures in science, mathematics, history, and the arts. Biographies make personal the material that teachers want students to master. Biographies of scientists frequently read like detective stories, as they hunt for the solution to a scientific

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problem. Great scientists and mathematicians also set an excellent example for students through their passion and dedication. Students will gain an important personal perspective when they read an autobiography of an ordinary person who lived through a historical event that they are studying. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* is a classic example, but there are many other fine works in this vein. Other books integrate educational material into the stories themselves, such as *Flatland* by Edwin Abbott, or *The Man Who Counted* by Malba Tahan.

■ Tell stories to older students.

Teachers may think that storytelling is inappropriate for older students. Once children get to sixth grade or so, they may think that stories smack of preschool. Of course, older children do enjoy stories; they attend movies, they read books. The problem is that listening to stories read aloud in class sounds like (and indeed is) what young children do. The solution is simple enough. The importance of age-appropriate language is obvious, and teachers might also consider not signaling to students that a story is being told. Such signals might include reading aloud from a book, using a dramatic voice, and insisting that the story be told as a whole, uninterrupted. Rather, the teacher might begin the story without announcing it as a story—tell it in everyday language, work from notes, and allow discussion while the story is being told.

■ When "story" is intrinsic to the subject matter, make use of the story format to structure lessons.

History is a natural story; it has the four Cs—causality, conflicts, complications, and character—built in. Yet, history textbooks rarely use a narrative structure. For teachers, an important way to make use of story in history is through the generous use of trade books that treat history as biography, historical fiction, or a narrative.

■ Use the four Cs to structure lessons.

There are ways to use the four Cs as the framework for developing lesson plans. For example, a typical lesson on the

Spanish-American War emphasizes President Cleveland's and then President McKinley's reluctance to do anything about the Cuban revolution against the Spanish, despite the considerable economic stake that the U.S. had in the country. Successive events (the publishing of an insulting letter by the Spanish Minister and the sinking of the *Maine*), lead to a U.S. ultimatum that is rejected by the Spanish, whereupon the U.S. declares war. Considering the four Cs might lead to a different framework. The strong *character* in this drama is Spain, because it is Spain's actions that move the story forward. Thus, a teacher might begin with the background of how Spain first came to control Cuba and the failed revolt of 1868-1878. The central *conflict* of the story is how the Spanish should deal with the revolt: put it down or try to accommodate the Cubans. The first *complication* is the increasing involvement of the U.S. in this conflict, which offers a third option—allow the U.S. to mediate. At each step, the teacher would ensure that the *causal* link between one event and the next was clear to students. Story format can inform the structuring of a lesson plan, even if the lesson does not include a story *per se*.

■ Use the most important C—conflict.

Screenwriters know that the most important of the four Cs is the conflict. If the audience is not compelled by the problem that the main characters face, they will never be interested in the story. Movies seldom begin with the main conflict that will drive the plot. That conflict is typically introduced about 20 minutes into the movie. For example, the main conflict in *Star Wars* is whether Luke will succeed in destroying the death star, but the movie begins with the empire's attack on a rebel ship and the escape of the two droids. All James Bond movies begin with an action sequence, but it is always related to some other case. Agent 007's main mission for the movie is introduced about 20 minutes into the film. Screenwriters use the first 20 minutes—about 20 percent of the running time—to pique the audience's interest in the characters and their situation. Teachers might consider using 10 or 15 minutes of class time to generate

interest in a problem (i.e., conflict), the solution of which is the material to be learned.

Cognitive science research confirms that stories are indeed powerful. This research shows us where this power comes from and suggests how teachers might harness it. Stories have a particular format, and each of us has a representation of that format in memory. Teachers may use this power both by the judicious use of storytelling in the classroom, and by using the structure of stories to organize a lesson. □

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Endnotes

- The definitions vary somewhat, and some contain five or six Cs rather than four, but there is considerable overlap in the definitions (Field, 1994; Hull, 1983; McKee, 1997).
- The Notebooks of F. Scott Fitzgerald*, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/Bruccoli Clark, 1978, p. 332.

Brown v. Board of Education

Caste, Culture, and the Constitution

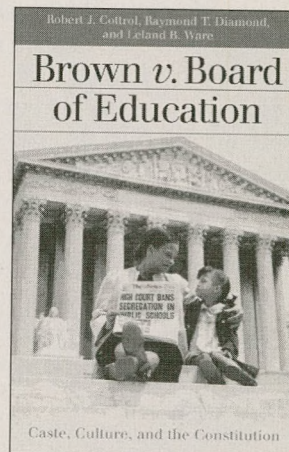
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PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM

(Continued from page 42)

in terms of the types of placements they seek for them.

In addition to having the teachers assess the children, we also evaluated the children ourselves on tests of inhibitory control, general knowledge, and prereading abilities. Inhibitory control is the capacity to suppress a behavior when it is necessary to do so, despite an opposing desire. Not talking out of turn when one has something important to say is an example of exercising inhibitory control. We chose this construct because as Kochanska, Murray, Jacques, and Koenig (1996) point out, such skills are key in learning to comply with adult demands (such as those from parents or teachers) and much of what represents acceptable classroom conduct involves suppression of the child's desires (e.g., remaining quiet, remaining in one's seat, waiting one's turn, etc.).

Just as with teacher reports of children's classroom behavior, we found no differences between PCHP graduates and their classmates on inhibitory control. This is an important result, given data that indicate that kindergarten teachers consider children's behavioral problems to be more of a challenge to their academic and social success than academic delays (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, and Cox, 2000), as well as research that suggests that social-emotional competence can support children's academic development. These results suggest that PCHP graduates have the behavioral skills necessary for classroom success.

To test general knowledge, we used measures developed for the Head Start FACES evaluation (Tarullo, Zill, Hubbell-McKey, and Resnick, 2002). These included assessments of counting, color naming, and knowledge about books (such as identifying the role of the author, recalling items from the book, and indicating where one should begin reading). Kindergartners who had completed PCHP as toddlers scored as well as their classmates from more privileged families on all of these measures.

The more impoverished backgrounds of the PCHP children were only evident in our tests of prereading abilities, which we assessed with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Third Edition (PPVT-III; Dunn, Dunn, and Dunn, 1997) and the Test of Early Reading Ability, Third Edition (TERA-3, Reid, Hresko, and Hammill, 2001). The PPVT-III is a standardized test of receptive vocabulary that was normed on a national sample and that is used extensively in research and evaluation. It involves showing the child four pictures and asking him or her to point to the one that best describes a particular word, beginning with words like "chair" and progressing to increasingly complex words like "argument." The TERA-3 measures children's mastery of early developing reading skills and was also normed on a national sample. This standardized measure provides a Reading Composite score consisting of three subscales: Alphabet, which measures letter recognition; Conventions, which looks at concepts such as knowledge that print goes from left to right; and Meaning, which looks at early comprehension.

On both of these measures, the more privileged children

outperformed PCHP children. This probably means that while PCHP does greatly reduce the gap between low-income children and their higher-income peers, it does not completely eliminate that gap. But there could also be effects that we were not able to detect. For example, Currie and Thomas (1996) found that Head Start had no effects upon children's PPVT scores, even though effects were apparent for other tests. But when they looked specifically at children whose mothers spoke Spanish at home, they found that Head Start did have a positive impact on those children's PPVT scores. Unfortunately, our sample of children whose mothers spoke Spanish at home was too small to conduct a similar analysis, so whether or not PCHP has a similar impact is a question for future research. Another question for future research is whether or not an impact on PPVT-III or TERA-3 scores will show up after the children have been in school longer. Because parents are expected to be the vehicle of change in PCHP, it is possible that more time in school may be needed to bring out the program's effects on standardized tests like PPVT-III and TERA-3, which may require a longer exposure to academic knowledge. In our parent questionnaire, we did find that PCHP parents were as active in communicating with their children's schools as more privileged parents, so we do have reason to expect that the impact of the program will become greater as parents learn from the school.

Overall, and consistent with previous research, we found PCHP to be an effective program helping families in a broad range of circumstances. While we did not conduct the detailed observations like those undertaken by Hart and Risley, we do believe based on our research and our review of studies that PCHP can help to reduce the enormous gap they noted between preschoolers from families on welfare and those from professional families. This is not a new idea. Thirty years ago, the distinguished psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner, one of the architects of Head Start, said, "It is in the social sphere that Levenstein's method is most distinctive ... the principal and direct agent of intervention becomes not the teacher or the tutor, but the mother. As a result, intervention does not terminate at the end of the program, but continues as long as the patterns of joint activity and interaction between mother and child endure. The system exhibits a distinctive hand-in-glove quality, and thereby an efficiency, that would be difficult to achieve in non-enduring relationships" (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, p. 26).

Let's return to Moises, five years after he began the program: As a second-grader, Moises is reading on grade level, something his mother never expected. Mrs. P. took English classes and is training to become an aide at the local Head Start. She is active in her church. Her husband learned enough English to confidently ask for a raise and the family now has their own apartment.

Perhaps the best words of support for the program come from a former parent participant like Liliana Vasquez, who

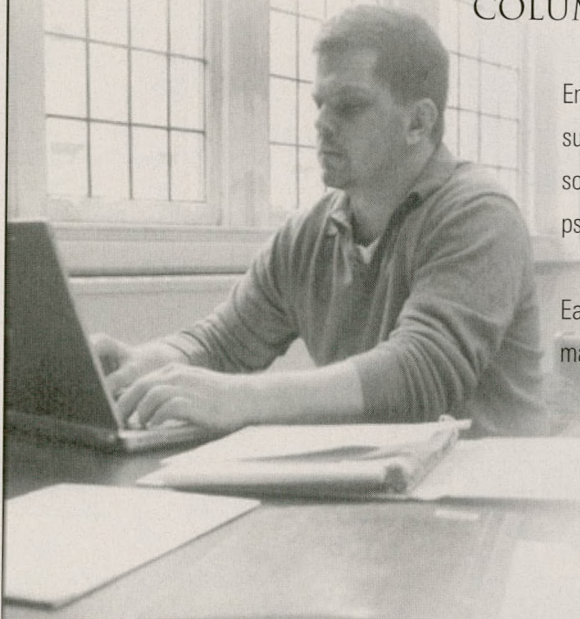
says, "I did not truly understand ... what this program would bring to the family. A bilingual home visitor came to my house. She was a sweet person who brought a lot of fun ideas to my family and encouraged me to participate. In the beginning, I was shy and reluctant, but soon I was playing and enjoying myself. Our family learned how to talk to one another. I had thought that a mother's job was just to feed, clothe, and care for her children. I learned to be a mother with patience and love." □

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